

Israeli MP says Tel Aviv must erase all of Gaza from the face of the Earth

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Israeli Public Diplomacy Minister Galit Distal Atbaryan. Photo by Moti Milrod/Haaretz

Tel Aviv, November 7 (RHC)-- An Israeli lawmaker from the ruling right-wing Likud Party on Wednesday offered fresh evidence that the Israeli government's aim in its bombardment of Gaza is a genocidal effort to kill or forcibly remove the more than 2 million Palestinians living there, declaring: "Gaza should be erased."

With the support of the United States and other Western countries, Israel has claimed since October 7th -- when Hamas launched a surprise attack on southern Israel -- that its bombardment of Gaza is necessary to destroy the armed group, even though the IDF has repeatedly struck civilian targets and killed nearly 9,000 Palestinians so far, including over 3,500 children.

After screening a 45-minute montage of footage taken by Hamas fighters' body cameras during the October 7 attack, Knesset member and former Public Diplomacy Minister Galit Distal Atbaryan posted on Facebook that Israeli officials must invest all their energy "in one thing: erasing all of Gaza from the face of the Earth."

"That the brave monsters will fly to the southern fence and enter Egyptian territory," Atbaryan continued, an apparent reference to Israel's reported plan to permanently expel Palestinians who survive the assault to Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, imposing a "second Nakba" on the population. "Or let them die... Gaza needs to be wiped out." "Revengeful and vicious IDF is required here," she continued. "Anything less than that is immoral."

Atbaryan's post signified "genocidal intent, clearly expressed," said author and former Irish Times environmental editor Frank McDonald.

Writer and organizer Fiona Edwards noted that despite public comments like Atbaryan's, the U.S. and other Western governments continue to insist that "Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East."

Atbaryan is only the latest Israeli official to proudly announce to the world the violence the government plans to perpetrate in Gaza, both following the October 7 attack and long before the latest escalation in fighting in the region.

Defense Minister Yoav Gallant called residents of Gaza, about half of whom are children, "human animals" as he ordered a "complete siege" on the enclave including a total blockade of food, fuel, and electricity.

Former military officer Eliyahu Yossian said the IDF must enter Gaza "with the aim of revenge, zero morality, maximum corpses," and told Channel 14 in Israel on Monday that "there is no population in Gaza, there are 2.5 million terrorists."

Earlier this year, Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich said at an event in Paris: "There's no such thing as Palestinians because there's no such thing as a Palestinian people." He also said the West Bank town of Huwara should be "wiped out" by "the state of Israel," while Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu proudly presented a map of what he called "The New Middle East" -- without the illegally occupied West Bank, Gaza, or East Jerusalem -- at the United Nations General Assembly just weeks before the onslaught in Gaza began.

"Still questioning a genocidal intent?" said Muhammad Shehada, chief of communications for Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor following Atbaryan's comments. "Atbaryan is from Netanyahu's Likud party. She speaks for him!"

* By Julia Conley, a staff writer for Common Dreams.

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