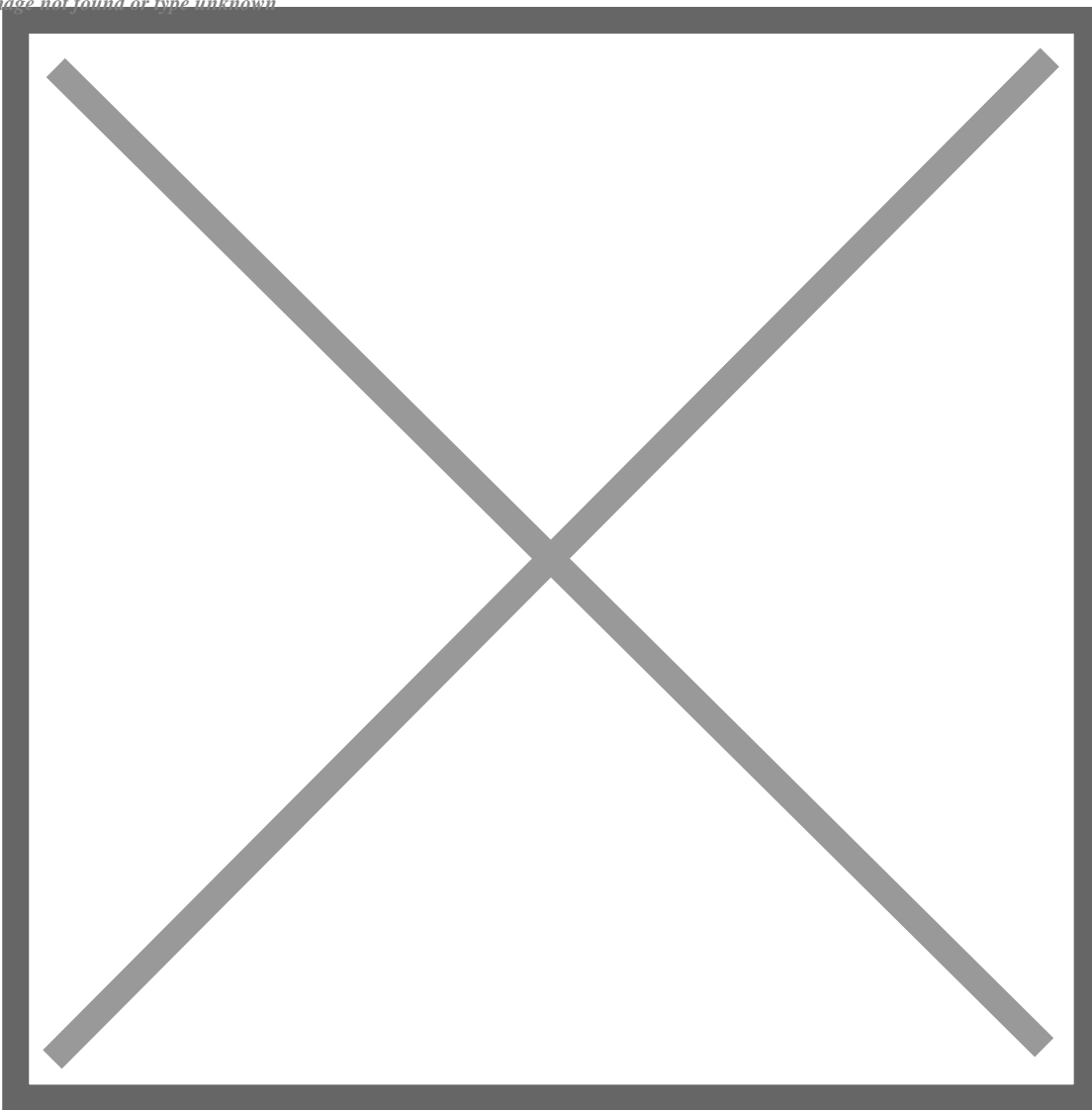


Turkey's president says Israel must face punishment for cruelty, inhumane actions in Gaza

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Recep Tayyip Erdogan has long been a vocal supporter of the Palestinian cause

Islamabad, July 21 (RHC)-- Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan says Israel must face punishment for its actions to deter anyone "from considering such cruelty again." "Israel must face the consequences of its actions, ensuring that the punishment serves as a stark deterrent against anyone considering such cruelty again," Erdogan was quoted as saying on Sunday.

The Turkish president urged the United States to exert pressure on Israel in order to end the "oppression" in Gaza. "To end this oppression, it is necessary for the US administration to pressure Israel and withdraw its support from murderer Netanyahu and his associates," Erdogan stated.

Erdogan also commented on an advisory opinion issued by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) that affirmed Palestinians' right to self-determination and ruled that Israeli settlements in occupied territories must be evacuated.

"I hope this decision and previous ones not implemented by Israel will bring an awakening in the international community," he said. "The whole issue is for those who stand for justice against Israel's actions to unite, ensuring everyone stands alongside the decision of the ICJ. We can only disrupt this game with such a stance."

On Friday, the International Court of Justice said, "Israel's continued presence in the occupied Palestinian territory is unlawful."

Legal experts say the 'landmark' opinion issued on Friday by the ICJ necessitates Israel to facilitate the return of Palestinians to their lands occupied by the Zionist regime since 1967.

The regime, the ICJ said, "is under an obligation" to end it "as rapidly as possible." The court found multiple breaches of international law by Israel including activities that amounted to apartheid.

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