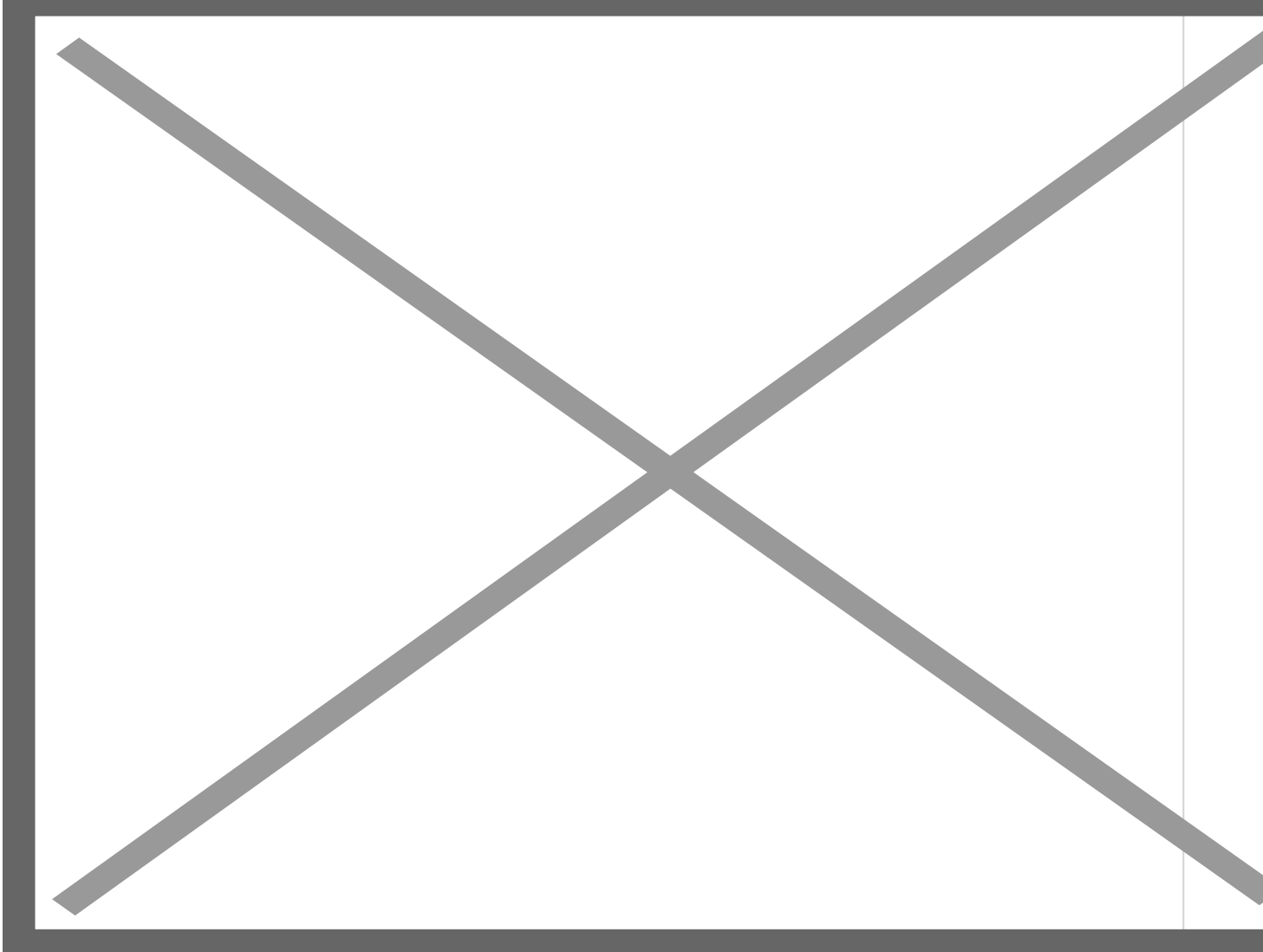


World condemns U.S. veto of Gaza ceasefire resolution at UN Security Council

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United Nations, February 22 RHC)-- Condemnations have poured in from world countries after the United States once again vetoed a United Nations Security Council resolution that demanded an immediate ceasefire in Israel's months-long genocidal war on the besieged Gaza Strip.

The Algeria-drafted resolution called for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza and the "unconditional" release of prisoners, with representatives of 13 countries at the 15-member Security Council voting in favor of the resolution and Britain abstaining.

Israel has killed more than 29,000 people, mostly women and children, and injured some 70,000 others in Gaza since the regime launched its US-backed onslaught on October 7, 2023. The veto, which marks the third time Washington has opposed such a resolution, drew criticism from many countries including China, Russia, Saudi Arabia and even close US allies, France and Slovenia.

China warned on Wednesday that Washington's decision to veto the UNSC resolution pushed the war in Gaza into an "even more dangerous" situation. "China voted in favor of the draft resolution," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told a regular briefing in Beijing. "The United States has once again single-handedly vetoed it, pushing the situation in Gaza into an even more dangerous situation, in which all parties concerned... have expressed their strong disappointment and dissatisfaction."

Expressing serious concerns about the situation in Gaza, the Chinese official described as a "moral obligation" the halt to the Israeli aggression on the besieged Palestinian territory.

"The humanitarian situation in Gaza is becoming extremely serious, and regional peace and stability have been severely impacted," Mao said, adding, "The Security Council must take action as quickly as possible to bring a halt to hostilities. This is a moral obligation that cannot be put off."

The Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson stressed that, "We will continue to work with all parties in the international community to push the Security Council to take further responsible and meaningful actions, and make unremitting efforts to quell the war in Gaza at an early date."

Russia's Ambassador to the UN Vasily Nebenzia said the US veto marked "another black page in the history of the Security Council." Nebenzia said the U.S. was trying to play for time so that Israel could complete its "inhumane plans" for Gaza, namely to squeeze the Palestinians out of the territory and completely "cleanse" the enclave. The Russian envoy added that no matter how bitter the "aftertaste" of the vote may be, "we are not in the mood to give up."

France's UN envoy Nicolas de Riviere expressed regret that the resolution "could not be adopted, given the disastrous situation" in Gaza. De Riviere underlined that France, which voted for the resolution, would continue to work towards all captives being released and for a ceasefire to be "implemented immediately."

Amar Bendjama, Algeria's UN envoy, said the UNSC "failed once again" and warned the move could have profound consequences for the West Asia region as a whole. "The international community should respond to the calls for ending the killing of Palestinians by calling for an immediate ceasefire. All those impeding such calls should review their policies and their calculations because wrong decisions today will have a cost on our region and our world tomorrow. And this cost will be violence and instability," Bendjama said.

"So ask yourselves, examine your conscience. What will your decisions today cause? How will history judge you?"

Qatar's UN Ambassador Alya Ahmed Saif Al Thani also said she regretted the UNSC's failure to adopt the Algeria-drafted resolution and pledged to continue facilitating efforts to secure a truce in Gaza.

Saudi Arabia's Foreign Ministry expressed "regret" at the veto and stressed the "need now more than ever to reform the Security Council to carry out its responsibilities in maintaining peace and security with credibility and without double standards."

Meanwhile, Norway's mission to the UN said it "regrets" that the council was not able to adopt a resolution on an immediate humanitarian ceasefire. "It is imperative to end the horror in Gaza," it added.

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