U.S. votes against UN resolution calling for humanitarian truce in Gaza

United Nations, October 27 (RHC)-- The United Nations General Assembly has voted overwhelmingly in favor of a resolution calling for an immediate humanitarian truce in Gaza -- but the United States and Israel, along with a handful of other client states, voted against it.

The 193-member body passed the resolution, drafted by a group of 22 Arab countries, by a margin of 120 to 14, with 45 countries abstaining. The United States and Israel voted no.

Speaking before the vote, Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi said that voting against the resolution “means approving this senseless war, this senseless killing.” Israel denounced the vote as “infamy”.

The resolution is non-binding, but serves as a barometer of global opinion as fighting between Israel and Hamas nears the end of its third week, following an assault by Hamas on southern Israel.

The United Nations General Assembly convened as Israel intensified its bombardment on Gaza, where phone and internet service have been cut off and Israel has engaged in limited ground skirmishes before an expected invasion.

The General Assembly voted after the UN Security Council had failed to take action over two weeks, with the U.S. and Russia using their veto powers to block proposals supported by the other.

The adopted resolution calls for an “immediate, durable and sustained humanitarian truce leading to a cessation of hostilities” and “firmly rejects any attempts at the forced transfer of the Palestinian civilian population.” It also stresses the need to avoid a wider escalation of the fighting and demands increased humanitarian aid for Gaza, where only a small handful of trucks carrying aid have been allowed to enter over the last week.

The resolution calls for the immediate release of all civilians being held hostage and condemns “all acts of terrorism and indiscriminate attacks.” Israeli UN ambassador Gilad Erdan said that “a ceasefire means giving Hamas time to rearm itself,” and that the vote was not intended to bring peace but to “tie Israel’s hands.”

Speaking on Thursday, Erdan had said: “The only place this resolution belongs is in the dustbin of history.”

Observers predicted that Israel will totally ignore the United Nations resolution, as it has on countless occasions in the past. Tel Aviv -- with total and unconditional support of Washington -- believes it is completely above international and humanitarian law.

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