

United Nations Security Council urges immediate ceasefire in Gaza

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The United Nations Security Council holds an emergency meeting on the situation in the Gaza Strip on September 4, 2024. (Photo via X)

United Nations, September 5 (RHC)-- The United Nations Security Council has expressed outrage over the lack of progress in a ceasefire aimed at terminating Israel's months-long genocide against Palestinians in the besieged Gaza Strip.

The 15-member body held its second emergency meeting on Gaza in less than a week on Wednesday, hearing a growing call for an immediate ceasefire in the besieged Palestinian territory as members discussed the humanitarian situation there as well as the escalating tensions in the occupied West Bank.

Council members voiced their frustration over Israel's refusal to accept the ceasefire outlined in Resolution 2735, which called for the release of captives and Israel's withdrawal from Gaza.

"There is a sense of outrage felt around the globe," said Slovenia's Ambassador Samuel Žbogar, whose delegation holds the council's rotating presidency this month. "Outrage in Palestine that the international community is failing them; outrage on Israeli streets that the hostages continue being held in Gaza; outrage of the global public that this war does not stop." Žbogar reminded the 15-nation council that it is their job to push for peace.

Rosemary Anne DiCarlo, the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peace-building Affairs, emphasized the need for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and to speed up humanitarian aid deliveries to the besieged Palestinian territory.

DiCarlo hailed the continued efforts of Egypt, Qatar and the United States to establish a ceasefire in Gaza, saying recent meetings in Doha and Cairo have attempted to bridge the gaps but major differences remain.

"The situation on the ground is dire and deplorable, with Israeli military operations continuing throughout Gaza and the death toll growing tragically," she added, stressing that Israel must fulfill its obligations based on international laws to protect civilians and ensure their safety.

Riyad Mansour, the Palestinian ambassador to the United Nations, underscored the necessity of an urgent ceasefire in Gaza and said the occupying entity was using the "most despicable means to achieve its colonial aims" in the coastal territory.

"Israel has unleashed a full-fledged war against the Palestinian people. Israel is seeking to impose a military solution to the conflict by disappearing a nation. There is no denying these facts. From genocide to apartheid, Israel is showing the world its willingness and readiness to use the most despicable means to achieve its colonial aims," Mansour said at the meeting in New York.

"We need ceasefire, ceasefire now. Everybody is saying that not only the Palestinians, but the millions of Israelis who are in the streets, who care about their hostages. And they're saying to their leadership, which is not listening to them, ceasefire now. Close the deal. Accept, you know, the project or the proposal on the table so that we can stop the killing and save everyone, the Israeli who are hostages and the Palestinians who are prisoners."

Amar Bendjama, Algeria's ambassador and representative to the United Nations, blamed the Security Council for failing to implement its resolutions to stop the Israeli war on Gaza and said: "We face a test regarding our adherence to international law and this multilateral system."

"We are here today because diplomacy has failed and how could we stop the suffering," he said, adding that there should be no double standard while assessing civilian suffering as Israel continues with "mass punishment" and seeks to "erase" Palestinian identity.

Pointing to the alarming number of civilian deaths and massive destruction in Gaza, the Algerian diplomat reminded the council that the Israeli occupying forces have killed 24 Palestinians in detention centers

since October last year.

Bendjama also requested that the Council should discuss the escalation of violence in the West Bank, where at least 39 Palestinians, including children, have been killed, since Israel launched a large-scale offensive on August 28.

Moreover, Algeria's ambassador to the UN said the plight of Palestinian prisoners is "too often ignored," and that they have been "silenced," and "abandoned by the international community."

"They endure torture. They endure abuse. They endure denial of access by the ICRC in a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law and human rights law," Bendjama underlined, referring to the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The United States called for patience with diplomacy, while other members, including Guyana and Malta, demanded quicker progress and warned of further action if the Israeli war continues.

"It is gravely alarming that with each briefing this council receives, the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Israel steadily worsens," Malta's Ambassador Vanessa Frazier said.

Israel launched its brutal Gaza offensive after the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas carried out a surprise operation against the occupying regime in retaliation for its intensified atrocities against the Palestinian people.

During its operation, Hamas took 251 Israelis captive, 97 of whom now remain in Gaza, including the bodies of at least 33 confirmed dead by the occupation's army.

After 11 months of Gaza war, Israel has failed to achieve its declared objectives of eliminating Hamas and freeing captives, despite killing at least 40,861 Palestinians, mostly women and children.

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