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Netanyahu Backs Gaza Offensive, Opens Door to Journalists

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Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has defended a planned military offensive in Gaza City, one of the most densely populated areas in the region, stating that Israel has “no choice but to finish the job and complete the defeat of Hamas.” He made the comments to international media on August 10, 2025, ahead of an emergency United Nations Security Council meeting. The offensive, approved by Israel’s security cabinet, is intended to dismantle Hamas strongholds, with stated objectives including the demilitarization of Gaza, maintaining Israeli security control, and establishing a non-Israeli civilian administration.

Netanyahu's remarks come amid heightened global concern over the humanitarian situation in Gaza. According to the Gaza Health Ministry, more than 61,000 Palestinians have been killed since October 7, 2023, with approximately half of the casualties reported as women and children. These figures have not been independently verified by international agencies. Netanyahu acknowledged that Gaza is experiencing hunger but denied that there is widespread starvation. He attributed the humanitarian crisis to Hamas, accusing the group of obstructing aid delivery and using civilians as human shields.

The Israeli prime minister also announced that he has instructed the Israel Defense Forces to allow more foreign journalists into Gaza. This would represent a shift from the access restrictions that have largely limited reporting to journalists embedded with the military for the past 22 months.

The planned offensive has drawn strong international reactions. Germany has suspended military exports to Israel, while members of the United Nations Security Council, including China and Russia, have criticized the plan, describing it as a form of collective punishment. The United States has reiterated its position that Israel has the right to defend itself and protect its security.

In Australia, the Labor government joined several allies in expressing concern about the offensive. However, opposition figures, including Liberal National Party member Andrew Hastie, criticized the government's stance, arguing that statements without corresponding action have limited impact.

The conflict continues to take a heavy toll. On August 9, 2025, at least 31 Palestinians were killed while waiting for aid. Gaza health officials also report that over 100 children have died from causes linked to malnutrition since the start of the war. Israeli authorities have indicated that the operation could involve the displacement of up to one million residents from Gaza City by October.