

South Africa says applying ICJ orders implies a ceasefire in Gaza

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The Hague, January 26 (RHC)-- On Friday, South African Foreign Affairs Minister Naledi Pandor warned that a ceasefire in Gaza is essential for Israel to comply with the measures demanded by the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

"How do you provide aid and water without a ceasefire? If you read the order, by implication a ceasefire must happen," Pandor said in statements to the press after leaving the Court. "We believe the moment is now right to open negotiations for a two-state solution to end this conflict decisively," she added.

In its first resolution on the genocide case brought by South Africa against Israel, the Hague court outlined the following provisional measures:

1) "The State of Israel shall, in accordance with its obligations under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, in relation to Palestinians in Gaza, take all measures within its power to prevent the commission of all acts within the scope of Article II of this Convention, in particular:

(a) killing members of the group;

(b) causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;

(c) deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; and

(d) imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;

2) The State of Israel shall ensure with immediate effect that its military does not commit any acts described in point 1 above.

3) The State of Israel shall take all measures within its power to prevent and punish the direct and public incitement to commit genocide in relation to members of the Palestinian group in the Gaza Strip.

4) The State of Israel shall 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 in the Gaza Strip.

5) The State of Israel shall take effective measures to prevent the destruction and ensure the preservation of evidence related to allegations of acts within the scope of Article II and Article III of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide against members of the Palestinian group in the Gaza Strip.

6) The State of Israel shall submit a report to the Court on all measures taken to give effect to this Order within one month as from the date of this Order.

Commenting on the ICJ's decision, the South African diplomat expressed that she would have liked a clear statement demanding a ceasefire. Pantor also pointed out that she was not disappointed by the decision because the issuance of some of the requested interim measures by South Africa represents a "decisive victory."

At this stage of the proceedings, however, the ICJ has only decided on the need for provisional measures and has not pronounced on whether Israel committed genocide.

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