

**Israel is committing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza, and Australia is failing to act. There are several actions Australian Government must take to end the genocide.**

## Overview

The current genocide being perpetrated on Palestinians in Gaza is one of the most shocking crimes against humanity witnessed in modern history. While this genocide by Israel has drawn global outrage from communities around the globe, Western governments (including Australia) have continued to provide political, financial and military support to Israel.

A relentless campaign of airstrikes and military campaigns across Gaza have resulted in the the killing of tens of thousands of civilians, the total destruction of more than 80% of hospitals and medical services, the crippling loss of the majority of of Gaza's schools, universities, power and water infrastructure, and roads. These attacks have also destroyed over 60% of housing in Gaza.

Australia, rather than using the economic and diplomatic levers at its disposal, has continued to endorse Israel as an ally despite the mass outcry from communities around the continent.

It is important to remember that the war on Palestinians has been on-going for more than 76 years, from the ethnic cleansing of 800,000 Palestinians in 1948, through the military and on-going occupation of the West Bank and Gaza in 1967, the siege of Gaza since 2007 and the relentless theft of Palestinian land to establish Jewish only settlements in Palestine.

The current situation is acute and we have put together a list of critical actions that the Australian government must take to bolster their influence and calls for a permanent ceasefire. A permanent ceasefire is only the first step towards justice for Palestinians. But it is a critical first step to end the relentless murder, wounding and devastation of the 2.2 million Gazans currently trapped in a warzone.

## Statistics on the Genocide

- 47,347 killed and missing persons.
- 15,747 children killed.
- 3,315 massacres committed by Israel.
- 10,000 missing persons.
- 37,347 killed persons who reached hospitals.
- 33 killed due to famine.
- 498 medical personnel killed.
- 151 journalists killed.
- 7 mass graves inside hospitals.
- 85,372 injured.
- 12,000 wounded in need of traveling for life-saving or critical treatment
- 60,000 pregnant women at risk due to lack of healthcare.
- 33 of 36 Gazan hospitals entirely out of service.
- 64 health centres out of service.
- 160 healthcare facilities damaged.
- 131 ambulances destroyed.
- 79,000 tons of explosives dropped by Israel on Gaza
- 1.7 million Palestinians displaced within Gaza

*Updated June 17, 2024.*

*The actual figures will be much higher than those currently known above.. Due to the horrific circumstances on the ground, it is difficult to get a complete picture of the scale of the loss and devastation.*

Over the past eight months, Israel has used starvation and the restriction of food, medical supplies, fuel and aid as a tactic in their war. Due to Israel's siege, Gazans were already suffering acute hunger and dependent on humanitarian aid. Gaza is now on the brink of famine, and Gazans are starving to death. Due to Israel's targeting of medical services, Gaza's medical system has collapsed and many needing critical medical care are prevented from accessing it due to Israel's blockade and border closures.

Israel's starvation and blockade of Gazans during this crisis amounts to collective punishment of the civilian population, which is a war crime.

### **Permanent ceasefire**

Israel must immediately and unconditionally end its genocidal military campaign against Gaza. It must withdraw militarily from Gaza and end its indiscriminate and violent attack on civilians.

Israel must immediately remove its blockade of Gaza and allow unimpeded delivery of humanitarian aid. They must end their 17 year siege on Gaza and commit to reinstating the free flow of goods into the Gaza strip.

A critical component of any permanent ceasefire must include Israel rebuilding and repairing all destroyed infrastructure like water pipes, electricity generators, and facilitating the return of all Gazans to their homes.

Once a ceasefire is achieved, Israel must allow independent parties to enter Gaza to investigate allegations of war crimes.

### **How is Israel responding to ceasefire calls?**

Israel has repeatedly refused to accept any ceasefire proposals, and has rejected both the International Court of Justice rulings and the International Criminal Court's application for arrest warrants for Prime Minister Netanyahu and Defence Minister Gallant.

The international community must step in and force Israel to end its senseless, indefensible and unjustifiable campaign of genocide against Palestinians. This can only be achieved through the diplomatic, political, military and economic isolation of Israel by the international community, and the abandoning of Israel as an ally of the West.

There is an indisputable power imbalance between Israel and Palestine in this crisis, and Israel has to-date refused to take action to mitigate civilian casualty or abide by international law. The responsibility of ensuring Israel abides by international agreements and law therefore falls to the international community, including Australia.

### **What has Australia done so far?**

Rather than using the economic and diplomatic tools at its disposal to force Israel to end its genocide against Gazans, Australia has until this point chosen to endorse Israel as an ally. Australia has continued to use weak language and passive disapproval to condemn Israel's actions, choosing to verbally support international law without implementing substantive sanctions to ensure Israel's accountability. A permanent, ceasefire with true justice for Palestinians requires sanctions, to bring about Israel's accountability, and reparations.

The Australian government has instead chosen to try to delegitimise the outcry from the Australian community about the situation in Gaza by framing Palestinian rights protests as violent and anti-semitic, while largely ignoring rampant islamophobia. They have isolated politicians who have spoken out, and refused to engage with the distress and genuine concerns of the Palestinian, Muslim and broader Australian communities.

They have refused to reassess trade relations with Israel, and although Israel is currently under multiple international investigations for genocide and war-crimes, they have refused to properly acknowledge or halt military ties and weapons trades with Israel.

While Australia maintains all economic and political ties with Israel, their verbal support of international institutions and international law are rendered feeble.

### **Ukraine Precedent**

In response to the Russian occupation of Ukrainian territory in 2022, the Australian government responded with a range of rapid and stark sanctions, The 1200 sanctions placed on Russia included travel bans on certain individuals including Ministers, Government Officials, those who had engaged in any activity threatening the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, and a ban on the trade of certain exports, imports and commercial activity between Russia or the occupied Ukrainian territories and Australia. Australia as a sovereign state took these decisions as they were not mandated by the United Nations..

In April 2022, both Anthony Albanese and Penny Wong called on the then-Morrison government to expel Russian diplomats from Australia in response to the Ukrainian crisis. Australia also joined another 43 states in referring Russia to the ICC.

The Australian Government also immediately expanded and resourced the resettlement of Ukrainian refugees to Australia, providing visa extensions, expedited visa processing times and temporary protection visas to more than 11,500 Ukrainians.

Australia has also contributed \$35 million in humanitarian aid and more than \$70 million in military assistance to Ukraine.

This stands in stark contrast to Australia's response to Israel in the current crisis.

## What must Australia do?

- Demand an immediate, permanent and unconditional ceasefire and allow unfettered access to humanitarian aid for Palestinians in Gaza;
- Declare public support for both the ICC applications and the ICJ rulings and commit to support both institutions to seek justice for Gazans and Palestine:
- End all military trade and contracts with the Israeli Government;
- Implement targeted economic sanctions to pressure Israel's compliance with the ICJ ruling;
- End its public statements of support for the Israeli Government and take active steps to cut diplomatic ties with the Israeli Government, expel the Israeli Ambassador and recall the Australian Ambassador to Israel;
- Take steps to sanction both the Israeli state and its officials, military officers, and any Australian serving with the IDF for violations of international law;
- Demand a political process for resolution based on justice, equality, self-determination and the right to return for Palestinians; and commit to the rebuilding and repair of Gaza's infrastructure and environment.

## What can you do?

- 1)** Lobby your MP to call for a ceasefire, by signing our petition, using our MP Engagement toolkit and joining APAN's next MP Engagement training.
- 2)** Sign up to hold one community-building event to educate and bring in new supporters. You could hold a film screening, a market stall, or a kitchen table conversation.
- 3)** Learn how to talk about the situation, especially about how to place it in its historical context. We have some useful conversation techniques you can access.

**For information on what you can do, visit [apan.org.au/take-action](https://apan.org.au/take-action)**