

Muslim leaders slam double standards over Gaza war

Smoke ascends over the northern Gaza Strip following an Israeli strike on October 25, 2023.
● RONALDO SCHEMIDT/AFP



International Desk

Turkey and Qatar accused the international community of "double standards" on Wednesday in its reaction to the escalating conflict between Israel and Hamas in Gaza.

Qatar's top diplomat Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani said Qatar and Turkey – both Western allies – "reaffirm our complete rejection of responding to the crisis with double standards when it comes to human life." "It is not permissible to condemn the killing of civilians in one context and justify it in another," said Al Thani, who also serves as Qatar's prime minister.

Gaza's Health Ministry said on Wednesday that at least 6,500 people have been killed in the war so far, many of them children.

Western governments, including Britain, France and the United States, have offered their full support to Israel, asserting its right to defend itself following Hamas's deadly rampage. Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said, "The failure of some American and north European countries to condemn and prevent the destruction and disaster in Gaza constitutes a very serious double standard and plays a destabilizing role." Both Turkey and Qatar have been strong supporters of the Palestinian cause and have open channels of communication with Hamas, the rulers of Gaza.

Hamas, a liberation group

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, in his

strongest comments yet on the Gaza conflict, said on Wednesday Hamas was not a terrorist organization but a liberation group fighting to protect Palestinian lands and people.

Erdogan also slammed Western powers for supporting Israel's bombing of Gaza and called for an immediate cease-fire.

"The perpetrators of the massacre and the destruction taking place in Gaza are those providing unlimited support for Israel," Erdogan said. "Israel's attacks on Gaza, for both itself and those supporting them, amount to murder and mental illness."

'Glaring double standard'

Jordan's Queen Rania also accused Western leaders of

a "glaring double standard" for not condemning Israel's killing of Palestinian civilians.

"When October 7 happened, the world immediately and unequivocally stood by Israel and its right to defend itself and condemned the attack," she said.

"But what we're seeing in the last couple of weeks, we're seeing silence in the world."

"Are we being told that it is wrong to kill a family, an entire family, at gunpoint, but it's OK to shell them to death?" she asked.

French President Emmanuel Macron said Wednesday, "France does not practice double standards".

"International law applies to everyone and France carries the universal values of humanism," Macron said during a joint press conference with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi in Cairo, responding to accusations by Arab leaders who have accused Western nations of overlooking harm to Palestinians.

US role in war

Iran's permanent ambassador to the United Nations also said the US is aiding and abetting the Israeli regime's ongoing war on Gaza.

Addressing the UN Security Council on Tuesday, the Iranian envoy Amir Saeid Irvani said, "The US has further exacerbated the conflict by overtly aligning itself with the aggressor at the expense of the innocent

Palestinian population."

Israel has responded to Hamas's October 7 attack with relentless air strikes on the tiny Palestinian enclave. It has also imposed a total siege on Gaza's 2.4 million residents who are facing a "catastrophic" humanitarian crisis, the UN says.

Crippling blockade

The main UN aid agency in Gaza warned on Tuesday it will have to stop operations by the end of Wednesday because it is running out of fuel.

Alarm has grown about the spiraling humanitarian crisis in the heavily bombarded Gaza Strip, where one doctor said he was forced to perform emergency surgery on the wounded without anesthetic.

Nearly 600,000 internally displaced people are also sheltering in 150 facilities of the United Nations Palestinian refugee agency in Gaza, while at least 40 UNRWA installations have been impacted, the UN agency posted on Wednesday on the social media platform X.

"Our shelters are four times over their capacities - many people are sleeping in the streets as current facilities are overwhelmed," the agency added.

UN chief Antonio Guterres on Tuesday spoke of "epic suffering" in Gaza and said there had been "clear violations of international law" there, a statement that drew a fierce response from Israel's top diplomat.

Political suicide for Israel

By Syed Ali Hassan

Iran Daily's correspondent in Pakistan

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Tuesday, called Israeli attacks on Gaza a violation of international law and demanded an immediate cease-fire.

Guterres described Israel's collective punishment of Palestinians as war crimes, adding that the attacks by Hamas on Israel on October 7 "did not happen in a vacuum as the Palestinians have endured 76 years of suffocating occupation."

Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen blasted Guterres for his remarks. Cohen mentioned Hamas attacks but did point to the 19-day bombardment which has so far killed over 6,500 Gazans including 2,700 children. Since the beginning of the conflict, Israel has dropped 33 tons of explosives per kilometer on the Palestinian territory.

Meanwhile, Iran's Defense Minister Mohammad Reza Ashtiani warned that an Israeli ground invasion of Gaza would be a "political suicide" for the regime. He also slammed the US for its unwavering support for Israel, saying it could expand the war beyond Gaza.

According to the US Defense Department, local armed men in Iraq and Syria carried out 12 rocket attacks on American bases there. In addition, Hezbollah has targeted an Israeli checkpoint with a missile in the wake of Iran's warning.

Israel has not officially declared its withdrawal from a land attack, but some defense experts are suggesting that the regime may be steering clear of such operations.

The robust diplomatic efforts of Iran and the resistance forces in the region have exerted enormous pressure on Israel and its patrons, dissuading Israel from venturing out with any dire consequences. In addition to Iran, countries like Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan have warned Israel against launching a ground attack.

Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Munir Akram, has warned that Israeli operations in Palestinian territories are becoming a dangerous conflict. Addressing the meeting of the Security Council, he said that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza, and Pakistan demands an immediate and unconditional cease-fire. He warned that Israeli actions could lead to a wider and more dangerous conflict and that those responsible are those who are escalating the conflict.

During the special session, Saudi Arabia also called the Israeli attacks on civilian hospitals, food reserves and basic facilities a breach of international law. The Saudi foreign minister described the international community's failure to end Israel's relentless attack and forced displacement of Gazans as a threat to security and stability.

It is denial of a right to life, Mr. Biden



By Ebrahim Beheshti
Staff writer

On September 21, 2021, Joe Biden addressed the UN General Assembly for the first time as US president and reaffirmed his country's commitment to upholding democratic principles, particularly "freedom, equality, opportunity, and a belief in the universal rights of all people." He quoted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states: "The equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace in the world."

Biden also said the US and his partners will work "to meet these challenges, to build a future that lifts all of our people and preserves this planet."

Setting aside some double standards by Western nations led by the United States concerning human rights, let's focus solely on recent events within a small geographic area over the past 18 days. We don't need to go through details; just examining news from Tuesday, October 24, related to the developments in Gaza will be enough to assess the US and its allies' commit-

ment to the universal value of respecting human rights.

According to the Gaza Ministry of Health, the death toll from Israel's strikes on Gaza since October 7 has climbed to over 5,800, among them nearly 2,400 children. Shockingly, just in one day, Israelis killed 704 Palestinians. The ministry also declared the complete breakdown of the health care system in Gaza's hospitals.

The International Committee of the Red Cross has raised alarm about the dire conditions in northern Gaza's hospitals. According to Al-Quds Al-Arabi newspaper, the number of Palestinian journalists killed in Israeli airstrikes on the Gaza Strip has now reached 19.

Israel's Channel 12 has confirmed reports that the Israeli military used banned bombs against civilians in Gaza.

Human Rights Watch (HRW) accused Western states of hypocrisy and double standards amid a lack of criticism of Israel's actions in the Gaza Strip.

"The reaction from Washington and – with a few exceptions – from European capitals to Israel's actions in Gaza since October 7 has been muted," Tom Porteous, the deputy program director at the international

NGO, said in a statement that was released on HRW's website. According to Porteous, while the United States and European countries denounced Russia's actions in Ukraine, there was no clear condemnation of Israel's cruelty in Gaza. He described the West's hypocrisy as "flagrant and obvious."

Jeremy Corbyn, the former leader of the British Labour Party, criticized the policies of the UK government in the war against Gaza.

"Today, [we] say very bluntly to our political leaders ... do not condone war crimes, do not condone the starvation and the denial of medicine to desperate people in Gaza," Corbyn told thousands of pro-Palestinian protesters at a rally in London on October 14.

"If you believe in human rights, then you must condemn what is happening now in Gaza by the Israeli army."

Josh Paul, a former director in the US State Department's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, resigned last week over the Biden administration's robust support for Israel. Paul declared he could not support further US military assistance to Israel, calling the administration's response "an impulsive

reaction" based on "intellectual bankruptcy."

"The absence of a willingness to hold that debate when it comes to Israel is not proof of our commitment to Israel's security. Rather, it is proof of our commitment to a policy that, the record shows, is a dead end – and proof of our willingness to abandon our values and turn a blind eye to the suffering of millions in Gaza when it is politically expedient, he wrote in an opinion published by the Washington Post.

Iyad Al-Bazm, the spokesperson of the Ministry of Interior in the Gaza Strip, pointed out that more than 80 percent of the bombs used by Israel in its aggression against Gaza were US-made.

Western leaders, during their trip to Israel, have openly declared their support for Israeli acts, framing them as self-defense. In a somewhat hypocritical humanitarian gesture, they've made a distinction between military personnel and civilians. It's as if they see Isra-

el as a nice and obedient child who pays attention and distinguishes between soldiers and non-combatants. But the question arises: Were the 4,000 women and children killed in Israeli bombings armed members of Hamas?

No, Mr. Biden. You and your allies and partners have not only failed to create a brighter future for the people of Gaza, but you have also turned a blind eye to the violation and denial of their right to life. You've remained silent and even supported these acts. This behavior runs contrary to your supposed commitment to upholding human rights.

