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By GT staff reporters
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Biden's cease-fire proposal for Gaza conflict comes out of political needs: experts

Move to quell mounting pressure on Washington, whilst increase influence in Middle East



Displaced Palestinians are seen in Jabalia, northern Gaza Strip, on May 30, 2024. Local sources reported that Israeli troops have withdrawn from the western and southern regions of Jabalia in northern Gaza, while some soldiers remain in the northern and eastern areas of the city. In a statement, the emergency committee in the northern Gaza Strip urged residents to "be patient and not return to the northern areas of the Gaza Strip at this time." (Photo: Xinhua)

The US' new three-phase cease-fire proposal for Israel and Hamas marks the Biden administration's latest effort to quell the mounting domestic and international pressure on the

US government's biased position toward Israel in the conflict, and is vying to increase its influence in the Middle East, said Chinese experts.

Biden on Friday laid out a three-phase cease-fire proposal to end the war in Gaza that has killed tens of thousands and caused a humanitarian crisis, Reuters reported.

The offer calls for a cease-fire, the release of Israeli hostages and Palestinian prisoners, and the reconstruction of Gaza.

Hamas said it views the proposal "positively." Israel has said there will be no formal end to the war as long as Hamas retains power, raising questions of timing and interpretation over the truce offer, media reported.

Israeli Minister of National Security Itmar Ben-Gvir threatened on X "to dissolve the government if Netanyahu agreed to a cease-fire deal announced by Biden."

Israel's Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich threatened his resignation from the government if the war is ended "without eliminating Hamas," Israeli Channel 12 reported.

The basic stance of various political parties in Israel is that the conflict with Hamas cannot be completely ended at the moment. Israel will not completely end the war until Hamas is completely eliminated and the hostages are rescued. This means the conflict will persist, Niu Xinchun, executive director of the China-Arab Research Institute of Ningxia University, told the Global Times. He noted that the US' early announcement of this cease-fire plan is also intended to exert pressure on Israel.

Niu said that Biden has released a cease-fire proposal at this juncture mainly in answer to the mounting domestic and international pressure piling on both Israel and US as Israel's attack in Gaza has sparked outrage, and after some European countries have recognized a Palestinian state, causing a rift between Europe and the US.

Earlier this week, the White House said that it does not believe that Israeli operations in Rafah amount to a "major ground operation" that could cross a red line and trigger a possible change in US policy. The statement came after an Israeli air strike and resulting fire killed at least 45 Palestinians on Sunday.

At the end of May, Spain, Ireland and Norway formally recognized the Palestinian state, in what they say is an attempt to refocus attention on efforts to find a political solution to the war in the Middle East.

As the US presidential election approaches, domestic forces are exploiting the Palestine-Israel conflict for political benefits.

In an announcement on Friday, US lawmakers from both sides of the political spectrum formally invited Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to address Congress in

Washington.

The Republicans are in broad agreement on supporting Benjamin Netanyahu, however, there are significant rifts within the Democratic Party. Therefore, inviting Netanyahu to address Congress is a Republican effort to divide the Democratic Party, Niu said.

Apart from answering domestic and international pressure, Biden's new cease-fire proposal also serves to vie for influence in the Middle East. "Now Washington has realized that it stands against international society, it worries more than anything that its influence in the region is waning. Thus it came up with the idea of a cease-fire proposal and wants regional countries to follow orders," said Zhu Weilie, the director of the Middle East Studies Institute of the Shanghai International Studies University.

[China and Arab states' joint statement on the Palestinian issue](#) was released on May 31. The text noted that relevant resolutions of the United Nations must be fully and effectively implemented and that the two sides will work together to promote an immediate cease-fire in the Gaza Strip and strive for a comprehensive, just, and lasting resolution of the Palestinian issue as soon as possible.

Both sides oppose the implementation of plans, intentions and actions to forcibly drive the Palestinian people out of their homeland, which would undermine prospects for peace in the Middle East and exacerbate regional conflicts, said the statement.

The joint statement was adopted by China and Arab states at the 10th ministerial conference of the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum.

China's approach to the Israeli-Palestinian issue is to address both the symptoms and root causes, while the US only focuses on the symptoms, Zhu said.

He further elaborated that China emphasizes regional governance and supports the Arab countries' recognition of the two-state solution. The US, on the other hand, only emphasizes a cease-fire without addressing humanitarian issues or acknowledging the Palestinians' right to their own land.

Refusing to support the establishment of a Palestinian state aligns the US completely with the Netanyahu government. Biden's current actions are all for his own political gain, Zhu noted.

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