



[The Outrage Over the Killing of Yet Another American at the Hands of Israeli Occupying Forces](#)

Late last week, Israeli occupying forces shot and killed 26-year-old Aysenur Ezgi Eygi, a Turkish-American woman taking part in a peaceful protest against illegal Israeli occupation and settlements in the West Bank. Witnesses to the incident have gone on record to say that she was murdered by a sniper in cold blood, and posed no threat to Israeli soldiers present at the protest. Doctors confirmed that she was shot in the head and succumbed to her injuries at a hospital in Nablus. The Israeli military tried to claim that it acted due to an “instigator of violent activity,” however this has been refuted by first-hand accounts, with some going as far as to say that the soldier took a “kill shot” at Eygi and “cried of joy” after his shot.

In the aftermath of the killing, various [Democrats in Congress and members of the U.N.](#) alike have called for accountability on the part of Israel for the murder of Eygi, including pushing the Biden administration to launch an [independent investigation into it](#). U.S. Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) and U.S. Representative Pramila Jayapal (D-WA) wrote a [joint letter](#) addressed to both U.S. President Joe Biden and U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, calling on them to conduct an independent U.S.-led investigation into the killing of Eygi, a Washington State resident. Murray and Jayapal expressed the importance of pursuing accountability and justice through an immediate, transparent, credible, and thorough U.S. investigation led by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). They also emphasized how the murder of Eygi is the most recent in a pattern of American citizens being killed by Israel without accountability, and the fear that continued impunity would result in more killings like this in the future. The Congressmembers specifically requested that written explanations be provided by September 24th highlighting how the Biden administration plans to address the murder.

Additionally, countless human rights groups such as the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor issued statements urging the U.S. to take action so as to send a clear message of accountability to Israel. In his [official statement](#) on the killing, President Biden was criticized by human rights activists for remarking that he was “outraged” and that there needed to be “full accountability” for the matter while at the same time blindly backing Israel’s claim that the shooting was accidental. Biden stated that he trusted Israel’s own biased investigation into it, disregarding the fact that human rights activists, Eygi’s family themselves, and so many others have called for a fair and independent investigation. Given Israel’s [abusive manner of operations](#) in the illegally-occupied West Bank and Gaza, in addition to their pattern of committing these types of killings in the past, their supposed “investigation” cannot be trusted. U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), who sits on the Senate’s Foreign Relations Committee, commented that the Biden administration [has not been doing enough to pursue justice](#). In his full array of official remarks, Van Hollen asserted that the influence the United States has over Israel is undeniable, and must be leveraged in this situation in order to hold them accountable and demand the prosecution of anyone responsible for harm against American citizens. He also drew attention to the role that Israeli government officials themselves have played in fueling violence in the West Bank.

The murder of Eygi is, regrettably, not at all an isolated incident. A slew of Americans have lost their lives at the hands of Israeli occupying forces in alarmingly similar circumstances. American activist Rachel Corrie was [crushed to death](#) as she tried to block an Israeli military bulldozer from demolishing a Palestinian home. She, like Eygi, was

also a volunteer with the International Solidarity Movement, an organization dedicated to non-violent support of Palestinian popular resistance to illegal Israeli occupation. Furthermore, two 17-year-old Palestinian-Americans were killed in the West Bank. In both cases, U.S. officials released lukewarm statements similar in likeness to the one calling Eygi's murder "deeply disturbing," yet failing to launch or call for independent investigations into the murders. Omar Assad, a 78-year-old man, is another Palestinian-American who was unjustly detained and killed just miles from his home back in early 2022. That same year, Palestinian-American journalist Shireen Abu Akleh was shot in the head while wearing her press vest and covering an Israeli raid in the Jenin refugee camp in the West Bank. An FBI probe into the incident is now radio silent.

The list goes on and on. These cases are not coincidentally linked. They are inextricable in their similarities, highlighting a blatant and obvious pattern of Israeli violence against Palestinian, Palestinian-American, and American civilians alike – many times in internationally-recognized Palestinian lands that Israeli settlers have unlawfully and forcefully moved into. The United States has failed to deter these criminal and violent actions, even when they are carried out against their own citizens in illegally-occupied Palestinian territories. So long as these heinous murders on the part of Israeli occupying forces go unpunished, it sends a message of impunity, invincibility, and lack of accountability – all of which will likely lead to this pattern of behavior continuing, and potentially even worsening. As such, punitive measures must be taken in order to deter and prevent more such occurrences in the future. A failure to do so would be a complete and utter miscarriage of justice.

Lying on the ground next to an olive tree and bleeding to death, that is how witnesses described Eygi's last moments. The poetic injustice of a peaceful protestor dying beneath what has been claimed as a symbol for resistance, harmony, and self-determination should not be lost on any observer – nor was it on [Eygi's family](#): "Like the olive tree she lay beneath where she took her last breaths, Aysenur was strong, beautiful, and nourishing. Her presence in our lives was taken needlessly, unlawfully, and violently by the Israeli military," her family said in a statement. Eygi is remembered by family, friends, and professors for her deep and fervent passion for human rights. The Seattle native studied psychology and Middle Eastern languages at the University of Washington. [The Guardian](#) reported the following statement from a former professor of Eygi's, Aria Fani: "I begged her not to go (to the West Bank), but she had this deep conviction that she wanted to participate in the tradition of bearing witness to the oppression of people and their dignified resilience."