

# 'I will no longer be complicit in genocide'

"I will no longer be complicit in genocide."

These are the last words of a member of the US Air Force before setting himself on fire outside the Israeli Embassy in Washington to protest the regime's US-backed slaughter of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. Aaron Bushnell, 25, also said his suffering was minimal compared to that of Palestinians as the humanitarian crisis persists in Gaza.

Aaron was taken to a hospital in a critical condition but died from his wounds hours later.

The image of a man pointing a gun at Aaron's body as it burned on the ground also drew criticisms. The image quickly became a symbol of the brutality Bushnell was protesting and then experienced in his final seconds.

Vigils were held to honor his life in various US cities

which have been the scene of pro-Palestine rallies since the beginning of Israel's onslaught on the Palestinian territory on October 7.

Mourners left flowers and candles, many expressing their admiration for Bushnell's final act of protest while condemning the US government for its support for Israel's war, which has claimed the lives of about 30,000 Palestinians – most of them women and children.

Aaron's self-immolation brought to light the military aid and support that Israel has been receiving from its biggest ally.

Since October 7, Israel has received immense support from the US, ranging from arms and ammunition to consultancy from top-level commanders.

The Hamas resistance group, whose forces are fighting Israeli forces in Gaza, reacted to the incident in Washington and said the US should be held responsible for his death.

Hamas said in a statement, "He immortalized his name as a defender of human values and the oppression of the suffering Palestinian people because of the American administration and its unjust policies".

It is not the first time someone has set themselves on fire in front of an Israeli diplomatic mission in the US since the intensification of Israel's strikes on Gaza.

In December, a protester self-immolated in front of the Israeli consulate in Atlanta, Georgia.



People attend a vigil for US Airman Aaron Bushnell at the US Army Recruiting Office in New York City on February 27, 2024.

● MICHAEL M. SANTIAGO/  
GETTY IMAGES VIA AFP

A person holds a sign during a vigil for US Airman Aaron Bushnell at the US Army Recruiting Office in Times Square in New York City on February 27, 2024.

● MICHAEL M. SANTIAGO/  
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People place flowers in front of photos at a vigil for US Airman Aaron Bushnell at the US Army Recruiting Office in Times Square in New York City on February 27, 2024.

● MICHAEL M. SANTIAGO/  
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A person holds a sign during a vigil for US Airman Aaron Bushnell at the US Army Recruiting Office in Times Square in New York City on February 27, 2024.

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Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist



People leave notes and flowers during a vigil for US Air Force active-duty airman Aaron Bushnell outside the Israeli Embassy in Washington, DC on February 26, 2024.

● ANNA MONEYMAKER/GETTY IMAGES/AFP



Protesters set Israeli flags ablaze outside the Israeli Embassy in Washington DC on February 27, 2024.

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