

## US overt, covert plans for Gaza war



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### OPINION EXCLUSIVE

The world is a plurality of entities. That is why we see disparate positions taken by countries regarding the war on Gaza. Regardless, what is plainly obvious is that the United States has fully entered the war.

Whenever the US is brought up in conversation, one should take into account the heightened role that the country plays and now is unimaginable for any other country to play. For example, the US wields an exceptional power in making or breaking coalitions as demonstrated by the mobilization of its allies in support of Israel. Anyone who has seen the country engaged in a battle of narratives or media warfare knows that it also has an undeniable influence on international institutions.

Washington's plans for the Gaza war are either overt or covert, with each probably having short-term and long-term objectives.

We saw the overt plans of the United States in action. They are easily gleaned from the following actions:

1. It has tried to prevent the condemnation or restriction of Israel in international institutions. For example, Washington has vetoed the United Nations Security Council resolutions calling for "humanitarian pauses" in the war.
2. It has delivered military equipment to Israel, some overtly and some not. It has even dispatched its fleet to the region to deter attacks on the occupying regime.
3. It has put a spotlight on the October 7 attack by Hamas on the occupied territories in order to strike preemptively in the battle of narratives in the media. This battle became a means to justify the devastating attacks of Israel on Gaza and the killing of Palestinians.
4. It has also tried and still tries to orient its allies in the Arab world, Europe, and the G7 to conform to its logic and approach.

The covert plans of the US for the war, however, are secret and somewhat unclear. For instance, it is not evident what its plans are for the normalization of ties between Saudi Arabia and Israel after this. The fate of Gaza is equally unclear. Will Gaza be handed over to the Palestinian Authority? Will the plan for the forced migration of Gazans to the Sinai Desert be still on the table? Will Gaza get under the control of international forces? What is certain is that the US admittedly does not want the besieged enclave to be occupied by Israel. Washington will surely have plans for every one of these possibilities.

Tel Aviv is against a cease-fire because a cease-fire is not currently included in any of Washington's plans. The recent G7 statement reflected that the US and its allies prefer to use the new term "humanitarian pause," which is a short-term solution for delivering aid, not for stopping the war.

Israel and the US are not willing to negotiate a cease-fire with Hamas, stressing that to negotiate with Hamas is to recognize it. This is not the whole picture. The other part of it answers the following questions: What country or organization would be assigned the responsibility of negotiating with Hamas, and Gaza will be handed over to which group?

The situation is very complicated right now, and we can't even say who Israel or the US will negotiate with. It seems that Hamas, as a warring party, will not be a side to the negotiation. Israel and the US are dreaming about a Gaza without Hamas. Nevertheless, Hamas, as a school of thinking and a way to stand against greedy demands and horrible crimes of Israel is indestructible. So, it seems that Israeli attacks on Gaza with the support of the US will go on at least for a few more days.

# Lives of hundreds of patients at risk at Gaza's Al-Shifa hospital

The director general of hospitals in Gaza warned that the lives of hundreds of patients are at risk due to the catastrophic situation at Al-Shifa hospital as Israel intensified its deadly strikes on the Palestinian territory, especially on the region's health centers.

About 650 patients, including 36 children, have their lives in danger, Muhammad Zaqout said at a press conference, calling on Egypt to save their lives.

Zaqout also confirmed the presence of "about 1,500 displaced people in the Al-Shifa Medical Complex," warning that "accumulation of garbage and medical waste, lack of water, and power outages threaten everyone's life".

Clashes reported around Gaza City's Al-Shifa hospital, where thousands of wounded and displaced Palestinians are trapped. The compound has been repeatedly hit by strikes in recent days, one of which Hamas health officials said destroyed the cardiac ward on Sunday.

"The occupier (Israel) completely destroyed the cardiac department of Al-Shifa hospital... The two-storey building has been completely destroyed in an air strike," Youssef Abu Rish, deputy health minister in the Gaza Strip, told AFP.

Palestinian Minister of Health Mai al-Kaila said Israeli forces "are not evacuating people from hospitals; instead, they are forcibly evicting the wounded and patients onto the streets, leaving them to face inevitable death".

The Israeli military, which has killed more than 4,000 children since the beginning of the conflict in Gaza, pledged on Saturday to aid the evacuation of babies from the hospital, claiming that "staff of the Al-Shifa hospital has requested that".

Inside Al-Shifa hospital, Doctors Without Borders surgeon Mohammed Obeid said there was no water, power, food or internet access for about 600 post-operative patients, 37-40 babies and 17 people in intensive care.

The surgeon said in an audio message posted Saturday on social media that two babies died in the Al-Shifa neonatal unit after power to their incubators was cut off and a man also died when his ventilator shut down.



### Attack on UN compound

Meanwhile, the United Nations said several people have been killed and wounded in Israeli strikes on a UN facility in Gaza City, where hundreds of Palestinians have taken refuge to escape the war.

"The shelling has reportedly resulted in a significant number of deaths and injuries," the United Nations Development Programme said in a statement issued late Saturday.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Sunday called for pressure on the United States to stop Israel's offensive in Gaza, but said there would be no agreement unless Washington accepted the region as Palestinian land.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Saturday ruled out a role for the Palestinian Authority (PA) in Gaza once the war is over.

"There will have to be something else there," he said, when asked whether the PA, which has partial administrative control in the occupied West Bank, may govern Gaza after the war.

Erdogan returned from a summit on Saturday of Arab and Muslim leaders in the Saudi capital Riyadh.

### Israel's 'barbaric' actions

Arab and Muslim leaders at the summit condemned Israeli forces "barbaric" actions in Gaza.

The final declaration on Saturday rejected Israeli claims that it is acting in "self-defense", and demanded that the UN Security Council adopt "a decisive and binding resolution" to halt Israel's "aggression".

"The US should increase its pressure on Israel. The West should increase pressure on Israel... It's vital for us to secure a cease-fire," Erdogan said. He said the US must accept Gaza as Palestinian land.

"We cannot agree with Biden if he approaches (the conflict) by seeing Gaza as the land of occupying settlers or Israel, rather than the land of the Palestinian people," he said.

Turkey has been an increasingly vocal critic of Israel's offensive in Gaza, which was triggered after Hamas fighters staged



Wounded Palestinians receive treatment at the Al-Shifa hospital in Gaza City on November 7, 2023.  
● DAWOOD NEMER/AFP

an October 7 attack into the occupied territories which killed around 1,200 people. Israel's relentless campaign in response has killed more than 11,000 people, mostly women and children, according to the latest figures from the Health Ministry in Gaza.

### New protests

Fresh demonstrations in solidarity with Palestinians were also held in many countries. On Sunday, protesters took to the streets of Australia's largest city, Sydney, demanding an end to Israel's atrocities in Gaza. Similar protests were also held in many European cities including London, Paris, Brussels, Barcelona, Dublin and Berlin on Saturday. Argentina's capital and South Africa's Cape Town were also the scene of anti-Israel demonstrations.

## GOP candidates bloodthirsty, delusional about Iran

### OPINION

It's like Iraq and Afghanistan never happened in the minds of the next generation of Republican warmongers.

Listening to the Republican presidential debate on Wednesday, I heard all the things I expect to hear from Republican candidates — from fearmongering about the Mexican border to deafening silence about the 26 million people who still don't have health insurance in the wealthiest nation on the planet.

I also heard a lot of bloodthirstiness about the Palestinians. Sadly, at this point, I expect that, too. Even those MAGA Republicans who cosplay as "anti-war" when they're talking about Ukraine are all in on this American proxy war. One thing that did slightly surprise me, though, was how eager some of these people seemed to be to start a war with Iran.

Referring to strikes on US forces in the region by Iranian-allied groups in Iraq and Syria and the US engaging in limited retaliation, former UN ambassador Nikki Haley said: "We need to understand this is Iran giving the green light telling them what to do, and we shouldn't be doing the tit for tat like what Joe Biden has done. We need to go and take out their infrastructure that they are using to make those strikes with, so they can never do it again."

Sen. Tim Scott (R-SC) went even further, tying together Hamas, Hezbollah, and the

fighters in Iraq and Syria to draw the conclusion that "you have to cut off the head of the snake and the head of the snake is Iran and not simply their proxies."

But even if you don't care about the ocean of death and suffering this would bring to Iranian civilians just trying to live their lives, how many Americans would die or come home physically or psychologically broken by the time it was all over?

Why would we do that to ourselves — again?

Afghanistan was the longest war in American history — and surely one of the most pointless. A year and a half after he sent troops to Afghanistan, George W. Bush invaded a second country — Iraq. In some ways that one was such a disaster that it made Afghanistan look good.

By contrast, Iran is — to put it bluntly — a real country with a real army. Not on an American scale, of course, but even so. The Iranian armed forces consist of 610,000 active-duty personnel, plus another 350,000 available for mobilization — not to mention the various closely allied forces, like Hezbollah, that the candidates were talking about on Wednesday night. Saddam Hussein and the Taliban regime in Afghanistan were also diplomatically isolated in a way that Iran just isn't. It exercises massive influence in the region — including,

thanks to Bush's war, Iraq — and it's allied with Russia. The potential for aid coming from all sorts of quarters during a war with the United States should give even as enthusiastic a warmonger as Nikki Haley pause.

Maybe Scott and Haley just want to... what...to bomb the hell out of them for a few days and just get away with it without the Iranians lifting a finger in response? As delusional as that is, Haley seemed to say as much at one point: "Iran responds to strength. You punch them once, you punch them hard, and they back off."

So, in her worldview, Iran is both an incredibly dangerous country that needs to have its whole "infrastructure" "take[n] out" in such a final way that they can "never" provide aid to forces fighting with the US again — but also so weak and cautious that if President Haley tried it, they wouldn't even fight back?

Whatever else you want to say about all this, one thing everyone should stop saying — forever — is that any of these people are "anti-war".

The full article penned by Ben Burgis first appeared on *The Daily Beast*.



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