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LIVE UPDATES

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Tens of thousands protest Israeli war crimes across US

What's happening:

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Palestinian supporters march with flags, signs and chant in protest to Israel war crimes Friday, October 13, 2023, in New York. [AP Photo/Bebeto Matthews]

Israel is carrying out an escalating genocidal war against Palestinians in Gaza. Over the past week, more than 2,000 civilians have been killed in missile strikes, and the entire population of more than 2 million has been cut off from food, water and fuel. Israel has demanded that 1.1 million people in northern Gaza evacuate to the south. These actions have been taken with the full approval of the United States and other imperialist powers. Hundreds of thousands of people around the world have taken part in protests against Israel's war crimes. On Saturday, tens of thousands of workers, youth and students marched in cities throughout the United States to protest Israel's action and oppose the escalation of the war.

More than 15,000 in Chicago protest against Israeli assault on Palestine: "If we see children and families getting killed we must talk about it"

According to protest organizers, more than 15,000 people attended a demonstration in downtown Chicago on Saturday afternoon to protest the assault on Gaza and the occupation of Palestine.



Thousands demonstrated in Chicago, and around the world, in opposition to the genocide in Gaza.

Ranen, who participated in the demonstration, told WSWS reporters, “I came to protest because I was born in Palestine. I came to the US when I was seven years old. I have been seeing the terrifying stories of what is happening to Palestinian civilians. Israel is killing whole families, not just fighting men.

“I believe what caused this was the Israeli government building walls and turning Gaza into an open-air prison. They have been constantly hurting us and being violent towards us. There is definitely racism. They do not give Palestinians equality.

“Since 1948, and even before, Palestinians have been under attack from Zionism. But now, the minute we start to defend ourselves, we are the ones called terrorists. We are not terrorists; we are just defending ourselves.

“We have a voice. We are supposed to say what we think; we have freedom of speech. Why are we the ones getting villainized if we are just saying how we feel?

“If we see children and families getting killed, we must talk about it. Why are we the ones being targeted and judged for speaking the truth?

“I feel like the governments should not be able to tell the people how to feel about Palestine. They have no right to shut the people down. The people fighting for Palestine are pro-human rights. So, if the governments are shutting down the people from speaking out, then these governments are also the oppressors. Why are they supporting the oppressors?”

On October 13, a special session of the Chicago City Council was called to debate an “Israel Solidarity Resolution,” declaring the city council’s support for Israel, condemning

the uprising in Gaza on October 7 and falsely presenting Israel's brutal retaliation as "ethically driven, with the goal of eliminating the terrorist infrastructure and taking extreme measures to minimize civilian casualties."

The body passed the resolution over significant public protest, after "progressive" Mayor Brandon Johnson, former lobbyist for the Chicago Teachers Union, had police clear the hall of public participants. Johnson denounced the uprising as "truly heinous," that "represents one of the worst acts of terror we've witnessed," but remained silent on the murderous violence being unleashed on Palestine.

At the demonstration on Saturday, the complicity of the Biden administration, both capitalist parties and the US government as a whole in the killing was the subject of chants of "Shame! Shame!"

At protest outside White House: "The IDF is killing people while the western powers and media are complicit"

Nearly 2,000 people gathered in Lafayette Park in Washington D.C. to protest the Israeli war against the people of Palestine. Young people and families took to the streets to demonstrate their opposition to the Netanyahu government's "genocidal onslaught" against some 2.1 million Gazans.

The protest was multiethnic and multiracial in its makeup, an expression of mass hostility towards the criminal treatment being dealt to the Palestinians. In addition to people from the Arab community, people from every background showed up to denounce the war. A group of people openly identifying themselves as orthodox Jews carried signs which denounced the Israeli government and the violence against Palestinians.

"This encroachment is not on Palestinians to end," said Hassan, who is originally from Gaza. "They have no power. They barely even have a government. They have no military, it's on Israel squarely [to stop this]. It's on the international community to end it," he said. "The IDF [Israel Defense Force] is killing people while the western powers and media are complicit and they are praising it."

Hassan joined the protest with two other siblings. "They are saying that all Palestinians are terrorists," said Ibrahim, Hassan's brother. "They aren't. The Israeli military is genocidal." He noted that the government was using white phosphorus in its bombing raids, which "burns human skin." The chemical is banned by many world governments in military conflict because of the widespread suffering it inflicts upon civilians.

"The Netanyahu government is unleashing a genocide," said another protester to WSWS reporters. "To speak up against it is not 'antisemitism,' but it is to take a stand against the

actions of the Israeli government.” She added: “I feel that Biden is not only green-lighting the actions of the government, but that he is complicit in it.”

Other protestors also commented on the complicity of the imperialist powers. “The situation is very dire,” said Zuhair to reporters. “The Western governments are not taking ... responsibility for protecting millions of civilians, millions of human beings in Gaza from this barbaric bombardment.”

Protest in Dearborn, Michigan: “I’m here to stand up for humanity”

Roughly, 5,000-10,000 people came to Dearborn, Michigan, to attend a rally in defense of the Palestinian people. The event was called “All Out For Palestine” and featured remarks from several groups, including SAFE University of Michigan, Palestine Youth Movement, Students for Justice in Palestine and others. Speakers voiced strong opposition to the brutal siege against Palestinians.

Workers and youth spoke in support of the WSWS perspective calling for the unity of workers internationally in opposition to the genocide.

Erynn, a teacher in the Detroit area, spoke on the support of all imperialist countries for the Israeli siege. “The unity of workers across the world is essential not just for this scenario but in general.”

A resident of Dearborn said, “I stand with the Palestinians. Most of them are children. I think aggression and retaliation is an unbalanced response. Many of these reports by Israel are unsubstantiated. There should be fact checking, because this is about the lives of many. The settlers are using colonial violence. The reason why Britain, France, Germany and the US are behind this is because they have a history of conquering.”

A worker from Dearborn said, “We’re here to protest the 75-year brutal occupation of Palestine and the genocide, the blockade on Gaza, the killing, the starving of children. We’re not going to put up with it. We’ll do whatever we can to support all organizations against it until it’s over.”

Speaking of calls for censoring pro-Palestinian views, the worker said, “I feel like in our country here, the only protests they’re not okay with are those that support Palestine. They put up with it as long as you align with their principles. In this country it doesn’t matter what party, they’re against Palestine. We don’t live in a democracy, it’s a plutocracy. Money is in charge here now, not the people.

“They’ve been living in an open-air prison for 75 years!”

Ibrahim, a university student, explained why he joined these protests. “I went to other protests in Lansing. I’ve been bothered by this situation for a long time.”

One protester, who did not want to use his name or photo for fear of retribution, said that he has many friends and fellow students who oppose US aid to Israel and crimes against the Palestinians but are afraid to speak out because of the intimidation and punishment being meted out by the ruling class.

“I heard about what they’re doing to those students at Harvard, and it’s so messed up,” he said. “I don’t really like Rashida Tlaib, but she has a right to speak out about Palestine. Some of my friends won’t post or are even afraid to ‘like’ anything on social media because they wonder what will happen if the wrong person sees it. But a lot of people are starting to really wake up and see what’s happening, they’re seeing through the lies of the media and these politicians.”

Protest in New Orleans suburb: “The American politicians and lobbyists ... they are giving Israel billions and billions a year to commit a massacre basically.”

WSWS reporters spoke to demonstrators at a rally in Harvey, a suburb of New Orleans, Louisiana.

One Palestinian protester reported that in the current military campaign against Gaza, a close family friend had 17 family members killed in one bombing and many more injured. Among the victims were an infant and a three-year-old child.

He condemned the hypocrisy of the US media, which only reports news that benefits the Israeli regime. “The truth is that over 200 [Palestinians] were murdered before October this year and more than 200 last year. Why doesn’t the news pick this up? My family has always dealt with settler violence.”

He said that he was fighting “the same thing I have been organizing against for the last decade and for my whole life as a Palestinian. That is for an end to the occupation and the right of return. That is all we have ever asked for.”

Another demonstrator said that he has relatives who are local to New Orleans but were visiting the West Bank and are now struggling to return. Communication with them has been cut off. “We’ve been trying to text on the apps, but there’s no response yet. The West Bank is getting heated too. Already 40 people have been killed because Israel is arming the settlers. It’s open season against the Palestinians right now.”

Asked about the role of the US government and its unlimited support for Israel’s war, he said, “The American politicians and lobbyists like AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee) are all giving Israel a blank check from the American taxpayers. While teachers ... beg for a \$500 raise, they are giving Israel billions and billions a year to commit a massacre basically.”

He reflected on the decades of wars waged by the US, noting they were “not for democracy, not for freedom. It’s to protect the elites and the things they are after, the oil, the corporations. The people don’t have a voice in America. That’s over. It’s been over a long time, since 9/11.”

He also commented on the social and political crisis wracking both Israel and the United States. “Every middle class American is trying to strike right now, like UPS workers and autoworkers. Workers are sick of it. When you have a CEO making \$30 million a year and a worker who can barely buy milk or bread, it’s not racism, it’s classism. That’s the new ‘ism’ in America. They give you crumbs and say you’ll be fine. Eventually things have to change.”

As to the political situation in Israel, he noted the mass protests earlier in the year. “Israel was on its last leg. They were going into a civil war, protesting Netanyahu every Saturday, thousands and thousands of people. Right now, everyone is very emotional. Once things calm down and people realize ‘I lost my loved ones because of him,’ he will definitely be prosecuted.”

Thousands in New York protest genocidal onslaught on the Palestinians by Israel



Thousands gathered in Manhattan on Friday, October 13, 2023, to oppose the genocidal onslaught against the Palestinian people.

Thousands of young people and workers of all backgrounds, including entire families, joined a demonstration in Times Square, New York City on Friday afternoon to oppose

the genocidal war waged by the Israeli government, with the full support of the US and the European imperialist powers, on the Palestinian people.

New York City is home to a Muslim population of 1.7 million people, and it also has the largest Jewish population in the United States at 2.1 million. The protest was advertised widely at the predominantly working class City University of New York (CUNY) system and supported by students at Columbia University and New York University (NYU).

An appeal from David North: Donate to the WSWS today

Watch the video message from WSWS International Editorial Board Chairman David North.

DONATE TODAY

The demonstrators in Manhattan were met with a large presence of the New York Police Department (NYPD). Hundreds of cops assembled near the rally, helicopters circled the demonstrators, and the NYPD installed mobile command centers.

A young teacher in New York City attended the demonstration but, like many interviewees, asked to remain anonymous. He told the *World Socialist Web Site*:

As a Jewish person I've been taught my whole life that oppression cannot be tolerated, and the Israeli government for decades has oppressed the Palestinian people and currently operates the largest open-air prison in Gaza. I've never been more moved than now to demonstrate against that injustice. I see what is happening now as, if not a full-on declaration of genocide, then short of it. We have Israeli ministers calling Palestinians "animals" and "beasts." As a Jew, hearing an entire group of people being called that way is just simply unacceptable. Right now, they are bombing indiscriminately in Gaza, and that is not being publicized in the same way as violence against Israelis is.

Obviously, I'm 100 percent against civilian deaths, no matter who it is, and that's exactly why I'm here now. Palestinians have been dying at an outrageous rate, and even if they're not dying, their living conditions are beyond horrible and unacceptable. I'm sure there are many, many Jews here and around the world who are passionately [opposed to what is happening]. The Israeli government in my view is working for those who support Israel as a military state, such as the United States, countries in the European Union and Britain.

Meanwhile, if you read opinion editorials in Israel, there are many who call on the Netanyahu government to end the occupation. In America, I see this attitude – if you're pro-Palestine you're antisemitic. I don't think that's how all Israelis see it. I think that the

mainstream media and the political powers in the United States pick and choose what they amplify.

A young woman told the WSWS, “The US media is throwing out a lot of misinformation. The accusation of 40 babies being killed was proved a lie. The US is a hegemon, and I see this as connected to the war on Russia in Ukraine, as an effect after the Cold War. The US has sent a huge load of armaments to Israel while it is forcing evacuation of a million people.”

Full Report

Mass protests erupt internationally against Israeli war on Gaza

A week after Palestinians initiated an armed uprising against Israel’s blockade of the Gaza Strip, protests are erupting internationally against Israel’s war on Gaza.

The fascistic regime of Benjamin Netanyahu has ordered 1.1 million Palestinians to flee Gaza City and go south, along roads bombed by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). Israel—which has now cut off Gaza’s water, fuel and electricity, and whose leaders call the Palestinians “human animals”—is targeting the Palestinians for genocide.

As the scale of the crimes committed by the Israeli regime and its NATO allies has become clear, protests have erupted around the world in bold disobedience of media denunciations of Palestinians, police intimidation and protest bans.

The most significant demonstration Friday took place in New York City, where thousands rallied to oppose the onslaught against Palestine, in open defiance of the unrelenting pro-Israel propaganda of the entire American political establishment and corporate media. In the center of world imperialism, home to the largest Jewish population of any American city, masses of people—including over 1,000 Jews—expressed their revulsion with the unfolding crimes in Gaza.

Other protests on Friday involving hundreds of people were held in Pittsburgh, Portland and Washington D.C., with larger demonstrations planned across the US this weekend. Despite the efforts of the media and politicians to demonize all protests against Israel’s policies as “antisemitic” and to isolate those feeling sympathy for the Palestinians, opposition is building among workers and youth of all backgrounds. A 2021 poll found that one-quarter of American Jews consider Israel to be an “apartheid state” hostile to the Palestinians, a figure that will only continue to grow.

Thousands also took to the streets in London once again on Friday, defying similar propaganda and threats from the British media and political establishment.

A series of larger demonstrations also swept across the Middle East, involving hundreds of thousands of people. In Jordan, mass protests in Amman demanded the opening of Jordan's border with the Israeli-occupied West Bank. Protesting crowds marched on the border with Israel, only to be turned back by Jordanian police.

Large protests took place in Sanaa and Tehran. In Cairo, tens of thousands rallied outside the Al Azhar Mosque, chanting "Free Palestine." Thousands defied a state ban to march in support of Gaza in Tunis. In Iraq, a country that has lost over one million lives after decades of US-led sanctions, war and occupation since the 1991 Gulf War, hundreds of thousands marched in Baghdad.

Protesters in the Middle East are effectively opposing not only the Israeli regime, but also their own governments, which have betrayed the Palestinians for decades. The Arab bourgeoisie's role is exemplified by the treachery of the Egyptian military dictatorship. Having signed a treaty with Israel in 1978, Egypt has now closed its borders to Palestinians trying to flee Gaza.

Full Statement

Open letter from Harvard employee opposing persecution of students protesting Israel's assault on Gaza

The following letter was sent to the World Socialist Web Site from a Harvard employee.

Dear colleagues,

The statement by the Harvard Undergraduate Palestine Solidarity Committee (PSC) and the extraordinary backlash to it has become an international news story.

The short statement by student activists, which legitimately held "the Israeli regime entirely responsible for all unfolding violence," has been denounced by university administrators, national media personalities and billionaire CEOs. It has outrageously been equated to support for Hamas, terrorism and anti-Semitism.



The Baker Library at the Harvard Business School on the campus of Harvard University in Cambridge, Mass., Tuesday, March 7, 2017 [AP Photo/Charles Krupa]

This has created an atmosphere of fear and self-censorship on campus. The PSC had to “postpone a solidarity vigil acknowledging all civilian victims” following “credible death threats,” according to a PSC statement to the *Harvard Crimson*, the student newspaper.

Due to the threats, only Harvard ID holders are allowed on campus during certain time periods, and the Harvard University Police Department (HUPD) has increased their presence on campus. A young Muslim student was reportedly advised by HUPD to stay in her dorm rather than attend an in-person meeting because her headscarf could make her a target for violence; loved ones are checking in to encourage distance from Harvard Yard.

[Full Report](#)