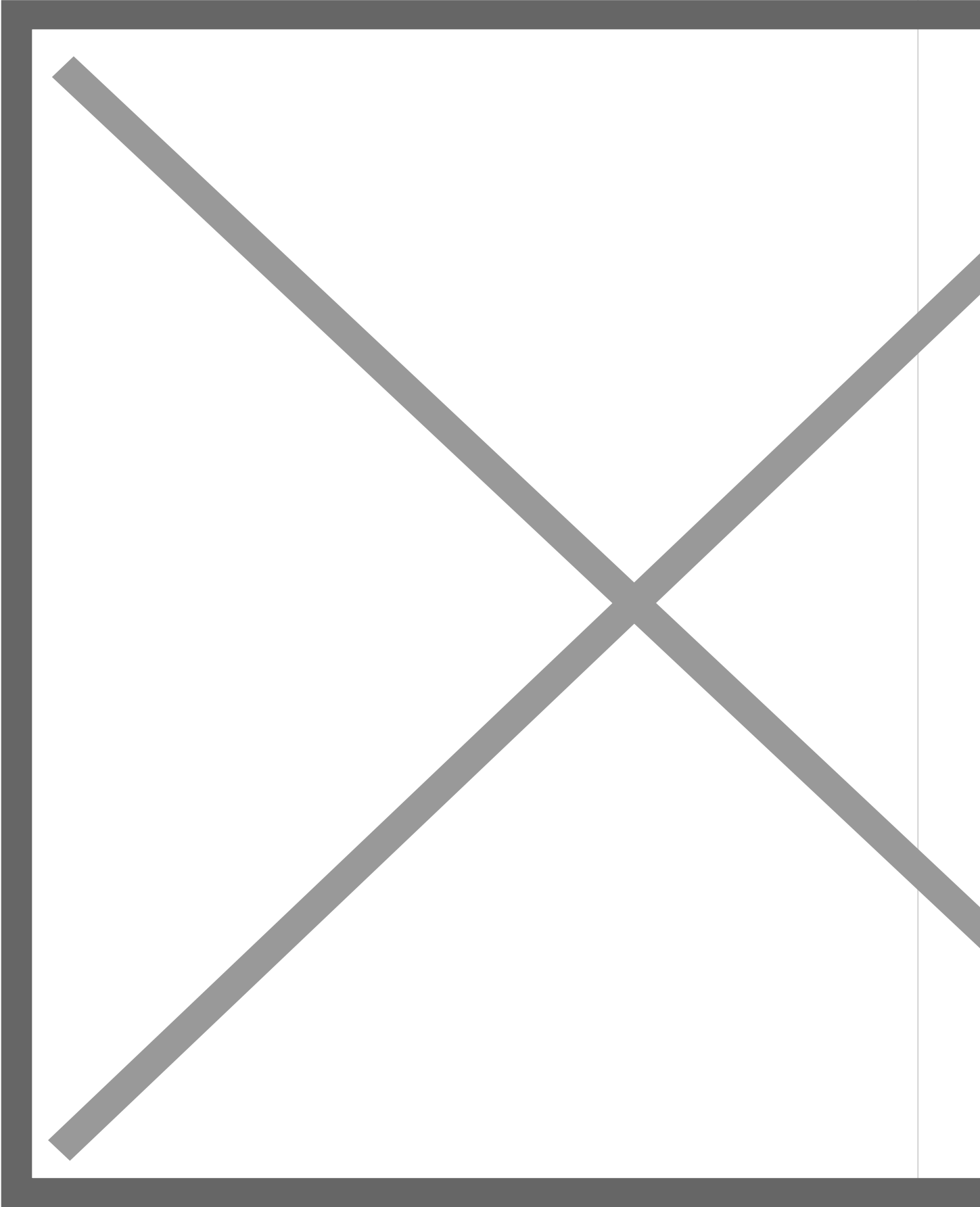


*Top U.S. State Department
official for Israel-Palestine
affairs resigns*

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Washington, June 23 (RHC)-- A senior U.S. Department of State official and expert on Israeli-Palestinian affairs has resigned this week, United States media reported, amid the eight-month war in Gaza that has killed more than 37,400 Palestinians.

Andrew Miller, the deputy assistant secretary for Israeli-Palestinian affairs, cited personal reasons for his decision to leave his job, The Washington Post newspaper reported on Friday.

Miller told colleagues that he wanted to spend more time with his family as the current conflict which started in October had "become all-consuming", the report said. He was a sceptic of U.S. President Joe Biden's "bear hug" approach towards Israel's government, said the Post, which first reported Miller's departure.

Miller's is the latest in a string of resignations from the Biden administration across several government agencies over Washington's continued support for Israel.

The Post added, however, that Miller told colleagues that if not for his personal responsibilities, he would have preferred to remain in his job including in areas where he disagreed with administration policy.

Reporting from Washington, DC, Al Jazeera's Kimberly Halkett said it underscored growing frustration within the Biden administration over the president's staunch support for Israel's war on Gaza. "Already, there have been a number of high-profile resignations, where those who have resigned have said that the president in some cases is twisting the facts or even turning a blind eye, or is complicit in the 37,000 Palestinian deaths and counting in Gaza," Halkett said.

Miller played a key role in the executive order issued in February that resulted in sanctions imposed against several Israeli settlers for attacking Palestinian communities in the occupied West Bank, broadcaster CNN reported.

He was previously a senior policy adviser to the US ambassador to the United Nations, and served as director for Egypt and Israel military issues on the White House National Security Council in the Obama administration.

In May, Major Harrison Mann, a former U.S. Army officer, said he resigned several months ago because of his country's "unqualified support" for Israel's war in Gaza. He quit the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) in November.

U.S. airman Aaron Bushnell died after setting himself on fire in protest outside Israel's embassy in Washington, DC, in February.

Thousands protested outside the White House against the war, and such events are likely to continue in the run-up to the November presidential election.

"We also expect that there will be further protests when Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu addresses a joint session of Congress next month. We know already that there will be a large number of members of Congress who plan to boycott that address," Halkett said.

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