

Israel's war on women and children

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Before the eyes of the whole world, Israel is carrying out a crime of monumental proportions: a deliberate and systematic massacre of the women and children of Gaza.

The Netanyahu government has murdered 20,000 Gazans in two months: 10,000 of them children and over 5,000 women.

The aim of this criminal regime is to kill as many Palestinians as possible and drive those who remain into the desert.

Gaza's entire population of 2.2 million is being starved and deprived of water. The vast majority, over 80 percent, have been displaced from their homes. In just two months, one out of every 115 people in Gaza has been killed. At the present rate, one out of every 20 Gazans will be dead within a year.

"I feel like I'm running out of ways to describe the horrors hitting children here," UNICEF spokesman James Elder said. "I feel like I'm almost failing in my ability to convey the endless killing of children."

Mirjana Spoljaric, the president of the International Committee of the Red Cross, after having visited Gaza, declared, "The things I saw there are beyond anything that anyone should be in a position to describe. What shocked me the most were the children with atrocious injuries, and at the same time having lost their parents with no one looking after them."

On October 16, Israel instructed one million people living in northern Gaza to flee to the south. Now, the population is once again being told to flee from portions of southern Gaza amid the deadliest bombing campaign to date. Israel's goal, as outlined in a leaked paper by the intelligence ministry, is to create the conditions in which Gaza, previously one of the most densely populated areas in the world, is incapable of supporting human life, creating the conditions for the displacement of the Gazan population into the Sinai Desert.

Israel has deliberately carried out a campaign to target all places of refuge, from the north of the Gaza Strip to the south. It has systematically bombed and raided hospitals, displacing doctors, patients and refugees at

gunpoint. Those too weak to move have simply been abandoned to die, including five premature babies whose bodies were discovered last week after they were left to die alone at Al-Nasr Children's Hospital.

By every definition, Israel's actions are a textbook case of genocide. The Rome Statute defines "genocide" as "acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group." This includes:

- **"Killing members of the group"**—20,000 Gazans have been killed over the past two months.

- **"Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group"**—41,316 Gazans have been injured.

- **"Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part."** Israel's blockade has blocked the entry of food, water and medical care, leading to famine and the surge of preventable disease.

The UN framework on genocide identifies "signs of an intent to destroy in whole or in part a protected group" as being a key indicator that a genocide is taking place. Such statements by Israeli officials abound:

- The statement by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declaring, "You must remember what Amalek has done to you," citing the Biblical passage that commands, "put to death men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys."

- The declaration by Defense Minister Yoav Gallant that "We are fighting human animals, and we are acting accordingly."

- The declaration by Israeli Security Cabinet member and Agriculture Minister Avi Dichter that "We are now rolling out the Gaza Nakba"—referring to the forcible displacement of the population of Palestine from their lands in 1948.

- The urging by former Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon that the population of Gaza "Go to the Sinai Desert."

- The call by Giora Eiland, the former head of the

Israeli National Security Council, to destroy the hospital system because “Severe epidemics in the south of the Gaza Strip will bring victory closer.”

This genocide is not a spontaneous response to the October 7 attack against Israel but rather a conspiracy years in the making. Last week, the *New York Times* reported the existence of leaked documents showing that the Netanyahu government possessed detailed advance knowledge of the Hamas battle plan for the October 7 attack. The Netanyahu regime decided to carry out a stand-down of the military and intelligence forces on that day, to create a pretext for its ethnic cleansing of Gaza.

The genocide not only has the support of the imperialist powers but is being carried out with their direct participation. It is likely that some victims of the genocide were murdered not only with American bombs, but directly by troops from NATO countries. Amid widespread reports of American and British troops on the ground in Gaza, the British government refused to answer a question by former Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn about whether UK troops are deployed there.

US officials have repeatedly made clear that there are no “red lines” for the number of people Israel will be allowed to kill, and US President Joe Biden has declared that there is “no prospect” of a ceasefire.

Appearing on the “Meet the Press” Sunday talk show, National Security Council spokesman John Kirby was asked if there would be “consequences ... if the United States feels as though Israel is not following a specific plan to protect civilians?” To this, Kirby replied, “We’re going to continue to support Israel as they go after Hamas. The security assistance continues to flow. That’s not going to change.”

Kirby defended Israel’s targeting of the civilian population, declaring, “They have actually given civilians in Gaza a list, a map—it’s online—a list of areas where they can go to be more safe. There’s not too many modern militaries, in advance of conducting operations, that would actually do that.”

In effect, the United States argues that, since Israel is not only massacring the population of Gaza but also displacing it, Israel’s actions are acceptable.

The precedents of Israel’s genocide were seen in the US invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan—in the sieges of Fallujah and Mosul. But this is a new level of criminality: The world is seeing imperialism in its most brutal and naked form.

The entire world can see that all the invocations of human rights by the imperialist powers have been nothing

but lies and deceit.

Millions of people have taken part in mass demonstrations against Israel’s assault on Gaza. In response, the governments involved in the genocide have carried out an unprecedented and sweeping effort to criminalize political opposition.

The British, French and German governments have all attempted to ban demonstrations against the genocide and carried out mass arrests. In the United States, the entire Senate has voted to equate opposition to the genocide as support for terrorism. Universities have shut down student groups protesting the genocide and attempted to block demonstrations. Technology companies, at the behest of governments, have imposed a sweeping regime of mass censorship.

The world’s so-called “democracies” are making it illegal to oppose genocide.

It is absolutely futile to make appeals to the criminal imperialist governments implicated in the Gaza massacre. Stopping the genocide in Gaza is the task of the working class. Workers should support the call by the Palestinian trade unions not to handle war materiel destined for Israel. The global demonstrations by millions of people against the genocide must be expanded and armed with a socialist perspective.

The struggle to put an end to Israel’s genocide in Gaza must be waged as a struggle against the imperialist governments that are responsible for it and the capitalist system whose barbarism is being put on hideous display before the world.



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