

Shelling and Killing Civilians: Western Hypocrisy Over Israel and Ukraine

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Western leaders have frequently used the pretext of 'protecting civilians' to carry out their aggressive and illegal military interventions, such as directly in Libya, Iraq, and indirectly in Syria by supporting extremists.

[It has already been established](#) that this pretext was nothing more than an excuse to carry out regime change that would benefit Washington. The current violence in Ukraine and Israel, where the Ukrainian and Israeli governments are shelling and killing civilians, while the West turns a blind eye, further illustrates the hypocritical and immoral nature of Western governments. Ukraine

The Western-backed Kiev government, which was installed after an illegal coup, continues to bomb its own civilians with complete disregard for innocent lives lost. In the most recent attack by the government, [at least four people died](#) when a suburb of the rebel-held Ukrainian city of Donetsk was badly damaged by rockets. Apartment blocks were hit as the bombardment continued through the night.

Those who are bombing their own citizens into oblivion continue to act with malfeasance and complete impunity as they carry out their war crimes and their merciless punitive operation against their own civilians. Kiev authorities continue to act with complete disregard for any law whatsoever as they kill women and children and conduct air strikes on civilians, while those sitting comfortably in their plush offices across the Atlantic continue to support Kiev and not a dissenting word is heard. Even after US State Department spokesperson Jen Psaki stated that Kiev has the right to conduct airstrikes on civilians, using the logic of territorial integrity and national unity, not a single word of protest was voiced. Is it now official US policy to bomb civilians? Or is it okay only if it is done by a coup government that they have installed?

Last week Pro-Kiev's military opened artillery fire on residential buildings in east Ukraine's Lugansk. At least 80 people, including 56 civilians and 24 self-defense fighters, had been taken to Lugansk hospitals as a result of bombings and shelling by the Ukrainian military. Despite the blatant failure to protect his own civilians, Ukrainian President Poroshenko received full support from [US Vice President Joe Biden who informed Poroshenko](#) of ongoing US diplomatic efforts to work with international partners to impose costs on Russia if it continues on its current course of providing the separatists with heavy weapons and equipment. Despite Biden being one of the first to condemn Syrian President Assad for apparent "butchering" of his own people, he failed to condemn the Ukrainian leadership for

precisely the same crime.

Ultimately, the United States is supporting an illegitimate junta carrying out the brutal military “punishment” of entire populations as they attempt to “clear” the eastern part of their own country.

Israel

Meanwhile, Israel is continuing <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/13/israeli-troops-clash-with-hamas-a-s-gaza-death-toll-continues-to-spiral> its brutal and aggressive bombing of Gaza, with the death toll passing 160 on the Palestinian side, with no Israeli fatalities reported.

In the most recent attack, the Palestinian health ministry says two people were killed <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/israel/10963427/Israel-air-strike-hits-charitable-association-for-disabled-in-Gaza.html> when Israel hit <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-28275837> a residential home for disabled people in Beit Lahiya. Furthermore, an Israeli warplane flattened the home of Gaza police chief Taysir al-Batsh and damaged a nearby mosque as evening prayers ended, killing at least 18 people and wounding 50. Collective punishment of the Palestinian collective has always been the norm in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The principle of the presumption of innocence until proven guilty only applies to the Jewish citizens of Israel and the colonizers in the West Bank.

The Israeli Prime Minister, Binyamin Netanyahu, said that “no international pressure will prevent us from striking, with all force”. Netanyahu does not need to worry about any pressure coming from Washington, as the United States once again has given its full support for Israel to butcher as many Palestinians as Israel feels necessary. White House spokesman Josh Earnest said <http://www.timesofisrael.com/us-backs-israeli-right-to-defend-itself-un-chief-condemns-rockets/>: “We strongly condemn the continuing rocket fire into Israel and the deliberate targeting of civilians by terrorist organizations in Gaza.” The spokesman also backed Israel’s right to respond to the attacks.

Washington’s immoral stance is becoming more isolated however. Navi Pillay, the UN high commissioner for human rights has said <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/11/israeli-air-strikes-gaza-continue-us-barack-obama-offers-broker-ceasefire> that Israel’s air campaign in Gaza may violate international laws prohibiting the targeting of civilians. She said: “We have received deeply disturbing reports that many of the civilian casualties, including of children, occurred as a result of strikes on homes. Such reports raise serious doubt about whether the Israeli strikes have been in accordance with international humanitarian law and international human rights law.”

In addition, major human rights organizations have condemned Israel. [Amnesty International has urged](#) the UN to urgently mandate an independent international investigation into Israeli airstrikes on Gaza and hold accountable those responsible for war crimes. Amnesty said that despite claims by Israel that its operation [“Protective Edge”, launched June 8](#), targets Hamas militants, most of more than a hundred Palestinians killed in airstrikes on Gaza are civilians, adding that at least 24 children and 16 women were among the casualties. Amnesty added: “Unless the Israeli authorities can provide specific information to show how a home is being used to make an effective contribution to military actions, deliberately attacking civilian homes constitutes a war crime and also amounts to

collective punishment against the families.”

Furthermore, Bill Van Esveld, Israel, Palestine researcher at [Human Rights Watch](#) also stated [that intentional attacks](#) on the Palestinian population can be deemed a war crime and accountability for violations of international law must be imposed.

Despite constantly spouting the usual rhetoric of promoting human rights and international law, Western leaders under the umbrella protection of Washington have completely abandoned these principles. Western-backed war criminals in Israel and Ukrainian governments continue to defy international law and human rights, resulting in bloodshed and destruction. Just like many times in the past, the United States has blood on its hands.

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