

US vetoes Security Council draft resolution on Israeli operations in Gaza

By [Global Research](#)

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Wide view of today's Security Council meeting on the Middle East, called jointly by the Arab League, Organization of the Islamic Conference and Non-Aligned Movement. ([UN Photo/Marie Gandois](#))

Exercising its veto in the Security Council today, the United States blocked a draft resolution that won the endorsement of 10 other members and would have called for a United Nations fact-finding mission in response to a recent Israeli operation in Gaza resulting in at least 18 civilian deaths.

Sponsored by Qatar, the draft would have condemned Israeli military operations in Gaza as well as Palestinian rocket fire into Israel, while calling for an immediate withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Gaza Strip and a cessation of violence by both parties.

Four countries - the United Kingdom, Denmark, Japan and Slovakia - abstained on the text, which would have requested that Secretary-General Kofi Annan establish within 30 days the fact-finding mission on the 8 November incident in Beit Hanoun, where some eight children were among the dozen and a half people killed.

Today's action followed a day of debate in the Council on Thursday. At that meeting, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs Angela Kane voiced shock at the Beit Hanoun incident. She called on Israel to review the implications of its military actions and on the Palestinians to stop rocket attacks by militants, while urging both sides to return to the negotiating table.

The draft resolution would have called on the diplomatic Quartet - made up of the UN, United States, European Union and Russian Federation - to take immediate steps to stabilize the situation, including through the possible establishment of an "international mechanism for the protection of the civilian populations."

The representative of the United States joined other Council members in voicing deep regret over the loss of life in Beit Hanoun, while noting that the Israeli authorities had admitted that the incident had been a mistake and intended to conduct an investigation.

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