

## Links to 3 recent articles in which Dr. Stephen Zunes is quoted:

\* [This IPS article below examines Israel's tradition defying UN Security Council resolutions](#) even if the US allows them to pass but refuses to let them to be enforced

\* Two recent articles in a major Swedish daily on US policy toward Israel and Palestine:  
<https://dn.se/varlden/darfor-fortsatter-biden-att-stodja-israel-trots-risken-for-valjartapp/>  
<https://dn.se/varlden/okad-press-att-stoppa-militart-stod-till-israel-svarare-att-forneka-krigsbrott>



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April 9, 2024 By [Thalif Deen](#)

### [Will Israel Defy Another Security Council Resolution?](#)

UNITED NATIONS, Mar 26 2024 (IPS) - The UN Security Council (UNSC) resolution for a temporary cease-fire in the ongoing conflict in Gaza— adopted by a 14-0 vote with the US abstaining — marks a significant step forward in momentarily halting the five-month-old fighting which has claimed the lives of over 32,000 Palestinians and 1,200 inside Israel.

But a lingering question remains: how will Israel respond?

Clearly, Israel has had a longstanding notoriety for flouting UNSC resolutions —and still never having to pay a price for such violations—primarily because of the unyielding support of the United States.

**Stephen Zunes, Professor of Politics, University of San Francisco, who has written extensively and authoritatively on the politics of the Security Council, told IPS: “By my count, Israel has initially stood in violation of as many as 40 UN Security Council resolutions for at least a decade following their passage, though they eventually came into compliance with about a dozen of those. They remain in violation of the others”.**

Successive U.S. administrations, including the Biden administration, have made clear they would veto any UN Security Council resolution that would impose sanctions or any other kind of pressure to force Israel into compliance, he said.

While it is certainly a positive development that the Biden administration did not veto Monday’s Security Council resolution calling for a ceasefire as it has previously, the United States again demonstrated its isolation in the international community by being the only country to not vote in favor.

The Biden administration 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.”

White House spokesperson John Kirby said the United States did not vote in favor because the resolution did not condemn Hamas, despite the fact that it did not condemn Israel either.

**The wording of the various clauses which the Biden administration also apparently demanded are revealing: While it “demands” that Hamas release the hostages, the United States made sure that the resolution only “emphasizes the urgent need” to get desperately-needed aid to Palestinians and that it did not mention that it is Israel that is preventing it, said Dr Zunes, currently Torgny Segerstedt Visiting Research Professor, at the Department of Sociology and Work Science, University of Gothenburg, Sweden.**

At the same time, even though the ceasefire resolution, if honored, would only stop the fighting for two weeks, it is significant that the United States allowed for even a temporary ceasefire resolution to pass without conditioning it on the release of Israeli hostages, he noted.

“This is no doubt a reflection of the growing domestic and international pressure the Biden administration has been facing over its support for Israel’s horrific war on the people of Gaza.

Whatever the wording of the resolution, however, it is unlikely that Israel will abide by it and the United States would certainly veto any attempt by the United Nations to enforce it,” he declared.

Oxfam’s UN Representative and Head of New York Office Brenda Mofya said: “We welcome the Security Council’s adoption of a ceasefire resolution so Palestinians in Gaza can have much-needed respite from the relentless and devastating Israeli violence and critical aid can reach them”.

However, this resolution, while a step in the right direction, falls short of the permanent ceasefire which is truly required and comes too late for the over 32,000 Palestinians in Gaza that have been killed, and thousands more unaccounted for, while the Security Council wrung its hands over semantics, she argued.

“For nearly six months, the rest of the international community has repeatedly called for a permanent ceasefire, the release of all hostages, and the provision of unrestricted aid into Gaza. It is long overdue for UN Security Council Member States to finally heed these calls with the moral leadership that is rightfully expected of them and stop the killing and suffering.

“Now this resolution has passed, it is imperative for Member States to fulfil their obligations to ensure that it is implemented so that Palestinians never endure violence such as this again. This includes immediately halting the transfer of weapons, parts, and ammunition to Israel and Palestinian armed groups,” she said.

“A mere two-week pause is not enough. This initial cessation in violence must lead to a permanent ceasefire that lasts and a sustainable peace for Palestinians and Israelis alike, so people in Gaza can mourn their loved ones and begin the long road of recovery and reconstruction,” declared Mofya.

Louis Charbonneau, UN director at Human Rights Watch said Israel needs to immediately respond to the UN Security Council resolution by facilitating the delivery of humanitarian aid, ending its starvation of Gaza’s population, and halting unlawful attacks.

Palestinian armed groups should immediately release all civilians held hostage. The US and other countries should use their leverage to end atrocities by suspending arms transfers to Israel, said Charbonneau.

In a statement issued on March 25, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the US abstention on the Security Council resolution comes on the heels of the Russian and Chinese veto “of our comprehensive draft resolution in the Council, reaffirms the U.S. position that a ceasefire of any duration come as part of an agreement to release hostages in Gaza”.

“While we do not agree with all provisions included in this text, adjustments made by the resolution’s sponsors over recent days are consistent with our principled position that any ceasefire text must be paired with text on the release of the hostages”, he said.

This resolution further explicitly recognizes the painstaking, non-stop negotiations being conducted by the Governments of Egypt, Israel, Qatar, and the United States to achieve such a release in the context of a ceasefire, which would also create space to surge more humanitarian assistance for Palestinian civilians, and to build something more enduring.

“Because the final text does not have key language we view as essential, notably a condemnation of Hamas, we could not support it. This failure to condemn Hamas is particularly difficult to understand coming days after the world once again witnessed the horrific acts terrorist groups commit,” Blinken said.

“We reiterate the need to accelerate and sustain the provision of humanitarian assistance through all available routes – land, sea, and air. We continue to discuss with partners a pathway to the establishment of a Palestinian state with real security guarantees for Israel to establish long-term peace and security,” he declared.

Nihal Awad, National Executive Director of the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR), said the Biden administration’s long overdue decision to permit the passage of a Security Council resolution calling for a ceasefire “will only be impactful if our government takes concrete steps to support it.”

The far-right Netanyahu government is already flouting the resolution and promising to continue its genocide in Gaza. The Biden administration should respond by ending the transfer of any new weapons to the Israeli government and taking steps to pursue a just, lasting peace, he said. [*IPS UN Bureau Report* [Follow @IPSNewsUNBureau](#)]