

Israel faces int'l criticism over crimes against Gazans

UN deplors Israeli 'clear violations'

International Desk

The Israeli regime has faced international criticism and scrutiny as its intensified airstrikes have increased civilian casualties in the Gaza Strip under the pretext of self-defense and eliminating the Hamas resistance group.

Rapidly expanding Israeli airstrikes across the besieged strip killed more than 700 people in the past day as medical facilities across the territory were forced to close because of bombing damage and a lack of power, health officials said Tuesday, AP reported.

The Health Ministry in the Hamas-governed Gaza said Tuesday that 5,791 people have been killed in the territory since the outbreak of war with Israel. The death toll includes 2,360 children. A total of 16,297 people have also been wounded in two weeks of the airstrikes in response to Hamas' surprise attack on Israel on October 7, resulting in more than 1,400 Israeli casualties and over 200 people captured, as reported by AFP.

'Clear violations'

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Tuesday alleged violations of international law as Israel pounds Gaza, and urged an immediate humanitarian cease-fire to bring in relief, AFP reported.

"I am deeply concerned about the clear violations of international humanitarian law that we are witnessing in Gaza. Let me be clear: No party to an armed conflict is above international

humanitarian law," Guterres told a Security Council session, without explicitly naming Israel. The Security Council session was bringing together top diplomats including Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who has previously rejected calls for a cease-fire, saying it would only allow Hamas to regroup.

The Palestinian Authority's foreign minister on Tuesday deplored inaction by the UN Security Council to stop "massacres" in Gaza by Israel.

"The ongoing massacres being deliberately and systematically and savagely perpetrated by Israel – the occupying power against the Palestinian civilian population under illegal occupation – must be stopped," Riyadh al-Maliki told a special Security Council session.

"It is our collective human duty to stop them," he said. "Continued failure at this council is inexcusable."

'Beyond the scope of self-defense'

China has condemned violence and attacks on civilians in the conflict, with Foreign Minister Wang Yi declaring Israel's actions "beyond the scope of self-defense".

In a Tuesday phone call with his Israeli counterpart, Eli Cohen, the Chinese foreign minister called for Israel to take effective measures to protect the safety of Chinese citizens and institutions in the Middle East, adding that "all countries have the right to self-defense, but they should abide by international humanitarian law and protect the safety



↑ Palestinians pull a boy from rubble after an Israeli strike on the Zaroub family house in Rafah, Gaza Strip, Palestine, on October 24, 2023.
● HATEM ALI/AP

of civilians". China will do its utmost when it comes to contributing to Palestinian-Israeli reconciliation, its foreign minister told Cohen. China will firmly support any resolution as long as it is conducive to peace, Wang said, calling the conflict a "major choice between war and peace", Reuters quoted the state media as saying. In a separate phone conversation with Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyadh al-Maliki, Wang said he "deeply sympathizes" with the people of Gaza, adding that they need security and efforts to promote peace, not weapons or geopolitical calculations.

'Unrestricted authorization to kill'

Qatar's ruling emir on Tuesday urged the international community not to grant Israel "unrestricted authorization to kill" Palestinians in its fight against Hamas, in what he called a dangerous escalation that threatens global security. "We say enough. Israel shouldn't be granted an unconditional green light and unrestricted authorization to kill," Sheikh

Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani said in an annual speech to open the Persian Gulf state's advisory Shura (Council), his first public comments since Qatar began its most recent efforts to mediate between Israel and Hamas.

'Fight must not be without rules'

In what was apparently a message to Israel, French President Emmanuel Macron said, "The fight must be without mercy, but not without rules" because democracies "respect the rules of war," AP reported.

Macron added that, for example, democracies don't target civilians.

Speaking after meeting Israel's prime minister on Tuesday, he called for access to aid for Gaza and for electricity to be supplied to Gaza hospitals – not for making war. Macron also proposed a coalition to fight terror groups in the region "that threaten all of us."

The French president compared the proposal to the international coalition fighting the Daesh group in Iraq and Syria. He was referring to the resistance groups in Palestine, Lebanon,

and Yemen, saying they must not take the risk of opening a new front.

Benjamin Netanyahu claimed that it is Hamas that is responsible for civilian casualties, but that "we will do every effort to avoid them." He added, "It could be a long war."

Israel said on Tuesday it had killed dozens of Hamas fighters overnight in strikes on Gaza but that its war to destroy them, which involves bombarding and blockading the Palestinian enclave, would take time.

Lebanon won't initiate war

A prominent Lebanese Christian politician allied with Hezbollah said Tuesday that Lebanon would not initiate a war with Israel but would defend itself if attacked.

The comments by Gebran Bassil, head of the Free Patriotic Movement of former president Michel Aoun, came as sporadic clashes continue on the Lebanese border between Hezbollah and armed Palestinian groups in Lebanon on one side and Israeli forces on the other.

"No one can drag us into war

unless the Israeli enemy attacks us, and then we will be forced to defend ourselves," Bassil said after a meeting with Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, another Hezbollah ally. Bassil also spoke by phone to Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah on Monday. "All the Lebanese agree that they do not want war, but that does not mean that we should allow ourselves to be attacked without a response."

Warning of backfire

In rare comments on an active foreign policy crisis, former US president Barack Obama said some of Israel's actions in its war against Hamas, like cutting off food and water for Gaza, could "harden Palestinian attitudes for generations" and weaken international support for the regime, Reuters reported.

Obama said on Monday any Israeli military strategy that ignores the human costs of the war "could ultimately backfire". It was not clear whether Obama had coordinated his statement with US President Joe Biden, who served as his vice president for eight years.



Raisi: Muslim states' united stance could have prevented Israeli crimes

International Desk

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi said that a united stance of Islamic countries could have prevented the aggression of the Israeli regime against Palestinians. The Iranian president made the remarks in a meeting with Saudi Arabia's new ambassador in Tehran, Abdullah bin Saud al-Anzi, on Tuesday.

Referring to Israel's 75-year oppression against the defenseless and innocent people of Palestine, Raisi said that lack of a united position by Islamic countries has led to the continuation of the killing and aggression against

Palestinians.

The president also described Iran and Saudi Arabia as two important countries in the region, saying that expansion of relations between the two countries will be effective in developing and strengthening regional cooperation and solving the problems of the region and the Islamic world.

Saudi Arabia and Israel have been seeking to normalize relations. But following the regime's onslaught on the Gaza Strip, Riyadh reconsidered its foreign policy priorities, putting US-backed plans to normalize ties with Israel on ice.

During a meeting with the new Tunisian ambassador in Tehran, Imad al-Rahmuni, the Iranian president expressed appreciation for the positions of the Tunisian government in rejecting normalization with Israel and emphasized the importance of the unity of Islamic countries in securing the interests of Muslim nations.

Raisi said that the tragedy and crimes that are taking place in Gaza are a shame for those countries that are seeking normalization with Israel.

The UAE, Bahrain, Sudan, and Morocco signed US-brokered normalization agreements with

Israel in 2020, drawing condemnations from Palestinians who slammed the deals as "a stab in the back of the Palestinian cause and the Palestinian people."

Iranian president also held a separate meeting with Brazil's new ambassador to Iran, Eduardo Ricardo Gradilone Neto. Raisi said that sending humanitarian aid, stopping Gaza bombardments and lifting the siege on the Palestinian territory and the realization of the rights of the Palestinian nation should be the priorities of the UN Security Council. Brazil currently holds the United Nations Security Council presidency.



↑ Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi (R) meets with Saudi Ambassador to Iran Abdullah bin Saud al-Anzi (L) in Tehran on October 24, 2023.
● president.ir