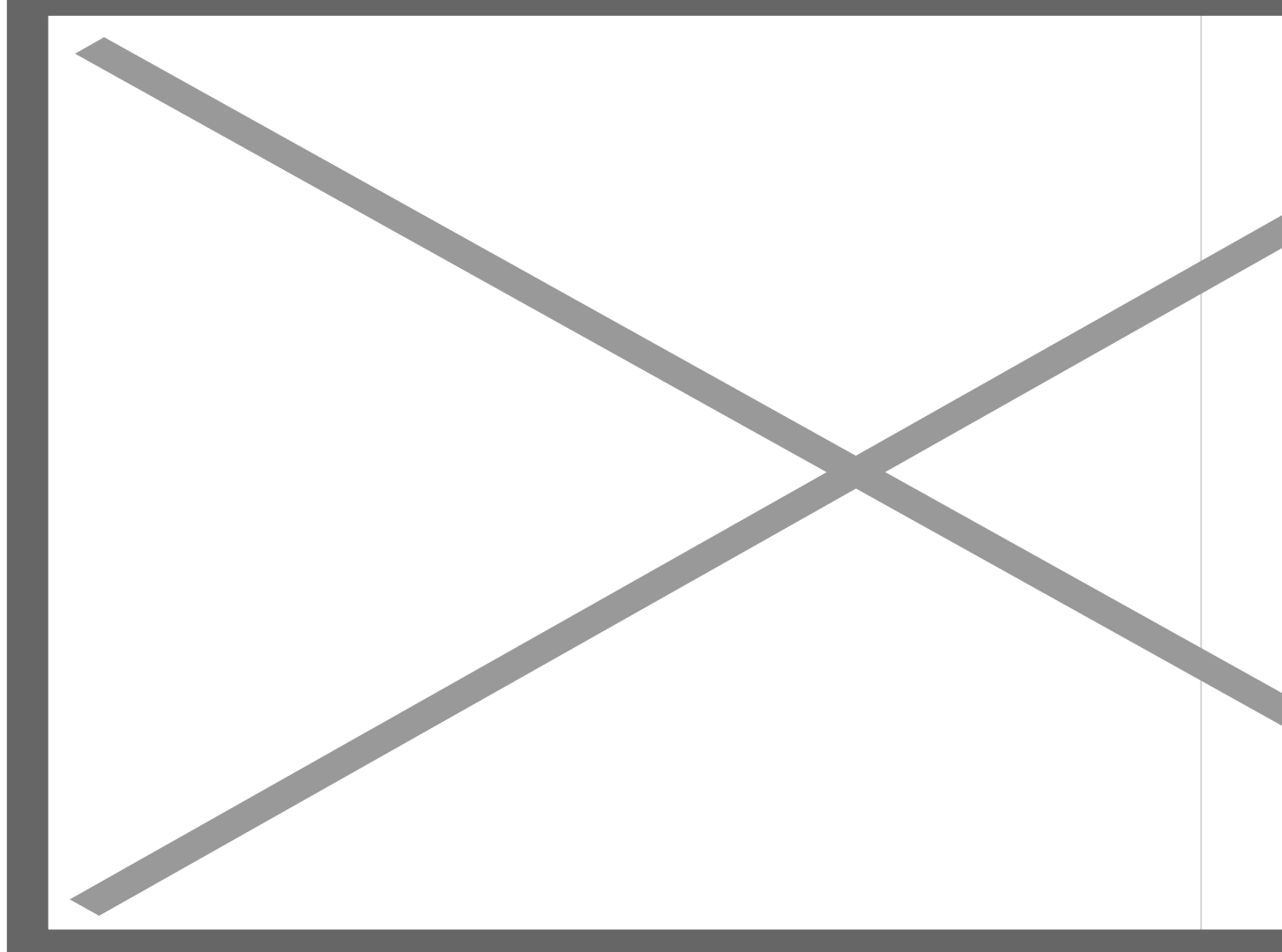


Iranian president denounces the continuation of Israel's brutal onslaught on Gaza

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Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi (R) and his Brazilian counterpart Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva

Tehran, October 19 (RHC)-- Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi has denounced the continuation of Israel's brutal onslaught on the besieged Gaza Strip as a "lunatic" measure that will spread conflicts across the region.

Raeisi made the remarks in a phone conversation with his Brazilian counterpart Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva as the two discussed the latest developments in Palestine and exchanged their views on Operation al-Aqsa Storm, the largest military operation by Palestinian resistance groups against the illegal entity in decades.

The Iranian president described the Hamas-led operation, which was launched on October 7, as a reaction to the continued occupation of Palestine by the Zionist regime and the widespread violation of the basic rights of Palestinians.

Over the past 12 days, the Israeli military has been pounding the Gaza Strip with thousands of rockets and has forced its residents to relocate south, in what is expected to be a precursor to the ground invasion of the coastal area.

"The criminal, lunatic and illegal actions by the Zionists against the oppressed people of Gaza will not only help solve the problem, but will also intensify and expand the scope of conflict to other parts of the region," Raeisi told Lula da Silva.

The Iranian president underlined that the Israeli regime was taking revenge on the Palestinian civilians, especially women and children of Gaza, for its defeat in the Hamas operation "al-Aqsa Storm."

Pointing to the inhumane act of the Zionists in cutting off water and electricity and preventing the entry of fuel, food, and medicine into Gaza, Raeisi said: "We underline an immediate halt to the bombing of residential areas and the killing of the oppressed women and children of Gaza, as well as an immediate removal of the area's blockade."

The Iranian president termed the Israeli regime's actions as a clear example of war crimes and crimes against humanity, and underlined the need for all countries to play a role in dealing with such actions.

Raeisi also called on Brazil, as the interim president of the United Nations Security Council and an influential member of the BRICS group of countries, to work for a ceasefire in and an end to Israel's aggression against Gaza.

Lula da Silva, for his part, approved of the Iranian president's stance on the situation in Gaza and the need to immediately stop the attacks on the besieged area, establish a ceasefire and reopen the crossings for humanitarian aid and treatment of the injured.

The Brazilian president censured as "unacceptable" the occupying regime's policy of forcibly relocating the residents of Gaza and its attacks on Palestinian women and children as well as their schools and hospitals.

The death toll from Israeli airstrikes on Gaza has risen to nearly 3,500, while more than 12,500 others have sustained various injuries in the coastal territory, according to Palestinian official news agency Wafa.

Israel started its bombardment of the Gaza Strip after Hamas, which is based in Gaza, started Operation Al-Aqsa Storm on October 7, and launched attacks on settlers and military forces that killed some 1,400 people.



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