

Europe Solidaire Sans Frontières > English > Americas > USA > Foreign Policy, Military, International Solidarity (USA) > **Israel War on Gaza—Genocide and Expulsion. Washington isolated in its (...)**

# **Israel War on Gaza—Genocide and Expulsion. Washington isolated in its support of Israel**

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**“We here in the United States, with our own imperialist government the main support of Israel’s genocidal war and aim of ethnic cleansing, have a special responsibility.”**

Israel’s war against the Palestinians in Gaza is the focal point at present of the long-term Zionist project of taking over all the land of the people who lived in what was the pre-1948 land of Palestine.

Early on, this aim was expressed in the slogan, “a land without people, for a people without land,” ignoring that the land did have people.

The Palestinians in Gaza are for the most part descendants of those driven from their homes by Jewish settlers in Palestine, armed and backed by Western imperialist powers (mainly Britain) in the 1948 war. They fled to Gaza, which at the time was part of Egypt.

Israel conquered Gaza from Egypt in the 1967 Israel-Arab war, with backing from the West, this time mainly the United States.

The U.N. has a precise definition of what genocide is that goes beyond the “normal” crimes and violence in all wars where the unintended deaths of civilians, including women and children, are considered “collateral damage.”

According to the U.N. Convention, genocide is a crime that can take place both in time of war as well as in time of peace. The definition contained in Article II of the Convention describes genocide as a crime committed with the intent to destroy a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group, in whole or in part.

This definition was the result of a negotiating process and reflects the compromise reached among United Nations Member States, including the United States, in drafting the Convention in 1948.

Israel’s current war, with massive bombings and shelling leveling cities, destroying hospitals and homes, killing over 20,000 with more than 6,000 missing and presumed dead under the rubble, with those numbers growing every day, is genocide.

Destroying hospitals furthers genocide. Pregnant women, and those delivering babies, are among those in danger.

Palestinian civilians killed and wounded are not “collateral damage” but primary targets. That is the only explanation for hospitals being destroyed, for the siege preventing food, water, electricity and medical supplies entering.

Cutting off food and clean water spreads malnutrition and disease, which is becoming a new source

of death, part of the genocide.

In the few remaining hospitals, there are no anesthetics. Necessary amputations of limbs of the wounded is a horror show of screams of pain. Many are children. Babies die of pain.

A large percent of those killed are women and children, indicating that most of the casualties are civilians. Even Israel, when the total of those killed was 15,000, said that 6,000 were fighters against the Israeli invasion and 9,000 were civilians.

Israel has an interest in over-stating the number of fighters killed for domestic consumption, and under-stating the number of civilians killed for foreign audiences, so the percentage of civilians killed is likely much higher.

This campaign of mass terror has displaced 1.9 million people out of a total of 2.2 million Gazans. Israel has warned people to flee from proposed bombing sites to “safe” places, only to find these “safe” places are then bombed and shelled too, and they have to flee again.

There is a direction to this mass displacement. It began in north Gaza with bombing and a ground invasion there, and has systematically moved south, forcing Gazans in growing concentrations toward and at the border with Egypt.

It is clear that the genocide is the deliberate means to force the people of Gaza to cross the border into the Sinai desert in Egypt — ethnic cleansing.

“The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) are setting the stage for the mass expulsion of Palestinians into Egypt while creating the conditions that will make it impossible for them to ever return to their destroyed homes in Gaza,” the U.N.’s Palestinian refugee agency chief, Phillippe Lazzarini, said in a Los Angeles Times op-ed.

An Israeli Defense Ministry spokesman denied Lazzarini’s accusation, saying Israel never had a plan to push Gazans into Egypt. We guess he hopes people have very short memories, as an Israeli government plan to do just that became public at the beginning of Israel’s war, acknowledged by Netanyahu at the time.

The United States does not hide its 100 percent support of the Israeli genocidal war. It vetoed a United Nations Security Council resolution on December 8 demanding an immediate humanitarian cease-fire in Gaza, the only vote against it, with the United Kingdom abstaining.

Supporters of the resolution called it a terrible day and warned of more civilian deaths and destruction as the war goes into its third month.

U.S. unconditional support of Israel’s war is also expressed by Biden circumventing Congress to send \$100 million worth of additional artillery shells for use against the Palestinians.

U.S. deputy ambassador Robert Wood criticized the council after the vote. He declared that halting military action, a cease fire, would allow Hamas to continue to rule Gaza and “only plant the seeds for the next war.”

In a vain last-minute effort to press the Biden administration to drop its opposition to a cease-fire, the foreign ministers of Egypt, Jordan, the Palestinian Authority, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey were all in Washington. But Secretary of State Antony Blinken met them only after the Security Council vote.

United Arab Emirates (UAE) is currently a member of the Security Council and sponsored the resolution. UAE deputy ambassador Mohammed Abushahab said before the vote that the resolution had garnered nearly 100 co-sponsors among U.N. countries in less than 24 hours, a reflection of global support.

After the vote, he expressed deep disappointment at the U.S. veto and warned that the Security Council is growing isolated and “appears untethered” from its mandate to ensure international peace and security.

“What is the message we are sending Palestinians if we cannot unite behind a call to halt the relentless bombardment of Gaza?” Abushahab asked. “Indeed, what is the message we are sending civilians across the world who may find themselves in similar situations?”

Russia’s deputy U.N. ambassador Dmitry Polyansky called the vote “one of the darkest days in the history of the Middle East” and accused the United States of issuing “a death sentence to thousands, if not tens of thousands more civilians in Palestine and Israel, including women and children.”

He said, “history will judge Washington’s actions” in the face of what he called a “merciless Israeli bloodbath.”

The Council called the emergency meeting to hear from Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, who for the first time invoked Article 99 of the U.N. Charter, which enables the U.N. chief to raise threats he sees to international peace and security. He warned of a “humanitarian catastrophe” in Gaza and urged the council to demand a cease-fire.

Guterres said he raised Article 99 — which hadn’t been used at the U.N. since 1971 — because “there is a high risk of the total collapse of the humanitarian support system in Gaza.” The U.N. anticipates this would result in “a complete breakdown of public order and increased pressure for mass displacement into Egypt,” he warned.

Gaza is at “a breaking point,” he said, and desperate people are at serious risk of starvation.

Guterres said Hamas’ brutality against Israelis on October 7 “can never justify the collective punishment of the Palestinian people.”

The U.N. chief detailed the “humanitarian nightmare” Gaza is facing, citing intense, widespread, and ongoing Israeli attacks from air, land and sea that reportedly have hit 339 education facilities, 26 hospitals, 56 health care facilities, 88 mosques and three churches.

Over 60 percent of Gaza’s housing has reportedly been destroyed or damaged, some 85 percent of the population has been forced from their homes, the health system is collapsing, and “nowhere in Gaza is safe,” Guterres said.

Riyad Mansour, the Palestinian U.N. ambassador, told the council that Israel’s objective is “the ethnic cleansing of the Gaza Strip” and “the dispossession and forcible displacement of the Palestinian people.”

“If you are against the destruction and displacement of the Palestinian people, you have to be in favor of an immediate cease-fire,” Mansour said. “When you refuse to call for a cease-fire, you are refusing to call for the only thing that can put an end to war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.”

In Washington, Jordan’s top diplomat told reporters that the killings of Palestinian civilians in

Israel's bombardment and siege of Gaza were war crimes and threatened to destabilize the region, the U.S., and the world for years to come.

"If people are not seeing it here, we are seeing it," Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi said, adding: "We're seeing the challenges that we are facing talking to our people. They are all saying we're doing nothing. Because despite all our efforts, Israel is continuing these massacres."

The Security Council vote showed the growing diplomatic isolation of the U.S. This was emphasized right after that vote, in a December 12 vote in the U.N. General Assembly calling for a cease fire. It was passed with 153 countries in favor, 10 against, and 23 abstentions.

In an October 27 vote calling for a ceasefire, the vote was 120 in favor, 14 opposed and 45 abstentions. What is important is not only that the vote for a cease fire increased on December 12, but that so many U.S. allies had changed their vote.

Among the 31 countries in NATO, only the Czech Republic joined the U.S. in voting against a cease fire. Austria, which is not a member of NATO but has close ties to it, cast a "no" vote.

Nine NATO countries abstained: Bulgaria, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia, and the U.K.

Twenty NATO countries voted for a cease fire.

Also, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand voted for a cease fire. Australia, along with Canada, Denmark, Albania, Greece and India had abstained on October 27, but voted in favor December 12.

Ukraine abstained.

The prime ministers of Australia, Canada, and New Zealand, three of the Five Eyes intelligence alliance (the other two are the U.S. and U.K.), issued a joint statement about their yes vote, saying:

"In defending itself, Israel must respect international humanitarian law. Civilians and civilian infrastructure must be protected. We are alarmed at the diminishing safe space for civilians in Gaza. The price of defeating Hamas cannot be continuous suffering of all Palestinians."

Israel, however, is taking no heed of the majority of the world calling for a ceasefire. It knows that Washington will back its current war on the Palestinian people, whatever squeaks of protest Biden may make.

"Israel will not be deterred" wrote longtime foreign affairs journalist Chris Hedges in Consortium News. "It plans to finish the job, to obliterate what is left in the north of Gaza and decimate what remains in the south, to render Gaza uninhabitable, to see its 2.3 million people driven out in a mass campaign of starvation, terror, slaughter and infectious diseases."

But when the overwhelming majority of world governments call for a cease fire, that means they are under intense pressure from below, from the masses.

We can take heart from that fact and redouble our efforts in all forms of mass action to support the immediate and urgent demand "Cease Fire Now!"

"Free Palestine from the River to the Sea! Support the Palestinian resistance in whatever form it takes!"

We here in the United States, with our own imperialist government the main support of Israel's genocidal war and aim of ethnic cleansing, have a special responsibility.

**Malik Miah and Barry Sheppard**

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