**United for Gaza**

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Shortly after the start of a four-day ceasefire in the war on Gaza, the prime ministers of Spain and Belgium, Pedro Sanchez and Alexander De Croo, appeared in a joint press conference at Rafah Crossing.

While Sanchez described “what is happening (as) a disaster,” De Croo called for a “permanent cessation of hostilities” and for an end to the killing of children.

Equally significant, the two European leaders declared that “we may decide to recognize the State of Palestine, if the European Union does not”.

Coupled with the strong position of Ireland, some in Europe seem to be waking up to the fact that the Israeli occupation is the primary cause of the recent Gaza ‘hostilities’.

Israel was not pleased by the evolving European position. It immediately summoned the ambassadors of both countries, and sharply ‘rebuked’ them. This exaggerated response comes to show that Israel is not willing to give Europe even the narrowest of margins – as in condemning the killing of children or, expecting some kind of a peaceful settlement centered round Palestinian sovereignty.

Spain and Belgium’s phrase of “we may decide” to recognize Palestine even without EU consensus is indicative of an actual foreign policy schism within Europe itself. It turned out that not all EU governments have the same tolerance towards the genocide in Gaza as, for example, Germany and Britain.

Interestingly, other EU officials, too, are calling for a Palestinian State, though their intention is neither to ensure Palestinian freedom nor to safeguard Palestinian rights.

EU’s chief diplomat Josep Borrell, for example, argued on November 20 that “the creation of a Palestinian state would be the best way of ensuring Israel’s security”.

Even the former British Prime Minister, now Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, used similar logic. Israel will not have security unless it guarantees “long-term safety, security and stability” for the Palestinian people, Cameron said.

Regardless of the reasoning behind the growing emphasis on a ‘solution’ and rights for the Palestinians, this language was almost entirely absent from the Western political discourse prior to October 7.

The truth is that Palestinians have succeeded, through their resistance and sumud, to reassert Palestine on the global agenda. But how did Palestinians succeed in doing so, despite the utter marginalization of their cause before the war?

First, unlike previous wars, especially those that preceded the Unity Intifada of May 2021, this time around Palestinians spoke in unison.

Without rehearsing or even coordinating, it felt as if the Palestinian message flew seamlessly, when all Palestinians, regardless of their ideological backgrounds, placed the focus on the Israeli atrocities, without falling into the trap of the typical factional blame game.

Even children who have lost members of their families in Gaza would stand bravely in front of cameras reiterating that they will never weaken and that nothing would remove them from their homeland. Young and old repeated the same logic, used similar language, even from their hospital beds.

This led Israel to do everything in its power to excommunicate the 2.3 million Palestinians in Gaza from the rest of the world, shutting down the internet, electricity and any form of communications, even among Palestinians themselves.

Yet, somehow, a clear, united Palestinian message continued, amplified countless times by an army of social media activists who impressively helped balance out mainstream media bias, eventually overpowering corporate media’s control over the war narrative altogether.

The Palestinians have done this, and more, without powerful lobby groups, media consultants or a hasbara machine, like that which attempted, to no avail, to sway the public opinion in favor of Israel. Secondly, the factional Palestinian suddenly disappeared.

For years, factional narratives, dividing Palestinians into conflicting interest groups, have thwarted the Palestinian people’s attempt to unify behind a single leadership – one that is capable of conveying, representing and defending Palestinian political aspirations.

Excerpted: ‘United for Gaza: Time Now for Palestinians to Protect Their Collective Sumud’.

Courtesy: Counterpunch.org