



Humanitarian aid trucks wait in line to be inspected at the Kerem Shalom crossing, amid Israel's ongoing war against Gaza on December 12, 2023.

Can we hope that this resolution will pave the way for additional resolutions or significant measures to end the war in Gaza?

The recent resolution explicitly calls for the establishment of conditions for a "sustainable cessation of hostilities" serving as a potential foundation for the future. It shattered the alliance between Israel and the US in committing war crimes and gross human rights violations, underscoring the fact that human rights resolutions cannot be vetoed within the international system.

Conventionally, when a major power exercises veto power, other countries tend to avoid engaging with the issue, perceiving it as futile. However, this time it was demonstrated that human rights issues are not subject to veto power. In terms of international law, this marks a revolutionary or momentous event. Gross human rights violations, including mass killings and war crimes resulting in civilian casualties, bear consequences for the perpetrators, even when committed by a major power or an ally who has its full support.

While a major power may seek to disregard such inhumane acts, public opinion is becoming increasingly sensitive to them. Thirteen member states of the Security Council, apart from the United States and Russia which abstained, voted in favor of the resolution, emphasizing the imperative to halt these inhumane acts and commence aid to the affected population.

Although the US refrained from vetoing the resolution, it managed to take off the issue of an immediate cease-fire during the preliminary consultations.

Indeed, this resolution does not signify the end of the war. While the Security Council has called for aid to the people of Gaza, they still acknowledge Israel's claim of self-defense. However, differing opinions have emerged regarding Israel's right to legitimate defense. Personally, I do not hold such a perspective for Israel. The fundamental issue lies in Israel's occupation of land, with its inhabitants fighting to free themselves from this occupation.

What occurred on October 7 at the hands of Hamas can be perceived as a natural reaction to Israel's occupation. Nevertheless, from the standpoint of human rights and conventions pertaining to war, certain objections can be raised regarding the actions of Hamas fighters on that day. Nonetheless, this does not alter the fact that Israel remains the occupying force, and the right to legitimate defense belongs to the Palestinians, not Israel.

Alongside the tragic events of the Gaza war, a notable phenomenon has emerged in a more pronounced form—the influence of public opinion worldwide. Public sentiment has gradually been able to sway the positions of politicians and statesmen from countries that support Israel, or even modify them. Can this power potentially lead to positive outcomes for the Palestinians in the future?

Absolutely. The power of public opinion has indeed become a valuable asset in international relations. The portrayal of events or phenomena in the world significantly impacts the shaping of public sentiment. In the early stages of the war, particularly after October 7, the Israelis made considerable efforts to craft the narrative they desired. By emphasizing the events that transpired on that day and subsequent to the Hamas attack, they painted themselves as the oppressed party, managing to influence public opinion to some extent. Additionally, certain behaviors, such as celebrations in countries that support Palestine, inadvertently contributed to this portrayal of Israel.

Israel believed that with this carefully constructed image, it had the greenlight to take any action. However, it failed to realize that public opinion is vigilant and observant of unfolding events. As the truth gradually emerged and indefensible crimes against the people of Gaza came to light, public opinion began to recognize the discrepancy between the image Israel presented and the realities on the ground in Gaza.

Consequently, widespread condemnation of the massacre in Gaza ensued. Currently, Israel has almost no support from global public opinion, and this influential force can continue to exert pressure on states that support Israel, ultimately pushing for a cease-fire.

Yemen, a thorny issue for US



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OPINION EXCLUSIVE

According to reports, several countries, including Britain, Spain, Canada, France, Bahrain, led by the United States, are planning to establish a maritime alliance to ensure trade security in the Red Sea. The measure is a response to Yemeni attacks on ships bound for Israel in the body of water. The formation and implementation of attainable goals by such a coalition will inevitably escalate tensions in the region, particularly affecting transportation in the Red Sea and the Bab al-Mandab Strait. The United States has already made efforts to prevent the war from spiraling out of Gaza and the emergence of new fronts against Israel and has stuck to it. Thus, it appears that the US is not contemplating an offensive against Yemen. Yemen has become a complex issue for both the United States and Israel, presenting a thorny problem to resolve. The Americans understand that waging a war with Yemen would be akin to stepping into a quagmire with no guarantee of a safe exit. Yemen could potentially become another Afghanistan for the United States, incurring significant costs without achieving objectives. Moreover, the situation in Yemen differs from that of Afghanistan, as the Houthis have eight years of experience battling the Saudi-led coalition. Furthermore, their advantageous geographical position and military capabilities contribute to Yemen's strength.

Therefore, an American attack on Yemen or targeting the

Houthis would not resolve the issue but instead initiate a new regional situation fraught with its own challenges for the United States. Insecurity of the vital Bab al-Mandeb waterway would likely be a primary concern, adversely affecting America and its allies.

Engaging in a war with Yemen could be a protracted war that would consume American resources for years to come. The Americans are well aware of this reality, which might explain their lack of desire to lock horns with the Yemenis.

The US seeks to establish coalitions, as it did against ISIS previously, aiming to exert influence and shape the opinions of regional countries by creating such alliances.

On the other hand, the Yemenis have taken a prudent stance, emphasizing that only ships destined for Israel in the Red Sea would be targeted, while vessels sailing to destinations other than Israel are not a source of concern for them. In fact, the Yemenis took away the excuse from the US that they had endangered maritime trade in the Red Sea. It is evident that America's primary motive is not sea trade security but rather Yemeni measures against Israel, which are unrelated to maritime trade.

However, it seems unlikely that the establishment of such a coalition will stop Yemen's actions against Israel. The Yemenis have successfully resisted the Saudi-led coalition for eight years and will not easily capitulate to American pressure. It is noteworthy that Saudi Arabia is not among the countries announced to be part of the maritime alliance. For now, Riyadh has chosen a policy of neither war nor peace toward Yemen.



People dance on the deck of the Galaxy Leader commercial ship, seized by Yemen's Houthis last month, off the coast of al-Salif, Yemen, on December 5, 2023.