

[Transcript] Global News Podcast / UN aid agencies repeat their calls for a ceasefire in Gaza

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This is the Global News podcast from the BBC World Service.

I'm Rachel Reitin and in the early hours of Sunday, the 22nd of October, these are our main stories.

A group of UN agencies has issued a joint statement calling for a ceasefire and unrestricted humanitarian access to Gaza. Israel says it's preparing to step up its attacks on Gaza to increase pressure on Hamas militants there. Also in this podcast. You couldn't give anybody more happiness than to win the welcome. At our game, the game that we gave to the world, on our own ground, our own favourite pitcher, Emily, in front of our own public. One of England's greatest footballers, Bobby Charlton, has died at the age of 86. A group of UN agencies has called for a ceasefire and unrestricted humanitarian access to the Gaza Strip after 20 trucks carrying aid arrived in the territory on Saturday. The joint statement from UNICEF, the World Food Programme and the WHO, among others, said action was needed to save lives and prevent more human suffering.

The US Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken, urged Israel and Egypt to allow the Rafa crossing from Egypt to remain open to allow a sustained supply of aid. Israel tightened its blockade of the territory two weeks ago. Saturday's delivery of aid in 20 trucks included medicines and food, but not fuel. The Rafa crossing into Gaza is the only land passage into the territory not controlled by Israel. The UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, who is attending a special peace summit in Cairo, spoke of the importance of these initial aid supplies. The people of Gaza need a commitment for much, much more. A continuous delivery of aid to Gaza at the scale that is needed. And we are working non-stop with all parties that are relevant to make it happen. Excellencies, let's be clear. The grievances of the Palestinian people are legitimate and long. We cannot and must not ignore the wider context for these tragic events. The long-standing conflict and 56 years of occupation with no end in sight. But nothing can justify the reprehensible assault by Hamas that terrorized Israeli civilians. Our reporter in Gaza, Rashidi Abu-Aluf, was at the Rafa crossing on Saturday and gave us more details about what was being brought into the territory. I understand there is some kind of guarantee for a safe road to the trucks to travel to a warehouse for the Onurwa or UN warehouse in the south to deliver the aid. And then what is inside

the first 20 trucks, two operation rooms for Khan Yunis Hospital, Nasser Hospital, essential medical life-saving kits for the hospitals, some food for the people who are displaced in the

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UN schools. But this is as we understand from the Egyptian, from the UN, and from all the parties involved in this very long process of talks. This is a test that 20 trucks isn't enough, it's like a drop in the ocean, but it's open the window for hope. Egypt said we will guarantee sustainable humanitarian corridor into Gaza. Israel worried that this humanitarian aid will be end up in Hamas' hand. Hamas told the BBC that we are not going to be involved in any sort of distributing or collecting or deciding this. The UN will handle this and the UN has the capacity and has the staff and has the space to deal with this. I spoke to our diplomatic correspondent, Paul Adams, who's in Jerusalem. So aid has started to come into Gaza, but as we just heard from Rashid Abu-Alaf, it's just a drop in the ocean. You've got to just bear in mind the statistics of this. 2.3 million people living in the Gaza Strip, half of those people on the move, many of them forced to leave homes that have been subsequently destroyed. There's no fuel, water is in desperately short supply. And just to provide water, to take water in on trucks, of course, requires a great many trucks. So today, it just barely scraped the surface of what is needed. And in order to really properly address the humanitarian situation, which is getting worse and worse by the hour, the aid agencies are saying we need hundreds of trucks every day, not just 20, but hundreds of them. And at the moment tonight, we do not know if anything is going to cross tomorrow. It may, but at the moment, nothing is really assured. And what are the barriers to allowing more trucks to come in?

Well, you heard Rusty alluding to some of that. The fear that Israel has that Hamas will steal some of this, will use it for its own purposes. Israeli officials point to Hamas having already stolen some fuel some days ago. You know, Israeli officials say they do hope that the aid will continue to flow. And they are pointing Palestinians in the direction of an area on the southern end of the Gaza Strip, close to the Mediterranean Sea, where they say humanitarian aid will be distributed. But I think everyone is basically waiting to see, will this initial convoy get in? Will it go to where it's supposed to be? And can the distribution work unimpeded? Only then, perhaps, will we see a greater flow beginning. Meanwhile, there's massive army on the border. No sign of an invasion by Israel. I've heard lots of speculation linking the release of the hostages overnight to the possible delay in the ground invasion. What are you hearing? I think that is probably right. I mean, the presence of so many hostages, still more than 200, being held inside the Gaza Strip is a massive complication for the Israelis. And of course, Hamas, who described the release yesterday as a humanitarian gesture, I think are being a, you know, somewhat disingenuous. I think they are acutely aware of the fact that there are Israelis demonstrating on the streets of Israel, demanding the return of their loved ones. And so they know that by delivering two hostages, they're keeping that hope alive and keeping that pressure up. And so they are hoping that this will cause the Israeli government to pause, to wait. But I think ultimately the government will do what it wants to do. The other thing that's perhaps holding them back is that what the Israelis are proposing to do this time is something they've never done before, which is the complete eradication of Hamas in the Gaza Strip. That requires a whole lot more planning and preparation than anything they've ever done in Gaza before. And I think that's one of probably several reasons why this hasn't already happened. Paul Adams in Jerusalem. The Israeli military has said it's to step up its strikes on Gaza to put further pressure on Hamas there. Hamas is designated a terror organization by many Western governments, including the UK. The Israeli Army spokesman Rear Admiral Daniel

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Hagari gave more details on the increase of its strikes. We'll deepen our strikes. We'll minimize the risks to our forces in the next stages of the war, and we're going to increase the attacks from today. We'll increase the attacks, and therefore I called on Gaza City residents specifically to continue moving south for their safety. This is expected to be a major ground offensive. Hamas authorities say that strikes on Gaza by Israel over the last two weeks have killed nearly 4,000 people. The group's attack on southern Israel on October the 7th left 1,400 people dead, most of them civilians. And as we heard earlier, a special peace summit has been taking place in the Egyptian capital Cairo, Mahmoud Abbas, who's head of the Palestinian Authority, which controls the occupied West Bank, but not the Gaza Strip, told delegates that Palestinians will not be forced off their land. We warn against any attempts to displace our people in Gaza beyond its borders. We also warn against any evictions of Palestinians from their homes or displacement from Jerusalem or the West Bank. We will not accept displacement. We will remain steadfast on our land, no matter the challenges. I spoke to our Middle East regional editor, Mike Thompson, and asked him who attended the conference, and more importantly, who did not. Starting with who's there, quite a collection of countries, more than 20 in fact, Jordan, Qatar, Italy, Britain, France, South Africa, China, Russia, plus the EU's foreign policy chief. And you've also, of course, mentioned their Mahmoud Abbas and King Abdullah of Jordan. And what have they been saying? Well, there's been quite a range of comments. I think mainly from the Arab world, it's been a condemnation of Israel's offensive and from sort of Western figures, more of a sort of concentration on getting more humanitarian relief for civilians. King Abdullah condemned the collective punishment, which we're hearing just now, condemned there, and the cruel siege of Gaza, as he put it. But he pleaded with everyone not to give up on this two state solution. There was quite an interesting contribution from South Africa's President, Cyril Ramaphosa, who talked about how this was likened to apartheid in South Africa. Our people waged a brave and courageous struggle to achieve their freedom, and were subjected to untold suffering, just like the Palestinians are going through. But we had courageous leaders who were able to set aside their differences and sued for peace, and were able to bring the abhorrible system of apartheid to an end. Given that Israel, America and Iran are not there, how likely is it that something positive will come out of this conference? Well, as you say, these are key players, obviously, in this conflict. And in fact, the conference has now ended with no joint agreement, no comments saying we will all agree to back one path or another. So it looks unlikely in the medium term, there'll be much of any solution here. Never mind the longed for two state one that just about everyone there seem to be backing. Mike Thompson. For two weeks now, we've been focused on events in Israel and Gaza. But in that time, there's also been increasing violence in the West Bank, the other Palestinian area controlled by a different group, the internationally recognised Palestinian Authority. From there, our correspondent Yolanda now reports. So really, there are just teenagers throwing stones with their slingshots at the moment. Snipers, Israeli snipers up in the hill. Someone's been injured and the ambulance is racing over. Already, this had been the deadliest year in years for Palestinians in the West Bank. But since the war in Gaza started, the violence here has really surged.

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At rallies, there's full support for Gaza. But many also worry for the Palestinian nationalist cause because of Israel's order for people to leave the northern half of the strip.

He decided to displace the Palestinians. Palestinians have no choice except to defend their existence. This is the case. What really matters to us is that our people remain steadfast on our lands. We're afraid of being forced to evacuate.

Just days ago, the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, a political rival of Hamas, which governs Gaza, did meet the US Secretary of State.

But protests against the President as the bloodshed rose in Gaza quickly showed the dangers for his Palestinian Authority. There were plenty of green Hamas flags at demonstrations.

Suspensions grew that Mr Abbas might agree to take over Gaza after the war.

I ask a former Palestinian Authority Minister, Sabri Saidem, if that is the plan.

The past two weeks have seen scores of funerals in the West Bank.

Palestinians have been killed by Israeli security forces and settlers.

This was last week south of Hebron. A settler was filmed seriously injuring a Palestinian shooting him at point-blank range. Israeli police say they're investigating.

While world attention is inevitably focusing on the bloodshed and humanitarian crisis in Gaza, tensions are also escalating in the West Bank, and it raises the threat of a wider conflict.

That report by Yolande now. Now to other news. One of the greatest footballers of all time, Sir Bobby Charlton, has died at the age of 86. He played for Manchester United for his whole career and was a member of the England team that won the 1966 World Cup. He was also one of the young United team who survived an air crash in Munich in 1958. Our sports correspondent, Andy Swiss, looks back at his life. And now Bobby's got a chance to shoot. He does, and it's land. They go by Bobby Charlton. With his superb passing and thunderous shooting, Sir Bobby Charlton

was arguably the greatest English player of his generation, indeed perhaps even the greatest of all time. His career began in 1954 when he was signed by Manchester United and he never left the club, experiencing great success but also great tragedy. In 1958 he was on board the plane which crashed in Munich, killing 23 Manchester United players and officials. I remember I was going hitting a perimeter fence and then I don't remember. I woke up and I was in my seat, still strapped in, but I was about 20 or 30 yards from the plane. Charlton was back in action within a month and the club gradually rebuilt the team around him. It came to fruition in 1968 when he capped in Manchester United to the European Cup, scoring twice in their victory over Ben Feker in the final. If that was the pinnacle of his club career, his international career scaled even greater heights. His England record of 49 goals stood for decades and in 1966 he was a member of the side, along with his brother Jack, which won the World Cup. For Charlton it was a moment of huge personal emotion. I never cry when we get beat but I like people to be happy and you couldn't give anybody more happiness than to win the World Cup. At our game, the game that we gave to the world, on our own ground, our own favourite pitch at Wembley, in front of our own public, the applause and the national feeling just got to me. After retiring from the game he remained at Manchester United as a director and was knighted in 1994, a reward not just for his talent but his reputation for sportsmanship and integrity.

Chance for Charlton and it's there! Bobby Charlton for my money, certainly in my time, the greatest of the all. FIFA's president Gianni Infantino said Sir Bobby Charlton was a football legend

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whose impact on the game spanned generations. Manchester United called him a giant of the game who was a hero to millions around the world. The former England captain Gary Lineker said he felt lucky to have seen Sir Bobby play. It's a very sad day. I think Bobby Charlton was synonymous with English football for such a long time. He was one of those people that you could go to a country where no one spoke English in any part of the world and people would say Bobby Charlton and that I think is fame and testament to his abilities.

In the 1970s Bobby Charlton managed Preston North End football club in northern England. These fans also paid tributes to their former manager. He was just one of those legends that will be sorely missed. He really will be. Just so patriotic and amazing. It was a privilege for us to get a guy like Bobby Charlton at Preston North End. Guttled, Guttled, he's an icon isn't he? He's a legend football legend. Yeah definitely. Yeah being sorely missed. One of the greatest players that's England's ever seen. He's from United. He did everything that any player dreams to do. He's done it, surpassed it. He's the best player England's ever seen. Football fans paying tributes to Sir Bobby Charlton who's died at the age of 86. Still to come. What happened was what looked like a worker wearing a blue uniform and a yellow hat climbed into a vat of malt. Had a quick look around

and then. So what happened at the Chinese brewery that makes one of the biggest selling beers in the

world? Find out later. Unexpected Elements is the podcast exploring the science behind the headlines.

That's an interesting concept. This is probably not your statement. Each week we take a news story you've probably heard of and use the science surrounding it as a springboard to dive into other stories that may not be on your radar. We're here in my b-love. In front of a box of beans.

It's a little bad side effect at all. Unexpected elements from the BBC World Service. Find it wherever you get your BBC podcasts. Welcome back to the Global News Podcast. Pakistan's former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has returned to the country after four years of self-imposed exile in London. He was allowed to leave Pakistan in 2019 for medical treatment, despite serving a jail term for corruption. Mr Sharif went straight ahead to address a campaign rally in Lahore, although he's currently disqualified from standing in the upcoming general election. Our Pakistan correspondent Caroline Davis was on the plane for the final leg of Mr Sharif's journey home.

The moment Nawaz Sharif touched down in Pakistan, the plane's wheels had barely hit the tarmac, before his followers on board, especially chartered flight from Dubai, started chanting and surging forward to speak to him.

Journalists began broadcasting live from their phones and scrambled to film the former Prime Minister as he left the plane. Mr Sharif served less than a year of his seven-year jail sentence for corruption charges. He spent the last few years in London. The sentence still stands.

For now, he has protective bail but is still disqualified from running.

His team will try to overturn those decisions.

He arrived at his political rally in Lahore by helicopter to singing Chants and Fireworks.

His party has been working hard to bring out the crowds.

Most analysts believe it's highly unlikely that he would have returned without some agreement with Pakistan's politically powerful military, the same institution he's thought to have fallen

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out with when he was imprisoned. Meanwhile, his main political opponent, the man who succeeded him in 2018, Imran Khan, remains in jail. Caroline Davis. Next to Ukraine and fighters on the front line in the Haasan region have told the BBC that troops have succeeded in holding a position for the first time in Russian-occupied territory on the east bank of the Danitpro River. It's potentially a significant development in Ukraine's ongoing counter-offensive, which has so far made slow progress. Our correspondent Jenny Hill reports from Kyiv. Ukrainian fighters have repeatedly tried to cross the river and gain a foothold in Russian-occupied territory. Now they claim to have finally established a position on the fiercely defended east bank. In a text exchange, they told us that troops were now engaged in heavy fighting for control of the nearby village of Krinky. If successful, they claimed the settlement could become a base, from which to push further into the region. But they acknowledge a large-scale operation here would be difficult, and this is only a small part of a vast front line. Still, any victory here would be seized upon by Kyiv's military chiefs, dividing Russian-held territory and cutting off access to the occupied Crimean peninsula as central aims of their counter-offensive, which so far has yielded only limited territorial gains.

Jenny Hill in Ukraine

Argentina goes to the polls on Sunday in the first round of presidential elections.

The front-runner is an economist called Javier Millay, who touts himself as an outsider and is often compared to Donald Trump and Brazil's former leader Jair Bolsonaro. In a country struggling with inflation running at over a hundred percent, he's offered some radical solutions to shake up the economy, and it's been a campaign that's mainly played out on TikTok. Our South America correspondent Katie Watson reports from the capital Buenos Aires. This was the moment Argentina's leading presidential candidate brandished a chainsaw while out on the campaign trail. He wanted to send a message, vote me in, and I'll slash costs to save this country from economic collapse.

Javier Millay is a candidate unlike any other. This, in a country steeped in turbulent political history and famous for icons such as Eva Perón. This man with wild hair and even wilder sideburns is a political outsider, his closest confidants more adept at making TikTok videos than making policy. In the UK, the Brexit campaign and in the United States.

Iñaki Gutierrez is a 22-year-old law student. Inspired by how Brexit played out on Facebook, he convinced Millay that an online campaign was the recipe for success, and he's now helping Millay shape it. It's changing the way that people inform themselves, and you don't have to have any more big structures, you know, for making politics. You can, with a phone, reach all the country in one hour, two hours, three hours, one day.

But up against Javier Millay are two political big hitters,

Paranist Economy Minister Sergio Massa and Conservative former Security Minister Patricia Buric. It's interesting because when you walk the streets of Buenos Aires, there are lots of posters of all the other candidates, and they're typically smiling, asking people to vote. But there's nothing of Millay's campaign. In fact, the only thing there is is a poster, a cartoon of Millay that's criticising his magical solutions, as they call it, for the economy. It's made little difference to his rise. Javier Millay's fans queued for more than six hours earlier this week to catch a glimpse of their candidate in his final campaign event. Several people wearing baseball caps with the words, make Argentina great again.

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We want an outsider. Just like Donald Trump did in the United States, we want an outsider who actually believes and who actually has the guts to fight the mafias in this country. But on the other side of Buenos Aires, at the Paranist campaign event, many are worried about this man's rise. A man who wants to restrict abortion rights, loosen gun laws, and who has also played down the country's brutal dictatorship. Everything is at risk. Even the most simple things, says Massa supporter Malena Aboba. She says she's worried that if Millay wins, there'll be persecutions for those who choose to abort. It'll be a return to the kitchen for women, she says. Just as his fans are spreading the message through social media, his critics are trying to debunk fake news through it too. Caro is part of a group called the Indisciplinades. Tiktokers who got together after Millay won the primaries. For us, it's really important to bring Argentinian political history to the fore. The social history, economic history, to realize that what he's proposing isn't anything new. In fact, it has a way to happen it, and it didn't work. But if the polls are right, voters don't care. Javi Millay is the man of the moment in Argentina. In a country where inflation makes every day that much harder, this new kind of politics is appealing. 80 Watson in Argentina. Now to China. Qingdao is one of the biggest selling beers in the world. But the Chinese brewer is having a bit of a reputation crisis. After video emerged on social media of a worker, apparently climbing into a container full of raw materials and then urinating on them. Police in the city on China's east coast are investigating. Robin Brandt heard more about this incident from our Asia-Pacific editor, Michael Bristo. What happened was what looked like a worker wearing a blue uniform and a yellow hat climbed into a vat of malt. Had a quick look around and then, as you say, urinated onto all the raw materials inside this large container. The video was then posted online. As you can imagine, we've such a well-known brand like Qingdao. Lots of people saw it and there's been lots of speculation. Some humor online about the reason behind this video or what the worker was doing. Some people have even suggested that perhaps it was a rival staging a stunt, somebody to urinate, somebody to film and then leak the video online. So the police are investigating and the company itself says, of course, this consignment of malt has been sealed off and won't be used to make any beer. Of course. Just quickly, when I was living and working in China, Bingta Qingdao inevitably drunk the beer. This is a huge brand, isn't it? A huge company. It is a huge company. It started about 100 years or so ago. It began in Qingdao, as you say, which was at the time a German colony started by German brewers. A lot of British money behind it. And it was essentially for foreigners living in China. But since then, a lot of people drink beer in China and it's become a real global brand. And what the company itself will be hoping that this tiny, tiny incident won't affect that reputation because it is a massive earner for China. And perhaps it's one of its major international food brands. I can't really think of anything else to compete along with it. And as you say, I had beer with Qingdao just last week when I went to a Chinese restaurant. So it's certainly recognisable across the world.

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A Qingdao beer aficionado, Michael Bristo.

And that's all from us for now. But there will be a new edition of the Global News Podcast later.

If you want to comment on this podcast or the topics covered in it, you can send us an email.

The address is globalpodcast@bbc.co.uk. You can also find us on X, formerly known as Twitter, at Global NewsPod. This edition was mixed by Nick Randall. The producer was Liam McCheffrey. The editor is Karen Martin. I'm Rachel Wright. Until next time, goodbye.