

Israel-Hamas war

US urges Israel to investigate Gaza air strike that killed 7 aid workers

Food charity World Central Kitchen says convoy was hit after leaving warehouse



World Central Kitchen says its staff in Gaza were travelling in 'two armoured cars branded with the WCK logo and a soft skin vehicle' when they were struck © Ahmed Zakot/Reuters

James Shotter in Jerusalem and **William Sandlund** in Hong Kong 17 MINUTES AGO

The US National Security Council has urged Israel to investigate after seven members of the humanitarian organisation World Central Kitchen were killed in an air strike in Gaza on Monday night.

The organisation said on Tuesday that seven people had died in what it said was a strike by the Israel Defense Forces. The staff were travelling in a “deconflicted zone in two armoured cars branded with the WCK logo and a soft skin vehicle”, it added.

“Despite co-ordinating movements with the IDF, the convoy was hit as it was leaving the Deir al-Balah warehouse,” said WCK, adding that the team had just unloaded more than 100 tonnes of humanitarian food aid for Gaza, the besieged enclave where aid groups have warned of the risk of imminent famine.

The WCK workers who were killed included Australian, Polish, UK and Palestinian staff members, as well as a dual US-Canadian citizen, said the organisation, adding that it was “immediately” pausing its operations in the region.

World Central Kitchen chief executive Erin Gore said the incident was “an attack on humanitarian organisations” and “unforgivable”, adding: “We — World Central Kitchen and the world — lost beautiful lives today because of a targeted attack by the

IDF.”

The IDF said it was “conducting a thorough review at the highest levels to understand the circumstances of this tragic incident”.

“The IDF makes extensive efforts to enable the safe delivery of humanitarian aid, and has been working closely with WCK in their vital efforts to provide food and humanitarian aid to the people of Gaza,” it said in a statement.

The EU’s chief diplomat said the strike on the convoy showed that an immediate ceasefire was required.

“I condemn the attack and urge an investigation,” said the EU’s high representative Josep Borrell on Tuesday. “Despite all the demands to protect civilians and humanitarian workers, we see new innocent casualties.

“This shows that the [UN Security Council] resolution asking for an immediate ceasefire, full humanitarian access and a reinforced protection of civilians must be immediately implemented,” he added.

NSC spokesperson Adrienne Watson wrote in a post on X that the US was “heartbroken and deeply troubled” by the strike on the WCK workers.

“Humanitarian aid workers must be protected as they deliver aid that is desperately needed, and we urge Israel to swiftly investigate what happened,” she wrote.

In a post on X, Poland’s foreign ministry said: “We extend our deepest condolences to the family of the volunteer who was providing aid to the Palestinian people. Poland objects to the disregard for international humanitarian law.”

Foreign minister Radosław Sikorski said he asked the Israeli ambassador in Warsaw for “urgent explanations” about the strike on the aid workers’ vehicles.

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese confirmed that an Australian national named Zomi Frankcom was among those killed in the strike.

“Australia expects full accountability for the deaths of aid workers, which is completely unacceptable,” said Albanese on Tuesday. “Aid workers, and those doing humanitarian work, and indeed all innocent civilians, need to be provided with protection.”

World Central Kitchen was [founded by celebrity chef José Andrés](#). WCK was heavily involved in the first delivery of humanitarian aid to Gaza via sea last month. Last

week it oversaw the delivery of a second maritime consignment to the enclave.

The charity said last month that it had provided 42mn meals to Gaza's 2.3mn people since the start of the [war](#), which has taken a devastating toll on the enclave.

Israel's offensive has killed more than 32,000 people in Gaza, according to Palestinian officials, as well as displacing 1.7mn of its inhabitants and reducing huge swaths of the territory to rubble.

The UN warned last month that 1.1mn people in Gaza faced "catastrophic levels of food insecurity" and warned of a "staggering escalation" in the number of children suffering from acute malnutrition. The World Health Organization said last week that the health system in the strip was "barely surviving".

Israel launched its assault in response to Hamas's October 7 attack on Israel, during which militants killed 1,200 people and took another 250 hostage, according to Israeli officials.

Additional reporting by Henry Foy in Brussels

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