**Palestine’s Legal Battle**

**Israel is now obligated to submit a report within a month, demonstrating compliance with the provisional measures**

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In a groundbreaking develop­ment, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued a set of provisional measures direct­ing Israel to comply with the 1948 Genocide Con­vention. This decision, stemming from a case initiated by South Af­rica accusing Israel of genocide in Gaza, un­derscores the pressing need to address the escalat­ing humanitarian crisis in the re­gion. Although the ICJ refrained from ordering an immediate ces­sation of Israel’s military cam­paign, it mandated crucial steps for preventing genocide, facilitat­ing humanitarian aid into Gaza, and addressing individuals mak­ing genocidal statements.

Israel’s contention challenging the ICJ’s jurisdiction to issue pro­visional measures was unequiv­ocally rejected, emphasizing the binding nature of the court’s find­ings. This marks a pivotal mo­ment in the Israel-Palestine con­flict, where the toll has surpassed 26,000 Palestinian lives since the war’s initiation on October 7. The Palestinian Authority welcomed the ruling, framing it as a stark reminder that no state is exempt from the reach of justice. Palestin­ian Foreign Minister Riyadh Mali­ki asserted that the decision chal­lenges Israel’s entrenched culture of criminality and impunity, re­flective of decades of occupation, dispossession, persecution, and apartheid in Palestine. While the ICJ’s ruling falls short of explicit­ly calling for a ceasefire, legal ex­perts anticipate that it could exert considerable pressure on Israel and its international backers. Is­rael is now obligated to submit a report within a month, demon­strating compliance with the pro­visional measures. South Africa, the driving force behind the case, will have the opportunity to scru­tinize Israel’s claims and hold it accountable.

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Despite initial defiance from Is­raeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the government will likely face heightened interna­tional scrutiny concerning the conduct of its soldiers and state­ments from leaders and gener­als. The ICJ’s decision places ac­countability on Israel for the loss of innocent lives, with a broader expectation that its Western al­lies, including the US, will respect the ruling. Failure to do so could jeopardize the credibility of the rules-based international order and deepen the divide between the US and Western countries versus those in the Global South.

While the ICJ ruling refrains from explicitly endorsing a ceasefire, it adds considerable pressure on Israel’s allies to sup­port global efforts to bring an end to the conflict. Zaha Hassan, a human rights lawyer, suggests that the ICJ order complicates the narrative that Israel is acting within the constraints of interna­tional law in Gaza and in self-de­fense, especially for the US. The ICJ’s decision could catalyze mo­mentum for a negotiated cease­fire in Gaza and increase account­ability for Israeli military actions. Notably, Israel’s tactics on the ground appear to have shifted after South Africa announced its case before the ICJ, indicating a response to international pres­sure. In the ongoing conflict, the ICJ’s ruling raises expectations for a diplomatic resolution. The pressure on Israel’s internation­al backers, particularly the US, to reevaluate their support in light of the ICJ’s order may play a piv­otal role in influencing the course of the conflict.

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South Africa’s determined ef­forts to champion the rights of Palestinians on the internation­al stage serve as a commendable example for nations, irrespec­tive of their development status or religious affiliation. The coun­try’s commitment to bringing the case to the ICJ underscores the importance of global solidarity in addressing humanitarian crises and holding nations accountable for their actions.

As the international communi­ty awaits Israel’s response to the ICJ’s directives, skepticism looms given Israel’s historical resistance to international pressure and UN calls for halting human rights vio­lations in Gaza. The critical ques­tion remains: Will Israel adhere to the ICJ’s orders, breaking its pat­tern of defiance against global de­mands? The world watches closely, pondering whether this landmark ruling will mark a turning point in holding Israel accountable for its actions in the region.

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