

Veterans for Peace Statement on Gaza. “How could Anyone, at the very least, not Support a Ceasefire ... Mr. President?”

By [Veterans for Peace](#)

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On October 12, Veterans For Peace issued [this statement](#) about the conflict between Hamas and Israel, in which we condemned the horrific violence on both sides, particularly the killing of civilians. We added our voice to the many calls for a ceasefire and negotiations toward a political solution because there is no military one.

Since then, conditions have worsened – terribly. If a ceasefire isn’t declared, the killing and wounding in Gaza will increase dramatically, given announced plans to intensify bombing and conduct what is likely to be a months-long ground invasion.

[Marjorie Cohn](#), VFP Advisory Board member and former president of the National Lawyers Guild, joined many others in defining [what’s happening in Gaza as “genocide,”](#) and the U.S. role as “complicity in genocide.”

We take those terms very seriously.

On October 20, the Palestinian Ministry of Health in Gaza reported that 4,127 people, including 1,661 children have been killed and 13,162 people have been injured. Since then, [400 people were killed in 24 hours](#) on October 22.

This [Gaza surgeon’s eyewitness report from Al-Shifa hospital](#), where thousands have taken refuge, is one of many reports that describe “[Hospitals in Gaza on the brink of collapse](#), power set to run out in matter of hours,” “[Gaza conditions worsen](#) amid warnings that shortages could ‘kill many, many people,’” and more.

The only thing worse to read are the statements of Israeli officials ordering much more of the same. [Prime Minister Netanyahu](#) declared,

“This is a struggle between the children of light and the children of darkness, between humanity and the law of the jungle.”

[Major General Gassan Alian added](#),

“Human animals must be treated as such. There will be no electricity and no water [in Gaza], there will only be destruction. You wanted hell, you will get hell.”

And [Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant](#) told troops:

“I have released all the restraints...”

Members of Veterans For Peace know what happens when those are the “rules of engagement” and what a “free fire zone” is.

Francesca Albanese, UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967, warned of a [new instance of mass ethnic cleansing of Palestinians and called for an immediate ceasefire.](#) She added, Palestinians have no safe zone anywhere in Gaza, with Israel having imposed a “complete siege” on the tiny enclave, with water, food, fuel and electricity unlawfully cut off.

How could anyone, at the very least, not support a ceasefire...Mr. President?

Biden ordered our UN ambassador to [veto the UN resolution calling for a ‘humanitarian pause,’](#) so he can have more time to let American on-the-ground diplomacy “play out.” The tragedy and hypocrisy in that statement are monstrous, but surely [delight the weapons makers](#) who profit savagely from the billions of dollars our taxes buy for Israel year in and year out.

Our government, with many billions of our tax dollars, has fanned the flames beneath the pressure cooker of occupation for decades. We cannot pretend ignorance. [One of our members](#) saw a tragic similarity between what he witnessed in Palestine and what he did as an occupier in Iraq.

VFP urges our members and supporters as emphatically as we can:

Take action NOW - no matter how large or small - but do it now.

We must do everything we can to prevent even greater disaster!

Join in a local protest or organize one yourself. Certainly picket, and think seriously about occupying local offices of Members of Congress who do not support [HR 786](#) for an immediate ceasefire and humanitarian aid. Tell your friends what’s happening. Write a letter to the editor.

But do it now!

Without a ceasefire, this war, like all wars, will dangerously escalate. The U.S. has sent aircraft carrier battle groups into the eastern Mediterranean and more troops into neighboring countries; Israel has bombed two airports in Syria; Shia militias have attacked U.S. bases in Iraq and Syria.

To American troops deployed to the Middle East: follow your conscience. Remember that

what you do as a member of the United States military will be with you for the rest of your life. We in Veterans For Peace have learned from our experiences with war and death to be life affirming.

Join us for peace.

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