



[U.S. Vetoes Algeria's Drafted UN Resolution and Submits Their Own](#)

Earlier this week, the United States decided to strike down an Algerian-drafted UN resolution, which would have demanded an immediate ceasefire in Gaza. The proposed resolution was brought forth to the UN Security Council, but was voted down by the U.S. using its veto power, marking the third time that the United States has vetoed a ceasefire resolution in Gaza. The overall vote in the UN Security Council was 13-1, with the United Kingdom abstaining from it. After voting against the resolution, the U.S. submitted their own which called for a six-week temporary ceasefire. Some analysts were quick to point out that this is the first time that the U.S. has chosen to use the language ceasefire when dealing with the conflict in Gaza – the U.S. had previously avoided the term and vetoed earlier drafts which used it. The vote on the resolution itself demonstrates that Israel's military offensive has not been well-received in the international community and continues to garner further condemnation, with nations seeking to put an end to the bloodshed.

According to media outlets, many UN members expressed regret that the original ceasefire motion was blocked. Following the veto, Algeria's UN representative Amar Benjama stated that "unfortunately the Security Council failed once again," and when referencing U.S. leadership, asked to "examine your conscience and how will history judge you?" Even strong U.S. allies such as France expressed disappointment with the veto. This discontent was similarly reflected back in December, when over three-quarters of the UN General Assembly (193 total members) voted for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire, which shows a symbolic and robust denunciation of Israeli actions in Gaza. Observers have speculated that with the veto and subsequent counter-resolution, the United States is focused on appeasing pro-Israel voices while at the same time attempting to remain a credible actor on the global stage.

The original UN resolution, put forth by Algeria, called for an immediate ceasefire, the release of all hostages, the flow of unhindered humanitarian aid, compliance with international law, and also condemned the forced displacement of Palestinians. The humanitarian provision is critical, as 2 million Palestinian civilians, many of whom are children, face the growing threat of starvation, malnourishment, and disease. The Biden administration claimed that it believed the ceasefire resolution would impede current efforts at achieving a deal between Israel and Hamas. While the resolution prepared by Algeria demanded "an immediate humanitarian ceasefire that must be respected by all parties," the text spearheaded by the United States only calls for a "temporary ceasefire in Gaza as soon as practicable, based on the formula of all hostages being released." On top of the provisions for a temporary ceasefire and the release of all hostages, the U.S. alternative resolution called for the lifting of restrictions on humanitarian aid. Within the text, the U.S. additionally warned against an Israeli military offensive in Rafah, where an estimated 1.5 million civilians are currently taking shelter along the Egyptian border, stating that it would have grave consequences for regional security. It is justifiably feared that an Israeli offensive in Rafah would result in the killing of more innocent Palestinian civilians, as Israel has already indiscriminately killed tens of thousands in Gaza since early October. Others who survived could likely be forced to flee Rafah into neighboring Egypt. Ultimately, an Israeli military offensive in Rafah would be catastrophic, and would exacerbate the already-dire humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

The United States' desire to allow negotiations to play out and not rush a vote on the matter comes at a time when Palestinians in Gaza are in desperate need of aid and humanitarian relief. Without initiating an immediate ceasefire, the humanitarian crisis will become progressively more desperate and regrettably, more lives will be lost. Over 29,000 have been killed in the past four months, and an Israeli military offensive in Rafah would worsen this. Israeli war cabinet member Benny Gantz and others have warned that there could be a massive offensive on Rafah, underscoring the importance of an immediate and lasting ceasefire. Had the original Algerian-drafted resolution gone through, Israel would have been legally obligated to abide by it and commit to a ceasefire in Gaza – and would have otherwise faced consequences for failing to do so. Given that both the lives of innocent civilians and regional stability are on the line, there is a need to continue pushing for a ceasefire that upholds human rights and prevents potential harmful escalations.