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Chomsky: Israel committed ‘war crimes’ in Gaza

8/2/2014

Noam Chomsky, the renowned Jewish American thinker, says Israel has committed “a major war crime” as it continues to attack the besieged Gaza Strip.

Israel has been pressing ahead with heavy offensive on Gaza amid international condemnation to stop the bloody onslaught which has claimed the lives of at least 1,700 Palestinians. More than 9,000 people have also been injured since the beginning of the aggression nearly four weeks ago.

Chomsky told Press TV that Israel is much worse than the former apartheid regime in South Africa.

“Hospitals have been attacked repeatedly. Each one is a war crime. In fact, for Israel to fire one bullet across the border is also a crime. Trials for war crimes only apply to the defeated. Within the occupied territory, Israel’s police are much worse than apartheid,” he said in a phone interview.

He said Israel faces economic isolation over occupying Palestinian territories. He called for an arms embargo on Tel Aviv.

Chomsky also criticized Arab leaders for supporting Washington’s pro-Israel policies in the past years.

Israel has intensified its airstrikes on Gaza after it was reported that an Israeli soldier had been captured by Palestinian resistance fighters there.

On Friday, US President Barack Obama called on the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas to “unconditionally” release the Israeli soldier.

"If they are serious about trying to resolve this situation, that soldier needs to be unconditionally released as soon as possible," Obama said in a news conference.

Obama framed the release of 23-year-old Hadar Goldin as a precondition for a possible ceasefire.

Latest figures show the ongoing Israeli air and ground strikes have claimed the lives of more than 350 children across the strip.