

Hong Kong Anti-war Mobilisation Public Statement: Against Israel's extermination of Palestinians! For a Free Palestine!

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1. This is not an “Israel-Hamas Conflict” between equal powers, but ongoing ethnic cleansing by Israel against Palestinians

In the mainstream news and media, the ongoing crisis in the Gaza Strip and Palestine is euphemistically referred to as the “Israel-Palestinian Conflict” or the “Israel-Hamas War”. In reality, however, the sheer disparity of (military, diplomatic, state) power, and the disproportionality of death and destruction suffered, reflect that this is not a conventional conflict between two adversaries on an equal footing. By October 26 2023, Israel's airstrikes on the Gaza Strip has led to more than 7,000 Palestinian deaths, including nearly 3,000 children. Israel has acknowledged that they have only killed six Hamas leaders thus far. At the same time, Israel's order to Palestinians to evacuate from the northern half of the Gaza Strip has led to the displacement and homelessness of more than 1 million Palestinians.

Israel seeks to retroactively justify the death and destruction inflicted on the Gaza Strip as legitimate “military actions” and the exercise of their “right to self-defence”, but this in no way excuses Israel's current and ongoing actions, including the deprivation of water, electricity, fuel and supplies to more than 2 million Palestinians that has resulted in catastrophic levels of starvation and hardship. An immediate ceasefire is the only way to prevent the ongoing humanitarian catastrophe from becoming even worse.

2. Israel must immediately cease its brutalisation of the Gaza Strip and its systemic campaign of ethnic cleansing.

Since 1948, Palestinians living under the oppression of the Zionist Israeli regime have been repeatedly displaced and dispossessed of their homes. For the past seventeen years, the Gaza Strip has been under a state of de-facto siege. Its residents are living in the largest open-air prison in the world, facing frequent water and electricity outages, under constant surveillance, and must pass through a gauntlet of military checkpoints if they wish to enter or leave the Strip. According to a report by Amnesty International in 2023, the Israeli state is systematically restricting the movement of Palestinians and is waging a campaign of land and property seizures on a massive scale. In March this year, Israeli planes resumed aerial spraying of herbicides on the Gaza Strip, destroying substantial amounts of Palestinian farmland. In August, the Israeli army initiated an offensive against Gaza, destroying at least 1700 Palestinian homes, executing 151 Palestinians, and killing 36 children in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

While we oppose Hamas's indiscriminate terrorist attacks on civilians [on October 7], it is undeniable that the Israeli state's systematic and institutionalized colonization and persecution of Palestinians is the primary factor and trigger that led to the terrorist attacks. The precondition for a

lasting peace in Israel and Palestine is the cessation of the Israeli state's ethnic cleansing-genocide-of the Palestinian people.

3. Against imperialist intervention in the Gaza crisis

The United States has long been Israel's foremost military provider and ally, and it is the United State's military support for Israel that is the basis for the Israeli state's oppression of Palestinians. Since October 7, the US President Joe Biden has dispatched multiple carrier strike groups to the Eastern Mediterranean [and has sent numerous arms shipments to Israel], framing the US's role in the ongoing crisis as "The Arsenal of Democracy" as it was in the Second World War. Biden even hopes to pass a bill in Congress to support countries like Israel, Ukraine and Taiwan with \$100 billion worth of funding, striking a false equivalence between the situation of Ukraine and Taiwan with Israel's military occupation and ethnic cleansing of Palestinians.

The United States' unconditional military aid to Israel will not put an end to the bloodshed, but only further exacerbate it, leading to more death and destruction and deepening the hatred between Israelis and Palestinians. We must oppose American military involvement in the ongoing crisis.

4. The Anti-war Movement has become a global trend

Since the outbreak of this new conflict in the world, there have been rallies in solidarity with the Palestinian people in various countries. More than 100,000 people have taken to the streets in London in solidarity with Palestinians, and there have been demonstrations demanding a ceasefire in Gaza in Chicago, Vancouver, and Washington, DC. According to a CBS poll, more than half of US voters between the ages of 18 to 34 think that it is wrong to send weapons to Israel, and 57% think the US should provide humanitarian aid directly to the Gaza Strip. All these reflect that the anti-war movement is becoming a global trend, and the more public pressure there is, the more likely it is that the governments of the world will be forced to turn their foreign policy in the direction of peace.

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