

The United States Vetoes Yet Another UN Humanitarian Ceasefire Over Gaza

Is a rival resolution from Washington another trick to protect Israel?

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There have been several interesting developments relating to Israel's ongoing destruction of Gaza and its people, but one might well question the motives of at least one of the principal players in the drama, namely Joe Biden's United States government.

Last Tuesday the United States, acting to protect Israel, [vetoed](#) a United Nations Security Council resolution, arguing that it would "jeopardize" the ongoing negotiations between the two parties to release the Israeli hostages and it [wouldn't be](#) "conducive to a sustainable peace and would instead empower Hamas." 13 of the 15 members of the Security Council supported the resolution, Britain abstained, and US alone voted against it. It was the third humanitarian resolution incorporating a ceasefire vetoed by Washington over Gaza, each of which was intended by the White House to give Israel a completely free hand to deal with the Palestinians.

The resolution had been proposed by Algeria and it called for an immediate ceasefire and the expediting of emergency humanitarian assistance to the in-peril Gazan population. The UN has been warning that a humanitarian catastrophe that could kill hundreds of thousands is about to take place if nothing is done to reverse what is being called a genocide due to the deliberate employing of famine and disease, not to mention the killing of more than 30,000 Palestinians by the Israeli military aided and abetted by the US. After the UN vote, the Algerian ambassador to the UN [said](#) Washington's lone opposing vote should be understood as "approval of starvation as a means of war against hundreds of thousands of Palestinians" and "it implies an endorsement of the brutal violence and collective punishment inflicted upon" those Palestinians in Gaza." The Algerian resolution also came at a time when the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague is beginning [its separate](#)

[review](#) of whether Israel has used the past month to mitigate or cancel its genocidal acts in Gaza.

Opinion polls suggest that most Americans oppose what Israel and Washington are doing, but they have little ability to influence choices made by Congress and the White House, which are overwhelmingly inclined to defer to Israeli points of view due to the fact that they have been bought by the powerful Zionist Lobby in the US. *Nota bene* one of the biggest sellouts to Israel of all time, former Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi who, with impeccable timing given both the Algerian proposal and the ICJ review, stated last week that Israel [has not used](#) any weapons provided by the United States in its military action against Gaza. She said,

“There’s nothing that we have sent since Oct. 7 that has contributed to this brutality. In the longer run, they are in a dangerous neighborhood.”

That is, of course a complete lie, as the Biden Administration has carried out hundreds of airlifts of “emergency” weapons to the Jewish state, to include the 2,000 pound [bunker buster bombs](#) whose use against hospitals and other large buildings has been [well-attested](#) to by some of the eyewitness journalists, medical doctors and UN officials who have managed to avoid being targeted and assassinated by Israel.

What followed on the Monday announcement by US Ambassador to the UN Linda Thomas-Greenfield about the impending Algerian veto surprised many who were watching developments.

The media were informed that Washington would be presenting its own rival Security Council draft resolution that would call for a temporary ceasefire and which also would advise Israel against launching a ground invasion of Rafah in southern Gaza over Ramadan, which starts on March 10th, due to the fact that more than a million Gazans are trapped in the region with, quite probably, nowhere to go. The resolution calls for a “viable plan” for protecting civilians in Rafah, whatever that is supposed to mean, which Israel will presumably ignore, and it includes no sanctions if Israel refuses to comply. The US indicated that its draft document would be discussed in the UN over the next several weeks or more and might be subject to considerable editing, but it set no time table for initiating the *temporary* ceasefire apart from “as soon as practicable,” which is where a warning flag went up for me and others.



Smoke rises during an Israeli ground operation in Khan Younis, seen from a camp for displaced Palestinians in Rafah, southern Gaza. Reuters

The resolution gives Israel considerable freedom of action without any bothersome timetable to worry about and “temporary” means it can resume military action when it wishes to do so and there is no threat of possible punishment if Israel does decide to invade Rafah and kills another 30,000 Palestinians while doing so.

It is well known in Washington circles that follow foreign policy and Biden’s wars that the US doesn’t make any moves on the Middle East without complete prior consultation with the Israelis. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken has even participated in Israeli War Cabinet meetings. Against those weak but positive moves spelled out in the resolution, there is the fact that Netanyahu and his political allies, long opposed to a two-state solution, have recently repeatedly [rejected proposals for any Palestinian sovereign entity](#) which means that the intention is to destroy and/or annex Gaza. Israel is in fact using its formidable lobby and international press/narrative control to work assiduously to isolate the Palestinians by blocking any recognition by individual countries or as a full member at the UN. The greatest effort is inevitably being directed at working to keep the United States under control. Both Blinken and National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan carefully coordinate every step the administration takes with the Israeli Minister for Strategic Affairs and former ambassador to Washington Ron Dermer who reports directly to Netanyahu.

Nor is there any hint in what is included in the upcoming US resolution regarding what Biden and Netanyahu might seek to do afterwards to end the conflict.

In fact, Netanyahu has indicated that he is quite willing to expand the fighting as his government has moved to restrict access to Jerusalem’s al-Aqsa mosque during Ramadan on “security grounds,” hardly a conciliatory move, while also widening the conflict with

Hezbollah [by an airstrike](#) deep into Lebanon. Nevertheless, nearly everyone, except Israel and its US lobby, agrees that both justice and political realities demand that some kind of genuine Palestinian state should be allowed to develop if the ancient land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea is ever to find peace. Predictably, the problem is in the details, not to mention that Israel's current Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has repeatedly insisted that no such an entity will ever be allowed to exist to challenge Israeli political and military supremacy in the region. And, for the moment, Netanyahu has the *force majeure* and both the active and passive support from the United States that he needs to enforce his writ over nearly all the occupied and under siege territory that he clearly sees as *Eretz* or Greater Israel.

Given the reality of who is capable of doing what to whom, the United States is perhaps hesitantly taking the lead on proposing something like a revived two-state solution to the problem, as originally envisioned in the UN partition that created Israel in 1948 as well as in the Oslo Accords of 1993, even though most Middle East experts have long asserted that such a formula can no longer succeed or even be attempted. Given the horrors taking place in Gaza, there is inevitably some interest in resuscitating a political formula that has already failed, largely because the existing Palestinian Authority (PA) has [long since lost its legitimacy](#) in the eyes of its most important audience, the Palestinian people. Any suggestion that a unity government for Palestinians combining the PA and Hamas is somehow viable is therefore delusional. Both Washington and Jerusalem know that, so one might consider that talk of some kind of empowered and enabled government for Palestinians is at best notional.

To be sure, the proposals that h Hamas have been leaked in one form or another appear to be a way for the United States to save face and give some Palestinians a token voice while also funding and supplying weapons to Israel to enable and even advance the crushing of the Gazans and increasingly also of the West Bank Palestinians by the Netanyahu regime. Leading extremists like Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich in the Israeli government have made no attempt to conceal their desire to expel the Palestinians from the historic Palestine, killing them as necessary if they resist or attempt any "intifada" type uprising such as occurred in Gaza in October.

The United States and some Europeans are recognizing that a Palestinian state with what amounts to full sovereignty will not be allowed due to Israeli resistance and willingness to militarily destroy any such entity, but some leaders are nevertheless hoping to create some sort of "semi-sovereign" disarmed Palestinian government that will be entirely subservient to Israel in every way that matters. As a model, it would function similarly to how Israel currently retains and sometimes holds back the excise and other taxes due to the rump Palestinian Authority governing entity in Ramallah, making it a "subcontractor of the Israeli occupation," that is completely surrounded and dominated by Israel.

Biden's impending Gaza proposal also has a domestic political aspect. With Israel's slaughter of Gazans still continuing, a situation that is enabled by Washington's unflinching support of Israeli behavior, serious problems as the US is an active participant in a genocide are beginning to surface as the war spreads throughout the Middle East. One presumes that Blinken has finally decided that something must be done to salvage the international reputation of the United States while also undoing damage to Joe Biden's electoral prospects as American voters increasingly are disgusted by the images of dead and tortured Palestinians that flash on national television screens nightly.

Aware that Netanyahu wants the war to continue until total victory to include opposition to the development of any Palestinian government entity, Blinken [has reportedly asked](#) the State Department to conduct a review and “present policy options on possible US and international recognition of a Palestinian state after the war in Gaza” if presumably it does end and is not completely annexed by the Jewish state. Netanyahu, for his part is also reading the political tea leaves that show his popularity is sharply declining. He counters that by repeating claims that Israel is winning what will be a long war completely destroying Hamas and, to show that he is serious, he has recently rejected a serious Hamas [proposal for a ceasefire](#) followed by prisoner and hostage exchanges and talks to resolve the conflict.

So the United States’ UN security Council resolution to advance some kind of peace process between Israel and the Palestinians might be much ado about nothing, just a way to buy time and to help Biden transform himself and his administration to make it look like they are interested in peace and reconciliation when they are really acting on behalf of Israel. As usual, the reality is in the details and we will soon enough know what the US president and his advisers have been up to and what they expect to achieve beyond the dissemination of the characteristic bipartisan lies and evasions that have constituted US foreign policy since 9/11.

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