

I. International

Global Majority Mobilizes for Gaza Ceasefire, World Peace

by Gretchen Small

Nov. 17—In the face of the unspeakable, accelerating slaughter of an entire people being carried out by Israel’s Netanyahu-led, proudly racist government which intends to eliminate the very idea of a Palestinian state itself, the vast majority of the nations of the world have begun to mobilize to somehow pressure the United States, its “special” ally, the United Kingdom, and their European satrapies, to stop this onslaught.

Every capital around the world understands that those leaders of the self-proclaimed “West,” have the power—should they choose to use it—to stop what the world recognizes as open-and-shut acts of war crimes, genocide and ethnic cleansing, and to do so quickly. Their refusal to do so is judged, likewise, as direct complicity in those crimes—a refusal which will have strategic consequences far into the future for the “West’s” ability to dictate orders to the rest of the world. Mere talk by the U.S. President, Secretary of State, *et al.*, that the U.S. is pressing Israel to “minimize civilian casualties” as it proceeds, will not calm the clamor for basic human morality to prevail, but only feed the revulsion against U.S. hypocrisy.

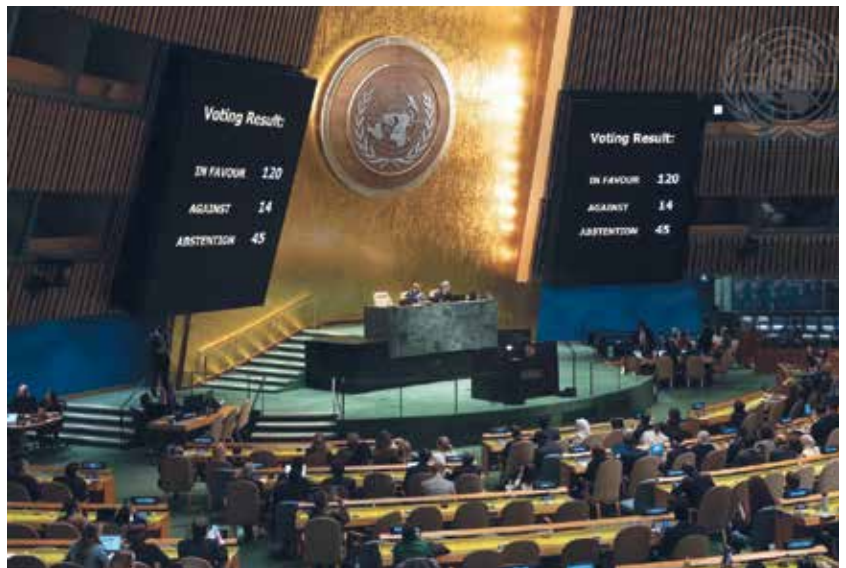
In a world that is seeing the growing influence of the BRICS-Plus and related institutions shape a more human world order, the bold assertions of more and more nations against this horrific barbarity should be seen as an example of this changing world, and the collapsing influence of the so-called “rules-based order.”

The Fight for the UN To Act

On October 27, the 193 nations of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) voted 121–14, with 44 abstentions,

for a resolution whose first clause calls for an “immediate, durable and sustained humanitarian truce leading to a cessation of hostilities” between Gaza and Israel. (The UN reports that the one-vote change from the original tally of 120 is the result of a member state citing technical errors in recording its intended support.)

The UNGA resolution was necessitated by the fail-



UN/Evan Schneider

The UN General Assembly adopts the Resolution on Protection of Civilians and Upholding Legal and Humanitarian Obligations in Gaza, Nov. 18, 2023.

ure of the UN Security Council to take any action in the face of the catastrophic situation developing in Gaza. Simply put, the United States, in particular, refused to accept any resolution which advocated anything beyond brief “humanitarian pauses,” a policy it enforced by wielding its veto.

So, diplomats turned to the General Assembly, where there is no veto power. Though non-binding, the resolution expresses the Global Majority’s compassion, reason, and love of humanity, and its determina-

tion to supplant the compulsive evil now breaking out in warmaking in multiple theaters.

Titled “Protection of Civilians and Upholding Legal and Humanitarian Obligations,” A/ES-10/L.25 [the resolution](#) was introduced by Jordan. By the time of the vote, over 50 nations had become co-sponsors. The 13 clauses that follow the call for a truce leading to a ceasefire, center on the insistence that all parties “immediately and fully comply” with the internationally recognized obligations of humanitarian and human rights laws, among them the release of all civilians held hostage, protection of humanitarian and civilian facilities (hospitals explicitly named), and securing “the immediate, continuous, sufficient and unhindered provision of essential goods and services to civilians throughout the Gaza Strip,” such as water, food, medical supplies, fuel, and electricity, which are indispensable to their survival.

“Firmly” rejecting “attempts at the forced transfer of the Palestinian civilian population,” the resolution calls both for Israel, “the occupying Power,” to rescind its order for Palestinian civilians, UN staff, and humanitarian workers to relocate to the south, and also for a “just and lasting solution” to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict which, it reiterates, can only be achieved by peaceful means, and on the basis of a two-state solution.

Leaders Insist on Ceasefire, Call Genocide ‘Genocide’

At the same time, leaders of key nations across the developing sector are joining Palestinian and Arab leaders in calling a spade a spade, as the West continues to block any steps to halt the killing.

Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva is one such leader. Decrying the systematic killing of children in Gaza, Lula said in his Oct. 24 weekly national



Wafa
Palestinians inspect the ruins of the former ten-story, residential Al-Aklouk Tower, destroyed in Israeli Air Force strikes. Gaza City, Oct. 8, 2023.



UN/Paulo Filgueiras
Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, President of Brazil: “This [the Israel-Palestine conflict] is not a war; it is a genocide.”

broadcast, “Conversation with the President,” that “the United States could interfere more.” His immediate next sentence, was that there are people who “want war, people [who] want to encourage hatred.... People are no longer human.” He [reported](#) that he had been speaking to every president possible about stopping the killing in Gaza and the urgency of negotiations, “so we can get back [to] building the possibility of a better world.”

His [posting](#) on X the following day was more to the point:

[This is] not a war, it is a genocide which has already killed almost 2,000 children who have nothing to do with this war, who are the victims of this war.

He insisted again Nov. 14, that other Presidents should step up and fight for a ceasefire. “At 78, I’ve already seen a lot of brutality and violence. But I’ve never seen such inhuman violence against innocents,” he wrote, and charged that Israel’s attack on innocent children and women in Gaza is “akin to terrorism,” He [demanded](#) “humane conduct by other presidents,” a ceasefire, and peace. “The war must end.”

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa is also mobilized. The Palestinian cause has long been close to South Africa's heart, given their own struggle to free themselves from a brutal apartheid system similar to that which Palestinians still suffer under. South Africa had already recalled its ambassador from Israel for consultations on Nov. 6, as one of ten countries which have taken that step to recalibrate their relations with Israel. Türkiye, Jordan, Bahrain, Honduras, Colombia, Chad, and Chile have also recalled their ambassadors; Bolivia has broken diplomatic relations, and Belize, suspended them.



UN/Cia Pak

Cyril Ramaphosa, President of South Africa: "Gaza ... is now a concentration camp, where genocide is taking place."

Ramaphosa announced during a state visit to Qatar Nov. 15 that his government has referred Israel's "appalling" and "unprecedented" actions in Gaza to the International Criminal Court (ICC). Like Brazil and other nations speaking out, Ramaphosa made clear that South Africa does not condone what Hamas did in Israel. But neither can it condone "what is happening now in Gaza, which is now turned into a concentration camp, where genocide is taking place.... [Israel] is now targeting hospitals where babies, women and the injured are dying like flies," [he said](#).

How can "children and even babies" be subjected to such "cruel deaths," he exclaimed. He [spoke](#) fiercely of the urgency of international action:

We join many other countries and organizations that are calling upon the ICC to investigate.... As it is unfolding before our eyes, we can see war crimes are underway, particularly at Al-Shifa hospital.... [There is] a need for the whole world to rise and call upon the Israeli government to cease fire, to stop what is happening, and we want the ICC to investigate, and of course, legal measures then need to be taken at a global level.

For his part, Indonesia's President Joko Widodo, in

his public remarks at the White House Nov. 13 before he and Biden began their private talks, told President Joe Biden to his face that the U.S. has to secure a ceasefire. The White House [transcript](#) thus had to duly record Widodo's statement that while the U.S. is one of the most important partners for Indonesia,

Indonesia also wishes our partnership [to] contribute to regional and global peace and prosperity. So, Indonesia appeals to the U.S. to do more to stop the atrocities in Gaza. Ceasefire is a must for the sake of humanity.

Arab League-OIC Diplomatic Initiative

Faced with continuing Western inaction, the 22 members of the Arab League and the 57-member Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) convoked a joint meeting Nov. 11, hosted by Saudi Arabia, to discuss how to respond. Notably, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi was warmly welcomed in Riyadh, the first visit by an Iranian leader to Saudi Arabia in 11 years. Not unexpectedly, there were differences on what must be done, but two smaller task forces were agreed upon, one specifically mandated to take on the task of initiating immediate international action to stop the war and, [according to](#) Indonesia's Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi, the other will work politically on helping achieve long-lasting peace between Israel and Palestine.

The [final resolution](#) adopted insists that the siege of Gaza be broken, and international humanitarian aid convoys be allowed in, and that the ICC conduct an investigation of war crimes and crimes against humanity by Israel....

The nations at the summit also called for all countries to "cease sending weapons and ammunition to Israel," and demanded that the UN Security Council take a "decisive and binding decision" that imposes an end to Israel's "barbaric, brutal and inhumane massacres ... against the Palestinian people, including in the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem." They also

specify that a UN Security Council condemnation of “Israel’s barbaric destruction of hospitals in the Gaza Strip and preventing the entry of medicine, food and fuel” is urgent.

These 79 Arab and Muslim nations also call—as have China, Russia, and Brazil—for an international summit to be convened as soon as possible, in order to secure “a just, lasting and comprehensive peace” in which Israeli occupation ends, as the only way to guarantee security and stability for the people of the region.

Leaders speaking at the conference were angry. “The international world remains immune in front of all these scenes. Who could have imagined that hospitals could be publicly shelled in the 21st Century?” Qatar’s Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al Thani [told the summit](#).

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi [warned](#) that the international community must stop its “double standards” and “inconsistency of humanitarian claims,” if it is to maintain even “minimum political and moral credibility” in the face of the “collective punishment”—an internationally recognized war crime—being wielded against the people of Gaza. “Killing, sieges, and forced displacement” cannot be justified as self-defense, he said. “The international community, particularly the UN Security Council, bears a direct responsibility to take decisive and concerted action to achieve ... an immediate and sustainable ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, without restrictions or conditions ... [and an end to] the forced displacement of Palestinians to any place outside their land.” He warned, as he has before, that “failure to stop the war in Gaza threatens an expansion of military confrontation in the region.”

Türkiye’s President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, according to CNN, [told](#) the summit:

The world remaining silent in the face of this brutality shames us all.... Gaza has been almost completely destroyed, and Western countries aren’t even calling for a ceasefire.... There is no doubt that whoever remains silent about injustice is a partner in the practice of injustice.

In a phone call the next day with the European Union’s High Representative for Foreign Affairs, Josep “the Gardener” Borrell, Jordan’s Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister Ayman Al-Sa-

fadi [warned](#) that the EU’s failure to demand an end to the war crimes committed by Israel is covering for their aggression. Should not the same legal principles and values cited by the European Union to mobilize international support for Ukraine, apply to Israeli war crimes? The Israeli actions have reached the “point of genocide against the Palestinian people in Gaza and the occupied West Bank,” yet neither the Security Council nor the EU has requested a ceasefire. He also warned that “the repercussions of this failure” will last for a long time.

In the Name of Children

At the time of the UNGA vote on Gaza, the recorded deaths in Gaza between Oct. 7 and Oct. 27 were nearing 7,000 people, over 2,900 of them being children. Only 10 days later, that toll had crossed the 10,000 mark, with over 4,000 children killed. Gaza, as UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres decried Nov. 6, “is becoming a graveyard for children.”

At the [UN Security Council’s Nov. 10 meeting](#) on the situation in the Middle East, Palestine’s Permanent Observer at the UN, Ambassador Riyad H. Mansour, expressed anguish:

The events in Gaza should pain the conscience of all people. The hospitals are now the primary targets of the Israeli bombing. I am an old man, I lived through the Nakba in 1948, and spent my whole life trying to repair the damage. We all said to ourselves at the time, that if the world knew what was happening, they would stop it. Now we know—we were wrong. It is happening again, in plain sight of the world, and nothing is being done to stop it, no one is telling Israel that enough is enough. The children of today who survive will recall the trucks loaded with dead bodies and body parts, suffering beyond what any human should bear.

Mounting world outrage at the Israel Defense Forces’ (ongoing) destruction of Gaza City’s largest hospital, Al-Shifa—even as Israeli cabinet ministers [boldly admit](#) that full ethnic cleansing is the goal of the Israel Defense Forces’ (IDF) operation—managed to get a resolution out of the UN Security Council on Nov. 15, the first since Israel moved into Gaza on Oct. 8.

The resolution was drafted by Malta, currently

a rotating member of the Security Council, in consultation with China, which presides over the Security Council this month. The resolution focused on the most politically vulnerable point of the Israeli operation which the West is backing—its mass killing of children.

[Res. 2712](#) is weak, in that it does not call for a ceasefire, but unlike UNGA resolutions, it is binding. It mandates:

... urgent and extended humanitarian pauses and corridors throughout the Gaza Strip for a sufficient number of days to enable, consistent with international humanitarian law, the full, rapid, safe, and unhindered humanitarian access for United Nations humanitarian agencies and their implementing partners ... to facilitate the continuous, sufficient and unhindered provision of essential goods and services important to the well-being of civilians, especially children, throughout the Gaza Strip, including water, electricity, fuel, food, and medical supplies, as well as emergency repairs to essential infrastructure, and to enable urgent rescue and recovery efforts, including for missing children in damaged and destroyed buildings, and including the medical evacuation of sick or injured children and their care givers.

Russia proposed to amend the language to call for “an immediate, durable and sustained humanitarian truce leading to a cessation of hostilities,” the same wording contained in the UNGA resolution. The U.S. vetoed the amendment, a policy consistent with Secretary of State Blinken’s memo weeks back banning U.S. diplomats from pronouncing words such as “ceasefire” unless a “no” appears in front of it.

Twelve of the 15 Council members supported the resolution. It passed because, for the first time, the United States did not cast a veto, but abstained. The UK and Russia also abstained, on differing grounds. Russia cited its failure to even speak of working toward a ceasefire.

The ambassadors of the United Arab Emirates, the



UN Video

Press conference of the UN ambassadors of the UAE, the Arab Group, and China, following the Security Council’s passage of a resolution for the immediate release of all hostages held by Hamas, and for opening extended humanitarian corridors in Gaza, Nov. 16, 2023: “It’s an important first step ... but it is not enough.” Shown speaking is H.E. Lana Zaki Nusseibeh (UAE); to her left is H.E. Zhang Jun (China).

Arab Group, and China explained their thinking following the passage of the resolution in a [special press briefing](#) Nov. 16. All the speakers recognized that the resolution “is not enough,” given the enormous loss of life, especially of children, but expressed the hope that this “step in the right direction” will lead to greater breakthroughs, either at the General Assembly or the Security Council. Ambassador Mansour pointed out that the fact that 5,000 children were killed in the Gaza Strip while the international community and Security Council watched, “is a stain on the forehead of the Security Council.” Had they acted, many of those children could have been saved, he said; nevertheless, “we want to save the remaining hundreds of thousands of children and civilians.”

The pressure is not letting up. At the request of three members of the OIC, a special session of the UN General Assembly was called for Nov. 17, to hear briefings on the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. As they met, the Gaza government press office reported that the death toll has now crossed the 12,000 mark, more than 5,000 of them children and 3,300 of them women, while 30,000 others have been injured. Some 3,750 other people remain unaccounted for, including 1,800 children, according to the statement. With communications and electricity spotty or non-existent, and the IDF occupying and attacking hospitals, those figures will no doubt turn out to be drastically higher.