

Israeli military announces plans to attack hospitals and schools

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29 October 2023

On Saturday, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) delivered a statement announcing its intent to attack “schools, mosques, and hospitals” in Gaza, amid a systematic campaign of genocide and ethnic cleansing that has already killed 8,000 Palestinians.

The statement, addressed to the population of Gaza, said, “ Hamas puts your life in danger by placing weapons and forces within civilians’ areas in Gaza, including schools, mosques, and hospitals. The impending IDF operation is set to neutralize this threat with precision and intensity.”

On October 17, the IDF bombed the Al-Ahli Arab Hospital, a Christian hospital in Gaza City, killing nearly 500 people. The Israeli government and US President Joe Biden falsely claimed that the hospital was destroyed by a missile launched by Hamas or another resistance group, Islamic Jihad, and attempted to substantiate this lie with statements and videos that completely contradicted each other.

But the statement over the weekend made unequivocally clear that targeting hospitals, schools and other places of refuge is the explicit policy of the Israeli government as part of its ethnic cleansing of Gaza. In its statement, the IDF claimed that moving the population of Gaza to the south was a “temporary measure,” and that the refugees would be allowed to return to their homes. “This is a temporary measure. Moving back to northern Gaza will be possible once the intense hostilities end,” the Israeli military declared.

It is becoming increasingly clear, however, that the expulsion of the population of northern Gaza is part of an ethnic cleansing campaign by Israel and that the population will never be allowed to return. On Sunday, the Hebrew-language publication *Mekomit* published a leaked document produced by Israel’s Ministry of Intelligence recommending the forcible and permanent displacement of the population of Gaza out of Palestine

and into Egypt’s Sinai Desert.

Mekomit reported that “the document recommends the forced transfer of the population of the Gaza Strip to Sinai permanently, and calls for the international community to be harnessed for the move.” It continued: “The document also suggests promoting a dedicated campaign for the residents of Gaza that will ‘motivate them to agree to the plan.’”

Mekomit wrote that the document “recommends that Israel act ‘to evacuate the Gazan population to Sinai’ during the war: to establish tent cities and new cities in northern Sinai, which will accommodate the deported population, and then ‘to create a sterile zone of several kilometers inside Egypt and not allow the population to return to activity or residence near the Israeli border.’”

On Saturday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu gave a prime time television address in which he declared, “You must remember what Amalek has done to you, says our Holy Bible.”

Netanyahu was referencing the passage from 1 Samuel, which declares: “Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.”

In his speech Saturday, Netanyahu called the current conflict Israel’s “second war of independence.” He declared the “second stage of the war,” asserting it would be “long and difficult.”

Netanyahu’s speech was accompanied by the announcement by the IDF that it would expand its ground incursions into Gaza, declaring that the Israeli military is “gradually increasing its ground activity in the Gaza Strip and the scale of its forces.”

On Sunday, Gaza’s health ministry said that the death toll among Palestinians had crossed 8,000. Israel’s bombardment over the weekend was described as the most intense of the entire war, and was accompanied by a

systematic blackout of all communications inside Gaza on Friday, which was only partially lifted on Sunday.

In a statement on Twitter, the international charity Save the Children wrote that the “3,195 children killed in #Gaza in just three weeks has surpassed the annual number of children killed across the world’s conflict zones since 2019.” The organization called for “an immediate ceasefire.”

“Three weeks of violence have ripped children from families and torn through their lives at an unimaginable rate,” said Jason Lee, Save the Children country director in occupied Palestinian territory. “The numbers are harrowing and with violence not only continuing but expanding in Gaza right now, many more children remain at grave risk.”

On Sunday, the Palestine Red Crescent Society reported that it received “serious threats” from the Israeli military and was told to “immediately evacuate” the al-Quds Hospital in Gaza, as it is “going to be bombed.” The hospital said in a statement that “since this morning, there have been bombs dropping 50 meters from the hospital.”

Responding to the statement by the Red Crescent, World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus wrote on Twitter: “The @PalestineRCS report of evacuation threats to al-Quds hospital in Gaza is deeply concerning. We reiterate—it’s impossible to evacuate hospitals full of patients without endangering their lives. Under International Humanitarian Law, healthcare must always be protected.”

US officials have made clear that they will support Israel’s actions no matter what atrocities it is carrying out. “We’re not drawing red lines for Israel,” said White House National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby on Friday.

In a phone call with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu Sunday, US President Joe Biden declared that Israel has “every right and responsibility to defend its citizens from terrorism.”



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