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General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling for Immediate, Sustained Humanitarian Truce Leading to Cessation of Hostilities between Israel, Hamas

Member States Fail to Adopt Amendment Condemning 7 October Terrorist Attacks by Hamas in Israel

Calling for an immediate and sustained humanitarian truce leading to a cessation of hostilities, the General Assembly today demanded the unhindered provision of essential aid to civilians throughout the Gaza Strip, as the body continued its emergency session on the situation in the Middle East. The Assembly also failed to unequivocally reject and condemn the terrorist attacks by Hamas that took place in Israel starting on 7 October.

By a recorded vote of 120 in favour to 14 against, with 45 abstentions, the Assembly adopted the resolution titled “Protection of civilians and upholding legal and humanitarian obligations” (document [A/ES-10/L.25](#)), demanding that all parties immediately and fully comply with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law.

Resuming the 193-member organ’s tenth emergency special session on the “Illegal Israeli actions in occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory”, the Assembly called for immediate, full, sustained, safe and unhindered humanitarian access for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and other UN humanitarian agencies and their implementing partners. It also called for the rescinding of the order by Israel, the occupying Power, for Palestinian civilians and United Nations staff to evacuate all areas in the Gaza Strip north of the Wadi Gaza and relocate to southern Gaza.

Calling for the immediate and unconditional release of all civilians who are being illegally held captive, the Assembly also stressed the grave impact that armed conflict has had on women and children as well as on other civilians who may have specific vulnerabilities, including people with disabilities and older persons. Emphasizing the importance of preventing further destabilization and escalation of violence in the region and calling upon all parties to exercise maximum restraint, the body reaffirmed that a just solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can only be achieved by peaceful means, based on the relevant United Nations resolutions and in accordance with international law and on the basis of the two-State solution.

Prior to adopting the resolution, the Assembly failed, by a recorded vote of 88 in favour to 55 against, with 23 abstentions, to adopt the amendment titled “Protection of civilians and upholding legal and humanitarian obligations” (document [A/ES-10/L.26](#)). In addition to unequivocally rejecting and condemning the terrorist attacks by Hamas that took place in Israel starting on 7 October 2023, the rejected amendment would have also condemned the taking of hostages and would have demanded the safety, well-being and humane treatment of those hostages in compliance with international law and call for their immediate and unconditional release.

Gilad Menashe Erdan, the representative of Israel, said the world has witnessed that the United Nations “no longer holds even one ounce of legitimacy or relevance”. This Organization was founded in the wake of the Holocaust for the purpose of preventing atrocities, he said. Israel just endured the largest massacre of Jews since the Holocaust and according to a majority of the so-called “Family of Nations”, Israel has no right to defend itself, he said.

Entire families and communities have been exterminated by genocidal Hamas jihadists, he said, adding: “We saw exactly what they dream of doing to every Israeli and Jew, and we will not sit idly by to let them rearm and commit such atrocities.” The only

way to ensure this is the eradication of Hamas' terror capabilities. Yet this resolution does not even name Hamas; even when discussing "our hostages", the drafters could not even bring themselves to name the Hamas terrorists responsible for this blatant war crime, he said. "Why are you defending terrorists that deliberately beheaded children and abducted babies," he asked.

"We all know that if given the chance Hamas and Hizbullah would commit the October 7 massacre again and again and again until there is not a single Israeli left to murder or a single citizen to terrorize and drive away from Israel," he said. Hamas has embedded itself deep within and under the Gazan civilian population and the people of Gaza are being exploited as human shields for terrorists. "Why are you not holding Hamas accountable," he asked.

Trusting information coming out of Gaza is like "trusting reports from ISIS," he said. Every Gazan ministry is run by Hamas. Every official statistic is the word of genocidal terrorists. The fact that UN officials and some Member States still parrot lies about what happened at the hospital in Gaza City is a true disgrace, he said, adding it was proven with absolute certainty that it was a Palestinian Islamic Jihad rocket and that the number of casualties is far lower than Hamas' reports. "Yet you continue to echo these lies. Shame on you," he said.

Riyad Mansour, Permanent Observer for the State of Palestine, said that in the world's parliament today, peace-loving nations stood up and proved that the international community has not forsaken the promise, purpose and principles of the United Nations and has not abandoned the Palestinian people in these darkest hours. He said he was thankful to all the countries that voted for the draft resolution tabled by Jordan and co-sponsored by 46 countries.

The occupying Power has launched its ground invasion and has cut electricity, Internet and all communication, he added. Some still refuse to condemn these war crimes and crimes against humanity being perpetrated by Israel, he said, adding that today he would not focus on such regrettable stances. "We will focus on the unequivocal message this august Assembly has sent to our people that the overwhelming majority of the people of the world stand with you, stand with the people in the Gaza Strip," he said. "They bear witness to your suffering. They feel your pain. And they have not forgotten you and will not forsake you."

He said the resolution was vital since the Security Council regrettably remains deadlocked, failing to fulfil its chartered duty to uphold peace and security. He thanked everyone from every region around the world for their principled support of the resolution. "We are one in seeking an end to the killing," he said. This is not something the representatives of the occupying Power will ever understand, he said.

After the General Assembly has clearly spoken and said enough bullying and inciting, the representative of the occupying Power still comes here and tries to force everyone to accept their twisted, criminal definition of self-defence, he said. "There is no such right in this world, not legally, not politically, not morally," he said. "This is the message that was sent today by the General Assembly to him and anyone else who are attempting to rewrite international law." More than 7,000 people, at least 3,500 of whom are children, have been killed, he said, adding Gaza is becoming a graveyard. "Do not let this happen," he said. "Listen to your conscience."

Prior to the vote on the resolution and amendment, the Assembly resumed its debate on the matter, with many speakers stressing the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza.

Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the representative of the United States, said that two key words were missing from the draft resolution: Hamas and hostages. "It is outrageous that this resolution fails to name the perpetrators of the 7 October terrorist attack," she said. "These are omissions of evil." Their exclusion gives cover to Hamas' brutality, and the United States-Canada amendment is straightforward in calling for a condemnation of the Hamas terrorist attack and for the immediate and unconditional release of hostages, she said. "One-sided resolutions [...] will not help to advance peace," she added.

Hamas is determined to destroy Israel and kill Jews, it has never cared about the genuine needs or safety of the people it claims to represent and has no respect for the rule of law or human life, she said. As Israel exercises its right and responsibility to defend its people, it must do so in line with the rules of war. "There are no law-free zones in war," she said, adding that international humanitarian law must be respected by all parties. "The death, destruction and desperation playing out before our eyes is enough to make one lose faith in humanity," she said, urging Member States not to look away. "We must not become numb to the pain and the suffering," she said.

Prior to the vote, several delegates expressed frustration at the failure of the Security Council to adopt resolutions related to the current escalation of the conflict in the Middle East.

Olof Skoog, the Permanent Observer for the European Union, in its capacity as observer, expressed regret over the use of vetoes, which has prevented the Council from fulfilling its mandate. This dramatic conflict and the humanitarian situation required a timely and strong message by the Council, which it failed to deliver, he said. "This is deeply regrettable," he added and condemned "in the strongest possible terms" Hamas for its brutal and indiscriminate terrorist attacks across Israel. The use of civilians as human shields by Hamas is a particularly deplorable atrocity, he said, strongly emphasizing Israel's right to defend itself in line with international law and international humanitarian law. "We reiterate our call on Hamas to immediately release all hostages without any preconditions," he said.

Almaha Mubarak F. J. Al-thani, the representative of Qatar, aligned herself with the Arab Group and the Gulf Cooperation Council and expressed deep regret over the failures of the Security Council to adopt any resolutions on the situation. Considering the catastrophic humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, the Assembly's resolution represents the minimum obligations of Member States and addresses a critical vacuum created by the Security Council, she said, renewing a call for all parties to de-escalate violence, for the release of all prisoners, particularly civilians, and for the delivery of desperately needed humanitarian aid to Gaza.

Sedat Önal, the representative of Türkiye, said there can be no justification for indiscriminate attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure or the forced displacement of people. It is the responsibility of the United Nations to help achieve unity and deliver results in terms of maintaining international peace and security, he said, regretting this has not been possible because of the "paralysis of the Security Council". It is incumbent upon the General Assembly to make the UN system function, he said, adding that is why Türkiye co-sponsored the resolution.

Osama Mahmoud Abdelkhalik Mahmoud, the representative of Egypt, said the world must oppose the targeting of civilians, the violation of international law, bombardment of hospitals and medical centres, the killing of children, as well as forcible displacement and destruction of human rights. Citing an Arab proverb, he said the Assembly must not be "a mute devil that does not speak out for the truth". He pointed out that the denial of basic necessities, including food and water, "have no place in the twenty-first century" as "they are reminiscent of practices of the Middle Ages".

Brian Christopher Manley Wallace, the representative of Jamaica, speaking for the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), called on all parties to take every necessary step to re-establish a pathway to peace and stability. "Let us once and for all acknowledge and accept the utter futility of war, violence and terror and recognize that dialogue and diplomacy constitute the only viable pathway to a lasting peace", he said. The Group, he stressed, is committed to the UN's ongoing efforts towards a two-State solution.

Joaquín Alberto Pérez Ayestarán, the representative of Venezuela, speaking for the Group of Friends in Defense of the United Nations Charter, urged Israel to take the path of international legality by adhering to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter, the Geneva Conventions and other relevant international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

Action

Speaking in explanation of vote before the vote, the representative of Jordan, presenting resolution "L.25", said the situation in Gaza is dire, during which more than 7,000 innocent Palestinians having lost their lives. He also called a vote on Canada's amendment "L.26".

The representative of Canada, presenting amendment "L.26", said "facts are facts". On October 7 Hamas committed acts of terror. Not mentioned in draft resolution "L.25" is the organization that bears responsibility for those events.

The representative of Pakistan said resolution "L.25" is a humanitarian text. The crime originated with Israel, he added. The real cause is the occupation of Palestine. He described the Canadian amendment as unfair and unequal. "Name both or name neither," he said.

The Assembly then took a recorded vote on amendment "L.26". With 88 votes in favour to 55 against, with 23 abstentions, the body failed to obtain a two thirds majority and therefore the amendment was not adopted.

Turning to draft resolution "L.25", the Assembly adopted that text with a recorded vote of 121 in favour to 14 against, with 44 abstentions.

Speaking in explanation of vote after the vote, the representative of Iran said historical experiences and recent developments "demonstrated that Palestinians have no choice but to continue their resistance against occupation, aggression and blatant

violations of their rights". His country voted in favour of the text, which he said demonstrated the international community's strong support for the Palestinian cause, and he regretted that Canada's representative tried to whitewash Israeli aggression.

The Syrian delegate said the world has grown sick and tired of the hypocrisy of some Western States and that Syria voted for the resolution because it primarily aims to stop the barbaric Israeli war machine and calls for an immediate halt to aggression, for the delivery of humanitarian aid, and for rejecting the forced eviction of Palestinian. He expressed reservation over some of the language of the resolution, which he said could be construed as equalizing the Israeli aggressor, the murderer, and the occupied Palestinian people, the victim.

The speaker for the Russian Federation said the adoption of the resolution is extremely important and necessary in the current escalating conditions. "This resolution is less than what we could and must do," he said. Unfortunately, due to the position of Western delegations, the Security Council was unable to take any action. "We clearly condemned both the terrorist acts and the deaths of Israelis and other citizens in Israel, as well as the indiscriminate bombing of Gaza and the victims there," he said. The Canadian amendment was "clearly biased," he added.

The representative of France said he voted in favour of the resolution because nothing justifies the suffering of civilians but regretted the missing condemnation of the terror attack by Hamas and other groups, and he said that the Assembly must call for the release of hostages. Echoing this sentiment, the representative of Poland said his country decided to abstain on the resolution in part for this reason. He said among the hostages taken by Hamas is a Polish citizen, a distinguished historian working for Yad Vashem Institute. "We expect Mr. Alex Danzig to return home safe and sound," he said.

The representative of Ghana said her country also voted in favour of the resolution because it cannot turn away from the unfolding humanitarian disaster in the Gaza Strip, ignore the real threat of a regional war or "squander the impetus within this organ to seriously push for the resumption of negotiations on the two-State solution".

PALESTINIAN ISSUES MIDDLE EAST ISRAEL STATE OF PALESTINE

! For information media. Not an official record.
