

One year of genocide in Gaza

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October 7 marks one year since Israel and the United States launched the genocide of the Palestinian people in Gaza, as the first phase of a regional war throughout the Middle East that is now metastasizing into a US-Israeli war on Iran.

The toll of the war of extermination against the civilians of Gaza is staggering. Between 40,000 people, according to official figures, and 186,000 people, according to an estimate published in the authoritative medical journal *The Lancet*, have been killed by Israeli bullets, bombs, or through famine or preventable disease.

The entire remaining population of Gaza is being starved by Israel, with “the highest number of people facing catastrophic hunger ever recorded by the Integrated Food Security Classification system—anywhere, anytime,” in the words of UN General Secretary Antonio Gutierrez.

Gaza, one of the most densely-populated urban areas in the world, has been turned into a wasteland, with the majority of its buildings damaged or destroyed. Every single university in Gaza has been leveled, along with hospitals, schools and cultural centers in a calculated and deliberate sociocide.

The official justification for the genocide and ethnic cleansing now underway is the October 7, 2023 attack on Israel by Hamas. The US media seeks to present the events of October 7 as a bolt from the blue, an unexpected sneak attack by Hamas that could not have been predicted and which had no antecedent factors.

But this narrative fell apart within a matter of months. In December 2023, the *New York Times* published a report revealing that the Israeli government was in possession of the exact document that laid out “point by point” the plan for the attack, which was “implemented with alarming accuracy.”

Moreover, Israeli military and intelligence forces operating on the Gaza border were ordered to carry out

a deliberate stand-down, with border units withdrawn to other areas of Israel just days ahead of the attack. The official United Nations inquiry on the October 7 attacks asserted “that Israeli authorities failed to protect civilians in southern Israel on almost every front.”

It was likewise revealed that a significant portion of Israeli casualties were killed by Israeli forces themselves, who fired indiscriminately into settlements where Hamas was operating, and deliberately targeted Israelis being held hostage. According to an official United Nations inquiry into the attack, Israeli forces “applied the so-called ‘Hannibal Directive’ and killed... Israeli civilians.”

On October 18, 2023, US President Joe Biden visited Israel to declare that the events of October 7 were “Israel’s 9/11.” Indeed, there is a deep connection between the two events. The September 11, 2001 attacks were seized upon by the Bush administration to launch the long-planned invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, together with sweeping attacks on democratic rights at home. Likewise, the October 7 attacks were used as a pretext to implement plans long in the making.

On September 22, 2023, just two weeks before the October 7 attacks, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu displayed a map at the United Nations General Assembly of the “new Middle East,” showing Israel encompassing all of the Palestinian territories, as part of a geopolitical framework with the US-aligned Middle Eastern states of Egypt, Sudan, Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

One year later, it is clear that Israel and the United States seized upon the events of October 7 to implement this vision of what he called the “new Middle East.”

When Netanyahu spoke again at the United Nations on September 27, near the one-year anniversary of the October 7 attacks, he again referenced “the map I

presented here last year,” declaring, “With American support and leadership, I believe this vision can materialize much sooner than people think.”

The war now unfolding in the Middle East is part of a decades-long effort by US imperialism to subjugate the whole of the Middle East, Central Asia and North Africa, a continuation of the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan, the 2003 invasion of Iraq, and the regime change operations in Libya and Syria.

If the ferocity and homicidal character of this effort have become more intense, it is because the US-Israeli genocidal war in the Middle East is part of the eruption of a global war against Russia and China—both nuclear-armed states—in which the Middle East is only one front.

The events since October 7, 2023 took place in the context of the debacle of Ukraine’s NATO-backed offensive in Spring 2023, which saw hundreds of advanced fighting vehicles donated by the NATO powers to Ukraine destroyed in a humiliating fiasco for the imperialist powers.

Now, one year later, the imperialist powers are making advanced preparations for a major strike on Iran. Last week, Biden confirmed that the US is in “discussions” with Israel over striking Iran’s oil facilities, while Democratic Congressman Adam Schiff on Sunday endorsed an Israeli strike against Iran’s missile forces. These war preparations take place against the backdrop of a steadily worsening series of military debacles for Ukraine in the Donbass region.

Facing major setbacks in their war with Russia, the imperialist powers are seeking to open a new Middle Eastern front.

The Gaza genocide triggered a wave of mass protests against war, with the largest anti-war protests since the 2003 invasion of Iraq occurring on virtually every continent. But the leaders of these demonstrations sought to treat the genocide in Gaza as an isolated event and were oriented toward pressuring the imperialist powers to adopt more humane policies.

This approach has proven bankrupt. One year on, it has become clear that the Gaza genocide is part of an escalating global war driven by an imperialist re-division of the world, inextricably arising out of the deepening crisis of the US-led imperialist world order.

A new strategy is required. The struggle against the Gaza genocide and war with Iran can only be

developed as a fight against imperialism, which Lenin called “the highest stage of capitalism.” The essential cause of war lies in the capitalist nation-state system, the global financial interests of the giant corporations and the relentless drive of the American ruling class for world hegemony.

The fight against war requires the mobilization of the immense power of the international working class and its political independence from all the capitalist parties. And the movement against war must be animated by the perspective of international socialism, aimed at ending the obsolete nation-state system that is inseparably bound up with imperialist war and colonialism and replacing it with socialism.



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