

# Isn't It Time for Arab Countries to Resist the Most Horrible Killings and Human Rights Violations in Gaza with Much More Unity and Firmness?

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*What has been taking place in Gaza during the last nine months is one of the most horrible man-made and entirely avoidable human tragedies. This tragedy is still continuing although it can be stopped any day if there is sincerity for peace and high commitment to peace on the part of the aggressors and their weapon suppliers.*

For the record, over 38,000 people have died and thousands of unidentified persons are reported to be buried under the rubble of destroyed buildings. Over 80,000 people are reported to be injured in very painful ways while proper medical help has become extremely difficult to access. Hunger in extreme forms, deprivation of housing in extreme weather conditions, denial of clean drinking water and sanitation, spread of disease and repeated displacement have been reported extensively among others by UN sources. People of Gaza time and again get arbitrary instructions from Israeli military forces to move from one place to another.

Most people have been displaced at least once and some have been displaced about 9 times in 9 months. On the basis of the reasonable assumption that due to all these factors the indirect mortality related to the Israeli attack is about four times the directly caused mortality, the total mortality related to this aggression is close to 200,000 or two hundred thousand in a very small region with a total population of around just about 2.3 million at the start of the attack. At the same time, the Palestinian population in the sister territory of West Bank has also faced increasing aggression resulting in many tragic deaths.

Amazingly, this horrible tragedy has taken place in a small region which is surrounded by

much bigger and well-endowed Arab countries. As expected, there have been a lot of shrill voices condemning this aggression. But rhetoric without real action is meaningless and isolated actions without real results also mean nothing when such a great human tragedy is unfolding day by day. What is more, it appears that although many responsible Israelis also oppose this unjust war, the Israeli prime minister appears to be bent on prolonging it due to reasons which are increasingly seen to be related to his own selfish interests.



Panelists speak at 'The War on Gaza: What's Next for Palestine?' event, hosted by the International Centre of Justice for Palestinians, on 30 October 2023 (MEE)

So should Arab countries not take more united and firm action to stop the horrible atrocities and human rights violations in Gaza which have been described as genocidal actions by many well informed observers? Here it should be added that the International Court of Justice has found it 'plausible' that Israel has committed acts that violate the Genocide Convention in Gaza.

Please do not misunderstand me. I am not at all speaking of any armed intervention by neighboring Arab countries. In fact this writer has been consistently writing against any widening of existing conflicts. In addition this writer is also very firmly against all acts of terrorist violence. What this writer is pleading for here is the achievement of much greater firmness, unity and continuity in the peaceful efforts and actions of Arab countries to stop the horrible killings and human right violations by Israel in Gaza.

The Arab countries should get over all their other differences to speak with completely one voice and united voice to try to end this most horrible violence as early as possible. In terms of their many joint meetings and declarations they should very clearly convey the message that firstly, the entire Arab world is united in demanding an immediate end to this terrible aggression and secondly, that the Arab world will not rest till this aim is achieved. This united action should also convey this message that those who are leading weapon suppliers for this aggression will not be considered as a friend. For balance, this message should make it clear that as long as Israel is peaceful and causes no harm to Palestinians, the Arab countries are happy to live peacefully with Israel.

Such increasing unity and firmness in the Arab world reflected in a series of continuing actions will certainly have a much bigger influence and will be much more effective in achieving the desired results compared to the isolated, weak and indecisive actions for the support of the cause of Gaza that have taken place so far particularly in the bigger and more influential Arab countries. These efforts should be made in transparent ways in the form of open declarations made jointly by all Arab countries, and the Arab people should be free to voice support for these declarations in peaceful ways at the street level. One important meeting calling for immediate end of aggression should lead to yet another effort and so on till the desired result of durable ceasefire and peace is achieved, to be followed by very large-scale relief and rehabilitation effort for the people of Gaza and of course the release of all Israeli hostages (who should never have been taken as hostages in the first place).

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*Bharat Dogra is Honorary Convener, Campaign to Save Earth Now. His recent books include Protecting Earth for Children, Planet in Peril, Man over Machine and A Day in 2071.*

*Featured image: Yazan al-Kafarna is one of the latest to die of hunger and malnutrition in Gaza since the start of the war on 7 October (Screengrab/X)*

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