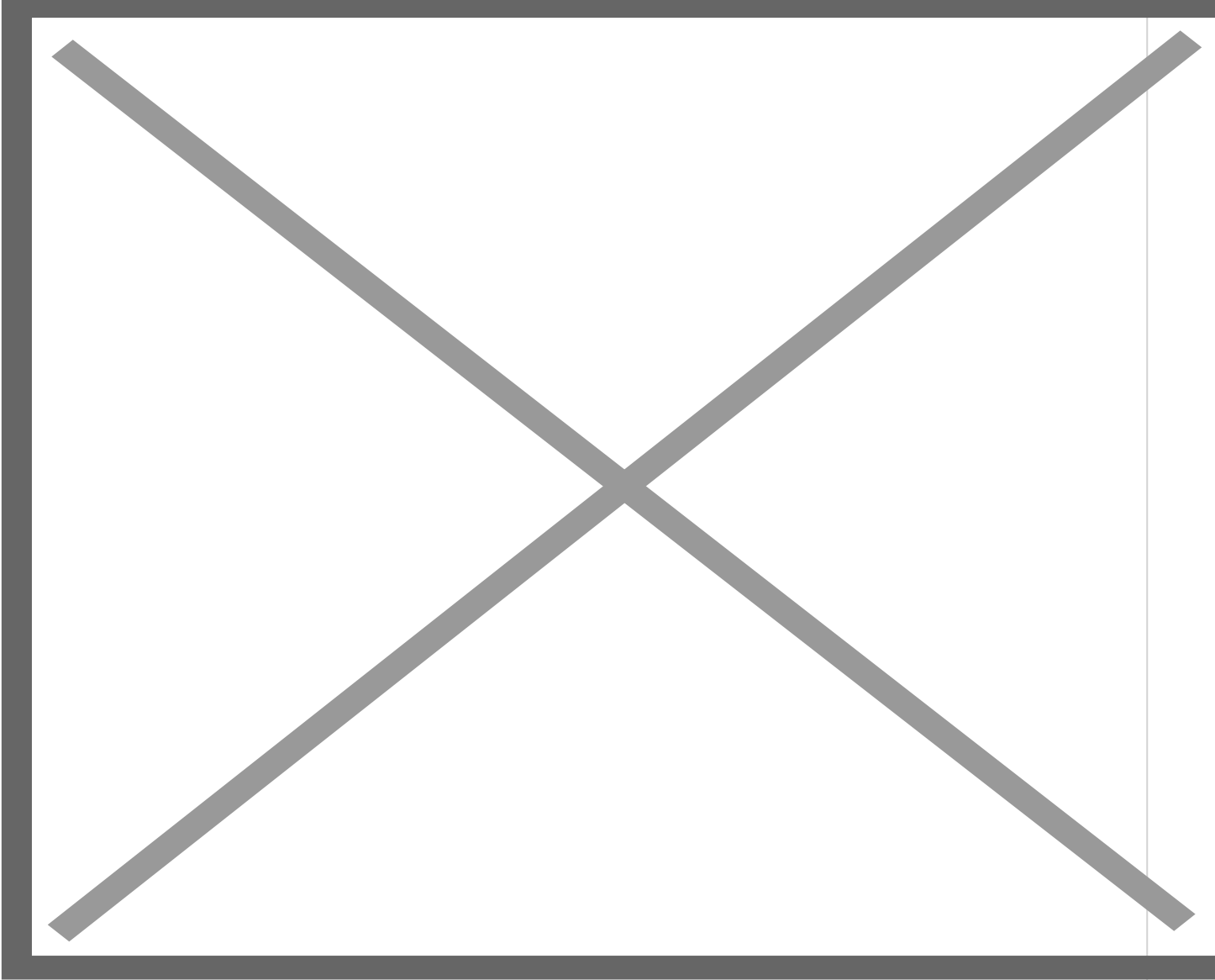


Chinese envoy to United Nations says immediate ceasefire is urgently imperative

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United Nations, February 23 (RHC)-- Speaking at the United Nations Security Council, China's representative to the United Nations, Zhang Jun, has said that a ceasefire in Gaza is an "urgent imperative to save innocent lives and to prevent a wider war."

The Chinese representative criticised the United States for exercising its veto on Wednesday on a resolution calling for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, and called on Washington to show a "responsible attitude" and "respect the established consensus."

"An immediate ceasefire is the common wish voiced by the international community and the consensus of the council's overwhelming majority," he said.

In related news, China has told the International Court of Justice at The Hague that Palestinian "use of force to resist oppression is an inalienable right" and cannot be equated with terrorism.

China used examples of international conventions to defend the Palestinian struggle for self-determination in its presentation to the UN's top court, where hearings are taking place all this week to call on the world judicial body to order Israel to withdraw from occupied Palestinian territories.

Of the 52 countries that sent representatives to The Hague to argue their case, the United States was the only country to oppose calling on Tel Aviv to leave Palestinian territories.

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