

Thousands of workers and youth participate in global protests against Gaza genocide

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Workers and youth around the globe continue to stand against Israel's ongoing genocide and ethnic cleansing campaign against the Palestinian people, which is being overseen, supplied and directed by US imperialism and its allies. Massive protests encompassing millions of people around the world continued to erupt in major cities, universities and outside major war suppliers on Friday.

Over a month of Israeli war crimes have sickened and imprinted themselves on the consciousness of an entire generation. Through the internet and social media, millions have broken through the official lies proffered by the Israeli government, its allies, the mainstream press and television networks used to justify the 75 year occupation and current genocidal campaign.

As of this writing, major protests are occurring, or are scheduled for this weekend, in major cities around the world.

In New York City Friday night, thousands of people gathered at Columbus Circle in Manhattan and marched outside the New York Public Library. Protests chanted, "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free," and condemned the role played by the New York Times in covering up Israel's genocide in Gaza as they passed by the newspaper's building.

On Friday, thousands of people marched in Tokyo, Japan in support of Palestine. Demonstrators chanted "Free, free Palestine," "Peace for Gaza" and carried signs calling for a "Ceasefire Now."

In Seoul, South Korea thousands marched and denounced "Genocide Joe" Biden with signs asking him "How many kids did you kill today?"

That same day, students in Manila, the capital of the Philippines, held a protest, "in solidarity with Palestinians against Israeli Zionist genocide." Students held signs that said "Education is a Human Right" and inscribed on their banner, "fight imperialist wars of aggression."

Thousands of people also participated in pro-Palestinian protests in Islamabad, Pakistan and Beirut, Lebanon.

While the protests are in some cases thousands of miles apart from each other and in countries where English is not the first language, chants calling for a "ceasefire" and "Free free Palestine" are ubiquitous. Workers and youth around the world understand that the vicious attack on the Palestinian people, which has resulted in over 11,000 deaths, nearly half of them children, and the displacement of nearly 1 million people, is an attack on the entire working class.

Responding to the call of the Palestinian General Federal of Trade Unions to block the shipment of war supplies to Israel, which has been endorsed and promoted by socialist autoworker Will Lehman, workers and youth in the major imperialist centers continued to protest outside some of the largest weapons manufacturers in the world.

On Friday, hundreds of trade unionists and labor activists with Labour 4 Palestine, Labour Against the Arms Trade, and World beyond War Canada, organized protests at four different weapons companies throughout the country. Protesters main demands are for a "ceasefire now" and for Canada to "stop arming Israel."

Protesters demonstrated in front of Lockheed Martin's Ottawa headquarters and L-3 Harris facilities in Hamilton, Ottawa and Montreal. In a graphic, the group explained that Canada "exported over \$21 million in military goods to Israel in 2022, including over \$2 million in bombs, torpedoes, missiles and other explosives. Every day, these weapons are used to carry out a genocide."

In the United States, some 300 protesters held a "die-in" outside Woodward Inc, in Fort Collins, Colorado. The facility was chosen in part due to a photo that went viral on social media last month that appeared to show that a component of one of the thousands of bombs dropped on Gaza was manufactured by Woodward Inc.

Protesters blocked entrances to the facility with their bodies and banners that read, "They got (money) for war but can't feed the poor, Free Palestine" and "Stop the War Machine!" Many of the demonstrators who participated in the Woodward "die-in" had previously protested at nearby

Colorado State University earlier in the day.

In Britain, hundreds of workers blocked the entrances to BAE Systems, a major supplier to the Royal Air Force, in Rochester, Kent on Friday morning. Protesters blocked four separate entrances for several hours and accused the weapons company, which produces components for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter of selling more than £300 million worth of weapons to Israel since 2016.

An organizer of the protest told the BBC that more than 400 trade unionists were involved in the militant action including healthcare workers, teachers, academics, artists from eight different trade unions.

Jeanine Hourani, of the Palestinian Youth Movement and the University College Union told the BBC that the demonstration was part of a “global, transnational movement” aimed at blocking arms to Israel.

“We’re here as British workers to say unequivocally that we do not accept the use of British labour in the war crimes that are currently being perpetrated in Palestine.”

On Friday evening, UK medical professionals held a protest outside 10 Downing Street demanding a “Ceasefire Now!” Doctors and nurses held signs with some of the 198 names of the Palestinian healthcare workers who have been slain in Gaza since October 7.

Students at universities across the United States, and the world, protested throughout the week and on Friday. While protests were overwhelmingly peaceful, video shows police assaulting a Palestinian student who was protesting at Brandeis University, in Waltham, Massachusetts, alongside members of Students for Justice in Palestine, which had been banned by the university last week.

According to the Muslim Justice League, Waltham and Brandeis police arrested seven people “including students, community members, and a National Lawyers Guild legal observer.”

On November 8, a WSWS reporting team intervened at a sit-in against Israel’s genocide that was held at the University of California, Riverside. The sit-in was organized by Students for Justice in Palestine and took place amid a McCarthyite campaign led by university administrators, beholden to their billionaire donors, to silence and intimidate any and all students who oppose the Israeli led genocide.

A crowd of about 150 students and faculty participated in the sit-in. Many participants in the crowd expressed distrust in the pro-corporate media and were apprehensive to speak to reporters for fear of being retaliated against.

“We wear masks and scarfs to hide our identities so then we don’t become targets of attack,” one UCR student, who wished not to be named, told WSWS reporters.

“We run the risk of being blacklisted for jobs after we graduate, we can be publicly doxxed, we could be fired from the jobs that we currently have or simply be kicked out of school just for attending rallies such as this,” they added.

A student speaker at the rally tied the rising cost of tuition to the war explaining, “We do not pay \$36,000 a year to have our school fund genocide!”

A different student speaker observed, “For years, throughout the entire occupation of the Palestinian people, the entire UCR administration, has refused to say anything against the Israeli occupation.

“But now things are changing. If you had told any one of us five years ago that there would be protests all across the world, in London, Paris, Berlin, Chicago, New York, we wouldn’t believe it. All over the world people are saying no to occupation. All around the world, the people are saying no to genocide. And that front starts here.”

Another student with Students for Justice in Palestine pointed out that, “Academia, which prides itself on ‘decolonization,’ but ends up falling silent on occupations like Palestine, is just a reminder that to the UC system, ‘decolonization’ has just become a mere metaphor, signifying everything except real change and resistance.”

“What we’re witnessing is a mass murder in an attempt to exterminate people who are fighting for a right to survive... There is no excuse, no justification, or no rationale for the continued attacks of bombing on civilians and children who have no hand in the situation.”

Another speaker informed the audience that her sister was recently killed in Gaza by the genocidal IDF.

“She was only 8 years old,” the speaker said. “She wanted to be a doctor, she wanted to help people.”



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