US BLOCKS PEACE IN GAZA, SUPPORTING ISRAEL'S GENOCIDAL WAR ON CIVILIANS

- By Ben Norton, <u>Geopolitical Economy</u>.
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The United States Vetoed Gaza Ceasefire Proposals At The UN Security Council, While Sending Israel More Weapons.

UN experts warn Israel is carrying out ethnic cleansing. An Israeli scholar of the Holocaust says Israel is guilty of "genocide" against Palestinians.

While Israel indiscriminately bombs the Gaza strip, killing thousands of Palestinian civilians, the United States has blocked numerous ceasefire proposals at the United Nations Security Council.

Instead of supporting peace, Washington has sent more weapons and military aid to Israel.

Meanwhile, mainstream Western human rights organizations have clearly stated that Israel is carrying out rampant <u>war crimes</u>, <u>wiping</u> out entire families.

A top UN expert warned "that <u>Palestinians are in grave danger of mass ethnic cleansing"</u>.

An Israeli scholar who is a specialist in genocide and the history of the Nazi holocaust even published an article warning that Israel's scorched-earth war on Gaza is "a textbook case of genocide".

Israel's Illegal Blockade Of Gaza – The World's Largest Prison Camp

Gaza is a small strip of land that is just 40 kilometers (25 miles) long. But with roughly 2.3 million people, it is one of the most densely populated areas on Earth.

Since 2007, Palestinians in Gaza have lived under a suffocating Israeli blockade. In 2011, UN experts emphasized that this blockade flagrantly <u>violates international law</u>. But Israel continued to impose it, controlling everything that goes in and out of Gaza.

Human Rights Watch stated in 2022 that Israel's 15-year blockade had "devastated the economy in Gaza, contributed to fragmentation of the Palestinian people, and forms part of Israeli authorities' crimes against humanity of apartheid and persecution against millions of Palestinians".

Israel had "<u>turned Gaza into an open-air prison</u>", Human Rights Watch wrote.

Even the United Kingdom's Conservative Prime Minister David Cameron acknowledged the same back in 2010, insisting, "Gaza cannot and must not be allowed to remain a prison camp".

70% Of The Palestinians Killed By Israel's Bombing Of Gaza Are Children And Women

In response to an attack by Palestinian militants on 7 October, 2023, Israel tightened the blockade even further. Defense Minister Yoav Gallant declared, "I have ordered a <u>complete siege on the Gaza Strip</u>. There will be no electricity, no food, no fuel, everything is closed".

The top Israeli official described Palestinians as "human animals".

The UN human rights chief, Volker Turk, publicly stated that this <u>Israeli siege was illegal</u>, and violated restrictions under international law against collective punishment of civilians.

Ignoring the United Nations, Israel launched a devastating war, relentlessly carpet bombing civilian areas in Gaza.

In 13 days of nonstop attacks, <u>Israel had killed 4,137 Palestinians</u>, according to data published on 20 October by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

The vast majority, 70 percent, of the Palestinians killed by Israel were children and women.

Another 1,000 people were missing, many trapped under the rubble of their houses.

Israel destroyed or damaged at least 30% of all housing units in Gaza, OCHA reported.

A staggering 1.4 million of the roughly 2.3 million people in Gaza were internally displaced.

UN Expert Warns Of Israeli Ethnic Cleansing

A week into the Israeli bombing, on 14 October, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) published an alarming statement: "A UN human rights expert warned today that <u>Palestinians are in grave danger of mass ethnic</u> cleansing and called on the international community to urgently mediate a ceasefire".

"Palestinians have no safe zone anywhere in Gaza, with Israel having imposed a 'complete siege' on the tiny enclave, with water, food, fuel and electricity unlawfully cut off", the OHCR stressed.

The UN human rights office quoted the UN special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territories, Francesca Albanese, writing:

"There is a grave danger that what we are witnessing may be a repeat of the 1948 Nakba, and the 1967 Naksa, yet on a larger scale. The international community must do everything to stop this from happening again," the UN expert said. She noted that Israeli public officials have openly advocated for another Nakba, the term for the events of 1947-1949 when over 750,000 Palestinians were expelled from their homes and lands during the hostilities that led to the establishment of the State of Israel. The Naksa, which led to Israel's occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in 1967, displaced 350,000 Palestinians.

"Israel has already carried out mass ethnic cleansing of Palestinians under the fog of war," the expert said. "Again, in the name of self-defence, Israel is seeking to justify what would amount to ethnic cleansing.

"Any continued military operations by Israel have gone well beyond the limits of international law. The international community must stop these egregious violations of international law now, before tragic history is repeated."

US Vetoes UN Security Council Resolutions Proposing Peace In Gaza

Many countries have joined UN officials in calling for a ceasefire to end the violence in Gaza. But the United States has blocked all attempts at bringing about peace.

On 16 October, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) voted on a resolution that called for a humanitarian ceasefire. The measure was proposed by Russia. The ceasefire resolution was opposed by four former colonial powers on the council: the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Japan.

Five Security Council members supported it: China, Russia, Gabon, Mozambique, and the United Arab Emirates.

The remaining six countries on the 15-member UNSC abstained: Albania, Brazil, Ecuador, Ghana, Malta, and Switzerland.

The UN News agency noted that Russia's representative, Vassily Nebenzia, blamed the "selfish intention of the Western bloc" for <u>sabotaging the ceasefire proposal</u>, stating that the US and its allies had "basically stomped" on the attempt to bring about peace.

Two days later, the UN Security Council held another vote on a Gaza-related resolution. This measure, which was proposed by Brazil, called for "humanitarian pauses", in order to send aid to besieged civilians.

The United States was the only country on the 15-member council that voted against this resolution. Washington thus killed the proposal, because it is one of the five permanent members, which have veto power.

12 UNSC members voted for the humanitarian pauses: Albania, Brazil, China, Ecuador, France, Gabon, Ghana, Japan, Malta, Mozambique, Switzerland, and the UAE.

The United Kingdom abstained in the vote, along with Russia. But while London abstained as a show of support for Israel, Moscow abstained in protest of how weak the measure was.

UN News reported, "Prior to the vote, two amendments proposed by Russia, calling for an <u>immediate</u>, <u>durable and full ceasefire</u>, and to stop attacks against civilians were rejected by the Security Council".

The UN News agency added that Russia's ambassador, Nebenzia, "proposed a call to end indiscriminate attacks on civilians and infrastructure in Gaza and the condemnation of the imposition of the

blockade on the enclave; and adding a new point for a call for a humanitarian ceasefire".

An anonymous senior diplomat from an unnamed <u>G7 member</u> <u>state</u> acknowledged to the Financial Times that the nations of the Global South, which represent the vast majority of the world population, have been enraged by the West's support for Israel as it massacres Palestinian civilians.

"We have <u>definitely lost the battle in the Global South</u>", the diplomat lamented. "Forget about rules, forget about world order. They won't ever listen to us again".

US Pledges Billions In Military Support As Israel Massacres Civilians

On 18 October, the day that the United States unilaterally killed the UNSC proposal for a humanitarian pause in Gaza, President Joe <u>Biden</u> arrived in Israel.

There, Biden met with the country's far-right prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu. The US president reassured him unflinching support for Israel.

The Biden administration also released a \$105 billion national security package, which included \$14.3 billion in aid for Israel (along with \$61.4 billion for Ukraine).

This funding was in addition to the baseline \$3.8 billion in military aid that the United States provides to Israel every year.

Biden's friendly meeting with Netanyahu came at a moment when Israel was bombing not only Gaza, but also the <u>occupied West Bank</u>, southern Lebanon, and even <u>airports in the Syrian cities of Damascus and Aleppo</u>.

On 19 October, Israel attacked the roughly 1,000-year-old St. Porphyrios Greek Orthodox Church in Gaza, killing at least 17 civilians, including 10 members of a family.

Numerous international <u>Christian churches condemned this Israeli</u> <u>assault</u> on Palestinian civilians. The Catholic Church's Vatican News agency cited a statement by the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, which wrote that "targeting churches and its affiliated institutions, in addition to the shelters they provide to protect innocent citizens, especially children and women who lost their homes as a result of the Israeli bombing of residential areas during the past thirteen days, constitutes a war crime that cannot be ignored".

The World Council of Churches likewise stated, "We condemn this unconscionable attack on a sacred compound and call upon the world community to enforce protections in Gaza for sanctuaries of refuge".

Amnesty International then published a bone-chilling report on 20 October titled "<u>Damning evidence of war crimes as Israeli attacks</u> wipe out entire families in Gaza".

The mainstream Western human rights organization described Israel's attack as a "cataclysmic assault on the occupied Gaza Strip", writing:

Amnesty International has documented unlawful Israeli attacks, including indiscriminate attacks, which caused mass civilian casualties and must be investigated as war crimes.

The organization spoke to survivors and eyewitnesses, analysed satellite imagery, and verified photos and videos to investigate air bombardments carried out by Israeli forces between 7 and 12 October, which caused horrific destruction, and in some cases wiped out entire families.

Here the organization presents an in-depth analysis of its findings in five of these unlawful attacks. In each of these cases, Israeli attacks violated international humanitarian law, including by failing to take feasible precautions to spare civilians, or by carrying out indiscriminate attacks that failed to distinguish between civilians and military objectives, or by carrying out attacks that may have been directed against civilian objects.

"In their stated intent to use all means to destroy Hamas, Israeli forces have shown a shocking disregard for civilian lives. They have pulverized street after street of residential buildings killing civilians on a mass scale and destroying essential infrastructure, while new restrictions mean Gaza is fast running out of water, medicine, fuel and electricity. Testimonies from eyewitness and survivors highlighted, again and again, how Israeli attacks decimated Palestinian families, causing such destruction that surviving relatives have little but rubble to remember their loved ones by," said Agnès Callamard, Amnesty International's Secretary General.

The same day that Amnesty released this report on Israeli war crimes, Republicans and Democrats in the US Senate voted unanimously, 97-0, to support Tel Aviv.

Israeli Scholars And Mainstream Media Warn Of Israel's Genocidal Intentions

An Israeli scholar has argued that Tel Aviv is engaged in a campaign of genocide against Palestinians.

The magazine <u>Jewish Currents published an article</u> on 13 October by Raz Segal, an associate professor of Holocaust and genocide studies at Stockton University in the United States.

Segal wrote that "the assault on Gaza can also be understood in other terms: as a textbook case of genocide unfolding in front of our eyes. I say this as a scholar of genocide, who has spent many years writing about Israeli mass violence against Palestinians".

"Under international law, the crime of genocide is defined by 'the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such,' as noted in the December 1948 UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide", Segal explained, adding, "In its murderous attack on Gaza, Israel has loudly proclaimed this intent".

Even a columnist at the mainstream British newspaper The Guardian, Chris McGreal, warned that the "<u>language being used to describe</u> Palestinians is genocidal".

He noted that Israel's president, Isaac Herzog, blamed the Palestinian people as a whole for the 7 October attacks, declaring, "It's an entire nation out there that is responsible. This rhetoric about civilians not aware, not involved, it's absolutely not true".

Similarly, a member of Israel's parliament from Prime Minister Netanyahu's far-right Likud party, Ariel Kallner, openly called for the mass ethnic cleansing of Palestinians, proclaiming, "Right now, one goal: Nakba! A Nakba that will overshadow the Nakba of 1948".