

Saudi Crown Prince demands immediate end to Israeli genocidal war on Gaza and Lebanon

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Saudi Crown Prince condemns massacre committed against Palestinian and Lebanese people at

the Arab-Islamic summit.

Leaders attend the Arab-Islamic summit in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia [Turkish Presidency/Murat Kula/Anadolu Agency]

Riyadh, November 11 (RHC)-- Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has demanded that Israel immediately stop its military aggression in Gaza and Lebanon at the opening of a summit of Arab and Muslim leaders in Riyadh.

In an address before the joint Arab League and Organisation of Islamic Cooperation summit on Monday, the crown prince, also known as MBS, condemned the "massacre committed against Palestinian and Lebanese people." He urged Israel "to refrain from any further act of aggression," and called on countries around the world to recognize the Palestinian statehood.

Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, also joined MBS in condemning Israel's military operation in Gaza and Lebanon, saying that "words cannot express the plight of the Palestinian people".

"The actions taken by Israel against the Palestinian people are undermining efforts to achieve lasting peace. It is only with justice that we will be able to establish lasting peace." "The world cannot turn a blind eye" on the Israeli violence, Aboul Gheit stressed.

The Saudi Press Agency said Israel's "aggression" in Gaza and Lebanon "has compelled Arab and Islamic leaders to take urgent action."

"Key priorities [for the summit] include halting the aggression, protecting civilians, providing support to the Palestinian and Lebanese people, unifying positions, and exerting pressure on the international community to take decisive steps to end the ongoing attacks and establish lasting peace and stability in the region," it added.

The Saudi state-run Al Ekhbariya news channel broadcast footage of Nigerian President Bola Tinubu and Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati landing in Riyadh for the summit on Sunday evening.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also attended the summit.

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian did not attend the meeting due to pressing "executive matters". But in a phone call with MBS, Pezeshkian said Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref will attend the summit. The November 2023 meeting had featured an appearance by Iran's then-President Ebrahim Raisi.

The summit comes a year after a similar gathering in Riyadh of the Cairo-based Arab League and the Jeddah-based Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), during which leaders condemned Israeli actions in Gaza as "barbaric". However, they were unable to agree on action against Israel despite calls to sever economic and diplomatic ties with it.

The 57-member OIC and 22-member Arab League include countries which recognise Israel and those firmly opposed to its regional integration. Last year's summit in Riyadh saw disagreement on measures like severing economic and diplomatic ties with Israel and disrupting its oil supplies.

Donald Trump's election last week for a second term in the White House is likely to be on leaders' minds in Riyadh, said Anna Jacobs, senior Gulf analyst for the International Crisis Group think tank.

“This summit is very much an opportunity for regional leaders to signal to the incoming Trump administration what they want in terms of US engagement,” she told the AFP news agency. “The message will likely be one of dialogue, de-escalation and calling out Israeli military campaigns in the region.”

Umer Karim, an expert on Saudi politics at the University of Birmingham, said Riyadh will use Monday’s summit to signal to the incoming Trump team that it remains a strong partner.

The message is that Trump “can rely on the Saudis as being representatives of the Muslim world”, and that “if you want to extend American interests in the region, Saudi Arabia is your bet”, he said.

Israel’s genocide in Gaza began after an unprecedented Hamas attack in October 2023, claiming more than 1,100 lives. Since then, Israel has killed more than 43,600 Palestinians in Gaza, most of them civilians.

Israel has also targeted the Lebanese armed group, Hezbollah, killing more than 3,100 people in that country in a year.

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