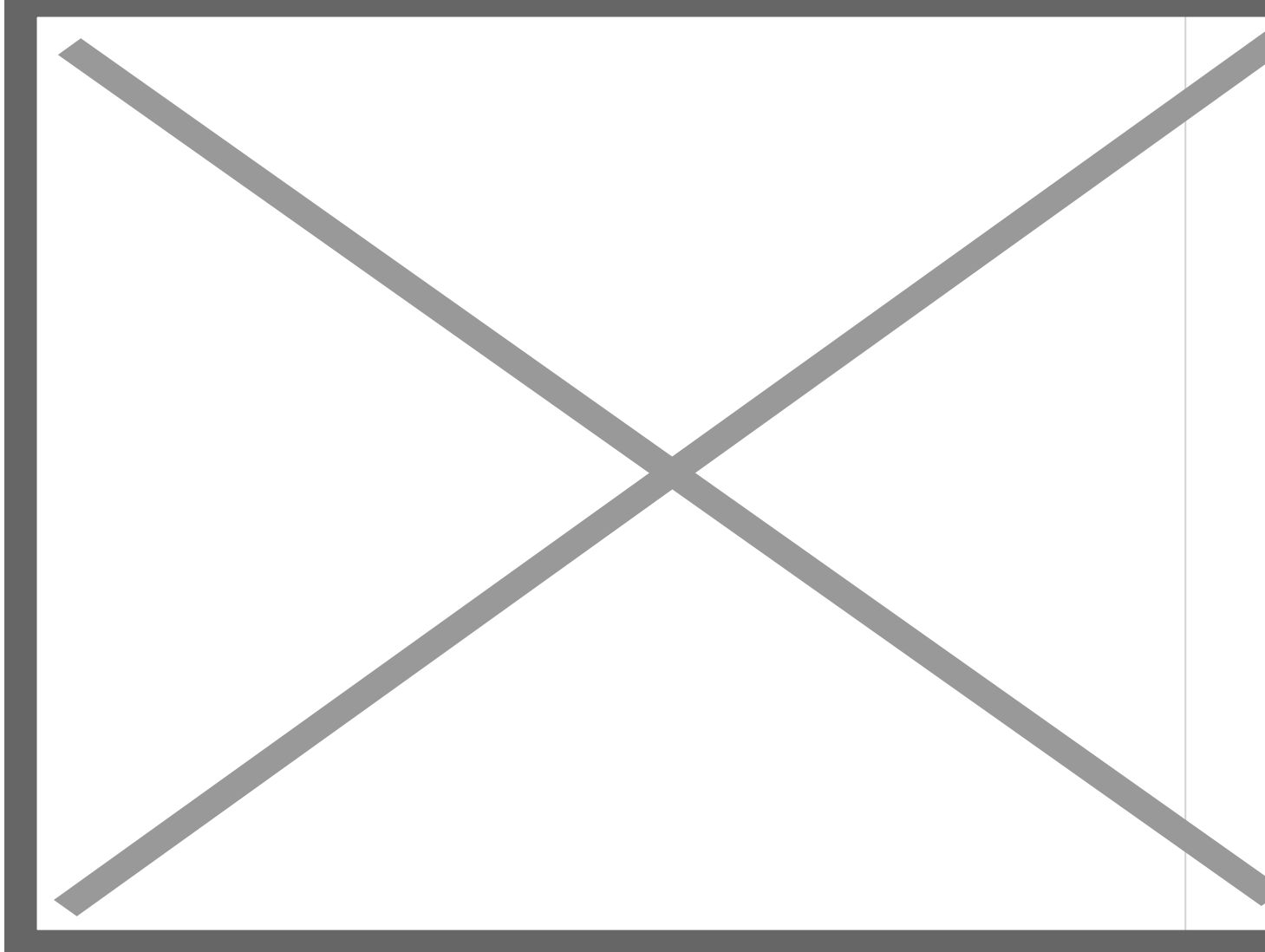


# *U.S. vetoes yet another UN Security Council resolution calling for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza*

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United Nations, February 21 (RHC)--The United States has vetoed another United Nations Security Council draft resolution on Israel's war on Gaza, blocking a demand for an immediate ceasefire between Israel and Hamas.

Arab nations, led by Algeria, put the draft resolution to a vote on Tuesday with the expectation that it would not pass after the United States -- Israel's key ally -- had warned it would not back the text and proposed a rival draft instead.

The U.S. was the only country to vote against the draft text while the United Kingdom abstained. The UN Security Council's 13 other member countries voted in favor of the text demanding a halt to the war that has killed more than 29,000 people in Gaza, according to Palestinian authorities, and displaced more than 80 percent of the population.

For a UN Security Council resolution to be adopted, it requires at least nine votes in favor and no vetoes by any of the five permanent members: the U.S., UK, France, Russia or China.

Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the U.S. ambassador to the UN, said her country was vetoing the resolution over concerns it would jeopardise talks between the U.S., Egypt, Israel and Qatar that seek to broker a pause in the war and the release of hostages held by Hamas.

She rejected claims that the veto was a U.S. effort to cover for an imminent Israeli ground invasion into the southernmost Gazan city of Rafah, where some 1.4 million displaced people are sheltering.

In introducing the resolution on Tuesday, Amar Bendjama, Algeria's ambassador to the UN, said the Council "cannot afford passivity" in the face of what is unfolding in Gaza, and that silence is "not a viable option." "This resolution is a stance for truth and humanity, standing against the advocates for murder and hatred," he said. "Voting against it implies an endorsement of the brutal violence and collective punishment inflicted upon them [the Palestinians]."

Algeria, the current Arab member of the Security Council, put forward an initial draft resolution more than two weeks ago.

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