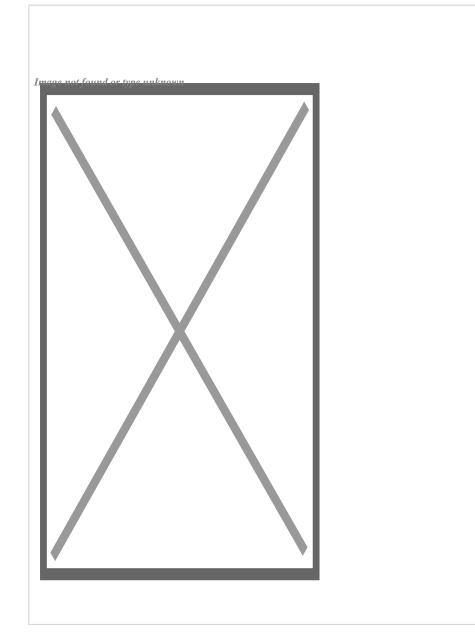# France calls for immediate ceasefire in Gaza after consulate staff killed in Israeli bombing

Paris, December 19 (RHC)-- France's top diplomat has called for an "immediate" ceasefire in the Israeli war on the Gaza Strip as the country's foreign ministry condemned the bombing of a residential building that killed one of its staff in the besieged Palestinian territory.

Catherine Colonna has pressed for an "immediate and durable" truce in Israel's war on Gaza and said Paris was "deeply concerned" over the situation in the war-ravaged territory. "Too many civilians are being killed," the French foreign minister said during remarks in Tel Aviv with her Israeli counterpart Eli Cohen while discussing the occupying regime's brutal onslaught on Gaza since early October.

In a statement earlier, the French Foreign Ministry censured Israel's killing of one of its staffers in Gaza and demanded that the regime's authorities shed full light on the circumstances of the deadly incident. An Israeli bombing hit a building on the southern city of Rafah on Wednesday evening, killing a French consulate employee and 10 others who had been sheltering with colleagues and their family members in the residential area.

The employee had been working with the French government in Gaza since 2002, and some of his family members had already been evacuated from Gaza, the French Foreign Ministry said in the statement, offering condolences.

"France condemns this bombing of a residential building which caused the death of many other civilians. We demand that all light be shed by the Israeli authorities on the circumstances of this bombing, as quickly as possible," the statement added.

Shortly before her arrival in Tel Aviv, Colonna also condemned increasing attacks by Israeli settlers on Palestinians in the occupied West Bank. "Since October 7th, unfortunately, some settlers, driven by their ideological blindness… have committed crimes" against Palestinians, she said, adding: "These settlers must be punished."

Since the start of the offensive on October 7, the Israeli regime has killed some 19,000 Palestinians and injured more than 50,000 others. Thousands more are also missing and presumed dead under the rubble in Gaza, which is under "complete siege" by Israel.

The international community, except for the United States, has unanimously called for an end to Israel's hostilities against Palestinian civilians since the occupying regime unleashed its genocidal war more than two months ago.

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