

African Union Summit Condemns Israeli Genocide in Gaza

55 member-states representing 1.3 billion people want the bombing and occupation to end

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In opening up its proceedings for the African Union (AU) Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in mid-February, the continental organization denounced the ongoing genocidal onslaught by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) in the Gaza Strip.

The deaths of tens of thousands of Palestinians, the injuring of many more along with the dislocation of the entire 2.3 million people living in the Gaza Strip, has enhanced the solidarity movement around the world.

For weeks observers, journalists and medical experts have warned that the people of Gaza are facing the potential for famine. A series of cynical campaign maneuvers involving the dropping of meals ready to eat over Gaza has done nothing to improve the humanitarian crisis created by the State of Israel and its supporters in Washington, London, Paris, Brussels and Berlin.

This organization, which was founded as the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963, having changed its name to the AU in 2002, has followed the political direction of the Republic of South Africa being one of the most outspoken critics of the Zionist state internationally. Pretoria has taken Tel Aviv to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) charging the government with violating the provisions of the Genocide Convention.



South African legal team at the ICJ in case filed against Israel

South Africa's ruling party for the last 30 years, the African National Congress (ANC), is a longtime ally of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the overall struggle of the people against national oppression and the apartheid system in the Occupied Territories. President Nelson Mandela, who was elected in the first democratic elections in 1994, noted that South Africa will not be completely free until the Palestinian people gain their freedom. In the aftermath of the events of October 7, known as the Al-Aqsa Storm, when the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) began their blanket bombing, shelling and later ground offensive in Gaza, the current Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Dr. Naledi Pandor, demanded that the people of South Africa, the continent and the world take practical action in solidarity with the people of Palestine.

[A Nigerian newspaper said](#) of the recent AU Summit that:

"The African Union has expressed its full support for Palestine in the ongoing Middle East conflicts, asking member states to sever ties with Israel. The AU gave 'full support for the Palestinian people in their legitimate struggle against the Israeli occupation, represented by the Palestine Liberation Organization under the leadership of President Mahmoud Abbas, in order to restore their inalienable rights, including the right to self-determination, return of refugees and independence in their State of Palestine, existing side by side with the State of Israel.'... It expressed outrage at what it described as a humanitarian catastrophe occurring in the Gaza Strip caused by Israeli forces. The AU expressed concerns about the possibility of the ongoing conflict spreading to Lebanon, other neighboring countries and the Middle East region."

Since the AU Summit, another statement has been issued in response to a recent massacre of over 100 Palestinians while they lined up seeking much-needed food rations. The IDF in typical fashion, blamed the oppressed Palestinian masses saying they engaged in an unprovoked stampede causing the deaths.

The rationale of the Israeli state and their backers in Washington and London for the killing of 30,000 people over a period of five months is that Hamas and the other resistance movements in Gaza are the source of the security problems. Nonetheless, the real issue underlining the continuing Palestinian crisis is the occupation of their homeland which has continued for nearly 76 years.

[The Middle East Monitor news website reported](#) on the AU response to the March 1 massacre in Gaza City noting:

“Chairperson of African Union Commission Moussa Faki Mahamat has ‘strongly’ condemned the recent Israeli attack in which scores of Palestinians were killed trying to access food aid in Gaza on Thursday, Anadolu reports. In a statement on Friday, the chairperson called for an international investigation into the incident to bring the perpetrators to account. He also reiterated the African Union’s call for an immediate and unconditional cease-fire in the Gaza Strip ‘to stop the ongoing and increasing State of Israel’s assault against the lives and means of survival of the Palestinian people.’ Mahamat called on the international community and major world powers to ‘assume their responsibilities to urgently impose peace and guarantee the rights of the Palestinian people.’”

Africa, Palestine and the regional states in West Asia have a shared history of colonial, semi-colonial and imperialist domination. The brutality of the Israeli state and the funding and enabling of their genocidal policies by Washington and the other imperialist centers, has alienated and angered billions around the globe.

The Status of U.S.-Africa Relations

Although Africa in general remains in a disadvantageous situation in relations to the western industrialized states, many on the continent within and outside of government are looking for alternative alliances which are not controlled by imperialism. The BRICS plus inter-governmental organization has attracted broad support from those wanting to join the alliance which has recently established a New Development Bank (NDB).

Since the BRICS 15th Summit hosted by South African **President Cyril Ramaphosa** during August 2023, many other countries have been admitted to the alliance including Iran, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Argentina, Egypt and Ethiopia. These countries bolster the populations of the existing memberships of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

At present, the BRICS organization represents approximately 36% of the world’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This exceeds the G7 which encompasses about 31% of the GDP. The number of people living in the BRICS plus states constitute 46% of the world’s population, whereas the G7 has around 10%.

Within the context of the AU there is “Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want”, which sets forth a series of goals aimed at deeper unity and robust economic development. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) was founded in 2018 with a positive view towards achieving the objectives stated clearly within the AU Charter and Agenda 2063.

[On the AU website it emphasizes:](#)

“AGENDA 2063 is Africa’s blueprint and master plan for transforming Africa into the global powerhouse of the future. It is the continent’s strategic framework that aims to

deliver on its goal for inclusive and sustainable development and is a concrete manifestation of the pan-African drive for unity, self-determination, freedom, progress and collective prosperity pursued under Pan-Africanism and African Renaissance. The genesis of Agenda 2063 was the realization by African leaders that there was a need to refocus and reprioritize Africa's agenda from the struggle against apartheid and the attainment of political independence for the continent which had been the focus of The Organization of African Unity (OAU), the precursor of the African Union and instead to prioritize inclusive social and economic development, continental and regional integration, democratic governance and peace and security amongst other issues aimed at repositioning Africa to becoming a dominant player in the global arena."

However, these important goals for the African continent to be achieved will require a frontal assault on the current neo-colonial arrangements still impacting the capacity of the AU member-states to achieve genuine independence and sovereignty. Pentagon troops remain in various geo-political regions of the continent through the U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM).

During 2023, there were threats leveled against African states by the Pentagon as well as the French government. **President Emmanuel Macron** of France along with the White House sought to build a coalition of West African military forces to invade Niger after the seizure of power by the National Council for the Safeguard of the Homeland (CNSP) administration in Niamey on July 26. Fortunately, opposition to this scheme from the workers, farmers, youth and many political officials throughout the Sahel and other states, which was designed to further ensnarl the Sahel within the web of imperialism, prevented a potentially disastrous outcome in the West Africa region.

In South Africa, due to its positions on the Russian Special Military Operation in Ukraine and the IDF siege on Gaza, the administration of President Joe Biden had falsely accused the ANC government of selling arms to Moscow while elements within the Congress were calling for a downgrading of Washington's diplomatic relations with Pretoria. The South African government has demanded that Kiev and Washington agree to talks aimed at ending the war. This same administration is playing an important role within the BRICS Plus Summit along with other important inter-governmental organizations to achieve sustainable economic development and an equitable form of international relations.

With the AU Commission openly disagreeing with the imperialist foreign policy of maintaining the State of Israel as a settler-colonial outpost in West Asia and on the border with North Africa, further efforts to destabilize South Africa and other AU member-states will be inevitable. Consequently, Africa must remain vigilant and work towards the building of a world where the majority are able to determine their own destinies.

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