

Gaza Under Zionist Attack

**Libya Calls for Cutting Relations and
Expulsion of Ambassadors of
pro-Israel States**



Hamas official urges Libyan authorities to release members in state-run prisons



Hamas political bureau member Muhammad Nazal has urged authorities in Libya to release Palestinian detainees in their prisons.

Nazal told The Libya Observer in an interview that the time has come to release the Palestinians detained "under the pretext" of smuggling weapons to Hamas.

He urged the authorities to view the initiative from a humanitarian and moral dimension related to supporting the Palestinian people.

A Palestinian resistant should not be detained in a revolutionary country like Libya, with which we share fraternal, humanitarian, moral, and national relations, he said.

Nazal held the Israeli forces responsible for the catastrophic situation in the Gaza Strip, saying that they were punishing the popular incubator in Gaza for standing behind the Palestinian resistance movements.

The Israelis are "targeting hospitals, health centres, schools, mosques, and homes of defenceless people, but the Palestinian people are steadfast and solid, he said as he threatened the occupying forces with a crushing defeat.

The official revealed that many states have tried to talk them into releasing the Israeli

prisoners without conditions.

"I regret that talks were not about a process of negotiation or exchange, but rather what is required of Hamas is to release these prisoners for nothing, which the movement rejects.

Nazal said the occupation is leading a conspiracy to displace the residents of Gaza to Egypt or the southern parts of the Strip under the cover of humanitarian corridors or safe areas, underscoring that all Palestinian factions remain unified against these displacement attempts.

He made it clear that the Palestinian people "will not allow a new migration" after their displacement in 1948 and 1967.

Resistance and resilience are the only ways to confront "this Zionist colonial settlement project," Nazal insists.

At another level, Hamas's member urged the Arab and Islamic nations to have effective and influential stands "to make up" for the positions of their official governments, as he urged the Palestinians in the refugee camps and diaspora to break the borders and walls and support their brothers in Gaza.

Hailing the resistance fighters, Nazal highlighted that despite the mismatch between the two forces, the Palestinian fighters man-

aged to inflict a shock defeat on the Israeli "invincible army," a victory that would remain in the annals of history, as he put it.

The official said that Netanyahu is in a difficult situation after suffering a hard blow on October 7 when asked about the group's response to Netanyahu's threats to end the resistance movements in Gaza.

Four Palestinians, including a father and son, were arrested in Libya in 2016 following the takeover of Fayez Al-Sarraj's government in Tripoli.

The detainees are believed to be Hamas members who had resided in Libya for years, targeted by the RADA Force, which runs a prison in Mitiga Airport.

A Libyan court on February 19 issued sentences between 17 and 22 years of prison to the detainees - who include businesspeople and students - over their alleged formation of a secret organization, possessing and smuggling weapons, and conspiring against state security.

Hamas denounced the ruling against the four Palestinians, who it said came to Libya to study and make a living, stressing that their first and foremost concern is for their land to be liberated and to return to their homeland.



Libyan HCS calls for cutting ties with states that support Israel

The High Council of State (HCS) called in an extraordinary session for cutting ties with countries that support the "Zionist entity," Israel, stopping the export of gas and oil to them, boycotting their products, and suspending dealing with their ambassadors until the brutal aggression against Gaza is stopped.

The HCS members discussed "what the Zionist entity is committing against the Palestinian people, especially in Gaza, including killing, forced displacement, genocide, cutting off water and electricity, and preventing the arrival of food and medical supplies," stressing the support of the Libyan people for Palestine until their lands are liberated from the brutal occupation."

The members discussed ways to provide and deliver urgent humanitarian and medical aid to the residents of Gaza, as the

member of the HCS, Amina Al-Mahjoub, said in a statement to the Fawasel media platform that "Thursday's council session discussed the situation in the Gaza Strip and included taking a set of decisions that were agreed upon by all members of the council." She said all the members agreed on the decision unanimously, adding that they had reviewed the needs of Gaza residents and necessity of opening border crossings for humanitarian and medical aids.

The HCS members called for the formation of a joint Arab-Islamic military force by Muslim countries to enter Gaza to protect civilians and stop the escalation of the situation internationally, calling on the Arab countries to stop dealing with the Zionist entity.



Libyan HoR calls for expelling ambassadors of countries supporting Israeli aggression on Gaza

The House of Representatives (HoR) has called for the departure of the ambassadors of countries supporting the “occupying Zionist entity - Israel” from Libya, urging for an end to the export of oil and gas to those countries if the massacres continue in the Gaza Strip.

The HoR stressed in a statement the necessity of immediately stopping the aggression, describing it as “a campaign of genocide by Zionist gangs”, indicating its refusal to displace the people of the Gaza Strip under any circumstances.

The statement urged for holding an urgent session at the leadership level of the Arab League and Islamic organizations, calling for an emergency session of the United Nations General Assembly in this regard.

The HoR criticized the visits of the presidents of the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, and France to Israel to declare their full support for the Israelis in order “to kill the Palestinian people and eradicate their legitimate right to resistance and build their independent state.”

It also condemned those Israeli moves, placing responsibility on the United States and the West for leading a war of genocide against a defenseless besieged



Libya’s Mufti hails Palestinian battles against Israel

Libya’s Grand Mufti, Sheikh Al-Sadiq Al-Gharyani, delivered a video statement to endorse the battles launched against Israel on Saturday.

In his statement, the Mufti delivered two messages; one to the Palestinian resistance fighters and another to the Islamic youth in General.

He underscored the necessity for the “Mujahideen” to be sincere and truthful in order to achieve victory. “Do not become weak and do not be sad, O Mujahideen, for you are hoping from God what they do not hope for.”

Sheikh Al-Gharyani also called on the youth of the Islamic nation in Palestine and its neighbouring countries to support the resistance fighters in the ongoing battle. “Your brothers, mothers, women, and children are calling for your help in the Gaza Strip... When will you support your brothers if you do not support them now?”

He called for all fronts to be opened, both inside and outside the country, warning that neglecting the Mujahideen would result in grave consequences and punishment from God.

It may be worth noting that the Sharia Research Council of the Libyan Fatwa House issued a statement to support the Aqsa Flood operation against the Israeli occupying forces and congratulated Muslims on “this great victory.”



Libyan PM calls on international community to stop Israeli violations in Palestine

The Libyan Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah called in a statement on the international community to stop the Israeli occupation’s blatant violations, to put an end to those violations, and end the deadly conflict.

The Libyan Prime Minister also held Israeli authorities responsible for the consequences of the Palestinian resistance’s reaction to the ongoing raids on Al-Aqsa Mosque, harming Palestinians, and settlement activity.

Dbeibah stressed the extent of danger of expanding the targeting of the Gaza Strip, or continuing to target Palestinians by the Israeli forces.

Medical sources in Gaza say at least 198 Palestinians have been killed in Israeli air attacks launched after a Hamas offensive against Israel that killed at least 100. The group running the besieged enclave said its surprise, large-scale operation was in response to the desecration of Al-Aqsa Mosque and increased settler violence.

Libyan Sharia Research and Studies Council hails Palestine's "Operation Al-Aqsa Storm"



Libyan Fatwa House's Sharia Research and Studies Council hailed Operation Al-Aqsa Storm that was launched by the Palestinian resistance movement in the occupied territories, reaffirming support for the resistance forces and congratulating Sunday the Islamic nation on this "great victory achieved by the resistance groups in Gaza against the Israeli occupation."

The Council said that this victory was a favor from Allah bestowed on "mujahideen," adding that "perhaps Allah saw in them patience and steadfastness through which they deserved His help and support." It also expressed astonishment at some media outlets from Muslim countries making equal the victim and the executioner, as they called on the Palestinians to stop resisting their enemy, and called for calm and self-control.

The statement added that this call was the same as issued by the occupying forces and their supporters from the West, ignoring what the occupation had been doing for eight decades, including massacres and demolition of Palestinian homes, and desecration of Al-Aqsa Mosque.

The statement said that it would have been more appropriate for those countries' statements to bear their legitimate responsibility and carry out what Allah had imposed on them of jihad, by defending the sanctities of Muslims, which were being violated in Palestine. It also mentioned that whoever was incapable of jihad with oneself, then jihad with money, which was demanded by the rich, merchants, and businessmen before anyone else, should not be spared.

The Council called on scholars, preachers, writers, bloggers, media figures, and all other personalities of public opinion to support the "mujahideen with their words", stressing the need to convey facts, and refute lies and suspicions with arguments and evidence.



Libyan acting FM reviews with Palestinian ambassador situation in Gaza

The acting Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Libyan Government of National Unity, Al-TaHER Al-Baour, discussed with the Palestinian ambassador to Libya, Mohammed Rahal, the developments of the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories.

According to what was reported by the Palestinian embassy, Al-Baour denounced the fierce attacks taking place against the defenseless Palestinian people.

Rahal briefed Al-Baour on the latest developments, war crimes, and massacres committed by Israelis since the beginning of the military operation, as well as the continuous aerial bombardment by the occupation forces on residential neighborhoods that led to the killing of more than 330 people and wounded more than 2000, most of them children and women.

Rahal also talked about an upcoming visit by the Palestinian Minister of Endowments and Religious Affairs to Libya. Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, the military wing of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas), launched Saturday dawn Operation Al-Aqsa Storm, during which it infiltrated by land, sea and air into the settlements surrounding the Gaza Strip, clashed with the Israeli occupation forces and seized a number of their positions and equipment.

In the latest information on the operation, the Israeli occupation media announced that the death toll of Israelis had risen to 700 and the wounded to more than 2000, in addition to the prisoners who were taken by the resistance forces to Gaza.



HCS depllores Israeli airstrikes, acknowledges Palestinian right to self-defence

The High Council of State (HCS) has condemned the Israeli airstrikes that battered Gaza overnight, killing at least 250 people, including women and children.

In a statement, the Council pledged support for the Palestinian people in the face of the Israeli "barbarous acts", which it said violates all international, humanitarian, and legal norms.

It called on the international community to assume responsibility towards the Palestinians and demanded swift action to eradicate such "blatant and repeated attacks."

In conclusion, the HCS highlighted the significance of ending the occupation and restoring rights to its owners, holding the Israeli authorities responsible for the Palestinian response due to the Jewish settlement activities and the continued assault against the Aqsa Mosque.

Libya calls for immediate halt of Israeli aggression on Gaza



Libya called for an immediate halt to the brutal Israeli aggression against the Gaza Strip, saying that the Israeli occupation authorities must be held accountable for their crimes against the Palestinian people, which account to genocide.

This call came in a speech delivered by the acting Foreign Minister of the Libyan Government of National Unity, Al-TaHER Al-Baour, during the discussion session held at the UN Security Council in New York.

Al-Baour said that the government and people of Libya condemned in the strongest terms the brutal, barbaric aggression carried out by “the Zionist occupation forces on the Gaza Strip, claiming so far claimed the lives of more than 5,000 martyrs, in addition to thousands of injuries, and hundreds of

people trapped under the rubble due to the intensity of the horrific bombing on Gaza.”

“It is not possible for any media to falsify what is happening in Gaza in terms of war crimes, such as what happened in the bombing of the Baptist Hospital, which martyred more than 500 people.” He said.

Al-Baour stressed that Libya didn’t accept the forced displacement of Palestinians, and refused to bargain with the Palestinians over their right to food and medicine, criticizing the double definition of what civilians are, and calling for immediate and urgent action to stop the aggression, holding Israel accountable for its responsibility for cutting off supplies of fuel, water, electricity, and food to the occupied territories in accordance with international humanitar-

ian law and the Geneva Convention. He called on the international community to take a clear position regarding the Palestinian right to establish its independent state with Jerusalem as its capital, instead of creating a new geographical and demographic reality that would lead to the end of the Palestinian Cause, and make everyone talk about the 2033 borders and the right of Gaza Strip refugees to return to their homes. Al-Baour said that the priority today is to create a safe environment for all residents of the region and an opportunity to establish a just peace, as well as to hold “the brutal Zionist occupation authorities accountable for ignoring the obligation to restrict their use of force in times of war in accordance with international humanitarian law and the Geneva Convention.”

Head of Libya’s Presidential Council calls for ending Israeli aggression on Gaza



The Head of the Presidential Council, Mohammed Menfi, has called for ending the plans of the Israeli occupation forces to invade the Gaza Strip by land and force its residents to move to the Sinai Peninsula, urging for an end to the repeated systematic raids on Al-Aqsa Mosque and the rest of the Islamic and Christian properties in East Jerusalem and all of occupied Palestine.

Addressing the Egypt International Peace Summit in Cairo, Menfi called for an immediate halt to what had been happening in the Gaza Strip, pointing out that the occupation’s actions had violated all international norms and laws, referring to the Security Council’s delay in assuming its role as quickly as possible to stop the attacks on the Gaza Strip in a way that would achieve the purposes of the UN Charter in maintaining

peace and security across the world impartially and responsibly.

Menfi indicated that what Israel had done in the last two weeks and over the course of 75 years exceeded all usual descriptions of these crimes and violations.

Meanwhile, the peace summit aimed to discuss the future of the Palestinian Cause and the peace process, after the Israeli aggression on Gaza, which had been ongoing for 15 days.

A number of Libyan cities saw massive demonstrations in solidarity with the Palestinian people, denouncing the ongoing Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip, which resulted in the killing and wounding of thousands of Palestinians, including a large number of children and women.



Dbeibah assures Abbas of Libya's solidarity with Palestinian cause

The Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah, has made a phone call with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, stressing Libya's support for the Palestinian people in their just cause.

A statement by the Government of National Unity quoted the Palestinian President as expressing his gratitude for the solidarity of the Libyan people and government with the Palestinian people.

The Palestinian News Agency reported that the call between Dbeibah and Abbas discussed the latest developments on the Palestinian scene, and the necessity of working with all regional and international parties to stop the Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people.

They stressed the importance of providing relief and humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip and securing water and electricity supplies and basic materials.

Palestinian cause unites Libyan community



Libya saw mass demonstrations this week in solidarity with the Palestinians in Gaza, who are facing relentless bombing by the Israeli forces, with Human Rights Watch confirming the use of white phosphorous in these attacks.

"Al-Aqsa Storm" operation launched by the Palestinian fighters in the occupied territory last Saturday set off an outpouring of support across Libya.

In the capital, Tripoli, crowds from all walks of life gathered in Martyr Square to celebrate the operation, chanting against Israel and saluting the Palestinian fighters for the "courageous" move. "It's been a long time since we've seen such a big demonstration," said Huda in her 20s, with joy in her eyes and a keffiyeh wrapped around her shoulders.

The rally featured fiery speeches lauding the resilience of those in Gaza and all occupied Palestinian territories. Sheikh Abdulrahman Gadu, an Islamic scholar, called on Muslims to exercise all forms of resistance and not to undervalue any support, no matter how small. "Your gathering here today irritates the enemy and means a lot to your brothers in Palestine," he said.

In a simulation of the Palestinian fighters, an enthusiast flew his motorized paraglider over Martyr Square, flying the Palestinian flag as crowds cheered him up from the ground.

Despite division, the Palestinian cause remains an agreed-upon issue in the Libyan community, who forced their prime minister to sack his Foreign Ministry Najla Al-Manqoush, after reports of her meeting the Israeli FM behind closed doors last August.

Palestinian ambassador hails Libyan stance on Gaza



The Palestinian ambassador to Libya, Mohammed Rahal, hailed the position of the Libyan people and government toward what had been happening in Palestine, telling Fawasel media, that the Libyan position was honorable, as it proved Libyans' affiliation with the Palestinian Cause, and that they saw the support of the Head of the Presidential Council, Mohammed

Menfi, and Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah's pledge to provide everything necessary to the Palestinian people. The Palestinian ambassador said the Libyan state, its people and government were the first to support the Palestinian Cause and condemn the aggression against the people, whether on a popular or international level. He called on the Libyan people

to keep organizing demonstrations and protests that would put pressure on countries to stop the aggression. "The residents of the Gaza Strip have been for days in need of all basic services as no aids have yet reached them." Rahal said, adding that they had been waiting for assistance and relief aids to be delivered to Gaza.



**Libyan PM denounces
Gaza genocide, calls
for firm stance
by Arab leaders**

The Libyan Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah has denounced the war crimes and genocide in the besieged Gaza Strip, calling for a firm Arab stance to stop the Israeli aggression that had been ongoing since October 07.

“Targeting defenseless civilians, bombing hospitals, ambulances, mosques, and schools, and the stifling, inhumane siege of the Gaza Strip, constitute genocide, war crimes, and a stain written by history on the foreheads of the occupiers and their supporters,” Dbeibah said in a video statement released by the official media platform Hakomitna on Facebook.

Dbeibah said that the massacre at Al-Ahli Hospital in Gaza showed the ugly face of

the Israeli occupation and the hateful killing machine that “brags about its power and unlimited, arrogant support.”

“The people and government of Libya will spare no effort in providing humanitarian and relief aid quickly, ensuring its passage to Gaza.” He said, pointing out Libyans’ expression of solidarity with Palestinians in public squares through the ongoing protests in support of besieged Gaza.

Dbeibah directed his speech to the leaders of the Arab countries, saying: “The central issue of Palestine is uniting all our peoples who hope that we will have a firm stance that forces the aggressor, the occupier, and its supporters to stop the

aggression.”

The Palestinian Ministry of Health announced that more than 600 people, most of them women and children, were killed, and 900 others were injured in an Israeli bombing that targeted the Arab Al-Ahli Baptist Hospital in the Gaza Strip. The Ministry of Health explained that the martyrs of the bombing were mostly women and children, whose body parts were spread on the trees and hospital corridors, noting that the high number of martyrs came due to the crowding of the hospital yards with displaced people and refugees heading to the hospital to take shelter from the brutal Israeli bombing of civilian homes.

**Ambassador to UN unveils reason
behind Libya’s abstaining from
voting on Russia’s Gaza resolution**



Libya’s ambassador to the United Nations, Al-Taher El Sonni, commented on the controversy that followed Libya’s abstention from approving a resolution presented by Russia at the Security Council session, saying the resolution’s terminology contradicted Libyan concepts regarding its vision of the Palestinian Cause.

El Sonni explained that Libya’s right to vote was related to “adopting the resolution” and not “approving it,” as Security Council decisions were made by voting among the 15 members only, and for any resolution to be put to a vote, there must be nine countries’ approval to pass it, noting that the five permanent member states had the veto power.

El Sonni revealed that there was no Arab consensus on the wording of the Russian resolution, stressing that Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Iraq, and Syria were among the

countries that did not adopt the resolution due to certain reservations, explaining that it had contained language and terminology that contradicted national concepts of the nature and description of the ongoing conflict, and it did not differentiate between the occupation and the resistance, including the issue of prisoners and detainees.

He stressed that adopting the Russian resolution would have obligated Libya in later times to adhere to the same terms that were mentioned therein, adding that this could have been used in other resolutions as an argument against Libya.

The UN Security Council voted in rejection of the Russian draft resolution regarding the Gaza Strip, as the resolution did not obtain the required nine votes. Five countries voted in favor, while four countries opposed it (the United States, United

Kingdom, France, and Japan), while six countries abstained from voting. Libya, Tunisia, Syria, Iraq and Algeria demanded amending the final statement of the emergency ministerial meeting of the Arab League Council issued on October 15.

The Libyan UN mission called for deleting the word “condemning the killing of civilians on both sides” from the second paragraph of the final statement, and amending the rest of the paragraph that said: “The necessity of releasing civilians and all prisoners and detainees” to become “releasing all prisoners and civilians.”

The Libyan mission called for amending the third paragraph to read: “Support the brotherly Palestinian people in defending themselves due to the aggression and violations of their rights to which they are currently exposed.”



Opinions

Meaning of victory in wars of liberation

By Abdullah Alkabir, a Libyan political writer and commentator

The occupation entity in Palestine is still reeling, losing its sanity and balance, after being humiliated by destroying the myth of the invincible army, and tearing the propaganda spider web in which it wraps itself, as a striking force that none of the armies in the region are capable of confronting.

In a few hours, a young resistance force succeeded in penetrating all of the enemy's fortifications, concrete, iron, and electronic. Everything it had built to provide the settlers with reassurance, collapsed like a sand palace on the seashore.

The horror of the shock held their tongues for hours, before they woke up to a blow that was the most humiliating in their entire history.

More than forty camps, bases, and settlements in which resistance men roam, hundreds of dead and prisoners, a valuable treasure of security and military information, are now in the possession of the resistance, according to Western newspapers. The most important result is the collapse of the settlers' confidence in the ability of their security and military system to provide them with safety and stability.

The political, military and strategic equations have changed radically, the path to normalization with the enemy was destroyed, thrones were shaken, and from under the ashes of frustration, emotions and slogans echoed across all cities of Muslim nations, shouting for Palestine, Al-Aqsa and the resistance.

The leaders of major countries and senior officials flocked to the occupation entity, only out of a strong feeling that shook deep within them, it (the entity) is collapsing, and if we do not move to help it, it may be finished off.

America moved its naval fleets for the primary purpose, which is to reassure the masses fleeing the population of the occupying entity towards the airports, fleeing the resistance that has reached the kitchens of their homes. America does not need to show extreme strength, because its military bases and warships are spread throughout most of the countries and seas of the region.

Can all the results and repercussions of the attack prompt us to say that the battle is still in its infancy, but it was decided in the first round on the morning of Saturday, October 7th?

It is true that the enemy is raining missiles and bombs on Gaza, and that the number of casualties has reached an unprecedented number in previous confrontations, with the declared blessing of the states claiming compliance with international law, democracy and human rights, and complete silence and submission from their agents in the Arab countries, and all of this is expected, as in all rounds of the conflict the enemy resorts to aerial bombardment, with no distinction between civilian and resistance.

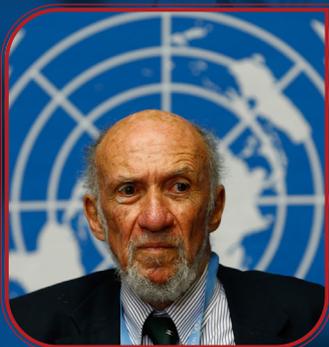
Yes, the price is high, and the cost in terms of blood, body parts, and tears is very high, which all colonized peoples have previously paid along the journey towards liberation and independence, armed with patience, perseverance, and the willingness to make all sacrifices, while the occupier's patience runs out, and they take a thousand account of their victims.

Algeria paid about a million and a half, and millions were wounded in the battle for independence against the French occupier. Libya lost half of its population as martyrs, wounded and displaced during the Italian occupation. The Afghan people lost tens of thousands to gain their independence. The number of civilian deaths in the war to liberate Vietnam from the American invasion reached more than a million. While the liberation movement lost about 85,000 dead, America's losses were 57,000 dead.

After a major battle in Hanoi, Vietnamese leader Ho Chi Minh asked his comrades about the number of dead, and he was told that we lost more than a thousand dead, and about twenty Americans were killed. He said: We have been victorious, and it is an inspiring phrase that is still on the tongues of all leaders of the wars of liberation.

The invaders are always keen on life, and they face great difficulties in convincing their people of the justice of their cause. With the return of the soldiers in coffins, anger increases, and therefore the effect of killing on the forces of the invaders is extremely influential. No matter how small the number, the outstanding Vietnamese leader, Ho Chi Minh, realized that every blow inflicted on the enemy is a victory, bringing the day closer to defeating the invaders and declaring liberation.

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the writer, and do not necessarily reflect those of the Libya Observer



Opinions

The West's refusal to call for a ceasefire is a green light to Israel's ethnic cleansing

By **Richard Falk**,
an international law and international relations scholar

Western states have provided cover for Israel's lawless extremism and possible end goal of massive dispossession and ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian people

In the avalanche of emotionally fraught commentary on the 7 October attack by Palestinian fighters against Israel and the subsequent Israeli assault on Gaza, media and political leaders appear to have forgotten that from the perspective of international law, Gaza remains an occupied territory subject to the Fourth Geneva Convention (Geneva IV).

Although Israel unilaterally proclaimed its "disengagement" from Gaza in 2005 - withdrawing its troops, dismantling 21 settlements and ejecting 8,000 settlers (somewhat offset by giving each unlawful settler family hundreds of thousands of dollars in compensation) - this did not end Israel's obligations under international law.

The United Nations Human Rights Council has drawn this conclusion on the basis that Israel's disengagement did not end the existential realities of Israeli control over Gaza, nor did it allow the territory to enjoy the benefits of autonomous political development.

Rather, the process involved an intrusive redeployment of occupying military and police forces on Gaza's borders, including total control over the entry and exit of Palestinians and goods at border crossings, as well as continuing exclusive dominance over Gaza's air and sea space.

This post-2005 structure of occupation was reinforced by frequent Israeli incursions, including targeted assassinations of Hamas political and military officials, frightening sonic booms of overflying Israeli fighter jets, and major military operations in 2008-09, 2012, 2014 and 2021, during which Israel committed many war crimes.

In addition, since 2007, a harsh and punitive blockade has left the impoverished population of Gaza facing the world's highest unemployment rate and a collective experience of life-threatening economic decline.

Israel's record of criminality towards Gaza was most notably documented in the UN's 2009 Goldstone report, whose policy recommendations were left unimplemented due to political pressures exerted on Israel's behalf.

This typical experience of condemning Israel's policies and practices, but taking no proposed preventive or punitive action in response, has been repeated over and over again, which explains Palestinian disillusionment with the UN and international law.

Disproportionate response

The question of Gaza's legal status is extremely relevant to the indiscriminate and disproportionate Israeli retaliation, which has been justified by Israel and its supporters as exacting vengeance while pursuing the goal of destroying Hamas.

The 7 October Palestinian fighters' operation inside Israel, accounting for more than 1,400 Israeli deaths and the capture of around 200 hostages, was itself a distinct war crime.

Neither the Palestinian fighters' attack nor Israel's response are free from the restraints of law and morality. In the simplest terms, the crimes committed do not give legal impunity to retaliatory Israeli war crimes.

The central point thus far lost in the public discourse is this: just as the Palestinian armed factions had no authority to commit war crimes because they were intensely provoked by decades of Israeli criminal actions, nor does Israel have the authority to act outside the constraints of law when retaliating.

The proper international framing of the relationship between Israel and Hamas - despite being crucial to interpreting the legal, moral and political issues at stake - has been revealingly absent from most media treatments and the policy postures of influential western political leaders.

Israel has used the most inflammatory and expansive language to vindicate its retaliatory responses. This lawless Israeli extremism has been blandly endorsed by governments in the US, France, Germany and the UK. Such pronouncements neglect to mention the obligation of the occupying power to administer the territories under its control in ways that give priority to the protection and wellbeing of the occupied civilian population. The occupier does enjoy a reciprocal right to maintain its security in ways that respect and protect non-combatants.

From such a perspective, it is conceptually misleading and normatively unacceptable for Israel to declare war against an occupied territory, as if the indigenous administrative authority was an enemy foreign government - but this is exactly what Israel has done, including claims of self-defence that do not fit the situation of belligerent occupation.

Genocidal siege

Israel has declared a total war on Gaza, imposing a genocidal siege that has cut off supplies of food, electricity and fuel, making no provision whatsoever to exempt civilians - most of whom have no direct contact with the military activities of Hamas.

Article 55 of Geneva IV sets forth the duty of Israel as occupying power to ensure that the people living in the territory it "occupies" have adequate food, water and medicines. But Israel's indiscriminate retaliation has included repeated nighttime aerial bombardments of residential areas, alongside the forbidden targeting of hospitals, schools and UN buildings, where many Palestinians have sought shelter under these extraordinary conditions.

A 24-hour evacuation order directed at 1.1 million Palestinians living in northern Gaza, without the provision of reasonable time to arrange such a dangerous departure from long-term places of residence, was aggravated by the lack of a safe and habitable place for Palestinians to go, thus intensifying the dangers facing civilians in Gaza - and their suffering. Such a measure

amounts to extreme collective punishment, which is prohibited by Article 33 of Geneva IV. It has less to do with security than with driving Palestinians out of Gaza, thereby implementing the end-game visions of Israel's extremist coalition government. It is relevant to note that Michael Lynk, the UN's special rapporteur for Palestine, submitted a detailed report to the agency on why Israel's authority as occupying power should be terminated, given its failure to comply with applicable international human rights law. This recommendation was ignored by the UN, but the General Assembly was sufficiently distressed by Israel's pattern of behaviour in occupied Palestine that it requested an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on the continuing legality of Israel's status as an occupying power within the framework of Geneva IV. The case is currently under consideration by the court.

If the West continues to endorse the double standards on display during the humanitarian catastrophe unfolding in Gaza, it will serve as a reminder that the post-colonial world retains an ethos of Orientalist racism when it comes to addressing issues of peace and justice in the Middle East. By failing to advocate for a ceasefire, western states have given a green light to Israel's agenda of collective punishment, which might itself be grotesque cover for the regime's end goal of massive dispossession and ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian people.

Disclaimer: *The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the writer, and do not necessarily reflect those of the Libya Observer*

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Opinions

The terror narratives protecting Israel's colonial violence

By Ramona Wadi, an independent researcher, freelance journalist, book reviewer and blogger

"As long as the United States stands and we will stand forever, we'll not ever let you be alone," US President Joe Biden told Israelis in an address from Tel Aviv, before proceeding to repeat the same propaganda which NATO and mainstream media utilised to justify foreign intervention in Libya. His next move was to bring ISIS into the narrative: "atrocities that recall the worst ravages of ISIS".

This manipulation follows Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's remarks after meeting US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, in Tel Aviv last week. " Hamas is ISIS, and just as ISIS was crushed, so too will Hamas be crushed. And Hamas should be treated exactly the way ISIS was treated," Netanyahu stated.

One must also not forget Blinken's threat. "Here in Israel, and everywhere, we will reaffirm the crystal-clear warning that President Biden issued yesterday to any adversary – state or non-state – thinking of taking advantage of the current crisis to attack Israel: Don't. The United States has Israel's back," Blinken warned, while referring to the US deploying the largest aircraft carrier in the world to bolster Israel's genocidal actions against Palestinians

in Gaza.

Only the terror narrative sustains Israel's current bloodbath against the Palestinians in Gaza. And only because the international community is too cowardly and complicit to call out Israel's colonial violence. Meanwhile, the US promotes a false narrative that, together with Israel, both allegedly believe in "the fundamental dignity of every human life". Basic empathy aside, which is non-existent anyway when speaking about colonial powers, how does the US\$100 million in aid to Palestinians compare next to the \$10 billion Biden will be requesting the US Congress for Israel?

The US is reciprocating Israel's terror narrative with comparisons to 9/11, and justifying Israel's colonial violence from the same narrative that brought the world's powers together in the so-called "war on terror". Positioning a US aircraft carrier against a besieged enclave, with a population that has been repeatedly displaced since 1948, and which is now estimated to have one million forcibly displaced Palestinians since 7 October, speaks of international engagement in colonial violence against Gaza. Not to mention the 3,785

Palestinians killed in Israel's bombing of the area.

According to EU Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen, "there is no contradiction in standing in solidarity with Israel and acting on the humanitarian needs of the Palestinian people". But there is. There is contradiction in standing in solidarity with a colonial enterprise built over the remnants and buried history of ethnic cleansing, stolen land and massacred people. Unless, of course, it is former colonial powers and their weaker allies depending on political allegiances that do not want a true decolonial reversal – one that restores land ownership to its rightful people – the Palestinians. Acting in solidarity with Israel is violating the Palestinian people's humanitarian needs – there is and will never be any equivalence. But such is the politics guiding the international community, sheltering Israel from facing a reversal of the terror narrative that would shatter its core.

Disclaimer: *The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the writer, and do not necessarily reflect those of the Libya Observer*

Credit: *This opinion was first published by the Middle East Monitor on October 19*

Gaza Death Count

23 OCT 2023

+8005 Palestinians **killed**, including

- +3342** children
- +2062** women
- +460** elderly

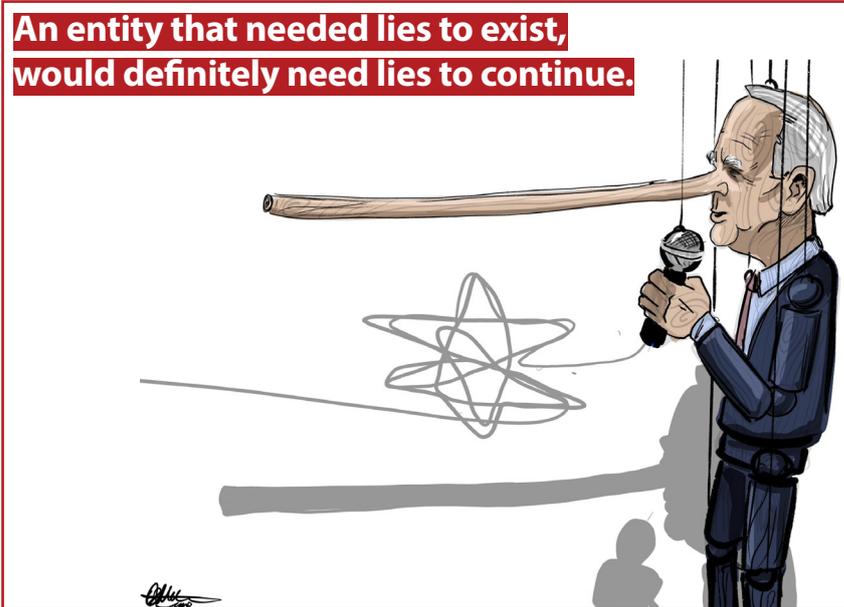
+20,242 injured

+1870 missing, including **1020+** children

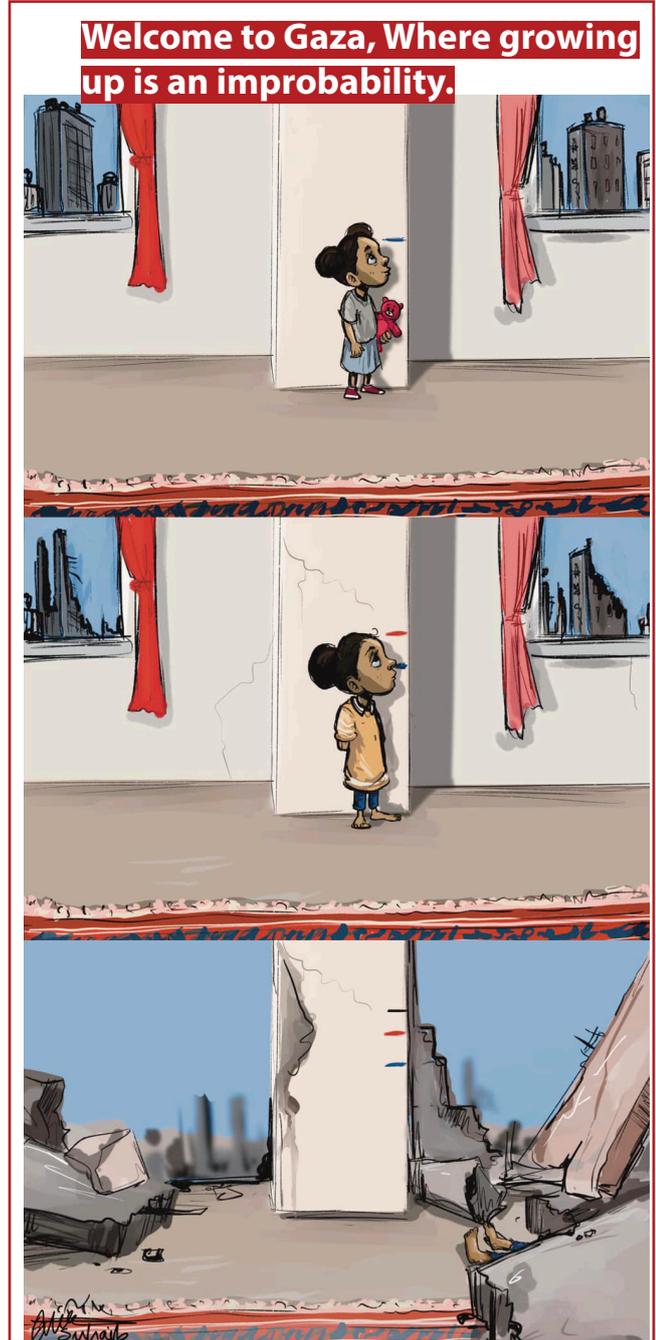
Cartoon



By Suhaib Tantoush



By Suhaib Tantoush

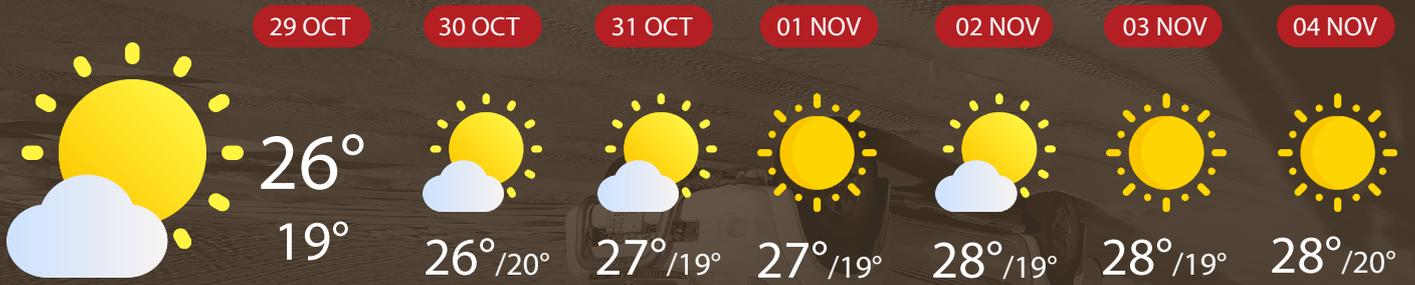


By Suhaib Tantoush

Photo of the Week



Tripoli Weather Forecast



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