

# ICJ orders Israel to prevent genocidal acts in Gaza



Israel's deputy attorney-general for international law Gilad Noam and British jurist Malcolm Shaw stand on the day the International Court of Justice rule on emergency measures against Israel in The Hague, Netherlands, on January 26, 2024. ● REUTERS

## Raisi lauds South Africa for taking Israel to court

The UN top court on Friday said Israel must prevent genocidal acts in Gaza and facilitate "urgently needed" humanitarian aid into the besieged territory, handing down rulings in a case that has drawn global attention. The court urged Israel to refrain from any possible genocidal acts as it presses its military operation in the Gaza Strip, but stopped short of ordering a ceasefire. Israel must take "immediate and effective measures to enable the provision of urgently needed basic services and humanitarian assistance to address the

adverse conditions of life faced by Palestinians," the court said, according to AFP. At this stage, the ICJ was not considering whether Israel is actually committing genocide in Gaza - that process will take several years. But the court warned Israel to "take all measures in its power to prevent" acts that could fall under the UN Genocide Convention, set up in 1948 as the world reeled from the horrors of the Nazi Holocaust. It also said Israel should "prevent and punish" any incitement to genocide. The case was brought by South Africa, which has ac-

cused Israel of breaching the UN Genocide Convention. Over two days of hearings earlier this month in the gilded hall of the Peace Palace, where the ICJ sits, lawyers from both sides battled it over the interpretation of this Convention. South Africa accused Israel of "genocidal" acts that were intended to cause the "destruction of a substantial part of the Palestinian national, racial and ethnical group." It urged the court to order Israel to "immediately suspend" its military operations in Gaza and allow humanitarian aid to reach the

civilians there. South Africa on Friday hailed a ruling by the United Nations' top court. "Today marks a decisive victory for the international rule of law and a significant milestone in the search for justice for the Palestinian people," the foreign ministry said. On Thursday, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi said South Africa's case against Israel has drawn the admiration of all freedom seekers worldwide, Press TV wrote. **'Courageous' initiative** During a telephone con-

versation with his South African counterpart Cyril Ramaphosa, Raisi lauded the "courageous" initiative, stressing that the move was taken by a country that has experienced the menace of racism and genocide for years. "The measure is praised not only by the Muslim world but also by all freedom seekers across the globe," the Iranian president said, according to his press service. **Isolating Israel** Palestinian resistance group Hamas hailed the "important" ruling, saying it "con-

tributes to isolating Israel". "The (International) Court of Justice's decision is an important development which contributes to isolating Israel and exposing its crimes in Gaza," the group said in a statement, according to AFP. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu slammed as "outrageous" South Africa's case against it at the UN's top court. "The charge of genocide levelled against Israel is not only false, it's outrageous, and decent people everywhere should reject it," Netanyahu said in a video statement. Israel earlier dismissed the case as a "grossly distorted story" and said that if any genocidal acts had been carried out, they had been executed against Israel during the October 7 Hamas attacks. Spain, one of the most critical voices in Europe of Israel's offensive against Hamas, welcomed the ruling. The question now is whether the court's rulings will be obeyed. Although its rulings are legally binding, it has no mechanism to enforce them and they are sometimes completely ignored - it has ordered Russia to stop its invasion of Ukraine for example. Netanyahu has already hinted Israel would not abide by any ruling saying "no one will stop us", not even a verdict in The Hague. The October 7 Hamas attack resulted in the death of around 1,140 people in Israel. At least 26,083 Palestinians, around 70 percent of them women, young children and adolescents, have been killed in the Gaza Strip in Israeli bombardments and ground offensive since then, according to the Gaza Health Ministry.

## Iran, Russia, Turkey slam Israeli attacks in Syria

Iran, Russia and Turkey jointly stressed fighting against terrorism in all its forms, slammed Israeli attacks in Syria, and emphasized the leading role of the Astana Format talks in promoting a sustainable settlement to the Syrian crisis. Delegations of the three guarantors made the remarks in a joint declaration adopted at the 21st international Astana meeting on Syria, held in the Kazakh capital of Astana on Wednesday. The trio expressed their determination to continue working together to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and stand against separatist agendas aimed at undermining the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria and threatening the national security of the neighboring countries, the final communiqué said. Since the outbreak of Israel's brutal war on the besieged Gaza Strip on October 7, Israel has significantly increased its cross-border attacks against Syria. In response to such hostilities, Iran, Russia and Turkey also "condemned all Israeli military attacks in Syria, considered these actions as a violation of international law, international humanitarian law, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria, and recognized them as destabilizing and exacerbating tensions in the region, and called for the cessation of these attacks."

## Baghdad, Washington to start talks to end US military presence in Iraq

The United States and Iraq said Thursday they will begin discussions on the future of American and other foreign troops in the country, with Baghdad expecting the talks to lead to a timeline for reducing their presence. Washington has forces in Iraq as part of the international coalition against the

Daesh terrorist group, but the country's prime minister has called for the coalition to leave, AFP reported. The talks - which have been planned for months - will come at a time of heightened tensions in Iraq and the region linked to the Israel's war on Gaza, which has sparked a surge in attacks on American

and other coalition forces. Washington and Baghdad agreed to form working groups that would eventually lead to formulating "a specific and clear timeline... and to begin the gradual reduction of its (the coalition's) advisers on Iraqi soil", Iraq's Foreign Ministry said. The ministry said the timeline

would be contingent on evaluating the threat posed by Daesh and its danger as well as the reinforcement of the capacities of the Iraqi security forces. US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin confirmed meetings would start "in the coming days" and said the process will "enable the transition to an enduring bilateral

security partnership between the United States and Iraq". There are roughly 2,500 US troops deployed in Iraq and about 900 in Syria as part of the anti-Daesh coalition formed in 2014 - the year the terrorist group overran around a third of Iraq. A senior US defense official said the upcoming meetings

would not be a negotiation on the withdrawal of American forces from Iraq, but said Washington "sees a need to transition to a normal bilateral security cooperation relationship". There have been more than 150 attacks targeting coalition troops since mid-October, many of them claimed by the

Islamic Resistance in Iraq that oppose US support for Israel in the Gaza conflict. Washington has carried out strikes on resistance groups in response to the spike in attacks, sparking condemnation from Baghdad, with Prime Minister Mohamed Shia al-Sudani calling on the coalition to withdraw from the country. Sudani said Daesh "is no longer a danger for the Iraqi state, and our armed forces are capable of fully assuming the maintenance of security and stability".

## Pakistan's envoy to Tehran: Time to turn 'new leaf' in bilateral ties

Pakistani Ambassador to Iran Muhammad Mudassir Tipu, who left for Tehran on Friday to resume his diplomatic mission, said that the time is ripe for turning a new leaf in bilateral relations. Tehran and Islamabad briefly halted their diplomatic ties after tit-for-tat attacks which led to the death of several people from both sides. "In conformity with the sincere & good wishes of Pakistan's leadership, I am en route to Tehran," Mudassir Tipu wrote on his X account

on Friday. "Ever more determined to work for a more robust, stronger & peace-loving Pakistan," he added. "Strong Pakistan & Iran are critical for region & to promote historic people to people ties. Time to turn a new leaf" Iran and Pakistan announced Monday that their ambassadors would resume their duties after the two countries agreed to de-escalate tensions following an exchange of deadly strikes last week. Iran's Foreign Minister

Hossein Amir-Abdollahian is also due to visit Pakistan on January 29, following an invitation from his Pakistani counterpart Jalil Abbas Jilani. The two neighboring countries witnessed an escalation of cross-border tensions over Iran's counter-terrorism operations. On January 16, Iran launched drone and missile attacks on two bases of Jaish al-Adl, an anti-Iran terrorist group that was formed in 2012, and has conducted several attacks on Iranian soil in recent years. The Iranian strikes in Paki-

stan drew a sharp rebuke from Islamabad, which recalled its ambassador from Tehran and blocked Iran's envoy from returning to Pakistan. Pakistan also carried out strikes against what it called bases of the separatist Baloch Liberation Front and Baloch Liberation Army in regions in Iran close to the border. Tehran condemned the attack as unacceptable and unbalanced and summoned Pakistan's charge d'affaires over the strikes, which left at least nine people dead.



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