



[Israel Continues Its Airstrikes on Civilian Targets in Gaza as Some U.S. Lawmakers Question Arms Sales Amid Growing Condemnation of Israel's Human Rights Violations](#)

Violence has continued in Gaza this week, as Israel continues to strike civilian targets in Palestinian territory. The attacks carried out by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) have killed hundreds of Palestinian civilians, and have destroyed scores of buildings including refugee camps, schools, and infrastructure housing multiple international media outlets. The United States has blocked United Nations Security Council resolutions condemning the airstrikes, as the Biden administration has received criticism for its underwhelming response to the crisis and Israel's actions. President Biden has received pushback from multiple entities over the brutal human rights abuses being committed by Israel. Some progressive Democrats in particular have steadfastly condemned Israel's unilateral and disproportionate aggression in Gaza, and a proposed arms sale to Israel is now being held up by Congressional Democrats who have valid concerns over the violence in the region. Several human rights organizations have also called on the Biden administration to intervene and prevent Israel from continuing to blatantly violate international law.

In recent days, criticism of Israel has grown stronger from the international community at large, with a widespread acceptance that there is a clear violation of international law occurring. The Arab League accused Israel of ethnic cleansing, and accusations of apartheid have long been levelled against Israel. In the United States, progressive lawmakers have been critical of both Israel and the Biden administration. Several representatives, most notably Reps. Rashida Tlaib, Ilhan Omar, and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, have been vocal in their dissatisfaction with the Biden administration for failing to take a stronger stance against Israel's behavior, despite the violence being perpetrated against Palestinian civilians. In total, over 1,500 Palestinian civilians have been wounded since Israel's most recent belligerent activity began, with over 220 killed, including 63 children.

Some Democrats initially sought to delay a \$700 million weapons sale to Israel agreed by the Biden administration, but backed off this plan, saying "it sent the wrong message" because the transaction was a commercial sale, not a military transfer. Despite the caucus backing off of this, a group of progressive Democrats have broken rank and introduced a resolution that would block the sale. This is largely symbolic, as it is unlikely that rank and file Democrats would agree to bringing the matter to a floor vote. However, several top Democrats, including Speaker Nancy Pelosi, have called for the Biden administration to push for an immediate ceasefire.

A major cause for concern in the recent escalation of violence is Israel's completely disproportionate military action. Israel currently boasts one of the world's most technologically advanced militaries, thanks largely to American tax dollars and support, which it has used to wreak destruction on Palestinian territory. While there have been rockets fired from Gaza into Israel, most have been destroyed by Israel's Iron Dome air defense system, which has resulted in very little damage to Israel. Conversely, Israel has waged a campaign of complete destruction, with bombs targeting civilian infrastructure that is defenseless. This follows a broader trend of Israeli discrimination, whereby Palestinians are treated as second class citizens compared to Israeli Jews.

Tens of thousands of Palestinians are currently displaced due to the Israeli violence, and the authorities have made no effort to ensure that these at-risk individuals are safe. Israel has failed to indicate when their "operation" against Gaza will conclude, and concerned observers are urging for stronger action to be taken to put an end to their belligerent and criminal actions. To this end, in a Wednesday phone call between U.S. President Biden and Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, Biden was noted for using a more forceful tone in demanding that Israel engage



in a “significant de-escalation,” language that at the very least highlighted an acknowledgement as to the dire nature of the situation. Analysts have indicated that they believe a ceasefire is in the offing, as the international community continues to pressure for an end to the crisis.