

Vast scale of Gaza genocide comes into view

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Three days into the first letup in Israel's two-month-long bombardment and invasion of Gaza, film crews have begun to document the evidence of the deliberate mass murder of Gaza's civilian population in what is the world's largest crime scene.

Last week, *Politico* reported that the White House was "concerned" that a "pause" in Israel's attack against Gaza "would allow journalists broader access to Gaza and the opportunity to further illuminate the devastation there and turn public opinion on Israel."

And so they have. An on-the-ground report by *Al Jazeera* over the weekend described the scene at Gaza's Indonesian Hospital: "The stench of death forces people to cover their nose, charred, decomposing bodies, children among them, are piled up in one corner. No burials have taken place because Israeli snipers targeted anyone who ventured out to dig a grave. Streets, schools, houses, shops, Israeli strikes have destroyed them all."

These reports have completely exposed US President Joe Biden's lie that Palestinian health authorities were overstating the death toll in Gaza. In fact, the Biden administration now admits the official death toll is a significant underestimation.

It has been two weeks since the last official death toll was published by the Ministry of Health in Gaza, due to the collapse of health services which made counting the dead impossible. However, the latest unofficial count from the government information ministry, published Wednesday, estimated that 14,352 people had been killed, including 6,000 children and 4,000 women.

Palestinian filmmaker Bisan Owda, whose social media reporting from Gaza has captivated millions of people all over the world, put the reality more plainly: "Numbers from Gaza you need to know: 20,000 people were killed, in 50 days of escalation—7,000 of them still under the rubble—8,000 of them are children—all of them are civilians."

According to Gazan officials, 233,000 housing units, or approximately half the houses in Gaza, have been either destroyed or damaged. Bombs or missiles hit 266 schools, of which 67 have been destroyed. Israel has killed 205 healthcare providers and 64 journalists. The most striking element of the death toll is the massive scale of death among women and children.

An article published in the *Guardian* on Sunday stated that Israel claims it has killed between 1,000 and 2,000 Hamas fighters. Even if this were true, it would mean that for every fighter killed, Israel has killed three to six children, and that between 85 and 92 percent of those killed are civilians.

On Sunday, the *New York Times* published a front-page article explaining that the massive death toll among women and children in the Gaza war is without precedent in the 21st century.

"Israel has cast the deaths of civilians in the Gaza Strip as a regrettable but unavoidable part of modern conflict... But a review of past conflicts and interviews with casualty and weapons experts suggest that Israel's assault is different."

The *Times* notes: "More than twice as many women and children have already been reported killed in Gaza than have been confirmed killed in Ukraine, according to United Nations figures, after almost two years of Russian attacks."

The report goes on to say that 70 percent of all deaths reported in Gaza are women and children, even though most resistance fighters are men. "In past clashes between Israel and Hamas, for example, about 60 percent of the reported deaths in Gaza were men," the *Times* wrote.

The article notes that Israel's use of 2,000-pound bombs eclipses anything seen in previous 21st century wars. The *Times* reports, citing a US official, that "roughly 90 percent of the munitions Israel dropped in Gaza were satellite-guided bombs weighing 1,000 to

2,000 pounds.”

The *Times* writes: “In fighting during this century, by contrast, US military officials often believed that the most common American aerial bomb—a 500-pound weapon—was far too large for most targets when battling the Islamic State in urban areas like Mosul, Iraq, and Raqqa, Syria.”

The *Times* article, like everything it publishes, is crafted and vetted to protect American state interests. While presenting statistics that can only be explained by the willful targeting of the civilian population, the *Times* is careful never to connect these actions to the statements of Israeli officials, who have repeatedly stated that their aim is to kill Palestinian civilians.

Earlier this month, Israeli President Isaac Herzog said that the entire population of Gaza was responsible for the October 7 attack in southern Israel, declaring, “It is an entire nation out there that is responsible... It is not true this rhetoric about civilians not being aware, not involved. It’s absolutely not true.”

Asked whether “that makes them, by implication, legitimate targets,” Herzog replied, “When you have a missile in your goddamn kitchen and you want to shoot it at me, am I allowed to defend myself?”

Last month, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declared, “You must remember what Amalek has done to you,” invoking the biblical passage that commands, “put to death men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys.”

“We are fighting human animals, and we are acting accordingly,” Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said last month.

As Craig Mokhiber, former director of the New York office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, explained: “Explicit statements of intent by leaders in the Israeli government and military leaves no room for doubt or debate” that Israel is engaging in a “textbook case of genocide.”

In other words, to use the language of the *Times*, “Israel’s assault is different” from earlier wars not just in the scale of death among the civilian population, but in the willingness of Israeli officials to admit that they have a deliberate aim of killing as many civilians as possible.

Everything Israel has done, moreover, has been coordinated with the Biden administration. All the 2,000-pound bombs it has dropped on Gaza were made

in the United States and supplied by the Pentagon. From the standpoint of Israel and US imperialism, one of the aims of the “pause” is to resupply the Israeli military, which the Biden administration is eagerly carrying out.

While the *Times* attempts to distance Israel’s assault on the population of Gaza from the US invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan, the genocide in Gaza marks an extension and expansion of the crimes of US imperialism. These wars killed over 1 million people and involved the use of torture, kidnapping and rape as state policy.

Not one single elected official or military officer was charged, let alone went to prison, for these vast crimes. Now, as the images from the destruction of Gaza demonstrate, US and world imperialism are carrying out crimes on an even larger scale, and are preparing yet greater ones for the future.

Stopping the genocide in Gaza requires the building of a mass antiwar movement of the international working class, armed with a socialist perspective. A key demand of this movement must be that those responsible for these war crimes, including not just Israeli civilian and military officials, but also leaders in Washington, Paris, London and Berlin are prosecuted for war crimes.



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