**Human Tragedy Unfolding in Gaza**

[Malik Muhammad Ashraf](https://www.nation.com.pk/columnist/malik-muhammad-ashraf)

October 20, 2023

[Opinions](https://www.nation.com.pk/opinions), [Columns](https://www.nation.com.pk/columns)

The genocide of Palestinians in Gaza being carried out by Israel with the support and backing of the powers like US, UK and members of the European Union is a ranting testimony of their hypocrisy and disrespect for humanitarian values, international conventions and laws in this regard. While voices of concern over this human tragedy unfolding in Gaza are emanating from the rest of the world urging the UN and the big powers to play their role in halting the hostilities, the latter are accusing the victims of being responsible for the bloodshed. Some have even announced military support for Israel in defending itself. The US President has even advocated the elimination of Hamas and Hizbullah. They have also torpedoed Russian resolution for a ceasefire.
It is this kind of hypocrisy by these powers that encourages Israel to flout international humanitarian laws with impunity and persist with its horrendous acts of genocide. According to reports 3000 people have been killed and more than 13 thousand injured in the attacks besides the demolition of hundreds of structures since the hostilities began on October 7. In the latest attack on a hospital, 500 people lost their lives. Responding to this attack the UN Secretary-General Antonio in a tweet has said “I am horrified by killing of hundreds of Palestinians in a strike on a hospital in Gaza today, which I strongly condemn. My heart is with the families of the victims. Hospitals and medical personnel are protected under international humanitarian law”.
The mere condemnation of what is going on in Gaza is not enough. Honestly speaking the UN Secretary General cannot do anything beyond that. He cannot even have the UN resolution on the issue implemented unless the US and its allies wish to do so. It is not the first time that a massacre of the Palestinians has been carried out on such a big scale. The memories of Sabra and Shatilla refugee camps where thousands of Palestinians were killed by Israel are still fresh in the memories of the people.
Reality and propaganda are two different things. Propaganda when repeated so often takes on a surreal life of its own. The leaders of US and Western countries cannot tell the difference between the two. On 9th October the leaders of France, Germany, Italy, the UK, and USA made a statement saying” We make clear that the terrorist actions of Hamas have no justification, no legitimacy and must be universally condemned” That was the most unfortunate stance. Terrorist actions are so common in the behaviour of Israel and these nations that their anti-terrorism rhetoric smacks of only propaganda unpinned by blatant double standards. They cry from every convenient roof-top to proclaim and stress their humanitarian credentials and show criminal indifference to human rights violations when it suits their strategic and geopolitical interests.
The statement by these five nations ascribing terrorism to acts of Hamas only and claiming that it did not represent all the Palestinians raises the question that if so, then why do they so ardently stand with Israel in inflicting collective punishment on the Palestinians? The destruction of almost the entire Gaza City and its 600,000 residents cannot be aimed at Hamas only. They would surely have no plausible answer to it and their explanations in this regard would only amount to sophistry.
The actions of Hamas are a sequel to the prolonged persecution by Israel. History bears testimony to the fact that the oppressed people being driven by emotions suppressed for a long time tend to rise over time to the level of the violence and oppression of the oppressor. The Israeli policy of persecution of Palestinians can also be readily interpreted as terrorism. It has surely set the standard for Palestinian reaction in a violent way.
Thus, the word of terrorism ascribed only to Palestinians is nothing but a propaganda mantra reflecting double standards by Western leaders. What this mantra implies is that as a sovereign state, you have a right to go around pummeling international law through your terrorist actions and piously calling it self-defence while their citizens cheer this stance influenced by the propaganda. As against it the victims of this violence and persecution have no right of self-defence or reacting to the inhuman ploys of the oppressor. If the victim does something in self-defence the action becomes terrorism.
It needs to be mentioned that the Western leaders who were part of the two-state solution never actually made any serious effort to have this agreement implemented. They looked the other way while Israel kept raising new settlements on the occupied land after this agreement in blatant disregard to international laws and Fourth Geneva Convention. None of the so-called civilised nations ever raised an eyebrow at these violations of international law and frequent killings of the Palestinians by Israel. They do not even care about the principles enshrined in the UN charter and the global public opinion. The statements of condemnation and expression of concern about what is unfolding in Israel are not going to influence them. The UN is only a debating club where issues are discussed, resolutions adopted and thrown on the back burner. Only those resolutions get implemented in which US and its allies have any interest.
Regrettably, OIC is also a dead horse. Though the Islamic countries do show solidarity on blasphemy and Islamophobia they lack the political solidarity like EU to be able to exert any influence or pressure in regards to the resolution of the Palestinian issue on which there are innumerable UN resolutions. Until and unless the Islamic world becomes united and puts up a common stand against all these atrocities nothing tangible can happen. The Palestinians will continue to suffer and watch the ruination of their land and lives helplessly.
The Iranians rightly call US the biggest ‘Satan’ It is behind all the conflicts around the world and is a culprit of humanity for killing thousands of human beings all around the world or supporting massacres by its allies. It can be deterred or stopped in its tracks only through an impregnable unity among the Muslim countries.