

Israeli bombardment claims over 700 lives in 24 hours as imperialist powers double down on support for genocide against Palestinians

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Palestinian health ministry officials reported Tuesday that 704 Palestinians were killed by Israeli air strikes over the preceding 24 hours, making it the deadliest day since Israel's bombardment of Gaza began over two weeks ago. The grim statistic coincided with statements by representatives of American and French imperialism underscoring their support for the savage slaughter of civilians in the Gaza Strip.

Conditions in the enclave are worsening by the hour. Hospitals are being forced to reduce services due to a lack of fuel, which Israeli authorities are preventing from entering Gaza via the Rafah border crossing from Egypt. Even the UN Refugee Agency (UNRWA) reported that its operations in Gaza may have to be suspended within 24 hours if fuel supplies fail to arrive.

"We are hosting 600,000 people in over 160 underground facilities, including schools, medical facilities, and other buildings like warehouses ... We're so stretched that we have to open warehouses to receive the displaced," said UNRWA director of communications Juliette Touma. "Supplies are also running out, so we will not be able to give any supplies to [Palestinians in Gaza]. We will not be able to do very simple things like start our fleet of cars or turn on the trucks and go pick up those supplies that are coming in from the borders."

The World Health Organization called for an "immediate humanitarian ceasefire" Tuesday to allow for fuel shipments to reach Gaza. Six hospitals across Gaza have shut entirely due to a lack of fuel, the WHO said, and the al-Shifa Hospital, the Indonesian Hospital and the Turkish Friendship Hospital are struggling to maintain critical services. "Unless vital fuel and additional health supplies are urgently delivered into Gaza, thousands of vulnerable patients risk death or medical complications as critical services shut down due to lack of power," the

WHO warned.

The Israeli government reiterated yesterday its bitter opposition to any fuel shipments entering Gaza. Only eight trucks passed through the Rafah crossing late in the evening, five carrying water, two food, and one carrying medical supplies for 2.3 million people. Israeli military spokesman Daniel Hagari asserted without providing any evidence that "Hamas uses it [fuel] for its operational needs."

The Israeli military continued its indiscriminate bombing campaign throughout the day. It struck several targets in the south of the Gaza Strip, where Israeli government officials ordered over a million people to flee almost two weeks ago to ostensibly be "safe" from attacks. One air strike flattened a residential building in Khan Younis with dozens of casualties. Later in the day, a Gaza health ministry spokesman said that 50 people had been killed in air strikes within an hour.

Late in the evening, the Palestinian Red Crescent reported an air strike in the vicinity of its headquarters and the al-Amal hospital in Khan Younis, where some 4,000 civilians are sheltering from Israeli bombs. Initial reports indicated extensive damage and numerous injuries.

The ability of the far-right Netanyahu government, which is deeply unpopular within Israel, to resort to such brutal methods of collective punishment is due above all to the unconditional support it enjoys from the imperialist powers, first and foremost the United States. White House spokesman John Kirby emphasized Washington's endorsement of the onslaught on Gaza, telling a Tuesday press conference, "This is war. It is combat. It is bloody. It is ugly, and it's going to be messy. And innocent civilians are going to be hurt going forward."

French President Emmanuel Macron became the latest

leader from one of the major imperialist powers to visit Israel, appearing alongside Netanyahu at a Tuesday press conference to declare his unflinching solidarity with the genocide against the Palestinians. Macron proposed extending the international coalition formed to fight the Islamic State terrorist group in Syria and Iraq in 2014 to include Hamas. Countries fighting ISIS “should also fight against Hamas,” he said. An Elysee Palace official later added that France is available “to beef up what we are doing in the coalition against ISIS. We are available to include Hamas in [being targeted by] the coalition against ISIS depending on what Israel will ask us to deliver.”

The comparison of the present war with the multi-national operations against ISIS is revealing, since the savage US-led war in Syria and Iraq led to the indiscriminate killing of tens of thousands of civilians. The “liberation” of cities like Mosul and Raqqa from ISIS control was achieved through their virtual destruction.

The prospect of direct US and French involvement underscores how the Israeli regime’s war on Gaza is rapidly evolving into a region-wide conflict, or more accurately the Middle East front in a global war. The Biden administration has already dispatched two aircraft carrier battle groups to the region with over 15,000 personnel, while making direct threats against Iran.

On Tuesday, Pentagon spokesman Brig. Gen. Pat Ryder confirmed that American bases in Syria and Iraq came under attack 10 times between October 17 and 24. A report from NBC News later in the day revealed that two dozen US soldiers were injured in the attacks. Taking direct aim at Tehran, Ryder remarked menacingly, “We know that the groups [that] conduct these attacks are supported by the IRGC [Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps] and the Iranian regime. What we are seeing is the prospect for more significant escalation against US forces and personnel across the region in the very near term coming from Iranian proxy forces and ultimately from Iran. We are preparing for this escalation both in terms of defending our forces and responding decisively.”

At a UN Security Council debate, US secretary of State Anthony Blinken also took aim at Iran, accusing it of supporting Hamas, Hezbollah, and the Hauthis “for years.” Referring to the attacks on US bases, he added ominously, “If Iran or its proxies attack U.S. personnel anywhere, make no mistake: We will defend our people, we will defend our security – swiftly and decisively.”

The UN Security Council debate also underlined the strident rejection by Israel and its imperialist allies of any recognition of the oppression suffered by the Palestinians

over the past three-quarters of a century. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres made some remarks that in previous conflicts in the Middle East would have been more or less widely accepted. “It is important to also recognize the attacks by Hamas did not happen in a vacuum,” he said. “The Palestinian people have been subjected to 56 years of suffocating occupation. They have seen their land steadily devoured by settlements and plagued by violence; their economy stifled; their people displaced and their homes demolished. Their hopes for a political solution to their plight have been vanishing.”

Israel’s UN envoy Gilad Erdan responded by demanding Guterres’ resignation, calling his remarks “shocking,” while Foreign Minister Eli Cohen cancelled a planned meeting with the UN head. Opposition leader Benny Gantz, who was brought into the war cabinet by Netanyahu, labelled Guterres a “terror apologist.”

The looming threat of a regional expansion of the war and the Israeli regime’s brutal collective punishment of the Palestinian population can only be stopped by the development of a mass anti-war movement in the international working class. Workers around the world must demand an end to military aid for Israel and the massive military spending packages demanded by Biden and his European imperialist allies. Workers in Israel must fight for an end to the oppression of the Palestinians, which is the only way to oppose the Zionist regime’s attacks on the democratic and social rights of Israeli workers. Arab and Jewish workers must be unified across the region under the banner of a socialist program to put an end to imperialist domination, ethnic and religious divisions, and war.



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