

The fraud of Starmer, Macron and Carney’s “opposition” to Israel’s ethnic cleansing of Gaza

Chris Marsden
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The joint statement issued by the UK, France and Canada on the situation in Gaza and the West Bank is not opposition to Israel’s genocide of the Palestinians. It is an attempt by Prime Ministers Sir Keir Starmer and Mark Carney and President Emanuel Macron to provide themselves with an alibi for mass murder and ethnic cleansing.

After nineteen months of their colluding with Benjamin Netanyahu’s government as tens of thousands were killed and Gaza was destroyed, the three leaders have issued a declaration, both cynical and toothless, that they strongly oppose the expansion of Israel’s military operations in Gaza.

What they refer to euphemistically as “expansion” is a pledge by Netanyahu to “take control” of Gaza and complete its ethnic cleansing by leaving two million Palestinians with a choice between permanent exile or death.

Their joint statement feigns shock and outrage at the “intolerable” human suffering in Gaza, describes Israel’s allowing “a basic quantity of food into Gaza” as “wholly inadequate” and calls for the government to “stop its military operations in Gaza and immediately allow humanitarian aid to enter Gaza... in line with humanitarian principles.” To do otherwise, it warns, “risks breaching International Humanitarian Law.”

What follows was a well-worn list of excuses for Israel’s murderous actions that have in fact blown international law to smithereens. There is a call for Hamas to release the remaining hostages “they have so cruelly held since 7 October 2023”, which is referred to as a “heinous attack” and is followed by the declaration, “We have always supported Israel’s right to defend Israelis against terrorism.”

Raising their bombast to maximum volume, the three

leaders describe the current “escalation” as “wholly disproportionate”, adding that “We will not stand by while the Netanyahu Government pursues these egregious actions. If Israel does not cease the renewed military offensive and lift its restrictions on humanitarian aid, we will take further concrete actions in response.”

As to what these “concrete actions” consist of, the letter’s sole reference is to “targeted sanctions” against “any attempt to expand settlements in the West Bank” and nothing whatsoever regarding Gaza and its permanent annexation.

Under these circumstances, the pro-forma restatement of supporting a viable Palestinian state and a “pathway to a two-state solution” is whitewash.

This is all framed as support for the “efforts led by the United States, Qatar and Egypt”, along with the Palestinian Authority, and other “regional partners” to secure a ceasefire and an end to “Hamas’ control of Gaza”.

Identified here is a rogue’s gallery stretching from the would-be Fuhrer Donald Trump—who is Israel’s chief military backer and wants US control of Gaza—to the Arab despots who have not only stood by but deepened their collusion with the US and Israel while they rained down death and destruction on Gaza.

Little wonder that Netanyahu responded to the letter by boasting that Israel would continue to fight until “total victory” was achieved. This was after he explained that similar “pressure” from the US had forced him to let in nine trucks of aid, less than 2 percent of daily shipments before the war and which will have no effect whatsoever on the deliberate and ongoing starvation of Gaza.

Unnamed “senators” that he described as Israel’s “greatest friends in the world” had told Netanyahu, ‘We cannot accept images of hunger, mass hunger. We cannot

stand that. We will not be able to support you.””

Netanyahu may rail against the UK, France and Canada for his domestic audience of fascist butchers. But Starmer, Macron and Carney are also Israel’s great friends and they too will continue backing his genocidal regime. In all three countries, support for Israel has been combined with denunciations of opponents of genocide as “antisemites” and their persecution by the state.

While the trio were promising that they “will not stand by”, Israel was declaring all of central Khan Younis city a “combat zone”, ordering all civilians to leave and continued its aerial bombardment.

The United Nations said that it had been given permission to send in 100 aid trucks—a fifth of pre-war levels—but said its staff could be killed in the process. The UN warned that 14,000 babies could die in Gaza in the next two days.

Accepting a limited delivery of aid as a necessary evil, far-right Finance Minister Bezalel Yoel Smotrich said this could be turned to Israel’s advantage. It would allow the Israel Defence Forces to “conquer, cleanse and stay”, and destroy Hamas and “Along the way, what remains of the strip is also being wiped out... The [Palestinian] population will reach the south of the strip, and from there, with God’s help, move to third countries under President Trump’s plan.”

Starmer is the most open and consistent defender of the Gaza genocide of the three leaders—coming to power last July after making Israel’s “right to defend itself” his watchword and repeatedly denying that a genocide is even taking place.

Last week, UK government lawyers were in court arguing in defence of its special arrangements allowing parts for F-35 fighter jets to be exported, which inevitably find their way to Israel, based largely on denying that genocide in Gaza is taking place.

On May 13, at a clandestine meeting at the British Museum organised by the Israeli Embassy, Britain’s minister for defence procurement and industry, Maria Eagle, boasted of Royal Air Force spy planes flying reconnaissance missions over Gaza. On May 19, asked directly by Sky News whether Israel is committing genocide in Gaza, Starmer refused to say it was.

Starmer absented himself from a parliamentary debate on Gaza to visit a Lidl supermarket to discuss the benefits of the UK/European Union trade deal. Foreign Secretary David Lammy announced a suspension of trade talks with Israel, but in response to PA media asking whether more exports to Israel would be banned, a Downing Street

spokesperson said only that “we always keep such arrangements under review.”

None of this has prevented the pseudo-left tendencies from once more insisting that pressure placed on the imperialist governments is the way that genocide can be prevented.

Britain’s Stop the War Coalition wrote of “beginning to see cracks in the monolithic establishment support for Netanyahu”, mooting a “reset” in the Starmer government’s “approach” and of how “Even Donald Trump appears to have realised that uncritical support for Netanyahu is unsustainable.”

The Socialist Workers Party wrote that the “Scale of Israel’s horror in Gaza” was “rocking Western leaders who fear it exposes their hypocrisy over human rights,” providing “an opportunity for the Palestine movement to ramp up pressure.” The statement by Britain, France and Canada was one example of the successes achieved by the “pressure of the Palestine solidarity movement.”

This is a dangerous lie. Popular pressure may encourage hypocritical statements to be mouthed by imperialist politicians regarding the fate of the Palestinians. But it will not end the genocide and their de facto participation in it.

This is why the May 20 WSWS Editorial Board statement, “Imperialism launches its “final solution” in Gaza”, identified as *the* central lesson to be drawn from over a year and a half of mass slaughter that “it is impossible to stop the Gaza genocide through appeals to the imperialist powers or the institutions of international law. The only way to stop the massacre in Gaza is through the mobilization of the working class. The struggle against the Gaza genocide depends on the expansion of the class struggle and the defense of the social, economic and political rights of the working class.”



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