

UN Security Council adopts resolution for humanitarian pauses in Gaza

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United Nations, November 15 (RHC)-- The UN Security Council has passed a resolution calling for “urgent and extended humanitarian pauses and corridors throughout the Gaza Strip” to allow for aid delivery and medical evacuations, after four failed attempts to respond to the Israel-Hamas war.

The resolution, introduced by Malta on Wednesday, also called for “corridors throughout the Gaza Strip for a sufficient number of days” to safeguard civilians, particularly children, ambassador Vanessa Frazier told the Council. It additionally asked for the unconditional release of captives held in Gaza.

It was adopted by 12 votes in favour, zero against and three abstentions – Russia, the United States and the United Kingdom.

“It is binding international law, but we know that there are many Security Council resolutions that are binding international law that Israel does not comply with. But I think it will add added pressure on Israel, particularly as the U.S. allowed this resolution to go through – it could’ve used its veto,” said Al Jazeera’s diplomatic editor James Bays.

“Out of the previous four resolutions that didn’t go through, probably the one nearest to going through was the one on October 18th. That’s when all the countries either voted for, or abstained, and the only country that voted against was the United States – it wielded its veto,” Bays said.

“We’ve had 29 days since that date, and we know all the death toll figures are undercounted, but in that time there have been 7,600 more deaths and 3,653 of those deaths were children. What was called for then was a resolution calling for humanitarian pauses,” he added.

The resolution made no mention of a ceasefire. It didn’t refer to Palestinian group Hamas’s attack on Israel on October 7, during which Israeli authorities say about 1,200 people were killed and some 240 were taken captive.

It omitted Israel’s retaliatory air strikes and ground offensive in Gaza, which Ministry of Health officials say have killed more than 11,000 Palestinians, two-thirds of them women and children.

The resolution listed fuel as among the items that must be allowed to be delivered “unhindered.” And it required that the UN chief give a report on its implementation at the next meeting of the Security Council concerning the Middle East.

Gilad Erdan, Israel’s ambassador to the UN, was quick to respond that the resolution would have “no meaning,” calling it “disconnected from reality.” He maintained that Israeli was acting in accordance with international law in Gaza, a claim that has been rejected by several experts on the subject.

Speaking ahead of a vote on her country’s draft resolution, Malta’s ambassador to the UN said it “aims to ensure respite from the current nightmare in Gaza and give hope to the families of all victims.”

A last-minute amendment introduced by Russia called for an “immediate, durable and sustained humanitarian truce, leading to a cessation of hostilities.”

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