

THE LEADERS

A Monthly News Analysis & Review

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GENOCIDE



THE LEADERS

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Editorial

2

COVER STORY

Zionists' Escalatory Threats To Masjid Al-Aqsa	6
Starvation As A Weapon Of War	10
Starvation as a Weapon: Gaza Tragedy	14
Genocide in Palestine: The Whole World Is Watching	18
Why Are Arab Regimes So Impotent in the Face of Zionist Barbarism?	24
Criminals in Gaza, their enablers and their offspring will pay a heavier price than the Nazis	30
Are post-war Gaza scenarios realistic?	34
Israeli attacks have killed thousands of Palestinian students since October 7	38
Why are so many journalists being killed in Gaza?	39
Gaza will be the grave of the Western-led world order	42



THE WOUNDED BODIES AND BRAVE HEARTS

E D I T O R I A L

THE LEADERS INTERNATIONAL

The people of Gaza have demonstrated remarkable patience and endurance in the face of Israel's brutal tactics and ongoing genocide. For decades, the Palestinian territory has been subjected to relentless attacks, blockades, and occupation by Israel.



Despite the overwhelming odds stacked against them, the people of Gaza have shown incredible resilience and determination to survive and resist.

The siege of Gaza, which has been in place since 2007, has created immense hardship for its residents. Lack of access to necessities such as food, water, and medical supplies has made life incredibly difficult for the people of Gaza. The constant threat of violence and destruction from Israeli airstrikes and ground incursions has only added to their suffering.

In less than 6 months, more than 31,600 Gazans have been martyred, most of them children and women.

Despite these challenges, the people of Gaza have refused to give up. They continue to resist Israeli aggression. Their unwavering

commitment to justice and freedom is a testament to their strength and courage.

The international community has failed to hold Israel accountable for its actions in Gaza, allowing the violence and oppression to continue unchecked. However, the people of Gaza have not lost hope. They continue to fight for their rights and demand an end to the occupation and blockade that has plagued their land for so long.

As the world watches in silence, the people of Gaza stand firm in their struggle for freedom and justice. Their patience and endurance in the face of unimaginable adversity serve as a powerful reminder of the human spirit's capacity to persevere in the face of injustice. It is time for the international community to stand with the people of Gaza and support their quest for a just and lasting peace. ■

Person of the Year GAZANS



- ▼ Why Gazans have been chosen as Person of The Year
- ▼ Leader's remarks energize Palestinians to resist Israeli criminals
- ▼ Gaza: A brief history
- ▼ Gaza through individual stories
- ▼ Gaza women endure relentless nightmares, inspire world with their courage
- ▼ Israeli "war on children"

The wounded bodies and brave hearts

Mohammad Sarfi
Editor-in-Chief

TEHRAN - The people of Gaza have demonstrated remarkable patience and endurance in the face of Israel's brutal tactics and ongoing genocide. For decades, the Palestinian territory has been subjected to relentless attacks, blockades, and occupation by Israel. Despite the overwhelming odds stacked against them, the people of Gaza have shown incredible resilience and determination to survive and resist.

The siege of Gaza, which has been in place since 2007, has created immense hardship for its residents. Lack of access to necessities such as food, water, and medical supplies has made life incredibly difficult for the people of Gaza. The constant threat of violence and destruction from Israeli airstrikes and ground incursions has only added to their suffering. In less than 6 months, more than 31,600 Gazans have been martyred, most of them children and women.

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COVER STORY

ZIONISTS' ESCALATORY THREATS TO MASJID AL-AQSA

AYMAN AHMED

While Zionist genocide of the Palestinians in Gaza continues, a more serious threat to Masjid al-Aqsa has gone unnoticed. Jewish terrorists have brought five unblemished 'red heifers' (cows) for ritual slaughter in Masjid al-Aqsa as prelude to its destruction and building of the mythical 'third temple' in its place.



If the level of Zionist vandalism of past Ramadans at Masjid al Aqsa is any guide, this Ramadan is likely to be much worse. Several factors are at work including the ongoing Zionist genocidal war on Gaza and the extreme brutality inflicted on Palestinians in the West Bank. Zionist thugs backed by the heavily-armed police and army will escalate their attacks on Palestinian worshippers arriving at the sacred sanctuary of Masjid al Aqsa.

Mosque attendance increases during Ramadan. It is a month of abstinence, sacrifice, reflection and contemplation. While Muslim adults—male and female—deny themselves food, drinks and other bodily pleasures, they seek nourishment of the soul. This is best done by turning to the Houses of Allah—the

Masajid—whose tranquility and serenity provide the ambience to nourish their souls.

This is generally true throughout the world except in Masjid al Aqsa where the Zionist thugs and vandals have repeatedly assaulted the sanctity of this sacred space and worshippers in past years. With Zionist-Nazis in full control of the regime in Tel Aviv led by the war criminal Benjamin Netanyahu, the stage is set for a massive assault on Masjid al Aqsa this coming Ramadan.

Whatever the level of Zionist violence, there will be resistance from Palestinian worshippers. Innocent men, women and especially youth will be killed far in excess of what has been witnessed in the past.

It must be borne in mind that the Islamic resistance in Gaza code-named its operation of October 7, 2023, Toofan Al-Aqsa (Al-Aqsa Storm). This was meant to send a clear message. While the 2.3 million Palestinians bottled up in the largest concentration camp in the world—Gaza—were being suffocated, it was the Zionists' escalatory attacks on Masjid al Aqsa that alarmed Hamas. Their repeated warnings to the Zionists to desist went unheeded until their fury exploded on October 7.

Rabbinical law prohibits Jews from trespassing on the sacred sanctuary for fear of polluting it but Zionist squatters backed by the police continue to barge on it regardless. A point of clarification is necessary. Some Muslims confuse the Dome of the Rock (that has the Golden Dome) with al-Masjid al Aqsa. This is a less imposing structure with a greyish dome.

It is more accurately called the Qibli Mosque. The entire walled compound that comprises the Qibli Mosque, the Dome of the Rock, many zawiyyas and madrassas is what constitutes al-Masjid al-Aqsa.

For Muslims, especially in al-Quds (Jerusalem) and Palestine in general, al-Masjid al Aqsa as sacred territory is not open for the Zionists to trespass. Its protection is the responsibility of all Muslims worldwide but they are unable to join in its defence because of physical barriers.

The Zionists allege that al-Masjid al-Aqsa sits on the site where their second temple once stood. They have not produced any evidence for this ludicrous claim. In any case, no Jewish temple

has existed on this site for nearly 2,000 years. How far can one burrow into history to make such claims?

The Zionists have made no secret of their plans to destroy the Masjid al-Aqsa and build their third temple on its ruins. Their barging onto the sacred sanctuary, first in limited numbers and now in larger numbers and much more frequently, betray their real intentions. With neo-Nazis in power, they believe their time has come.

And they have trotted out a cow as proof. Yes, you read that correctly. Hindus are not the only ones obsessed with holy cows. Their Zionist fellow travellers are equally enamoured by a cow, but of a special kind. It must be 'pure red' without any hair of another colour and no blemishes either.

The Bible (Old Testament), refers to red heifers several times in relation to Temple law resulting in the Jewish extremists' obsession to find the "perfect one" for their diabolical plot. What is the significance of red heifers? They are an essential part of sacrificial purity laws. Their ashes are required, according to passages in the Book of Numbers, to 'purify' the Temple's priests and its altars before they can trespass on the soil of the sacred sanctuary.

For the Zionist terrorists, the coming weeks are important. The next Jewish holiday, Passover, falls immediately after the end of Ramadan. There was an incursion onto the noble sanctuary five months ago (October 3, 2023) by dozens of illegal squatters carrying palm fronds to mark the Jewish holiday of Sukhot.



The next step in the extremist temple groups' campaign will be an attempt to perform the sacrifice of a pure red heifer inside Masjid al-Aqsa. The animal will then be burned and the ashes used to 'purify' the rabbis and the altars.

Rabbis have gone to extraordinary lengths in search of the 'pure red heifers without any

blemish'. With magnifying glasses, they have examined red heifers on various farms in the US to ensure there is not a single hair on their body of another colour. In September 2022, five red heifers were brought to Israel and looked after on a special farm for the ritual sacrifice leading to 'purification' of the rabbis. Why don't they just take a shower? It will clean them better rather than smothering themselves with ashes!

Following the rabbis' 'purification' with ashes, demolition of Masjid al-Aqsa will begin to build the 'third temple' over it. Imagine: destruction of Islam's third holiest site and the first qibla of Muslims to build a temple for terrorist invaders from Europe and North America! This, according to Zionist mythology, will herald the messianic era long prayed for by both Jews and Christians.

For the Zionists, this era means the supposed coming of a time that includes the return of biblical laws of purity. It will herald truly 'holy life' after perpetrating destruction and a blood bath that will surely erupt if the Zionists attempt to destroy Masjid al-Aqsa.

Evangelical Christians are equally excited. For them, it would herald the End Times, the return of Prophet Jesus (as) to Earth and the Rapture. With all the Jews assembled in Jerusalem and Palestine, their slaughter for the sin of crucifixion will be carried out. The Zionists are quite happy with this interpretation as long as they get to grab Al-Quds (Jerusalem) and the whole of Palestine!

What will the nearly two billion Muslims worldwide do? Ordinary Muslims will hold rallies screaming at the top of their lungs while Muslim regimes will issue vacuous statements condemning such desecration. They will appeal to the UN and the 'international community' to prevent these provocative acts. This will merely expose their impotence as has been evident from their lack of support for Palestinians facing the Zionist-perpetrated genocide in Gaza. ■



STARVATION AS A WEAPON OF WAR

IQBAL SULEMAN

In tandem with its genocide in Gaza, the Zionist war criminals are also using starvation as a weapon of war. Almost the entire population of Gaza faces starvation. There is enough food, water and medicines waiting outside Gaza's border with Egypt, but the Zionists refuse to allow it in.

There is no fuel and no food in Gaza. At the beginning of the Gaza Invasion, the Israeli war minister expressed the regime's genocidal intent when he said that "There will be no food, no electricity, no fuel, everything is closed". Indeed, Israel has actualized this genocide. There is no food, fuel, or electricity in Gaza. Gaza is a mass concentration camp, with its more than 2 million people starving. Children are having their limbs amputated without anaesthesia. Imagine for a moment, if it were your child having her leg amputated without anaesthesia, would you tolerate it, would you accept it?

The people of Gaza are now eating grass and grinding barely edible animal feed to make flour. The leading international authority

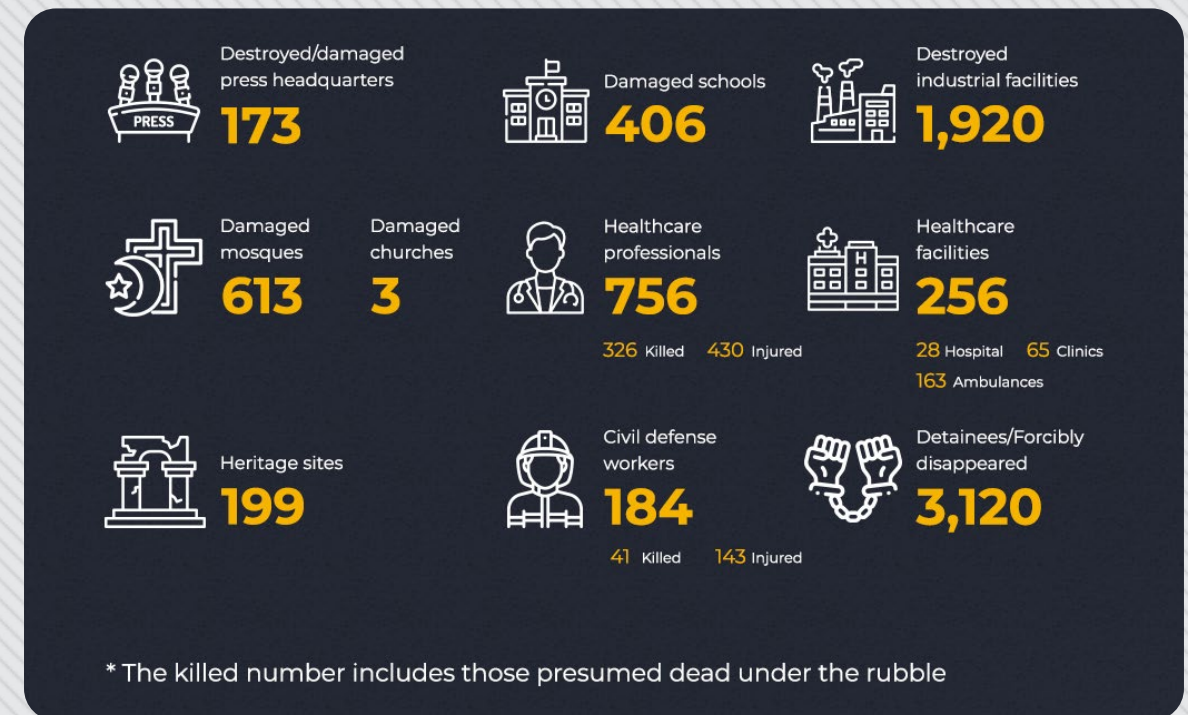
on food insecurity, the IPC Famine Review committee estimates that 90% of Gazans, some 2.08 million people are facing food insecurity. It is estimated that 95% of the world's population facing imminent starvation are living in Gaza. Those who believe that this conflict erupted on October 7 should look at the UN report of 2022 which found that a year prior to that, 65% of Gazans were food insecure. This was the direct result of the unlawful siege Israel had imposed on Gaza with the tacit complicity of the Egyptian, American and European regimes.

This mass starvation is being played out in real time today. The world is witnessing this horror on their smartphones and TV screens. Wealthy countries—the US, Britain and Canada—have at this unprecedented and dire moment of starvation in Gaza, suspended funding to the UNRWA on mere allegations by Israel that some UNRWA staff members were involved in the October 7 attacks on

Israel. No evidence has been provided to even substantiate the allegations but the wealthy countries have chosen to strangle this aid lifeline to Gaza, thereby being complicit in starving the Palestinians.

At the beginning of the Israeli invasion of Gaza, Oxfam reported that only 2% of the usual amount of food was being delivered to Gaza. Oxfam's Sally Abi Khalil stated that "There can be no justification for using starvation as a weapon of war". The Zionist state of Israel has been determined in strategically using starvation as a weapon of war. Israeli forces have been shooting at poor Palestinians waiting in line to collect food. They have attacked convoys delivering food. For the most part, they have prevented food from entering Gaza.

Not even Israel's allies in the United States believe the lies that the Zionist regime spins



when it says that it is allowing humanitarian aid to flow in. US senators Chris van Hollen and Jeff Merkley went to Rafah to observe and monitor aid going into Gaza. According to Van Hollen “Kids in Gaza are now dying from the deliberate withholding of food”. In a speech in the senate, he accused Israel of a textbook war crime. “This is a war crime; it is a textbook war crime that makes those who orchestrate it war criminals.” Van Hollen has called upon the Biden regime to invoke the US foreign assistance law which prohibits arms exports to any country that impedes the provision of US humanitarian assistance. Van Hollen has seen with his own eyes how Israel has actively prevented foreign aid from reaching the poor and starving people of Palestine.

He told the New Yorker magazine that “Goods like medical kits used to deliver babies, water testing kits, water filters, solar powered desalination units and tents with poles” were among the items that Israel rejected entry into Gaza. Van Hollen also observed that when one item in a truck is rejected, the Israelis send the entire truck back.

Israeli forces have also been targeting agricultural land in Gaza, food production factories and grocery stores. This is a cold, calculated and callous strategy to starve the people of Gaza. Allan de Wind, author of “Mass Starvation, The History and Future of Famine”, says “while it may be possible to bomb a hospital by accident, it is not possible to create a famine by accident.”

The whole world is calling for a ceasefire and an end to Israeli barbarism in Gaza. However, the

US, Israel’s chief military and economic backer, has throughout the invasion of Gaza, green lighted the actions of the Israeli regime and still refuses to leverage its financial and military aid to compel Israel to comply with international human rights and humanitarian law.

It is clear that without a complete ceasefire, it is impossible for aid to reach all the people of Gaza who desperately need it. Last month, the US shamelessly vetoed the Algerian resolution at the UN Security Council calling for an immediate ceasefire while the people of Gaza are subjected to the most atrocious horrors.

There are more than 17,000 Palestinian kids that are orphaned because their parents were butchered by Israeli Zionists. Hospitals have been destroyed and the UN has reported on credible reports of Israel violating the rights of Palestinian women. The UN experts on human rights reported on the 19th February “We are particularly distressed by reports that women and girls in detention have been subjected to multiple forms of sexual assault such as being stripped naked and searched by male Israeli officers. At least two female detainees were raped while others were threatened with rape and sexual violence.”

The experts also noted the despicable conduct of Israeli soldiers who uploaded degrading photos of Palestinian female detainees. According to the experts, Israel has unlawfully detained hundreds of Palestinian women. Some were kept in a cage in the rain and cold. These UN experts are part of what is known as the special procedures of the Human Rights Council which is the largest

body of international experts in the UN human rights system.

Israeli barbarism has resulted in approximately 100,000 Palestinian casualties of war with over 29,000 killed and 69,000 wounded. The Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor estimates that 90% of these casualties of war were Palestinian civilians. Israel has killed 12,300 children as well as 8,400 women. The UN office for the co-ordination of humanitarian affairs says that Israel has destroyed approximately 360,000 Palestinian homes; 392 educational facilities as well as 123 ambulances and 267 places of worship (mainly mosques) have also been demolished.

At least 85% of Gaza’s population is internally displaced by the Israeli Occupation and 1.7 million people of Gaza live in refugee camps. Israel calls all of this self-defence but to the majority of the world’s people, it is genocide.

The US’ veto last month has angered people throughout the world who are now fed up with watching international law and institutions fail the people of Palestine for more than 75 years. Is it not time for self-respecting delegates to stage a walk out immediately when the US vetoes a ceasefire resolution and urgently call for the democratisation of the United Nations where all countries share equal rights.

Despite the Israeli genocide, Palestinians are defiant; they refuse to be subjugated, or be subordinates and slaves to Israeli colonial masters. The suffering triggers a memory in their historical consciousness as they remember

their beloved Prophet (pbuh) who was also sanctioned, sieged, and starved in Sha’b Abi Talib where the Messenger and his comrades were starved to the point where they had to eat grass to survive. The Prophet (pbuh) lost his most beloved and committed comrades, his wife Khadija and the great Abu Talib who were casualties of the inhumane siege.

Perhaps the most potent trigger of faith consciousness is the slaughter of Palestinian children which invoke the memory of the slaughter of the children of the household of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), particularly the baby of Hussein, Ali Asghar. Palestinians, like Hussein feel that they are fighting a lone struggle abandoned by earthly powers against a powerful oppressor.

Despite being the victims of genocide, they are inspired by the Prophet and his grandson to be defiant and resolute in the struggle for self-determination and independence. To keep on resisting like Hussein after experiencing the most painful event—the killing of their innocent children. Palestinians have issued calls for solidarity, more marches, boycotts of Israeli goods, for activists to fast in solidarity with their struggle to end the genocide, for activists to wake up at 2am in the morning and engage in prayer seeking God’s corrective justice and an end to their oppression and for an urgent immediate ceasefire and end for this barbaric war.

Iqbal Suleman is a social justice lawyer and former head of the law clinic for Lawyers for Human Rights in Pretoria. ■



STARVATION AS A WEAPON: GAZA TRAGEDY

SHAHROKH SAEI

Since Israel launched war on the Gaza Strip nearly five months ago, it has perpetrated massacre after massacre and used starvation of civilians as a method of warfare in the besieged Palestinian territory.

International law has stipulated that intentionally starving civilians by “depriving them of objects indispensable to their survival, including willfully impeding relief supplies” is a war crime. Israel has been systematically denying Palestinians of these indispensable objects which include food, water and shelter.

“Intentionally depriving people of food is clearly a war crime. Israel has announced its intention to destroy the Palestinian people, in whole or in part, simply for being Palestinian.

In my view as a UN human rights expert, this is now a situation of genocide. This means the state of Israel in its entirety is culpable and should be held accountable – not just individuals or this

government or that person,” Michael Fakhri, the UN special rapporteur on the right to food, told the Guardian late last month.

Hunger and severe malnutrition are widespread in the Gaza Strip where 2.3 million people are facing severe shortages.

UN humanitarian coordinator Ramesh Ramasingham told the Security Council late February that 576,000 people in Gaza, which is at least one quarter of the territory’s population, are one step away from famine.

The World Food Program has also warned that a famine is imminent in northern Gaza.

Dire situation of children

Hunger is mainly threatening the lives of kids in Gaza. UNICEF has warned that the alarming lack of food, surging malnutrition and disease could lead to an “explosion” in child deaths in Gaza. Reports suggest that parents are using animal fodder to satisfy their children’s hunger.

But Israel has no scruples to starve Palestinians including children. A pediatrician at Kamal Adwan Hospital in northern Gaza said that the most doctors at the hospital can do for malnourished and dehydrated children is to give them saline

solution or sugar solution, according to Al Jazeera. “All of this is happening due to the lack of food,” Dr Imad Dardonah added.

CNN: Medicines denied entry

On Saturday, a CNN investigation revealed Israel is obstructing the entrance of humanitarian aid into the Gaza Strip, as near-famine grips parts of the besieged territory. It found that Israel has imposed “arbitrary and contradictory criteria” regarding access to vital aid. These include anesthetics and anesthesia machines, oxygen cylinders, ventilators and water filtration systems. Other products such as dates and medicines have also been denied entry. The probe is based on interviews with more than two dozen humanitarian and government officials. In the face of such brutal measures, Israel has also killed hungry people who seek food in the Gaza Strip.

On Thursday, Israeli forces opened fire on Palestinian people who were waiting for deliveries of food from a cargo of aid trucks in a Gaza City neighborhood.

But Israeli far-right minister Itamar Ben-Gvir praised the regime's troops for committing the massacre calling them "heroic fighters".

Ben-Gvir and some other high-ranking Israeli officials have also defended a total siege on basic necessities like food, water and fuel into Gaza that was imposed by the regime of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in early October.

Thursday's massacre in the Gaza City neighborhood was condemned as a "heinous massacre" by many officials and aid groups across the globe.

Washington's Western allies also condemned the massacre. They, however, did not take any action to hold the regime accountable for the atrocious crime.

The global condemnation of the massacre led to growing pressure on the administration of U.S. President Joe Biden which has remained supportive of Israel's brutal onslaught on Gaza. To ease pressure on the White House, Biden ordered the U.S. military to airdrop food aid into Gaza.

U.S. military cargo planes dropped first aid packages into Gaza on Saturday. The U.S. carried out the aid operation with Jordan's air force.

But the U.S. move triggered fierce criticism with several aid agencies rejecting it as ineffective. "Airdrops are expensive, haphazard and usually lead to the wrong people getting the aid," Jan Egeland, head of aid organization at the Norwegian Refugee Council, said.

Oxfam also blasted the White House's decision. "While Palestinians in Gaza have been pushed to the absolute brink, dropping a paltry, symbolic amount of aid into Gaza with no plan for its safe distribution would not help and be deeply degrading to Palestinians," Scott Paul, who leads Oxfam's U.S. government advocacy work, said in a statement on X.

He added, "Oxfam does not support U.S. airdrops to Gaza, which would mostly serve to relieve the guilty consciences of senior U.S. officials whose policies are contributing to the ongoing atrocities and risk of famine in Gaza."

A former USAID mission director in the West Bank and Gaza also shed light on Biden's motives. "The airdrops are symbolic and designed in ways to appease the domestic base," Dave Harden told Al Jazeera.

He added, "Really what needs to happen is more crossings [opening] and more trucks going in every day. The U.S. has the ability to compel Israel to open up more aid and by not doing that we're putting our assets and our people at risks and potentially creating more chaos in Gaza."



The Biden administration can use its powerful leverage at the UN Security Council to force Israel to allow humanitarian aid enter Gaza. Washington can also push Israel to end the Gaza war through attaching conditions to its unwavering political and military support for the regime.

Such calls have been made by members of the U.S. Congress.

"Hundreds of thousands of children are facing starvation. Stop this war right now – no more money for Netanyahu's government," Senator Bernie Sanders said in a post on X on Saturday.

The United States is fully aware that the airdrops will fail to meet the needs of hungry

people in Gaza. This is because the measure is just a drop in the ocean.

The U.S. airdrop policy is also a publicity stunt as it tries to paper over the failure of its policy toward Israel.

Biden has been Netanyahu's partner in crime and he cannot absolve himself of complicity for Israel's genocidal war on Gaza which has killed more than 30,000 Palestinians since October 7.

The only way to help the Palestinian people in Gaza is to pressure Israel to open land and sea corridors so that humanitarian assistance can be distributed in the territory. ■

GENOCIDE IN PALESTINE: THE WHOLE WORLD IS WATCHING

KEVIN BARRETT

Zionist Israel's genocide in Gaza is the most televised crime in world history. It is backed by western powers led by the US. Israel is guilty of collective punishment and its rulers—civilian and military—must be held accountable.

As police beat protestors outside the 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago, crowds chanted: “The whole world is watching.” And they had a point. Television network news cut away from convention speeches to show snippets of violence in the streets. Despite the networks’ refusal to show the worst abuses, it was all too obvious that police were the instigators and perpetrators. That widely-viewed “police riot” helped polarize public opinion, partly along generational lines, and contributed to the collapse of the US war on Vietnam.

In 1968, only a small portion of the world watched a few brief network-selected clips of the Chicago police riot. An even smaller portion got the unvarnished truth from underground



newspapers. Today, however, the whole world really is watching the unfolding genocide in Gaza—or as much of it as it can bear. Thanks to courageous journalists (106 of whom have already been martyred by the zionists in 84 days) and the wonders of social media, we are faced with the unprecedented spectacle of a monstrous genocide unfolding in plain sight, before the astonished and horrified eyes of 7.8 billion people. As Ron Unz put it, “We are certainly witnessing the greatest televised slaughter of helpless civilians in the history of the world with nothing even remotely comparable coming to mind.”

The breathtaking savagery of the zionists’ bloodthirsty debauchery, and the heartbreaking suffering of Palestinian victims, has become

an experiential reality for billions of people around the world. We have watched 2000-pound bombs exploding in heavily-populated neighborhoods, including crowded refugee camps in zionist-designated “safe areas.” We have watched more than 90% of the population of Gaza rendered homeless by zionist bombing.

We have seen the bodies of women and children refugees executed in a school at point-blank range by zionist genocide perpetrators. We have watched Gazans dying of thirst and hunger and lack of medical treatment as the zionists destroy hospitals, blockade food, water and fuel, blow up water, sewage, and electricity infrastructure, and gleefully burn humanitarian relief shipments.

If anyone doubts that Israel is waging a war of extermination against the people of Gaza, they need only check the statements of Israeli rulers to stand corrected. Netanyahu has openly called for Biblical vengeance, meaning genocide, against Palestinians, by identifying them as “Amalek,” the Torah’s designation for an enemy who must be exterminated to the last man, woman, child, baby, and even animal.

An Israeli general proclaimed that “Gaza will become a place where no human being can exist.” A minister in the current regime has suggested dropping nuclear weapons on Gaza. Israeli schoolchildren are taught to sing “Within a year we will annihilate everyone.”

What makes this spectacle of unfolding genocide even more outrageous is the effort of the world's most powerful forces, led by the US regime and the Zionist-dominated media, to censor, obfuscate, and prevent anyone from doing anything about the genocide. Young people, who are more adept at circumventing internet censorship, are especially outraged.

As in 1968, the "whole world" that is watching is disproportionately made up of younger people. Today, polls show that the majority of American young adults support the elimination of "Israel" by the Palestinian resistance!

Equally outrageous, in the eyes of most of the world's nearly two billion Muslims, is the inaction of their countries' political leaders. A huge backlash is developing in places like "Saudi" Arabia:

"On Twitter, one user posted two striking images, along with a comment: 'These are two pictures, one from Gaza and one from Riyadh Saudi Arabia last night. In a picture, Gaza's Muslims are facing genocide to protect the Aqsa Mosque! In the second picture, Saudi Yehud bin Salman is dancing naked with Shakira! They should be ashamed!'"

The institutions complicit in the Gaza genocide, starting with the US regime and its vassals

in both the west and the Muslim East, are being severely discredited. A gap has opened between the people, especially younger people, and their institutional leadership.

The trend is clear: As current institutions weaken and wither, new ones will emerge.

After losing wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and (soon) Ukraine, the US-led western empire no longer looks so formidable. In the wake of the Gaza genocide, the shocked and outraged people of the Global South in general and the Muslim East in particular are already boycotting American and Israeli products, and are in the process of forcing their governments to tilt away from the perpetrators

and towards the rising BRICS alliance, and away from the Axis of the Occupied and westoxicated toward the Axis of Resistance.

The "Confucian-Islamic connection" that Huntington saw as a threat to western world domination has been immeasurably strengthened by US complicity in the genocide of Gaza. The leading independent powers, Russia, China, and Iran, have been pushing ceasefire resolutions in the United Nations (which are always vetoed or watered down by the United States). The sharp contrast between the Americans, who are arming, funding, and diplomatically supporting the genocide perpetrators, and the anti-US bloc that wants to stop the genocide, is turning most of the world against the US.



That ongoing delegitimization of US empire is happening fastest in the Muslim East, where by far the two most popular entities today are the Al-Qassam Brigades and the Ansarullah movement in Yemen. Billions of people from Indonesia to Morocco are cheering wildly for Hamas and its supporters in the Axis of Resistance—especially the heroic Ansarullah forces who have shut down the Red Sea for Israeli shipping. Even the people of "Saudi" Arabia, conditioned by state propaganda to view Ansarullah as an enemy, are now applauding Houthi commandos descending from helicopters to capture Israeli-bound ships.

The shock effect of the Gaza genocide has riveted billions of eyes across the Muslim world to the latest videos of the leading Resistance groups. But since Hamas is less a group than an idea—pan-Islamic resistance to Zionism—and since Israel's genocide campaign has cast a heroic glow over that group, it is obvious that the Zionists are not only doomed to fail

in their quest to "annihilate Hamas," but that they have actually managed to raise the "Hamas idea" to the status of guiding light for the world's nearly two billion Muslims.

Thanks to the Zionists and their genocide, Hamas has become the central icon of Islamic political identity today. And even if the Zionists were to kill the current leadership, hundreds of millions of potential replacements wait in the wings.

So, the Zionist entity is doomed to lose, one way or another, in its war to "eliminate Hamas." When the current round of genocidal destruction ends, the idea of Islamic resistance to Zionism will have been firmly implanted, at the deepest level, in the heart of the Muslim Ummah. And the central symbol of that resistance will be Masjid al-Aqsa, the icon of Hamas's heroic al-Aqsa Storm operation.



The Significance of Al-Aqsa

The Aqsa Mosque is the pre-eminent symbol of Islam's ecumenical and spiritual aspirations. As the Qur'an tells us, "Exceptionally exalted is He who advanced His subject [Muhammad] on a night journey from Al Masjid Al Haram [in Makkah] to Al Masjid Al Aqsa [the distant Masjid in al-Quds/Jerusalem]; an area blessed by Us, so that We may show him [Muhammad] demonstrations of Our [extraordinary] power. He is the All Hearing, the All Seeing" (Al-Isra: 01). This verse is the cornerstone of the many accounts of the Isra wal Miraj, the miraculous "night journey" of the Final Prophet (pbuh) from Makkah to al-Quds/Jerusalem and his ascension through the heavenly spheres into the presence of Allah (swt). The Isra wal Miraj is said to be a miracle second only to the revelation of the Qur'an. It is this miracle that inspires the sublime architecture and artistry of the Masjid that stands on the spot where the Prophet (pbuh) commenced his upward journey into the Divine Presence.

The Isra wal Miraj is the symbol and inspiration of every Muslim's inner journey, which

amounts to an effort to ascend spiritually and get closer to Allah (swt). The beautiful Masjid al-Aqsa, and the Dome of the Rock with its magnificent dome featuring intricate geometrical designs evoking Allah's creation of multiplicity out of primordial unity, stands as the oldest and greatest architectural monument in the Islamic world, and the supreme artistic expression of Islamic spirituality. Even today, those who gaze upward at the ceiling of the Dome may experience a hint of spiritual expansion or ascension.

The Aqsa Mosque symbolizes not only Islamic spirituality, but also ecumenicism. According to accounts of the Isra wal Miraj, as the Prophet (pbuh) rose from the spot where the mosque now stands through the heavenly spheres, he met the earlier prophets including Moses and Jesus, peace upon them. This image of the brotherhood of all prophets and the underlying identity of their respective messages informs Islam's role as the final message that brings concord and unity among the followers of all the prophets: "We make no distinction between any of them, and to Him we submit"

(2:136). Hence al-Quds/Jerusalem, the city that is holy to the followers of all three major monotheisms, must be a place where everyone's rights are protected—and not a monument to the supremacism of a narcissistic and genocidal

"chosen people" who spit on Christians and plot to tear down Islam's greatest architectural monument to build a blood sacrifice temple. "And they plot, and Allah plans. And Allah is the best of planners" (8:30).

Al-Aqsa as Symbol of Emerging Unity

As the Islamic Ummah and the Global South, shocked to the core by the Zionist genocide of Gaza, unite in defense of Palestine in general and Al Aqsa in particular, the new order that arises from the ashes of the Anglo-Zionist Empire will be focused on unity and cooperation rather than division and strife. At the international level, this means adapting the Chinese "win-win, no war" approach rather than the Zionist-Western "zero sum, endless war" model.

Meanwhile, the triumph of the Hamas idea—pan-Islamic unity in defense of al-Aqsa—will bring the Muslim-majority countries together under the banner of Islam, and reduce the influence of the petty nationalisms imposed in the 19th and 20th centuries by Western conquerors and colonialists. As the Western Empire collapses, and with it the West's power to divide-and-conquer, a re-united Islamic world, brought together by bonds of communication and commerce enabled by technology, will emerge. As Sayyid Hassan Nasrallah says:

"We do not believe in multiple Islamic republics; we do believe, however, in a single Islamic world governed by a central government, because we consider all borders throughout the Muslim world as fake and colonialist, and therefore doomed to disappear."

Where will the central government of the "single Islamic world" be located? Quite possibly in al-Quds/Jerusalem... insha'Allah. That would be a fitting monument to the truly monumental courage and tenacity of the Palestinian people, whose resistance to genocide over the course of the past century, culminating in the heroic al-Aqsa Storm battle that is still raging as I write this, will be the guiding light and inspiration of not only the re-unification of the world of Islam, but also the re-establishment of at least some sort of bare minimum of justice on Earth, as the sun finally sets on the evil empire of the pathologically mendacious, genocidal Zionist West. ■





WHY ARE ARAB REGIMES SO IMPOTENT IN THE FACE OF ZIONIST BARBARISM?

KEVIN BARRETT

Fear of being targeted by the zio-imperialists and lack of spiritual quality has paralyzed Arab rulers to act in support of the Palestinians. Without public support, they are no match for the demonic energy of the zionist shayateen.

As I write this in late February 2024 CE (mid-Sha'ban 1445 Hijri) the official number of Palestinians murdered by zionist aggression in the al-Aqsa Storm war has risen to nearly 30,000. The real number is considerably higher, since many victims are still buried beneath layers of rubble. Nearly 70,000 have been injured. Most of those killed and maimed have been women and children.

The martyrs dispatched quickly to paradise are luckier than the survivors, who are forced to endure almost unimaginable horrors. The zionists have blockaded food in a deliberate attempt to slowly starve Gazans to death. Social media videos abound showing crying mothers unable to find so much as a crumb for their

famished children. Surviving families, many of whom have lost loved ones, lack housing, heat, and warm clothing in the midst of the cold, rainy winter.

The demonic zionists have deliberately bombed water, sewage, electrical, fuel, and health care infrastructure. They have destroyed the majority of Gaza's housing, in an effort to mass-murder Gazans and expel the survivors. The destruction of Palestinian homes and life support has forced 1.4 million people to take shelter in Rafah on the Egyptian border. Now the zionists are intensifying their bombing of Rafah in the latest episode of their "final solution to the Palestinian problem."

On January 26, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) agreed with South Africa's contention that there is probable cause to believe that Israel is committing genocide (see also here). Any nation on earth could invoke the made-in-USA "Responsibility to Protect" (R2P) doctrine and use military force in an effort to stop the #GazaHolocaust. The very first nations that might be expected to act are those that share Palestine's Arabic language and culture. And yet only two relatively small and weak Arab nations have tried: Lebanon and Yemen. The larger, richer, and more powerful states, beginning with Saudi Arabia and Egypt, have been missing in action.

What explains this bizarre situation, in which the weak show courage while the strong reek of abject cowardice? Let's begin with the cowardice. Egypt has basically been a zionist colony ever since the traitor Anwar Sadat "abnormalized" with Israel in 1979.

Since then, the Egyptian military has been awash in American funding, with nearly \$100 billion in bribes convincing junta leaders to continue betraying their Palestinian brothers and sisters.

Today, Egyptian dictator Abdel Fattah el-Sisi finds himself in a tight spot, as Israel pushes him to endorse genocide and open the border to Palestinian refugees, which would enable the complete erasure of the people of Gaza. To his credit, el-Sisi has thus far refused, saying that any expulsion of Palestinians to Egypt would cause Cairo to break off relations and return to an anti-Israel war footing. But ominously, Egypt is building a gigantic human cattle pen on the Gaza border, "just in case" or so el-Sisi says.

Saudi Arabia, historically a source of both lip service and a degree of real support for Palestine, has gradually followed Egypt's path of abject surrender. The current de facto ruler, Mohammad Bin Salman, implicitly endorsed zionist claims to al-Quds (Jerusalem) by acquiescing to Donald Trump's "Abraham Accords" fiasco, setting the stage for the current catastrophe. Today, the Saudis are trying to make amends for that mistake by insisting on "no normalization without a Palestinian state with pre-1967 borders" and strengthening the Kingdom's peace deal with Yemen's Ansarullah movement, even in the face of US pressure to join Washington's anti-Yemen "Operation Prosperity Guardian," better known as "Operation Genocide Guardian."

It is ironic that Saudi Arabia is tacitly (though not actively) supporting Ansarullah's blockade

of Israeli-bound shipping. After all, it was the Saudis themselves who originally dragged the US into their war on Ansarullah in 2015. Now the tables are turned, and the Americans are trying to drag the Saudis into an anti-Yemen war, so far without success.

Saudi Arabia has a nearly two-trillion-dollar adjusted GDP, while Yemen's is a mere \$0.2 trillion. By that measure, Yemen's economy is one-hundredth the size of the Saudi economy. But despite its apparent weakness, Yemen was not only able to defeat the Saudis and their western backers in a nine-year war, but is now taking military action to try to stop the genocide of Gaza.

Lebanon, too, boasts a mere \$0.2 trillion GDP, one percent of Saudi Arabia's and one-twentieth the size of Egypt's. But like Yemen, Lebanon has distinguished itself by taking military action in support of Palestine. Throughout Israel's genocide of Gaza, the Lebanese resistance group Hizbullah, the de facto main branch of the Lebanese military, has been pounding the zionists nonstop, puncturing Israel's "Iron dome," forcing 200,000 zionist settlers to flee the northern strip of Occupied Palestine, and diverting Israel's forces from the Gaza genocide campaign. So why are mice like Yemen and Lebanon roaring, while lions like Saudi Arabia and Egypt whimper? There are two categorically different kinds of answers: political (dunyawi) and theological-spiritual (rouhani).

Politically, most leaders feel constrained by circumstance; their choices are dictated by



the limits of the possible. Caught between a proverbial rock (zionist power) and a hard place (their own people's support for Palestine) they try to walk a fine line, careful not to anger the zionists too much lest they become targets, while offering sufficient lip service to the Palestinian cause to at least minimally placate their subjects.

That balancing act has become more difficult since October 7. Any Arab leader who takes active steps to support Palestine will be painting a target on his back—and the stronger the steps, the bigger the target. Yet any Arab

leader who is seen as complicit in the genocide risks being overthrown by his own people.

The leaders of Hizbullah and Ansarullah already have zio-American targets painted on their backs. They have less to lose, are principled rather than merely pragmatic, and therefore are free to seek Allah's good pleasure doing the right thing: actively resisting the zionist genocide of Gaza. Whereas leaders like Bin Salman and el-Sisi, presiding over states whose economies and militaries are intertwined with American and hence zionist money and power, would have to take huge risks in order to return their countries to forthrightly anti-zionist positions. And even if they did, and survived, there is no guarantee that, given the current balance of power, they would have much of a chance of succeeding in saving Gazans, much less fully defeating the zionist genocidaires.

So, from a worldly political viewpoint, the situation is bleak. Arab leaders are simply acting within constraints imposed by the power of circumstance. But how did they, and their regimes, arrive in such circumstances? By way of a long process of cultural decline. Whole peoples, led by their elites, have repeatedly chosen expediency over ethics, laziness over diligence, egotism over islam (submission of the self to God).

According to well-known ahadith, one of the signs of Yawm al-Qiyyama is that "the lowest and the worst man in the nation will become its leader." The world may not quite have reached that point yet, but it isn't far off. Today, leaders who represent the best of their nation, like those of Hizbullah and Ansarullah,

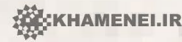
are the exceptions. Most leaders are neither pious nor courageous nor brilliant. When an uncommonly good leader arises, like Imran Khan in Pakistan, he risks being assassinated or imprisoned.

So, the deeper reason the Arab nation is so helpless today is that it, like much of the rest of the world, has declined in spiritual quality, allowing itself to be divided and conquered by the forces of evil. The mediocre-at-best leaders that predominate in today's Arab lands, like the shattered and corrupted societies they preside over, are simply not a match for demonic energy of the zionist shayateen.

But the seeds of better leadership, planted in places like Yemen and Lebanon and Iran and (insha'Allah) Pakistan, are beginning to sprout. As the secular-materialist west declines, and Zio-American power with it, the circumstances constraining Arab leadership will change, and the possibility of good leadership reviving united Arab and Islamic lands (rather like Putin's leadership reviving Russia) will become manifest.

Whatever worldly conquests the zionist dajjal acquires will be only temporary, and will bring the Occupation demons no real happiness nor any respite from their self-inflicted torment of hatred, greed, and cruelty. In the end, it will be seen that they were only digging their own graves—all the way to hell. For as the Qur'an tells us, "They plot and Allah plans; and Allah is the best of planners." (Surat al-Anfal, 30).■

Leader of the Islamic Revolution, “Governments of Muslim countries must prevent energy and commodities from reaching the Zionist regime” (Nov. 19, 2023). At the present time, some Muslim countries are exporting various commodities to the Zionist regime. This infographic shows the statistics regarding those exports based on reliable sources.



- Turkey**
- iron
 - ceramics
 - building materials
 - foodstuffs
 - electric tools, energy
 - raw materials, cement
 - various metals
 - public transportation vehicles

Exports of iron and ceramics from Turkey met **one third of Israel's needs**

Total volume of Turkey's exports to Israel equivalent to **5.7 billion dollars in 2022**

6.2% of Israel's total imports come from Turkey

Turkey was the **5th largest exporter** to Israel in 2022

Jordan

Trade in the areas of water, gas, and electricity

Total volume of trade equivalent to **536 million dollars**



Egypt

Oil

Annual trade in the amount of **270 million dollars**

Total volume of Egypt's exports to Israel equivalent to **115 million dollars**

Bahrain

Relations with Israel, especially in the field of research, development, and technological innovation

Export of minerals, metals, and fuel to Israel

Bilateral trade in the amount of **7.5 million dollars** in 2021

Total volume of Bahrain's exports to Israel equivalent to **3.5 million dollars**

Type and amount of exports to the Zionist regime

Which Muslim countries are filling the gas tank of the killing machine?

Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan

220,000 barrels of oil

From mid-May to the end of October

This amounts to **60%** of Israel's total oil import

United Arab Emirates

Areas of joint cooperation:

- cyber security
- agricultural technology
- financing technology
- construction technology

Investments in Israel's strategic sectors such as:

- aerospace
- energy
- medicine
- industries
- agricultural technology
- water

Exports from UAE to Israel amounted to **632 million dollars** between 2020 and 2021

The volume of trade between the two countries amounted to **2.56 billion dollars** in 2022

Establishment of a fund worth **10 billion dollars** to invest in various sectors in Israel

The UAE was the **17th largest exporter** to Israel in 2022

CRIMINALS IN GAZA, THEIR ENABLERS AND THEIR OFFSPRING WILL PAY A HEAVIER PRICE THAN THE NAZIS

ALI REZVANPOUR

Upfront, let me say that people who say that Israel's actions, namely, murdering over 25,000 helpless human beings (mainly women and children), injuring another 100,000 plus and displacing nearly 2,000,000 to boot are all entirely justified because of the barbaric attack of October 7 have a myopic view of events or are inhuman.

They must have lived in a cocoon and are not aware, or chose to ignore, the hundreds of thousands of Palestinians who have been killed, imprisoned, and driven from their homes since 1948 and they fail to see the ongoing human suffering in Gaza. October 7 does not give Israel a permanent get out of jail card.

If there is an iota of humanity in us, we should weep for what is happening today in Gaza and in the West Bank before our very eyes.

At a minimum, Benjamin Netanyahu is a criminal engaged in war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing, if not a perpetrator of an ongoing genocide. For him there is no hope. He says he is a devout Jew and he had better pray that there is no God because if there is he will undoubtedly fry in hell. He is not alone. There are Zionists in Israel and around the world who support him politically and/or with money and are complicit in all that he does. They are not innocent.

Then there are Israel's and Netanyahu's international enablers. At the top of the pile is the United States of America. Since the creation of Israel, but especially since 1967, financial and military aid, intelligence sharing and especially political support—dozens of vetoes at the UNSC that make a mockery of the most important organ of the United Nations, continued arm twisting of other countries to go along with Israel's trashing of international law and most importantly risking a nuclear war by protecting Israel's right to hide over 200 nuclear warheads when Arabs and Iran have called for a nuclear free zone in the region—have enabled Netanyahu and Zionists to feel

emboldened to do anything and everything to brutalize Palestinians and take over all their land.

Why has the U.S. acted so? The primary reason—Jewish financial and political support for U.S. politicians who do Israel's bidding. Financial support for a country that has a higher per capita income than the UK or France while average Americans are needy! This support has come from American Jews and also from dual American and Israeli Jews. While the U.S. prohibits foreign money in U.S. political campaigns, dual citizens can get around this impediment by collecting money in Israel and then donating it to the politicians of their choice, an easy loophole that by itself should ban any and all dual citizenships. If this loophole is not outlawed our political system and foreign policy are up for sale to any dual citizen! Are our politicians looking after U.S. or Israeli interests?

I Israel is in fact the “perfect” apartheid state—it has three sets of laws—one for Israeli Jews, another for Israeli Palestinians and a third for non-Israeli Palestinians.

A secondary, but false, reason for Washington's senseless and unconditional support of Israel is the untrue attribute of Israel, the only “democracy” in the region. This claim is an insult to human intelligence. Israel is in fact the “perfect” apartheid state—it has three sets of laws—one for Israeli Jews, another for Israeli Palestinians and a third for non-Israeli Palestinians. While Israeli Jews enjoy the good

life, not so for Palestinians with those in the West Bank traumatized by daily abuse from illegal settlers and their Israeli Defense Force protectors. The only positive thing that can be said of this unholy American-Israeli alliance is that Israel sometimes does America's bidding in the region.

In the course of the ongoing war, U.S. hypocrisy is in plain sight for the world to see. President Biden, Secretary of State Blinken and the rest of the cabal correctly claim that Israel has the right to defend itself—but is murdering over 25,000 Palestinians, largely children and women, self-defense? And U.S. leaders demand with sorrow in their eyes that Israel use targeted strikes and keep to the laws of war, then turn around and supply Israel with outlawed white phosphorous and one hundred additional 2,000 pound bombs, bombs that are designed to kill anything and everything indiscriminately! Who does Biden think he is fooling??

Sadly for the United States, the conduct of U.S. foreign policy has further polarized our own country. Backers of Israel have endeavored to shut down any and all criticism of Israel and its Zionist forays in the region. Comments attacking Zionism are labelled anti-Semitic and prohibited on many U.S. campuses with extreme pressure to fire administrators who tolerate such debate and outrage at what Israel is doing. When I was an active professor, I used to marvel that on campus you could criticize the President of the United States but not the Prime Minister of Israel. Efforts to shut down discussion even permeate the classroom. On one occasion when two students disrupted the talk of a

future Prime Minister of a Muslim country, I was told by another student that Israel has a program to instruct Jewish students on how to intimidate professors.

When I was an active professor, I used to marvel that on campus you could criticize the President of the United States but not the Prime Minister of Israel.

The pro-Israeli bias of the U.S. media is also on full display—always referring to October 7 to justify Israeli crimes, always reminding the audience of Iran’s backing for Hezbollah and the Houthis and giving more attention to the plight of the victims of October 7 than to the carnage in Gaza and the ongoing dire predicament of Palestinians living in the

West Bank (death, imprisonment, torture and eviction). Journalistic complicity in underreporting and covering up Israeli crimes is outrageous for the legacy of those who purport to stand up and report the truth.

While the U.S. is the enabler in chief, most of Western Europe, especially the United Kingdom—follow the U.S. line or are at best silent in the face of the slaughter of Palestinians.

Most disappointing are all Arab and most Muslim countries. Most rulers in these countries appear to be scared of America’s shadow. These rulers have continued to afford the United States military bases and do nothing that might upset their American backers to protect themselves and their lavish lives. They are scared to recall their ambassadors to Washington and Tel Aviv (for

those who have relations with Israel), sever relations with the United States and to impose primary and secondary economic sanctions on the United States.

There will be a price to pay for Israel and its enablers. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the International Criminal Court (ICC), world opinion and anti-Israeli and anti-American demonstrations that could lead to the overthrow of some Arab governments. South Africa, joined by a number of other countries, has presented a strong case for genocide at the ICJ. Although Israel and the United States have dismissed the case even at this stage—debating whether to order “provisional measures,” a temporary order that would tell Israel to take steps to guarantee that genocide doesn’t occur in the future, as the case is pending. This case is a serious development. While the court has no

enforcement ability, it has a big reputational impact. Now it seems that a case will be brought against the United States as complicit in Israel’s alleged crimes. If the United States tries to persuade ICJ justices to rule in Israel’s favor, it would be a death nail for the international rule of law.

Contemporaneously, a number of countries have brought a case at the ICC, a venue where convicted criminals will be arrested in countries that are a party to the treaty (the United States and Israel are not).

America is in danger of being dragged into the gutter by Israel. Americans have to ask themselves if such blind and possibly criminal support for Israel is justified? Does it reflect the America that we cherish? If not, how can it be stopped? As for Netanyahu and Biden, they should pray that God does not exist. If their religious professions are heard, they will for sure burn in the fires of hell for their crimes against humanity and for foolishly thinking that they could deceive the Almighty through lies and duplicity.

In our quest for a better world, we all have a role to play—to stand up against oppression wherever it happens and to expose the perpetrators. This we can and all must do if humanity is to survive.

By Professor Hossein Askari the emeritus professor of business and international affairs, George Washington University. ■



ARE POST-WAR GAZA SCENARIOS REALISTIC?

SHAHROKH SAEI

Since the establishment of Israel in 1948, Western countries have thrown their full weight behind the regime.

They have turned a blind eye to the plight of the Palestinians who have been subjected to atrocious crimes and mass ethnic cleansing campaigns carried out by the occupying regime.

Nonetheless, the October 7 military operation by the resistance movement Hamas which dealt a heavy blow to Israel's security and intelligence system, marked a turning point in the region.

The Hamas attack, which further shattered the image of Israel's invincibility, caught European officials and diplomats off-guard. Soon after Israel waged a deadly war on Gaza following the Hamas strike, the repercussions of the regime's onslaught pushed Europeans to place new plans on the agenda over the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.



EU proposal

One of these plans was drafted by the European Union in January.

News sources said the EU proposal includes a series of steps that could eventually bring peace to the Gaza Strip, establish an independent Palestinian state, normalize relations between Israel and the Arab world, and guarantee long-term security in West Asia. The bloc has conducted preliminary consultations with Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the League of Arab States, and other key partners in this regard.

The EU plan largely focuses on Gaza's post-war era. It indicates that the Gaza Strip and the West Bank would be represented by the Palestinian Authority (PA) and Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), rather than Hamas.

According to the draft, a peace conference should be held via the participation of Arab countries, the U.S., the EU and the UN. The conference would have one year to design the framework for a peace plan, taking into account the feedback from all involved parties, UN resolutions, European Council conclusions and previous mediation efforts.

One of the main goals of the EU measure was aimed at bringing an end to Israel's war on Gaza. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, however, has poured cold water on such ideas.

Paris conference

France hosted a conference on Sunday in an effort to help establish a ceasefire in Gaza. CIA chief William Burns, top Egyptian and Qatari officials as well as the heads of the Israeli Mossad intelligence agency and Shin Bet attended the Paris meeting.

U.S. media outlets revealed that an agreement was discussed under which Israel suspends its war in Gaza for about two months in return for the release of more than 100 captives held in Gaza. The yet-to-be-sealed deal would also allow the release of large numbers of Palestinian prisoners who are in Israeli jails and more humanitarian aid into Gaza.

The proposed deal, however, would not end the war. This is because Hamas demands that Israel completely stop fighting, and pull its forces out of Gaza. But Netanyahu insists

Saudi meeting

Last month, U.S. media also revealed that senior national security officials from Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt and the Palestinian Authority secretly met in the Saudi capital to coordinate plans for Gaza's post-war era and discuss ways to involve a revitalized Palestinian Authority in governing the enclave.

According to Axios, Saudi Arabia's national security adviser Musaed bin Mohammed al-Aiban hosted the meeting in Riyadh. The other participants were the director of Palestinian General Intelligence Service Majed Faraj and

that the regime's army will continue the Gaza onslaught till the elimination of Hamas.

Some two weeks ago, Netanyahu said the war on Gaza will continue till 2025, threatening that the fighting won't stop till Hamas is completely destroyed. But his previous comments indicate that the eradication of Hamas is just an excuse to press ahead with the war.

The embattled premier reiterated last month that Israel must retain security control over Gaza after Hamas is "destroyed", a move that contradicts the demand for Palestinian sovereignty. Weeks after Israel launched its onslaught on Gaza, it also floated the idea of pushing Palestinians from Gaza to Egypt — and not allow them to return after the war.

his Egyptian and Jordanian counterparts. They discussed how a new prime minister will receive some of the authority that has been centralized under President Mahmoud Abbas in recent years, if a new Palestinian government is formed, according to the news outlet.

The three Arab countries stressed that reforms are needed for the Palestinian Authority to return to governing Gaza after a post-war transition period. Regardless of the positions of participants in the Paris and Riyadh meetings and the EU's stance, it seems that Netanyahu

and his far-right cabinet are a major stumbling block in the face of efforts to end the Gaza war.

Netanyahu believes that a permanent state of war offers him a lifeline because he is under fire for the regime's failure to prevent the October 7 attack by Hamas. This is in addition to other Netanyahu's headaches including corruption charges and previous mass protests over his judicial overhaul plan.

Arab and Western countries are pressing ahead with plans for Gaza's post-war era. However, several questions in this regard remain unanswered. First, Israel was humiliated over its intelligence and security failure on October 7 and it is now more vulnerable than ever. The regime has committed massacres in Gaza to whitewash its vulnerability. So, how can it contribute to regional security?

Second, the expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank is another sore point. Israeli forces routinely kill Palestinians who protest against home demolitions and the regime's land grand policy. While tensions remain high in the West Bank, is it possible to ensure security?

Third, occupation is the root cause of instability and insecurity in West Asia. What should be done with regard to Israel's occupation of Syria's Golan Heights and parts of Lebanon?

Fourth, the Palestinian Authority remains unpopular in the West Bank over its inaction towards Israel's atrocities. How can it represent the entire Palestine?

These are among the questions that should be taken into consideration in line with efforts to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian issue and bring peace to the region. ■



ISRAELI ATTACKS HAVE KILLED THOUSANDS OF PALESTINIAN STUDENTS SINCE OCTOBER 7

THE LEADERS INTERNATIONAL

The Palestinian Ministry of Education says 5,881 students have been killed and 9,899 wounded in Gaza and the occupied West Bank by Israeli attacks since October 7.

In Gaza, 5,826 have been killed and 9,570 wounded, according to the ministry, while in the occupied West Bank, 55 students have been killed and 329 injured, Al Jazeera reported. The ministry added that 264 teachers and school administrators have been killed and 960 injured in Gaza, while six have been injured and more than 73 arrested in the occupied West Bank. ■



WHY ARE SO MANY JOURNALISTS BEING KILLED IN GAZA?

THE LEADERS INTERNATIONAL

When the Israeli regime began its indiscriminate airstrikes on Gaza, the killing of journalists was considered "collateral damage".

As the number of journalists and media workers killed by the Israeli military in the enclave has risen to 109, many experts have reached another conclusion. The regime has censored its own media from displaying any footage of the Gaza Strip that has been reduced to rubble.

The settler population will put pressure on the Netanyahu government to end the war if they realize that the army has failed to win over Hamas or recover Israeli captives despite killing 1% of the Gazans and flattening entire neighborhoods.

Foreign journalists have been largely forbidden by the regime from entering the enclave at their own free will. They have only done so very rarely in carefully calculated Israeli military tours.

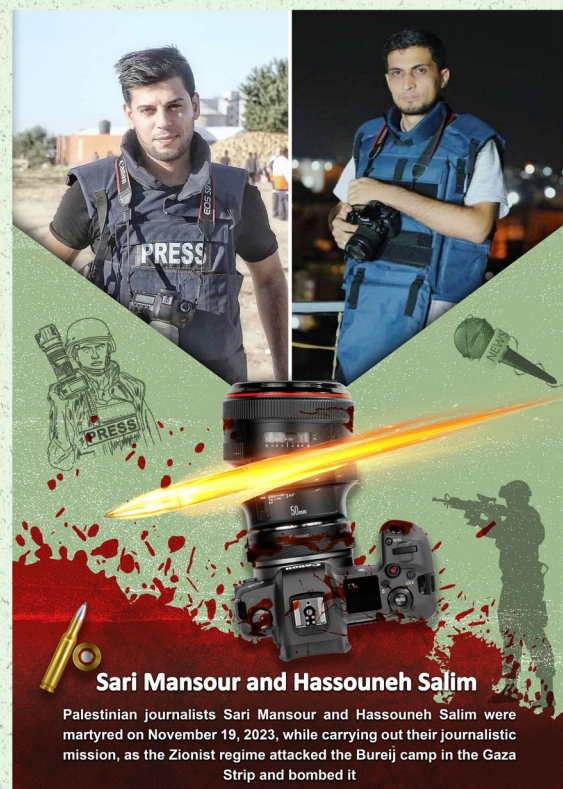


Western journalists, in particular, have been prevented as they would naturally interview the displaced residents of Gaza, travel through the enclave, and begin to observe and report about the regime's war crimes in the territory.

I Speaking at his son's funeral, Wael al Dahdouh, a veteran journalist, said, "To Hamza and to all the martyrs I say we will remain faithful. This is the road that we have chosen consciously. We have offered much, and we have offered a lot of blood because this is our destiny. We shall continue."

This would essentially spin the narrative of the Western media about the reality of what is unfolding in Gaza.





The only lifeline of information reaching the outside world is the brave work of local journalists and those who had been stationed in Gaza by regional media outlets before the war started. This is the only source to counter the disinformation campaign that the regime is waging and is trying its very best to kill this source.

According to the Gaza Media Center?, the regime has killed 109 journalists and media workers in the enclave, over the past three months, turning the blockaded territory into the most dangerous place in the world to work in such a profession. Moreover, the regime has used surgical strikes to destroy the Gaza media offices of some of the most well-known regional media outlets. These are the same news outlets that are using their cameras to highlight just part of the killings

and destructions that the Israeli military is committing in Gaza. The media has become the number one enemy of the regime, which is trying its best to silence the information getting out of Gaza.

In a post on X, Professor Farhang Jahanpour, a former lecturer at Cambridge, Harvard and Oxford universities, wrote on Monday that at least CNN admits that its coverage of Arab-Israeli news "is run through and reviewed by the CNN Jerusalem bureau—which is subject to the IDF's censor." Jahanpour asks: How many more Western media follow this practice without the public knowing about it?

To silence the media in Gaza, the occupation regime has also cut communications in the enclave so that live bloggers who connect with

the outside world and speak about the latest developments are prevented from doing so as internet services continue to go down on a regular basis.

UN workers can speak out against the regime for the most heinous crimes it is committing in Gaza, which they have been reporting on, but streaming live images from the Strip is a totally different ball game. Reporting from hospitals or shelters will change the entire mind frame of the audience.

The Israeli regime has killed some of the most well-known and veteran Gaza journalists trusted by the people in the region. Some have been killed by airstrikes and others on the battlefield by the Israeli military that has invaded the enclave. This is despite the fact that journalists wear a bright blue flak jacket with PRESS written on it as well as a bright blue helmet with PRESS clearly written on it to identify themselves. They are non-combatants.

An analysis by the International Federation of Journalists last month said that during the first 10 weeks of the Israeli war on Gaza alone, more journalists had been killed in the enclave than in any other country in history over an entire year. Reports have also emerged of other journalists going missing, detained, hurt, threatened, or intentionally their homes have been damaged. This fits into the regime's determination to harass the journalists still alive and reporting in Gaza to leave the enclave. Yet many have said they will continue to fulfill their duty until their death.

It is a very courageous stance, having witnessed everything that has happened to continue working and reporting from Gaza. The Committee to Protect Journalists said it was "particularly concerned about an apparent pattern of targeting of journalists and their families by the Israeli military." The organization also said it was further investigating the circumstances of all journalists that the Israeli military has killed. However, it pointed out that such efforts in Gaza are being hampered by widespread destruction and by the killing of journalists' family members, who typically serve as sources for investigators looking into how the journalists had been killed.

Hamza al-Dadouh and his colleague from Al Jazeera were killed in the southern city of Khan Younis when their car was reportedly attacked by the Israeli military. Hamza al-Dadouh was the son of Al Jazeera Gaza's bureau chief, Wael al Dahdouh, who had already seen his wife, another son, and a daughter as well as a grandson killed by the Israeli military since the regime's war on Gaza began more than three months ago.

Speaking at his son's funeral, Wael al Dahdouh said, "To Hamza and to all the martyrs I say we will remain faithful. This is the road that we have chosen consciously. We have offered much, and we have offered a lot of blood because this is our destiny. We shall continue."

The world relies on these brave journalists to continue reporting on the crimes against humanity being committed by the Israeli military against the civilian population of Gaza. ■

GAZA WILL BE THE GRAVE OF THE WESTERN-LED WORLD ORDER

SAUL J TAKAHASHI

By supporting Israel's atrocities in Gaza, the West has shredded what remains of its credibility and brought the 'rules-based' world order it purports to lead to the point of no return.

No matter how it concludes, South Africa's lawsuit in the International Court of Justice arguing Israel has violated the Genocide Convention will go down in history. It will either be remembered as the first step towards finally holding a rogue state accountable for repeated, longstanding violations of international law; or as the last, dying breath of a dysfunctional, Western-led international system.

For the hypocrisy of Western governments (and the Western political elite as a whole) has finally brought the so-called "rules-based world order" they purport to lead to the point of no return. Full-throttled Western support for Israel's genocidal rampage in Gaza has truly exposed the double standards of the West with regard to human rights and international law. There is no turning back, and the West has only its own arrogance to blame.

The litany of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by Israel in Gaza are clear as the light of day for anybody who has access to a smartphone. Social media feeds are overflowing with videoclips of hospitals and schools being bombed, fathers pulling out the lifeless bodies of their children from under destroyed buildings, mothers crying over the corpses of their babies. And yet, the reaction of Western governments – besides seemingly limitless military and political support – has been to label any criticism of Israel as anti-Semitism and attempt to ban outright any expression of solidarity with the Palestinian people.

Regardless of this oppression, tens of thousands of people are coming out on the streets day after day expressing their disgust at Israeli atrocities and Western complicity. Desperate to regain some semblance of credibility, Western governments (including the US) have recently started to be marginally critical of Israeli attacks. However, it is too little, too late. Western credibility has been shredded irrevocably.

Of course, Western hypocrisy is nothing new. According to Western governments, the world should be up in arms about Russian aggression but should be perfectly happy with Israeli brutality and flouting of international norms. Ukrainians who throw Molotov cocktails at Russian occupation forces are heroes and freedom fighters, while Palestinians (and others) who dare to speak out against Israeli apartheid are terrorists. White-skinned refugees from Ukraine are more than welcome, while black and brown-skinned refugees from conflicts in the Middle

East, Asia and Africa (most of which the West are behind) can sink to the bottom of the Mediterranean. The Western attitude has truly been: rules for thee, not for me. The Western position towards China exhibits the same insincerity. China is virtually encircled by American and allied military bases, armed to the hilt. Yet it is China that is guilty of... what? Unable to point to any concrete infraction, Western governments and media can only accuse China of "increased assertiveness", ie, not knowing its assigned subjugate place in the Western hegemonic order.

International justice has become a sick joke. Were the International Criminal Court (ICC) functioning effectively, Israeli leaders would be on trial even as we speak, and there would have been no need for South Africa to approach the ICJ. As it stands, though, the ICC only indicted Africans until 2022, when it announced an investigation into the Russian invasion of Ukraine less than a week after its start. The ICC issued indictments, including for Russia's President Vladimir Putin, in less than a year. Conversely, it took over six years for the ICC to open an investigation into the situation in Palestine, and even now, years later, meaningful action has yet to be taken. While Israel continued its orgy of violence against the people of Gaza, Karim Khan, the British Chief Prosecutor of the ICC, visited Israel and stressed the need for Hamas's crimes to be prosecuted, while going soft on Israeli crimes. Little wonder many civil society organisations are calling for him to be fired.

Of course, Western hypocrisy is nothing new. From the get-go, international legal norms were intended to apply only to so-

called "civilised" – read white – peoples. Savages did not count, and the powerful Western states could – and did – do to them what they pleased. Natives certainly did not "own" land or natural resources, and colonial powers were free to steal and exploit those as they wished. Zionism was also founded on such racist attitudes – attitudes that remain at the core of Israeli policies to this day.

These double standards are apparent with regard to the right to national self-determination – the fundamental right of all peoples to choose their own political system and control their own natural resources. After World War I, US President Woodrow Wilson insisted that self-determination be the guiding principle of the new world order – but, of course, only for Europeans. Palestinians and other Arab peoples found out the hard way that colonialism was alive and well: They were subject to League of Nations Mandates, which justified colonial rule for "peoples not yet able to stand by themselves". The Charter of the United Nations also included provisions for Trusteeship, essentially along similar lines as the Mandates of the League.

The wars of independence in Asia and Africa put a stop to this. The newly independent countries demanded successfully that self-determination be elevated to a right for all. The two international covenants on human rights, adopted in 1966, both stipulate the right of all peoples to self-determination in their common Article 1, making it clear that only with political and economic self-determination can any other human right be meaningful.

The discussion on the right of self-determination went further, to the chagrin of Western governments. The UN General Assembly has stated repeatedly that armed struggle (including that of the Palestinian people) against colonial rule is legitimate. And the 1977 Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions, on the laws of war, also stated that struggles against colonial and racist regimes are valid. International law has definitely developed in the right direction. Still, the systems to implement international law remain weak. This is by design, and it allows powerful countries to act with impunity, and to shield its proteges – as we see with the US and Israel. Even if the ICJ issues a provisional order for Israel to halt its violence, and even if, years later, it finds Israel guilty of genocide, without any enforcement, Israel can (and probably will) simply ignore those decisions. That would surely be the end of the current world order, as any facade of fairness would collapse.

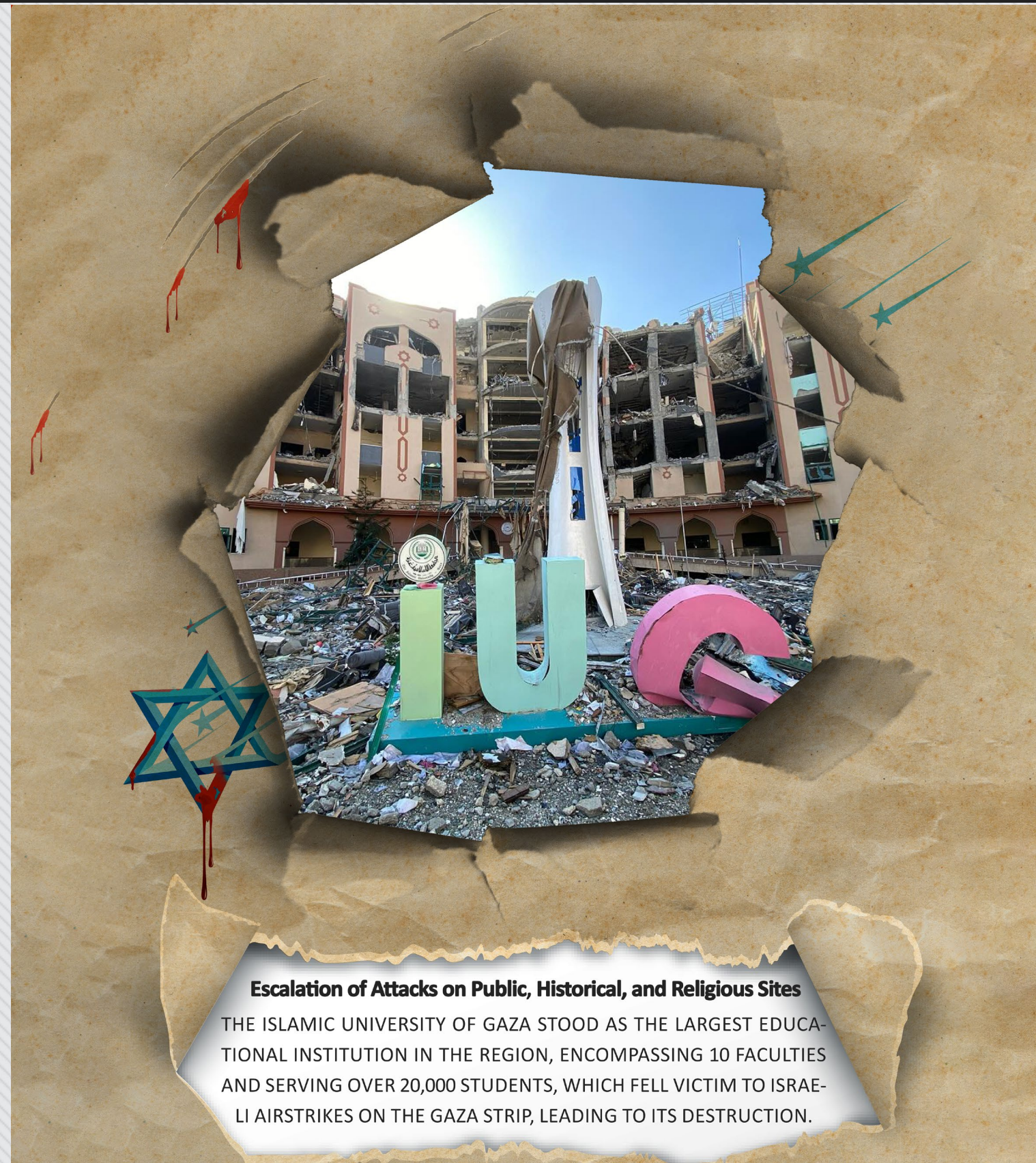
Enforcement of international law is in the hands of the UN Security Council, but with its veto rights for the five countries that happened to be on the winning side in 1945, that body has time and time again proven itself incapable of fulfilling its mandate. The General Assembly lacks any enforcement power. And the UN, the ICC, and most other international organisations are perennially underfunded, meaning they rely heavily on voluntary contributions from states. This makes them vulnerable to undue influence by the rich and powerful: in other words, the wealthy Western countries.

On a more fundamental level, these international institutions are not representative. Though civil

society organisations can contribute to most of the debates, only governments have a say in the decision-making process – despite the fact that, as we see in the case of Gaza, even the governments of ostensible democracies do not necessarily represent the will of their people.

Israeli aggression and colonisation must stop, and abusers of human rights in Palestine must be held accountable – including Western leaders who are complicit in genocide. However, we must not stop there. We must demand a revolutionary reform of international institutions. They must be made truly democratic and egalitarian. They must reflect the voice of the people, through civil society organisations and other democratic modes of representation – not governments that are too often in the pocket of rich and powerful interests.

Creating a world order that will ensure justice and equal rights for all will not be easy. It will require sustained efforts on the part of global citizenry, through putting pressure for change on governments and international organisations. However, it is the only way to ensure that “never again” becomes a reality. ■



Escalation of Attacks on Public, Historical, and Religious Sites

THE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY OF GAZA STOOD AS THE LARGEST EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION IN THE REGION, ENCOMPASSING 10 FACULTIES AND SERVING OVER 20,000 STUDENTS, WHICH FELL VICTIM TO ISRAELI AIRSTRIKES ON THE GAZA STRIP, LEADING TO ITS DESTRUCTION.



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