

[How Biden Immediately Undermined the UN Ceasefire Vote](#)

The Biden Administration is trying to seem like they're working to bring an end to the fighting when, in fact, they are not.



On March 25, the United Nations Security Council passed [Resolution 2728](#) calling for a bilateral ceasefire in Gaza for the remaining two weeks of Ramadan, along with other provisions. It made headlines in large part because the United States did not veto it as it had [previous ceasefire resolutions](#). The Biden Administration, however, had no intention for the resolution to actually take effect.

The United States was the only country in the fifteen-member United Nations body not to vote in favor, once again demonstrating its isolation in the international community. The Biden Administration had [threatened to veto](#) the original draft resolution calling for a permanent ceasefire, only agreeing to not cast a veto in return for dropping the word “permanent.”

The other changes the Biden Administration insisted on are revealing: While it “demands” that Hamas release Israeli hostages, the United States made sure that the [resolution](#) only “emphasizes the urgent need” to get desperately-needed aid to Palestinians, without mentioning that it is Israel that is preventing it.

The United States had initially pressed for the resolution to condemn Hamas while not condemning Israel, but it condemned neither. [According to U.S. officials](#), the failure to single out Hamas for condemnation was the primary reason the United States did not vote in favor.

Despite a decision by Israel to [delay](#) a meeting in Washington in protest of the U.S. refusal to veto, White House spokesperson [John Kirby insisted](#), “Nothing, nothing has changed about our policy. Nothing.” But there was one possible difference the non-veto may have indicated: While the resolution demanded both a temporary ceasefire and the unconditional release of hostages, it was the first time the United States allowed for even a temporary ceasefire resolution to pass without conditioning it on a hostage release.

Even after Israel’s killing of seven humanitarian aid workers, an administration official quoted by Politico [emphasized](#) that Biden’s public statement demonstrating his upset at Israel killing seven humanitarian aid workers was “all we have planned” in regard to holding Israel accountable. And, responding to reporters’ questions about whether there will be any consequences to Israel’s ongoing violations, National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby [responded](#), “We are still supporting Israel’s ability to defend itself against this still-viable threat. And that’s going to continue.”

U.S. officials immediately made clear that they would not allow the resolution to be enforced. Indeed, the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations [Linda Greenfield-Thomas](#), echoed by other Biden Administration [officials](#), insisted that the resolution was somehow “non-binding.” This led to a storm of protests, even from conservative allies like the [United Kingdom](#), citing [Article 25](#) of the U.N. Charter which declares that “The Members of the United Nations agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council in accordance with the present Charter.” Indeed, a landmark 1971 decision by the [International Court of Justice](#) confirmed that Security Council resolutions were indeed binding under international law.

There is also a [broad consensus](#) of international legal scholars that such resolutions are obligatory, particularly when the language of the resolution includes the word “demands” in the operational clauses. Despite this, they are not enforceable unless enacted under Chapter VII of the U.N. Charter, which the United States has refused to allow in the case of Israel and other allies.

The Biden Administration’s audacious claim that U.N. Security Council resolutions are non-binding is, therefore, not simply a means of relieving pressure on Israel’s rightwing government, but an apparent attempt to undermine the international legal system in place since World War II.

Biden’s attitude towards the enforceability of U.N. Security Council resolutions has varied throughout his career, depending on the geopolitical alignment of the countries in question.

As a senator, Biden was quite willing to support enforcing U.N. Security Council [resolutions](#) if they targeted countries not in good standing with Washington, such as Serbia, Angola, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, North Korea, and Libya, among others, which found themselves on the receiving end of a number of international sanctions designed as a result of their non-compliance.

Biden even justified his support for the [invasion of Iraq](#) in part in order to “enforce all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions relating to Iraq” on the grounds that it “is in the national security interests of the United States and in furtherance of the war on terrorism that all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions be enforced, including through the use of force if necessary.”

At the time of that resolution, however, there were nearly [100 other U.N. Security Council resolutions](#) violated by countries other than Iraq, including thirty by Israel and all but two by other countries allied with or on friendly terms with the United States, yet no record of Biden demanding enforcement of any of them.

Perhaps most revealing of Biden’s double standards was in regard to U.N. Security Council Resolution [520](#), passed in 1982, which called for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon. Israel—which was the only country with troops in that country mentioned by name—remained in violation of that resolution for eighteen years, along with no less than [nine other](#) previous U.N. Security Council resolutions demanding their withdrawal. At no point during that period is there any record of Biden ever calling for its enforcement.

As President, Biden has supported strict sanctions on Iran and North Korea due to their violations of U.N. Security Council resolutions regarding their nuclear programs and delivery systems, but has blocked U.N. Security Council resolutions targeting Israel ([UNSC Res. 487](#)) as well as India and Pakistan ([UNSC Res. 1172](#)) regarding their nuclear weapons and delivery systems.

Though Biden had no intention of allowing the United Nations to pressure Israel to accept a ceasefire, allowing the resolution to pass was important for political reasons. The United States has been isolated in the

international community over its opposition to a ceasefire, and was one of only ten countries in the 193-member [U.N. General Assembly](#) to vote against a ceasefire resolution. The remaining nine were either tiny Pacific island states dependent on U.S. aid or those under far-right governments.

This has led to growing criticism, both internationally and domestically, as polls showed a [solid majority of Americans](#) supporting a ceasefire, with increasing indications that Biden's obstructionist policies at the United Nations might be threatening his [re-election prospects](#). Though initially only willing to consider a "pause" in the fighting under certain conditions, in early March the administration—in an apparent effort to assuage anti-war sentiments—began using the word "ceasefire," though they were still only referring to a pause and did not represent any shift in policy.

And, last month, the United States introduced what it claimed was [a ceasefire resolution](#) before the Security Council. However, instead of "demanding a ceasefire," it merely urged the U.N. to "determine the imperative" of a ceasefire and that it be "in connection with the release of all remaining hostages." Four countries voted no, including China and Russia, thereby defeating the measure.

The Biden Administration is trying to create an impression that they are supporting the United Nations to bring an end to the fighting when, in fact, they are not. Just days after Israel categorically rejected [abiding](#) by Resolution 2728, [The Washington Post](#) reported that Biden had approved billions' of dollars' worth of bombs, missiles, and jet fighters to enable Israel to continue to wage war.

By allowing the resolution to pass, Biden is trying to convince voters he supports a ceasefire, even while he simultaneously prevents the United Nations from enforcing its resolution and provides Israel with the means to violate it.