

---

## **Middle East: Von der Leyen, “in Gaza, children are dying of starvation”. Humanitarian maritime corridor, risk of escalation, two-State solution**

(Strasbourg) “A humanitarian catastrophe is taking place in Gaza”. The president of the EU Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, too is taking stock of the effects that the conflict between Israel and Hamas is having on civilians. Though she recalled Israel’s right to self-defence, she acknowledged – without ever expressly admitting it – that the Israeli government and army have created an unbearable situation in the Gaza Strip where deaths are by now in the dozens of thousands. “We have seen children dying of starvation”, says Von der Leyen. Then she explains the ongoing operation of the “maritime corridor”, with ships leaving Cyprus for the coasts of the Gaza Strip to transfer urgent humanitarian aids on platforms and from there, on smaller boats, to the shores. “A sustainable, lasting flow” of aids “is needed to protect civilians’ lives”. The current international operation also involves the United States and the Emirates; more aids are coming from Egypt and Jordan. “Then we need to guarantee aids are safely distributed” to avoid a new massacre of civilians queuing up to receive food and water, as it recently happened. Then, Von der Leyen mentions the “risk of an escalation”, a “contagious effect” that may spread to Lebanon, Iran, while the Middle East sees the conflict already breaking out in Yemen. Finally, the President of the EU Commission calls for a “two-State solution” between Israel and Palestine.

Valentina Bombelli