



Stop Enabling Genocide: Halt US Military Aid to Israel

Whereas, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) has long championed human rights in Central and S. America, South East Asia, China, Russia, and many other parts of the globe. As educators, para-professionals, nurses, and those who serve our youth and communities, responding to and advocating for the communities we serve extends beyond the walls of a classroom, school, schoolbus, or hospital. We are more tightly connected across the planet than ever before; our jobs and our union are called to address world crises that extend beyond local, state, or national borders. This is especially true of the unprecedented humanitarian crisis facing Palestinian civilians and children from Israel's invasion and occupation of Gaza.

Whereas, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in January, issued an [interim ruling](#)¹ that Israel is plausibly committing genocide, ordering them to stop genocidal acts and take measures to guarantee that humanitarian assistance is provided to civilians in Gaza.² Francesca Albanese, the UN special rapporteur on human rights in the occupied Palestinian territories, issued a report on an "[Anatomy of a Genocide](#)"³ says she believes Israel has committed "acts of genocide in Gaza." She presented her report to UN member states in Geneva.⁴

Whereas, the United Nations Human Rights Council passed a resolution on Friday, April 5th condemning Israel's treatment of civilians in Gaza and demanding a halt in all arms sales to Israel.⁵ Canada, the Netherlands, Japan, Spain and Belgium have all announced their intention to stop shipping weapons to Israel".⁶

¹ "World Court orders Israel to take actions to address Gaza Famine," *Middle East Monitor*. 28 March 2024. <<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20240328-world-court-orders-israel-to-take-action-to-address-gaza-famine/>>

² "Israeli army continues genocide crimes in Gaza during Eid-al-fitr: Media Office," *Middle East Monitor*. 10 April 2024. <<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20240410-israeli-army-continues-genocide-crimes-in-gaza-during-eid-al-fitr-media-office/>>

³ Albanese, Francesca. "Anatomy of a Genocide," *UN Human Rights Council*. 26 Feb - 5 April 2024. <<https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/sessions-regular/session55/advance-versions/a-hrc-55-73-auv.pdf>>

⁴ Foulkes, Imogen. "Gaza war: UN rights expert accuses Israel of Acts of genocide," *BBC News*. 27 March 2024. <<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-68667556>>

⁵ "Gaza situation: UN rights body demands halt to arms sales to Israel," *EFE*. 5 April 2024. <<https://efe.com/en/latest-news/2024-04-05/un-rights-body-demands-halt-to-arms-sales-to-israel-condemns-treatment-of-gaza-civilians/>>

⁶ Tait, Robert. "Which countries supply Israel with arms and why is Biden reluctant to stop?" *The Guardian*. 9 April 2024. <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/apr/09/us-israel-weapons>>



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Whereas, a coalition of a dozen labor unions and liberal organizations, including the National Education Association (NEA), Service Employees International Union (SEIU), MoveOn, and NextGen America sent a letter to the White House on April 11, 2024 demanding that President Biden end military aid to Israel until its government lifts restrictions on humanitarian aid to Gaza. The letter calls on President Biden to enforce the Foreign Assistance Act, which bars military support from going to any nation that restricts the delivery of humanitarian aid.⁷

Whereas, the UN agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) released a statement in March 2024 on the astronomical human toll of Israel’s invasion and occupation in Gaza, especially on Palestinian children. The report stated that, “more children have been killed there in recent months than in four years of conflict worldwide.” As of March 2024, 12,300 children have died in Gaza in the last four months, compared with 12,193 globally between 2019 and 2022.⁸

Whereas, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini cited the recent Gaza health authority data as “staggering” and stated, “This war is a war on children. It is a war on their childhood and their future”.⁹ As a result of this war, in Gaza, “a child is killed every 15 minutes, one out of every 100 children in Gaza”.¹⁰

Whereas, this war has been utterly devastating for Palestinians, as of March 2024, more than 35,000 people in Gaza¹¹ have died — 70% of whom are women and children — and more than 70,000 people have been injured since October, the local health ministry said in its latest report.”¹² A report from the World Bank, the European Union, and the United Nations issued in

⁷ Epstein, Reid J. “Democratic Coalition Send Biden a Demand on Military Aid to Israel,” *NY Times*. 12 April 2024. <<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/04/12/us/politics/letter-biden-israel-gaza.html?smid=nytcore-ios-share&referringSource=articleShare>>

⁸ “Gaza: Number of children killed higher than from four years of world conflict,” *United Nations Turkiye*. 14 March 2024. <<https://turkiye.un.org/en/263401-gaza-number-children-killed-higher-four-years-world-conflict>>

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Levy, Gideon, “Opinion: 11,500 Children Have Been Killed in Gaza. Horror of This Scale Has No Explanation,” *Haaretz*. 4 Feb 2024. <<https://www.haaretz.com/opinion/2024-02-04/ty-article-opinion/.premium/11-500-children-have-been-killed-in-gaza-horror-of-this-scale-has-no-explanation/0000018d-6fe9-d4f1-a18d-fff9c4010000>>

¹¹ “Gaza death toll: how many Palestinian has Israel’s campaign killed,” *Reuters*. 14 May 2024. <<https://www.cnn.com/2024/02/29/middleeast/gaza-death-toll-30000-israel-war-hnk-intl/index.html>>

¹² Lim, Clarissa-Jan, “More Children Killed in Gaza in four months than in four years of war globally: report,” *MSNBC*. 14 March 2024. <<https://www.msnbc.com/top-stories/latest/death-toll-children-gaza-israel-rcna143269>>



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early April states that, "Palestinians in Gaza now make up 80 percent of all people facing famine or severe hunger worldwide".¹³

Whereas, international concerns for Israeli abuses of Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank predate October 7, 2023, going back decades. Just in the span of 2008 and the first half of 2023, over 6000 Palestinians have been killed in confrontations “in the context of the occupation and conflict” with “...many incidents raising concerns over violation of international law and lack of accountability”.¹⁴ Between 2000 and 2019, more than 10,000 Palestinian children have been arrested, detained, abused, and prosecuted by Israeli security forces in the Israeli military court system.¹⁵

Whereas, American tax dollars have been and are being used to kill tens of thousands of Palestinians. The US is the Israeli government’s number one supplier of military weapons, accounting for 68% of all Israel’s foreign-sourced weaponry.¹⁶ Not only does the US have a 10 year agreement to provide Israel with \$38 billion in military aid over ten years (Reuters Staff 2024,¹⁷ they also supply Israel with another half billion dollars to replenish their missile defense system.¹⁸

Whereas, according to Robert Tait of *The Guardian*, “Israel has been the biggest recipient of American financial support to a foreign country since the second world war, receiving by 2023 a cumulative sum of \$158bn, in current inflation-adjusted prices”.

¹³ Hass, Amira, “Number That Stagger the Imagination: There’s No Way to Quantify the Suffering in Gaza.” *Haaretz*. 10 April 2024. <<https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-04-10/ty-article-magazine/.premium/numbers-that-stagger-the-imagination-theres-no-way-to-quantify-the-suffering-in-gaza/0000018e-c1db-d480-a99e-cfdf01240000>>

¹⁴ “Data on Casualties,” United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.” <<https://www.ochaopt.org/data/casualties>>

¹⁵ Sayed, Armani. “What Palestinian Children Face in Israeli Prisons.” *Time*. 15 December 2023. <<https://time.com/6548068/palestinian-children-israeli-prison-arrested/>>

¹⁶ Tait, Robert. “Which countries supply Israel with arms and why is Biden reluctant to stop?” *The Guardian*. 9 April 2024. <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/apr/09/us-israel-weapons>>

¹⁷ “What Military Support Does the US Give Israel?” *Times of Israel*. 8 April 2024. <<https://www.timesofisrael.com/what-military-support-does-the-us-give-israel/>>

¹⁸ Crowley, Michael and Wong, Edward, “Gaza War Turns Spotlight on Long Pipeline of US Weapons to Israel.” *NY Times*. 6 April 2024. <<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/04/06/us/politics/israel-us-weapons.html>>



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Whereas, since October 2023, the Biden Administration has bypassed Congress to send \$253.5 million worth of weapons to Israel to execute their war in Gaza.¹⁹ Our nation's policy of arming the Israeli government has made us complicit in carrying out genocide. Time is of the essence. This policy must end now.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, as long as Israel continues to block substantive and meaningful aid to Gaza, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) calls for the US to halt military aid to Israel.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the AFT will vigorously advocate to President Biden, Vice President Harris, and members of Congress to immediately end US military aid to Israel.

Approved by the Berkeley Federation of Teachers Executive Board and submitted by the following Officers, who certify that all procedures have been followed.

Matt Meyer, President

Regina Chagolla, Vice President

¹⁹ Lee, Matthew, "The Biden Administration Once Again Bypasses Congress on an Emergency Weapons Sale to Israel." *PBS News Hour*. 29 Dec 2023. <<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/the-biden-administration-once-again-bypasses-congress-on-an-emergency-weapons-sale-to-israel>>