

Sri Lankan university students, academics and workers support US students opposing Israeli genocide in Gaza

Our correspondents

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Israel's Netanyahu regime further escalated its ethnic-cleansing war against Palestinians in Gaza this week with a series of attacks on the city of Rafah, home to 1.2 million people. The number of Palestinians killed during more than seven months of the Israeli onslaught now exceeds 40,000, the majority being women and children. Israel's ongoing blockade of food, water and medical aid supplies to Gaza has created a massive human tragedy.

The US and other imperialist powers have responded to growing anti-war protests by university and college students in the US, Canada, UK and several other countries by redoubling their support for Israel's genocide. The Biden administration has also unleashed National Guard troops and police to attack students and lecturers involved in peaceful protests on university campuses resulting in the arrest of more than 2,500 students in the past three weeks.

Socialist Equality Party (SEP) and International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) members in Sri Lanka recently spoke to students, academics and university workers about the US student protests and Israel's escalating barbaric military assaults.

Chamath, from the Applied Science faculty at Jayawardenepura University

I have seen that over 2,000 students protesting Israel's genocide in Gaza have been subjected to brutal police repression and arrested in the US alone. I totally denounce these attacks and demand the immediate release of these students.

Students everywhere face the same police brutalities whenever they come forward against governments' anti-democratic attacks but what is happening in Gaza is a genocide. How can humanity tolerate such heinous crimes against innocent people, most of them women and children? It is high time for people all over world to

collectively raise their voice against this criminal war.

Prasadi, a final-year student at the University of Kelaniya

The opposition of students and workers in America and Europe to the war against Palestinians in Gaza is encouraging. We must oppose the world from being dragged into a third nuclear world war for the interests of a handful of imperialists.

America and the UK are providing Ukraine with massive amounts of weapons to wage war against Russia but there's a shortage of young soldiers to fight in this war and so people from poor countries are joining mercenary forces. Young people from Sri Lanka have gone to Ukraine and Russia to fight on the respective war fronts and many have died. They have been forced to go to war due to the huge economic problems they face in Sri Lanka (see: "Hundreds of desperate Sri Lankans hired as mercenaries in Ukraine war").

Shasra, a student from Peradeniya University

What is happening in Gaza is a genocide with thousands of innocent Palestinians, mostly women and children, losing their lives. It is now clear that the October 7 Hamas attack was merely a pretext for Israel's long-planned ethnic-cleansing operation in Gaza.

It is shameful that the US government has fully backed this brutal war, which will only encourage global terrorism. Meanwhile, the US uses its veto power in the United Nations to impose its decisions on other nations. US imperialism has reduced the UN, which claims to be working for "peace," into a handmaid. The UN has totally failed to stop Israel's crimes against innocent people.

I'm glad to see our university brothers and sisters in the US, and internationally, come forward heroically against this brutality and their government's complicity with Israel's genocide. I agree with the *World Socialist Web*

Site analysis that the US government, like other world governments, has unleashed a massive military police crackdown on protesting university students because they are scared of these struggles further developing against their wars.

It is time to collectively raise our voices against the state crackdowns on anti-war protesters and the bloodbath Israel is now carrying out in Rafah. Students should join with workers to build a worldwide anti-war movement to attain global peace.

Samapath Weerasinghe, a non-academic worker at Peradeniya University

The war against the Palestinian people is not just a barbaric act but is a genocide. I had some knowledge about the historical repression of the Palestinians by Israel, and which has been going on for decades, but I've learnt more about this by reading the *World Socialist Web Site*.

War in Gaza is part of several imperialist war fronts that have been principally instigated by the US, with the danger of the world now being dragged into a nuclear war. As the WSWS explains, this can only be prevented in a fight against capitalism and the building of an anti-war movement of the international working class.

I condemn the repression of anti-war protests of university students in the US and other countries. The working class must come forward to oppose this war and the repression of these students.

Geethanjalee, a political science lecturer at Peradeniya University

It's shocking to see what's happening in Gaza. Israel's genocide has taken the lives of thousands of innocent Palestinians, most of them women and children. I was very shocked to hear that Gaza hospitals have been reduced to rubble by Israel's bombings and that hundreds of doctors and health workers have been deliberately killed. Having forced millions of Gazans into Rafah, Israel has now set the stage for one of its worst war crimes. People all over the world need to raise their opposition to this bloody attack.

Some commentators on the internet give different interpretations of the real roots of this war, but I realise that there is a political game behind this war, and that the main culprit is American imperialism which unconditionally backs Israel. At the same time, the Israeli government is promoting this war in order to crush the growing mass opposition inside Israel. Anybody who wants to seriously oppose this war should study WSWS articles.

Kumara Wanninayake, a non-academic worker at Jayawardanepura University in Colombo

It's regretful that most people don't know the real origins of this war. Israel was established with the backing of imperialist powers such as Britain and the United States to secure their interests in the Middle East. Tens of thousands of Palestinians have been killed by Israel in the decades with the funding and backing of the US government to carry out these crimes against humanity. The WSWS coverage on this war provides a correct political analysis of what is being unraveled.

We cannot allow imperialism to destroy humans to secure its interests. It is time for people all over the world to understand what is going on and come forward against this barbarism. It is encouraging that university students in the US, and in many other countries, have come forward against this barbaric war. The brutal police repression of these protests reveals that capitalist governments are terrified of the growing opposition within the population to war and they desperately want to crush that opposition.

We are currently on strike to demand a wage increase but appealing to the Wickremesinghe government, which has implemented brutal IMF austerity measures, is useless. The trade union leaders always betray our struggles, and they will do the same this time. The working class has to be organised and mobilised through the formation of independent action committees. This is the way forward to stop war and austerity.

Nadie, a student from Abu Dhabi

The crackdown on student demonstrations, particularly the threatened deportation of students abroad, is deeply concerning and undermines the principles of freedom of expression. This is proven when you review history, particularly the Vietnam War, from which there are many lessons.

Biden continues to support Israel, once again blatantly falsifying history and invoking the Holocaust to try and justify Israel's invasion of Rafah, but we now have an enormous capacity to mobilise and express international solidarity through social media.



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