

Famine and mass murder in Gaza: A crime of Zionism and world imperialism

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On Monday, the Israeli military carried out two airstrikes, one after another, on Nasser Hospital in the south of the Gaza Strip, killing over 20 people. The second strike deliberately targeted and killed five journalists covering the aftermath of the first strike, including correspondents for Reuters, the Associated Press, *Al Jazeera* and others.

So far, Israeli troops have killed 192 journalists during the Gaza genocide, most of them directly targeted in precision strikes. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, more reporters have been killed in Israel's onslaught on Gaza than in any other modern war.

Monday's deliberate, targeted murder of journalists and medical workers follows the announcement Friday by the UN-backed Integrated Food Security Phase Classification food monitor that famine has officially set in in Gaza City. The report stated bluntly that this famine is "entirely man-made" and added that "this is the highest number of people facing catastrophic hunger ever recorded by the Integrated Food Security Classification system."

On Sunday, Gaza's Health Ministry reported that 289 people, including 115 children, have died of malnutrition and starvation since October 2023. On Sunday alone, eight Palestinians in Gaza, including one child, died of starvation or malnutrition.

On November 21, 2024, the International Criminal Court formally charged Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for the war crime of "starvation as a method of warfare." This charge reflects the undeniable fact that the Netanyahu government, with the open support of the United States (under Biden and now Trump) and the tacit backing of all of the imperialist powers, is using deliberate mass starvation as a policy tool in its plan to ethnically cleanse Gaza.

Israel's offensive on Gaza City, launched last week, is a step in this systematic plan, which aims for the total military occupation of Gaza, the displacement of its

population into concentration camps in the country's south, and from thence their forcible transfer to other countries, such as South Sudan.

As Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich made clear in May, "Within a year... Gaza will be entirely destroyed, civilians will be sent to... the south to a humanitarian zone... and from there they will start to leave in great numbers to third countries."

On Friday, Defense Minister Israel Katz vowed to ruthlessly attack Gaza City, the last area of Gaza outside direct Israeli military occupation. "Soon, the gates of hell will open upon the heads of Hamas's murderers and rapists in Gaza, until they agree to Israel's conditions for ending the war, primarily the release of all hostages and their disarmament."

But just a day earlier, Netanyahu said that the planned onslaught on Gaza City would take place regardless of any ceasefire agreement with Hamas. "We're gonna do that anyway. There was never a question that we're not going to leave Hamas there," Netanyahu told Sky News.

In other words, Israel plans to open "the gates of hell" regardless of anything Hamas does, including laying down arms. These statements make clear that the Israeli "war" in Gaza is, and has always been, an effort to annex and ethnically cleanse Gaza, using the events of October 7, 2023 as a pretext.

Friday's declaration of a famine in Gaza City and Monday's massacre of journalists at Nasser Hospital have prompted completely hypocritical condemnations of Israel's actions by officials of several European imperialist powers.

UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy wrote in a post on X that he is "horrified" by the attack and that "civilians, healthcare workers and journalists must be protected. We need an immediate ceasefire."

But this same man declares, virtually with every breath, "We support Israel's right to defend itself" against a

defenseless population that Israel illegally imprisons and occupies and which it is seeking to exterminate. The British government has declared the anti-genocide group Palestine Action a “terrorist organization” and has arrested hundreds of people merely for taking part in demonstrations supporting the group.

Whatever their verbal protestations about one or another massacre carried out by Israel, Washington, London, Paris and Berlin have enabled and defended the Gaza genocide.

Responding to the latest atrocities, UN Secretary-General Guterres said that the deliberate famine is “a failure of humanity itself,” and UNRWA head Lazzarini said, “The world’s indifference and inaction is shocking. Like Hannah Arendt said, ‘The death of human empathy is one of the earliest and most telling signs of a culture about to fall into barbarism.’”

One must be blunt. The crimes being committed in Gaza are not “a failure of humanity,” nor are they the product of “the world’s indifference.”

Billions of people all over the world oppose the Gaza genocide. The US-Israeli campaign to exterminate the Palestinian people has been met by one of the largest—if not the largest—globally coordinated mass protest movements in world history. Countless thousands of students, artists, and professionals have protested the Gaza genocide at grave risk to their careers and personal safety.

What is lacking is neither “humanity” nor “empathy,” but perspective. The Gaza genocide is not “a failure of humanity,” but a crime of capitalism and imperialism. It arises not from the human condition, as a sort of existential barbarism pouring out of the human soul, but from a definite and concrete set of social relations.

In 2017, the Oxfam charity reported that the world’s eight wealthiest billionaires own the same amount as the 3.6 billion people who form the poorer half of the world’s population. Since then, the financial oligarchy has only grown richer, with Oxfam noting that the wealth of the world’s billionaires rose three times faster in 2024 than in 2023.

It is the vast expansion of the wealth and power of this oligarchy, whose riches are derived from the exploitation of the working class all over the world, that forms the social basis of the eruption of all forms of social barbarism.

The capitalist ruling elites are waging an escalating global war, of which the genocide in Gaza is a component part and a precedent. With the Gaza genocide, the capitalist class is abandoning all restraints on the use of

unbridled violence in the waging of imperialist war.

In domestic politics, the domination of the oligarchy expresses itself in the open turn to dictatorship and mass repression, and the crossing of all boundaries that previously limited the use of domestic repression.

The same Trump who proclaims that Gaza will become the “Riviera of the Middle East” once its population is expelled and its cities are plowed under declares that “there will be no better place on earth” to “build factories or grow a company” than the American police state he is constructing through military occupation and mass repression. Trump administration officials use virtually the same language to describe American cities as Netanyahu and his gang of fascists use to describe the Palestinians.

Every capitalist party, in every country, is implicated in the Gaza genocide. All factions of the US political establishment, Democrats and Republicans alike, have repeatedly voted to arm Israel and proclaim the eternal right of “Israel to defend itself.”

The Gaza genocide is not a cancerous growth on an otherwise healthy society but a symptom of the inner malignancy of capitalism. Moral appeals to the capitalist oligarchy are, in the words of Leon Trotsky, no “better than prayers for rain.”

Stopping the genocide requires a direct assault on the entrenched socio-economic interests driving it. The social force capable of stopping the extermination of the Palestinian people, together with all other manifestations of capitalist barbarism, is the working class.

Workers must be armed with the understanding that the fight against imperialist war and genocide is inextricably connected with the struggle against inequality and the rule of the capitalist oligarchy.

The fight against war and genocide must be united with the struggle to defend the social and economic rights of workers in the fight for socialism. The independent intervention of the international working class, mobilizing broader sections of the middle class and youth of society behind it, is the only way to end the global eruption of capitalist barbarism.



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