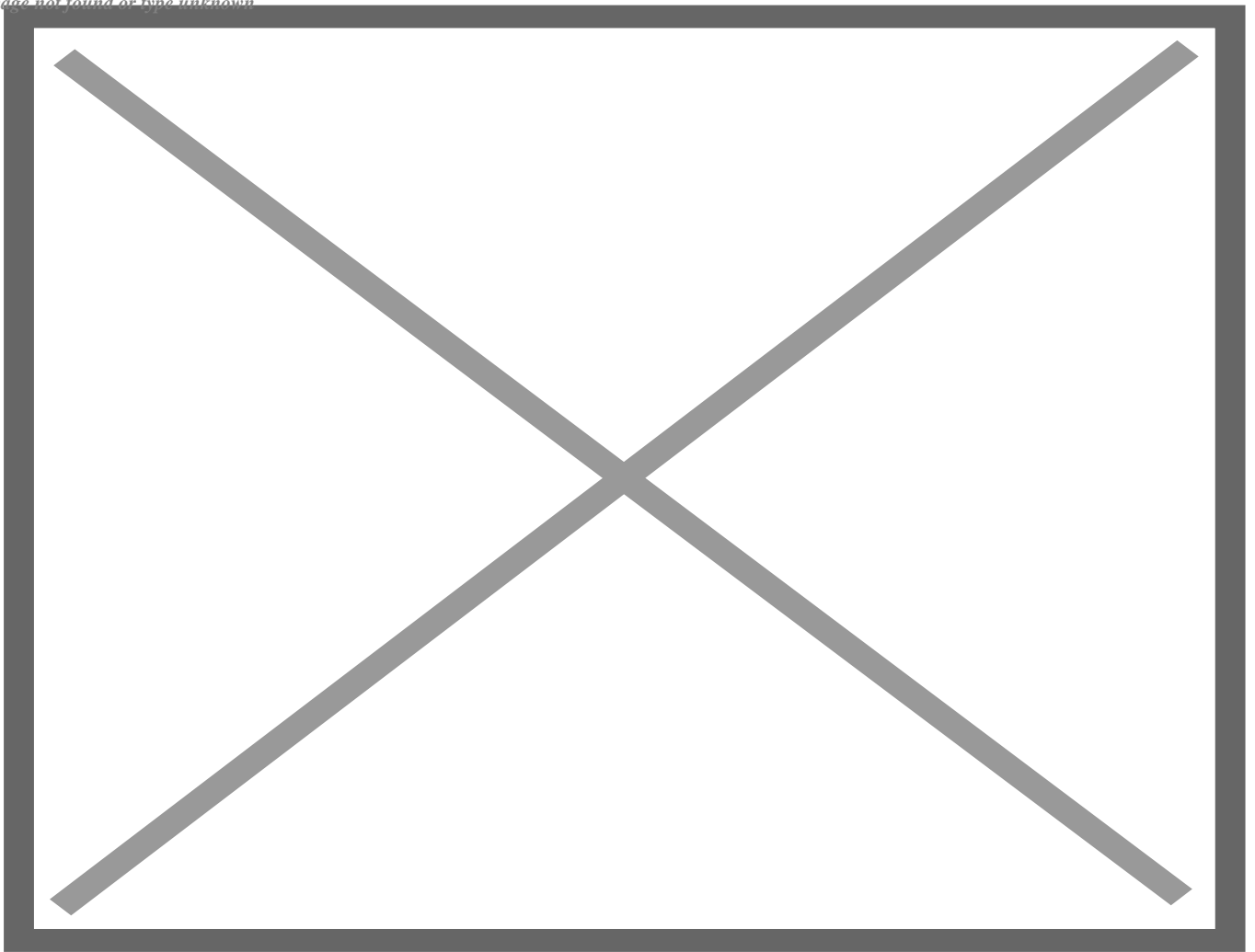


Global condemnation grows over Israel's massacre of Gaza aid seekers

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Paris, March 2 (RHC)-- French authorities have called for an independent inquiry into the killing of more than 100 Palestinians who were collecting food aid in northern Gaza as global outrage against Israel's attack grows.

At least 112 people were killed and more than 750 wounded in the attack, which occurred at the Nabulsi roundabout in Gaza City on Thursday.

Witnesses said Israeli soldiers opened fire as people gathered for flour while Israeli officials said their soldiers fired because they felt threatened when people stormed the aid trucks.

Speaking to national broadcaster France Inter, Foreign Minister Stephane Sejourne said France would not apply “double standards” to the Israel-Palestine conflict. “We will ask for explanations, and there will have to be an independent probe to determine what happened,” Sejourne said. “France calls things by their name. This applies when we designate Hamas as a terrorist group, but we must also call things by their name when there are atrocities in Gaza.”

Earlier, French President Emmanuel Macron said the Palestinian aid seekers were “targeted by Israeli soldiers” and expressed his “strongest condemnation of these shootings.”

Reacting to the incident in a post on the social media platform X, the Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs accused Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of a “disregard for the Nabulsi roundabout massacre” and said he was the “political face” of Itamar Ben-Gvir, Israel’s far-right national security minister.

The ministry said it “calls for imposing deterrent sanctions on the Israeli government to compel it to ensure the protection of civilians and secure their humanitarian needs”.

United States President Joe Biden did not condemn the shootings but said Washington was checking “two competing versions” of the killings and the incident would complicate efforts to broker a truce between Israel and Hamas.

The United Nations Security Council, meanwhile, held a closed-door emergency meeting late on Thursday but failed to issue a statement condemning the killings after the US objected to placing blame on Israel, diplomatic sources told reporters. US Deputy Ambassador to the UN Robert Wood condemned the deaths before entering the chamber, but upon leaving, he said the US “does not have all the facts on the ground”.

Meanwhile, Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Mao Ning said on Friday that Beijing was shocked by the incident and strongly condemned the killings.

“China urges the relevant parties, especially Israel, to cease fire and end the fighting immediately, earnestly protect civilians’ safety, ensure that humanitarian aid can enter and avoid an even more serious humanitarian disaster,” Mao said.

Qatar’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs said it condemned “in the strongest terms the heinous massacre committed by the Israeli occupation” and called for “urgent international action” to halt the fighting in Gaza. Doha warned that Israel’s “disregard for Palestinian lives ... will ultimately undermine international efforts aimed at implementing the two-state solution and thus pave the way for the expansion of the cycle of violence in the region”.

Likewise, Saudi Arabia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned the deaths and reiterated “the need to reach an immediate ceasefire”. Jeddah renewed its “demands to the international community to take a firm position to oblige Israel to respect international humanitarian law, immediately open safe humanitarian corridors, allow the evacuation of the injured and enable the delivery of relief aid.

Turkey accused Israel of committing “another crime against humanity” and condemning Palestinians in Gaza to “famine” as civilians struggle to get the most basic of food supplies.

“The fact that Israel ... this time targets innocent civilians in a queue for humanitarian aid is evidence that [Israel] aims consciously and collectively to destroy the Palestinian people,” the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs said.

In Iran, authorities described the incident as a “barbaric attack by the Zionist regime” while Lebanon’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants said the incident fell “within the framework of the policy of mass starvation and extermination of the Palestinian people, which drives them to despair and adds fuel to the fire.”

Jordan and the Arab League have also denounced the killings.

Ursula von der Leyen, president of the European Commission, said on Friday that she was “deeply disturbed by images from Gaza” and that “every effort must be made to investigate what happened and ensure transparency.”

Earlier, the European Union’s top diplomat, Josep Borrell, posting on X, denounced the incident as “carnage.”

The foreign ministers of Spain, Italy, Belgium and Portugal have similarly spoken out against the deaths of aid seekers. Germany, a staunch backer of Israel, joined the calls to demand an “explanation” from Israel.

“People wanted relief supplies for themselves and their families and found themselves dead,” German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock wrote on X. “The reports from Gaza shock me. The Israeli army must fully explain how the mass panic and shooting could have happened.”

In South America, Colombian President Gustavo Petro moved to suspend purchases of weapons from Israel, a key supplier of his country’s security forces, saying Israel’s actions amount to a “genocide” of the Palestinian people.

“Asking for food, more than 100 Palestinians were killed by Netanyahu. This is called genocide and recalls the Holocaust. The world must block Netanyahu,” Petro said.

Brazil also condemned the killings, saying Israel’s military operation has no “ethical or legal limits”.

Gaza’s Ministry of Health said 30,228 Palestinians have died in the war since October 7. UN agencies have warned there’s a risk of “famine” in the strip if more aid does not enter soon.

<https://www.radiohc.cu/en/noticias/internacionales/348717-global-condemnation-grows-over-israels-massacre-of-gaza-aid-seekers>



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