

# Australia: Gold Coast Gaza rally hears socialist anti-war perspective

Our correspondent  
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More than 100 people rallied and marched through Surfers Paradise at Australia's Gold Coast on Saturday to denounce the intensifying Israeli genocide in Gaza and the Albanese Labor government's ongoing diplomatic and military support for the mass murder of Palestinians.

Led by young workers and Middle Eastern families, it was the latest in weekly protest activities in the city. Gold Coast, although mostly known as a tourism destination, is Australia's sixth largest city, with a population exceeding 650,000, including many working-class people.

There were spirited chants, such as "free, free Palestine" and "Albanese you can't hide, you're supporting genocide" during the rally and march. Many onlookers were supportive, another sign of the widespread disgust and opposition to the crimes being committed by the Israeli regime with the backing of the US and its allies, including Australia.

Mike Head, a Socialist Equality Party national committee member and WSWWS correspondent, addressed the rally at the invitation of the organisers. He began by posing "the burning questions we all confront: How can the genocide in Gaza be ended? And how can we stop the wider plunge to war by the US and its allies?"

Head said the harsh reality was that the Israeli regime and its backers in Washington and Canberra had doubled down on the mass killings, despite millions of people around the globe, including in Australia, joining the largest worldwide anti-war movement in decades.

"Over the past week, the protest movement has grown in the US, especially on the university campuses," he said. "Following the arrests of more than 100 students at Columbia University in New York, encampments have been set up at least 40 universities

across the US, and spread to other countries, including here.

"In response, the Biden administration, in alliance with the fascist-led Republican Party, has backed a massive police mobilisation against the students. The ruling class is effectively moving to criminalise political opposition to the Gaza genocide, slandering it as antisemitic, even though many Jewish students are involved."

Head warned that the Albanese government and the police-intelligence agencies were trying to create the political conditions for similar repression in Australia by orchestrating sweeping police raids to arrest Islamic teenagers on flimsy "terrorism" charges without any evidence of terrorist plots or plans.

"This is as the final stage of the genocide is now looming, with intensifying bombings in the southern Gaza city of Rafah, where over 1.5 million Palestinians are crammed in shocking conditions, and plans to forcibly remove them all into tents."

The US Congress had just given bipartisan support to another \$US95 billion for war funding—for the US-NATO proxy war against Russia in Ukraine, for arming Israel for its genocide in Gaza and military confrontation with Iran, and for building up Taiwan as a war base against China.

Also attached to the bill was another \$3 billion for the AUKUS submarine program, which was aimed directly at China.

"These developments make clear the connection between the Gaza genocide and the wider plunge to potential nuclear wars by US imperialism against Iran, Russia and China," Head stated.

Many protest leaders had presented Gaza as a single issue, unconnected to any other developments and the history of US wars, including from Vietnam to Iraq.

And they had kept urging people to write to MPs and send petitions to the very same capitalist politicians responsible for the slaughter in Gaza.

“The task is not to issue requests to these governments, but to build a mass political movement aimed at overthrowing them and the capitalist system they defend,” Head said to applause.

Via the AUKUS military pact with the US and the UK, the Albanese Labor government was completing Australia’s transformation into a frontline state for war against China, including via US basing arrangements.

“It is a political dead end to try to convince politicians and governments to adopt a more humane policy in Gaza, while they carry out policies that could blow up the world.

“The same goes for appeals to the trade union apparatuses. They are completely aligned with the Labor government. They have not called a single strike against the genocide.

“We urge workers to mobilise independently of the union bureaucracies and all the parties of the ruling class, including the Greens, to immediately stop weapons deliveries and arms production for the genocide in Gaza and other US-instigated wars.

“We explain that to really fight the genocide and war, we have to turn to the revolutionary force in society, the global working class. But that poses the need for a genuine socialist party in Australia and on a world scale.”

Head urged everyone at the rally to register for this year’s International May Day Online Rally, organised by the International Committee of the Fourth International. “This global rally will be centred on the development of a working class and socialist movement against imperialist war.”

He also urged people to sign up as electoral members of the Socialist Equality Party “so that we can have the basic democratic right to have our party’s name on the ballot for the next federal election to broadcast the existence of a genuine socialist, anti-war party.”

After the rally, Jasmine, a young worker from New Zealand, signed up for the party’s mailing list, and wrote “thank you” on the form. She said she wanted to express her appreciation that Head had explained the link between the horror in Gaza and the US war moves against Russia and China.

A doctor who participated in the rally said she had

first been motivated to join the anti-genocide protests by the fact that the Israeli forces were killing 100 children a day. “At that rate, my son’s school would be eliminated in a fortnight.”

But this was the first time she had heard a real analysis presented at any Gaza protest rally. “That speech explained the connection to the wider war drive by the US and its allies. It was very informative and resonated with the audience. It contextualised many of the facts about the genocide and clarified the broader significance of the genocide to international geopolitics and why Israel is being backed by the US and Australia.”



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