

No Surprise: UN Chief Sides With Hamas for Israel's 'Suffering Occupation'

JERUSALEM, Israel – United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called for the immediate release of all Israeli hostages, and for an immediate cease-fire amid what he called “clear violations of international humanitarian law in Gaza.”

It thrust the U.N. onto the center stage in the Israeli-Hamas war Tuesday, as Guterres made demands on Hamas while accusing Israel of occupying the Palestinians.

“Nothing can justify the deliberate killing, injuring and kidnapping of civilians—or the launching of rockets against civilian targets. All hostages must be treated humanely and released immediately and without conditions,” he declared. But he also added, “It is important to also recognize the attacks by Hamas did not happen in a vacuum. The Palestinian people have been subjected to 56 years of suffocating occupation.”

Israel's permanent representative to the U.N., Gilad Erdan, demanded the secretary-general apologize or resign.

“Today we call on him to apologize,” Erdan said. “There is no justification to the existence of this building. This building was established to prevent atrocities. How can the secretary-general, with his words, justify in any way the terrible atrocities that happened towards civilians, innocent civilians?”

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Palestinian Authority Foreign Minister Riyad al-Maliki called

on the U.N. to stop what he called massacres against the Palestinians.

“The ongoing massacres, being deliberately and systematically and savagely perpetrated by Israel, the occupying power against the Palestinian civilian population under its illegal occupation, must be stopped,” al-Maliki said. “The Security Council has a duty to stop them. The international community is obliged under international law to stop them. It is our collective human duty to stop them. Now.”

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the U.S. position is clear.

“We all recognize the right, and indeed the imperative, of states to defend themselves against terrorism. That’s why we must unequivocally condemn Hamas’ barbaric terrorist attack against Israel,” Blinken intoned. “Babies riddled with bullets, young people hunted down and gunned down with glee. People—young people—beheaded. Families burned alive in a final embrace. Parents executed in front of their children. Children executed in front of their parents.”

One day after two more hostages were released, Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen reminded journalists at the U.N. about the hundreds of Israeli hostages Hamas is still holding.

“We are also here to bring the voice of the more than 220 people that [were] kidnapped,” Cohen stated. “I have behind me part of their families, that joined the Security Council today. We say clearly and loudly: Bring them home, they are civilians.”

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