



[UN Security Council Approves a Resolution Demanding an Immediate Ceasefire in Gaza](#)

Earlier this week, the United Nations Security Council passed a resolution demanding an immediate ceasefire in Gaza. The measure was approved, as the United States declined to exercise its veto power and abstained instead, with all other members of the UN body voting in favor. The resolution's passage marked a significant development after four previous unsuccessful attempts to do so, with three of these being vetoed by the United States, and the most recent failure coming last Friday when China and Russia vetoed a U.S. proposal. It also adds to the growing criticism of Israel's actions in Gaza, and serves to further isolate them on the global stage. The United States' decision to abstain from the UN resolution vote and allow for its approval prompted an angry reaction from Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, who decided to cancel a planned visit by Israeli officials to Washington D.C. this week. Over the past couple of days, it was revealed that Netanyahu reversed his decision and is planning on sending a delegation of two Israeli officials to Washington D.C. as early as next week for talks regarding a possible military assault on Rafah.

The Gaza ceasefire resolution was tabled by the 10 non-permanent members of the UN Security Council: Algeria, Ecuador, Guyana, Japan, Malta, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, South Korea, and Switzerland. In addition to demanding an immediate ceasefire, it expresses serious concern regarding the catastrophic humanitarian situation in Gaza and calls for more efforts to increase the flow of aid, lift the barriers to the provision of assistance at the necessary scale, and protect civilians. According to UN figures, more than 90 percent of Gaza's 2.3 million residents have been displaced since the onset of the war, and conditions resulting from Israeli bombardment have left the enclave on the brink of famine. A report released last week by an international authority on food security found that famine is likely to occur in northern Gaza by May and could spread across the rest of the territory by July if humanitarian conditions do not improve. Furthermore, over 32,000 Palestinians have been killed during Israel's military assault since October, an alarming number of which have been children.

Analysts have pointed out that while implementation of the resolution is what is ultimately needed, the mere vote and passage in itself is significant because it demonstrates that U.S. policy is moving closer towards the stronger recent rhetoric that has been used to condemn Israel's human rights and international law violations in Gaza. The fact that the United States' abstention came despite threats against it from Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu is also noteworthy. Now, concrete and tangible actions are required; given the dire humanitarian situation, significant political pressure must be applied to alleviate the mass suffering in Gaza. Following the passage of the resolution, the ceasefire should be implemented and honored, as Security Council resolutions are international law and binding on all UN members. It is hoped that this resolution will pave the way for an enduring ceasefire that will safeguard civilians, allow the entry of aid, prevent forced displacement, and work toward the release of hostages. To achieve this goal, human rights groups such as Amnesty International have called for the United States to suspend arms transfers to Israel and leverage their relationship with them to implement a sustained ceasefire and ensure that humanitarian aid reaches civilians in need. While the resolution is binding, Israel has shown no signs of complying with the ceasefire. Israel continued to attack Gaza just one day after the resolution, and Israeli officials have stated that they have no intention of abiding by the resolution. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres emphasized the importance of the resolution's implementation and Israel's compliance, expressing that it "must be implemented" and that "failure would be unforgivable."

The UN Security Council resolution reflects the international community's desire to end Israel's War on Gaza, with most countries agreeing that at the very least, it was a step in the right direction. While some of the ambassadors took issue with certain language in the resolution, it was almost unanimously agreed that an approved demand for a ceasefire was a welcomed development. Still, a few did not believe that the resolution went far enough. Russia's Ambassador to the UN Vasily Nebenzya, for example, wished for the inclusion of the word "permanent" in the resolution – believing that even if they were to halt them, Israel may resume military operations in Gaza after Ramadan ends on April 9th. Human rights groups have also pushed for implementation of the resolution. Human Rights Watch UN Director Louis Charbonneau said that Israel "needs to immediately respond" to the resolution "by facilitating the delivery of humanitarian aid, ending its starvation of Gaza's civilian population, and halting unlawful attacks." The resolution should be obeyed to prevent further human rights abuses; if it is not abided by, the UN Security Council may be forced to deliberate on punitive measures for Israel.