

# Palestine: An imperialist attack on the whole of the Middle East

The war against Palestine is opening a new chapter in history. It is a genocide carried out by Israel with the active support of the United States and the active support or complicity of many other states.

Of the 2.4 million Palestinians in Gaza, 1.9 million, or 86% of the population, have been internally displaced. Of the more than 41,000 deaths that have been identified, 40% are women and children, and the actual carnage is estimated at between 150,000 and 200,000 deaths, or around 10% of the population of Gaza. Through its siege of the territory's population without food or support and its many other violations of international law, the murder of hundreds of journalists and doctors and the blocking of humanitarian aid, Israel is demonstrating that its objective is to regain total control of the Gaza Strip. At the same time, 16 Palestinian communities have been forcibly displaced from the West Bank and 1,285 Palestinians had been displaced by July 2024.

It is an attack and a threat against all Palestinians and the majority of people in the Middle East, with major implications both for the region as a whole and for global geopolitical relations.

The Israeli attacks on Lebanon since September 2024 represented a new stage in the war: several thousand people were killed by indiscriminate attacks and massive bombardments, and tens of thousands fled the south of the country. On 27 September, the assassination of Hezbollah Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah and several of its leaders completed what proved to be a systematic decapitation of the organization after sabotaging its communications network.

Subsequently, it has become clear that the focus of Israel's military and political attack has shifted from Gaza to southern Lebanon - i.e. the areas of that state where Hezbollah's rear base is located - along with attempts to redirect propaganda, presenting Iran as the main threat to the so-called civilized world. In fact, Netanyahu has been conducting «limited military incursions» into this region since November 2023, but one of the main

manoeuvres now is to obtain military and political support from the United States in a situation where the White House, in the run-up to the elections, has less influence over the situation.

Biden's actions revealed the depth of his hypocrisy: the call on 26 September by the United States and other countries for a three-week ceasefire between the Zionist state and Hezbollah quickly gave way to a statement by Biden hailing Nasrallah's disappearance, clearly showing that his administration supports the Israeli offensive in southern Lebanon as well as in Gaza.

Israel is therefore waging mass terror as part of an asymmetrical war, with the aim of silencing all political, militant or military dissent. This war is not simply a continuation of the 75-year-old war of apartheid and colonization and ethnic cleansing against those who inhabited Palestine before the imposed creation of the State of Israel. There has been a qualitative leap in the desire to eradicate the Palestinian people, through the dehumanization of Palestinians and in a supremacist logic, in a total betrayal of the memory of the Shoah.

The current carnage is also linked to the neo-fascist nature of the Netanyahu government. Very weakened by months of popular protests against his arrogance towards the judiciary and the clear evidence of his corruption, Netanyahu, who has exploited the extreme weakness of the anti-Zionist left, has seized the opportunity of the bloody attack on 7 October 2023 to try to regain the initiative and control of the internal situation. The aim of establishing a Greater Israel - which could include southern Lebanon as far as the Litani River - the internal objectives of Israeli policy and the headlong rush to war are all part of the "clash of civilizations" rhetoric put forward by the Western powers, a discourse which perfectly suits their needs in the context

of the global crisis of the system of imperialist domination.

Netanyahu is now the vanguard of the global far right, which has pushed its traditional anti-Semitism into the background favour of a global racist and Islamophobic offensive. We are witnessing the emergence of a new world order whose historic mission is to allow mass massacres for the benefit of the domination of the great imperialist powers over the world.

Part of Netanyahu's tactic in focusing more on Hezbollah and Lebanon in the second half of September 2024 is to try to both the coalition to his right and the so-called centre of opposition leader Benny Gantz.

While Netanyahu's potential successors may agree to a prisoner swap with Hamas or have other tactical differences with him over the conduct of the war, they remain just as committed to Israeli control of Gaza and the West Bank, and just as opposed to any possibility of Palestinian sovereignty, however limited, in these areas. The repression of the Palestinians is not due to the whims of one man, but to the logic of the ruling classes of the Israeli state, at the expense of the Palestinian people.

Nevertheless, Israel is not acting alone. This is the first time since the offensive against Iraq in 2003 that the United States has intervened so directly. Its support of millions of dollars and weapons to Israel is decisive in the historic massacre of civilians. It is being carried out with the complicit silence or hypocritical protests of the major Western powers, the belated protests of China and the tightrope walking of Putin's Russia. The imperialist powers are ignoring the various resolutions of the UN or the International Criminal Court, which have no influence on events.

As for most governments in the Arab world, their logic of «normalization» of relations with Israel and invisibi-

lization of the Palestinian cause, which prevailed before 7 October, makes their critical statements on the bombing of Gaza, conceded under popular pressure, pathetic and tragic. For millions of people in the Arab-speaking and Muslim countries of the region, the Arab regimes are clearly perceived as collaborating with Israel and the imperialists. This policy leads them, as is the case in Algeria, Morocco, Egypt and Jordan, to step up repression against their populations, because they know that any mobilization in solidarity with Palestine would inevitably turn into a protest against their governments.

The pro-Assad battalions in Syria, Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Houthis in Yemen, in rebellion against a Saudi-controlled government - all forces with links to Iran's theocratic and deeply repressive regime - claim to be acting in the interests of the Palestinian people, while in reality trying to advance their own interests.

It is therefore a colonial and imperialist offensive with multiple targets, with violent repression and the encouragement of new settlements in the West Bank, the disappearance or mass exodus of Palestinians, military incursions into south-west Syria, bombing raids on the Houthis in Yemen, who are trying to block the manoeuvres of the American navy and merchant ships at the entrance to the Red Sea.

What Israel is doing is not self-defence but one of the most shameful massacres in recent history, rightly denounced as genocidal by South Africa before the Hague Tribunal. The ongoing tragedy is causing political and ideological upheaval throughout the world. It is becoming increasingly difficult for their allies to defend both the United States and Israel.

The carnage in Gaza is having a particular impact on peripheral youth around the world. The solidarity movement has met with widespread repression: demonstrations have been banned, participants have been repressed and even imprisoned. Hundreds of thousands of people demonstrated, blockading arms factories and pressing for the agreements between their countries and Israel to be broken. The movement exerted influence in artistic circles and the boycott movement spread. Millions of young people who had not experienced the two Intifadas rediscovered this struggle and made it their own. Racialized young people in working-class

neighbourhoods, victims of rising Islamophobia, have identified with the Palestinian cause.

While actions in support of this cause are quickly accused of anti-Semitism by those who defend Israel's actions, young Western Jewish humanists have shown an evolution of consciousness by developing a non-Zionist or anti-Zionist orientation, against the tide of pro-Israeli reactions in the United States to 7 October and organizing a historic mobilization that challenges the powers that be in the United States. The movement played a major role in replacing «genocidal Joe» Biden with Kamala Harris. Like many leaders in the Western world, she is obliged to adopt a critical public stance towards Israel, even though her real policy is unwavering support for the genocidal regime.

The mobilization went through several phases. Firstly, in the months following 7 October, it was very difficult to cope with the political pressure supporting Israel's pseudo-«right to defend itself». Then, there were major mobilizations, with a magnificent rebound when the universities mobilized. Today, we are faced with a new situation with the extension of the war to Lebanon, which follows targeted attacks in Iran. The threat of a regional war is more present than ever, and the headlong rush into war that we feared and predicted seems to be underway.

It is now more than ever our responsibility to build a global movement of solidarity with Palestine. This movement must be broad-based and united, demanding :

- stop the massacres,
- the withdrawal of troops,
- the reconstruction of Gaza,
- access to humanitarian aid for the population,
- the release of prisoners,
- the right of return for refugees,

All these humanitarian demands are fundamental. To achieve this, we need to step up demonstrations, occupations and boycotts, demand the requisition of companies collaborating in the genocide, block arms sales, and call on governments to end all links, particularly trade links, and all support for the genocidal state.

But we know deep down that this movement is also an anti-imperialist, decolonial, anti-war movement, that it resonates with the threat of a chaotic world where relations between the great powers are settled by arms. As part of this movement, we want to affirm the need

for the peoples of the world, the working classes and racialized people, to rise up to wrest power from the criminals. We support the resistance of peoples, armed or unarmed. Only a massive mobilization, particularly in the Middle East, can change the current totally unbalanced balance of power and force states and organizations to mobilise against this genocide.

We do not share the political project of Hamas or Hezbollah, nor their reactionary visions of society. However, given the retreat of the left in the region and the absence of other forces of resistance to colonialism, these organizations are de facto recognized tools of resistance, both in the region and by some in the solidarity movements. We therefore denounce the rhetoric of the Western ruling classes that labels them as vulgar «terrorists», without conceding an inch of ground to their vision, which is repressive and reactionary. For Israel and its allies, the very act of resisting is a terrorist act. For us, the violence of the victims stems from the violence of the oppressors. While we do not support Hamas politically, we do support its democratic right to exist, and we demand the removal of the PFLP, Hamas and Hezbollah from the lists of terrorist organizations drawn up by the United States and the European Union in particular.

In Palestine more than anywhere else, the victorious struggle of the exploited and oppressed can be the path to a fairer world. We reaffirm that only a free, democratic, secular and egalitarian Palestine, where everyone can live, whatever their religion, as long as they accept this decolonial framework, can bring a just and peaceful solution to the people of the region. The balance of power needed to bring about such a solution, far from the mirages of a Palestine limited to Bantustans, implies worldwide mobilization, and particularly regional mobilization, to stop the imperialists, the United States in particular.

The attack on Lebanon further isolates Israel on the international stage. We must also be prepared for an attack on Iran. This will inevitably be justified by Islamophobic and racist rhetoric, exploiting the legitimate democratic demands of the Iranian people, particularly women. We will assert our opposition to any imperialist attack on Iran and that the emancipation of the Iranian people will be achieved through their social struggles against the current regime.

# Palestine

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Palestine has the support of the majority of the working classes. It's up to us to turn this support into mass action!

*13 October 2024*