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The war in Gaza is turning into a major international crisis



The International Criminal Court (ICC) announced its intention to prosecute not only Hamas leaders, but also to issue an arrest warrant for war crimes against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his Defence Minister. This caused a storm of protest in Israel, both from the authorities and from public organisations: Israel categorically refused to comply with the ICC decision, calling it shameful. The US president also distanced himself from the court's decision, calling it "outrageous".

However, not all Western states took this position; France, unlike the UK and Italy, was quick to express its support for the ICC.

Tel Aviv does not recognise the UN Charter and condemns the actions of the Washington administration

Israel is openly defying the United Nations, by whose decision it was created. Its representative to the United Nations, in full view of the international community, blatantly destroyed the Charter of the Organisation.

Moreover, this representative harshly criticised the Security Council for observing a minute's silence in memory of the late Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi.

Israel is not only engaging in polemics with the US, but is also not shying away from condemning some of the US administration's moves.

The Jerusalem Post on 17 May described President Biden's intention to partially suspend military supplies to Israel as "suicidal" – "Biden's act makes him appear not only unreliable but weak": for America's enemies it is a shot in the arm, for America's interests it is a shot in the leg, and for Biden's leadership it is a shot in the head.

At the same time, Israeli officials are not stingy in describing their activities as fighting global evil.

The same newspaper argued a few days later that the war in Gaza should not be seen as a conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, but as part of the conflict between Western civilisation and radical Islam, which has formed an axis with Russia and China, countries that want to weaken America.

It is noteworthy that the issue of support for the Palestinians or Israel has become part of the US election campaign: the Washington Post reported on 20 May that Trump's staff was pledging support for Arab and Muslim Americans who were unhappy with the Biden administration's pro-Israel stance.

Will the "Bouteflika rule" succeed in applying to Israel?

Now that the Arab states have come up with a concrete plan to solve the Palestinian question and end the war in Gaza, they are considering applying the so-called "Bouteflika rule" in the UN General Assembly. In 1974, A. Bouteflika, then Algeria's foreign minister, chaired a session of the UN General Assembly and suspended South Africa's participation, depriving it of the rights and privileges of a member state: it could no longer sit, speak or vote in the General Assembly or other UN bodies. Apartheid South Africa then came under increasing international pressure. At this point, the US, UK and France vetoed an African initiative to expel South Africa from the organisation.

Bouteflika's decision was supported by 91 votes to 22, as there were 133 member states in the UN at the time. South Africa eventually reversed course as the country became a pariah and an isolated regime. Bouteflika's decision was part of this process.

In this sense, the Arabs expect that stripping Israel of its UN rights and privileges will put additional pressure on the Tel Aviv regime to change course.

If there is no home for Arabs in Palestine, there will be no home for Jews either

Although the US vetoed Palestine's application for UN membership, it does not override the legal and political status of Palestine, a state, albeit under foreign occupation, recognised by three quarters of its 193 member states. Recently, Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago officially recognised the State of Palestine.

Following the adoption of a General Assembly resolution supporting Palestinian statehood on 10 May this year, the Republic of Ireland has officially announced that it will recognise the State in the coming weeks. Belgium, Malta, Slovenia, Spain and Slovenia have also recently made a declaration to this effect.

While Palestine's full membership in the UN is hostage to the US veto in the Security Council, it has, according to some Arab political analysts, so far diverted attention from a much more important and significant issue – Israel's status in the UN.

Given the genocide in the Gaza Strip, a Saudi newspaper wonders how long supporters of Israeli ethnic cleansing – the US president, the German chancellor, the British prime minister – will support Netanyahu's policy of systematically discriminating against non-Jews.

In Israel itself, there is a growing pragmatic, broad-minded public, whose ideas were expressed by the country's most famous writer, David Grossman, who said that if there is no home for Arabs in Palestine, there will be no home for Jews.

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