



UN Security Council Resolution On Gaza Is An 'Atrocity' w/ Craig Mokhiber

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Dimitri Lascaris (DL): Good day, this is Dimitri Lascaris coming to you for Reason2Resist from Montreal, Canada on November 19th, 2025. On Monday of this week, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution endorsing Donald Trump's so-called Peace Plan for Gaza. The resolution approves the creation of a U.S.-led peace board to supervise the reconstruction, policing and governance of the Gaza Strip. It calls for the demilitarisation of Gaza without imposing any restrictions whatsoever on the arming of Israel, the perpetrator of genocide and apartheid against the Palestinian people. The resolution does call for the eventual withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Gaza Strip, but not within any clearly defined timeframe. Instead, it links Israeli withdrawal to what it describes as the demilitarisation of Gaza. It also calls for the establishment of an international stabilisation force to oversee the de-militarization and at least in part reconstruction of Gaza. And finally, the resolution expresses some vague, ill-defined aspiration that Palestinians might have a discussion with the Israelis one day about the creation of a Palestinian state. The vote at the Security Council was 13 states in favour with two abstaining. The states that abstained were Russia and China, each of which could have vetoed the resolution, but chose not to do so. Those that voted in favour of the resolution were the U.S., U.K., France, Algeria, Denmark, Greece, Guyana, South Korea, Pakistan, Panama, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, and Somalia.

Now here to discuss all of this with us is Craig Mokhiber. Craig has been on Reason2Resist before. You may know him to be a former United Nations human rights official and a specialist in international human rights law, policy, and methodology. On October 28th, 2023, three weeks after Israel's genocidal assault on the Gaza Strip began, Craig stepped down as the Director of the New York Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights four days before he was due to retire. And in his final letter to High Commissioner Volker Türk, Craig harshly criticised the organisation's response to Israel's war in Gaza, calling Israel's military intervention a textbook genocide, and accusing the UN of failing to act. Thank you so much for joining us again today.

Craig Mokhiber (CM): Thanks, Dimitri, always good to be with you.

DL: So Craig, I'd like to begin by highlighting a statement you made yesterday on X in the aftermath of this resolution's adoption. And you stated on November 18th: "The UN Security Council, if unconstrained by international law, as an instrument of repression and injustice. This is what we witnessed yesterday as the Council ignored the findings of the ICJ and turned the people of Gaza over to the co-perpetrators of the genocide. The veto has repeatedly been used in the Council to violate Palestinian rights. Yesterday when it could have been used to protect Palestinian rights, it was nowhere to be found. The Security Council has lost all legitimacy." That's a scathing indictment of the UN, deservedly so. I'd like to start by inviting you to elaborate on your reasons for expressing such a harsh judgement about the UN Security Council.

CM: I was trying to make the point that folks need to as they're focusing on what an atrocity this resolution was for the people of Palestine to also see how dangerous a historic precedent it is that the UN Security Council, which by the way, two years into the genocide in Palestine, the Security Council finally acts after being attacked and criticised and begged and pleaded with to take some action on this genocide, but rather than acting to enforce international law, to protect the victims, to hold the perpetrators accountable, it adopts this resolution that openly flouts international law. It disempowers and punishes the victims of the genocide, and it actually rewards and empowers the perpetrators of the genocide, and gives control of the lives of the survivors of the genocides to one of the co-perpetrators, which is to say the U.S. in consultation with the Israelis. This is a very frightening historic development, not just for the Palestinian people, but I think for everybody, because the Security Council actually has enormous power at its disposal. It can function under Chapter 7 to impose through the use of armed force its will on anybody in the world who doesn't have a country with a veto, I should say. And what the Council did in this resolution is it adopted a resolution that contained provisions that were directly contrary to the requirements of international law, and it exercised powers that were ultra vires, powers that are not in the hands of the Security Council under the UN Charter. So not to get too much in the weeds, but the Security Council, the only powers it has are the powers that come from the UN Charter. The UN Charter is a treaty under international law. It's a part of international law, that means neither the Charter nor the Security Council sit above or outside international law, they have no powers except those that exist within international law. Security Council has no authority to adopt a resolution that violates international law, least of all, provisions of international law that are the highest rules of international laws so-called *Ius cogens* and *ergo omnes* rules of international law rules that apply all the time for which there are no exceptions and that attach obligations to all member states including members of the Security Council so this is a very frightening development the Security Council has acted outside the law to use force to impose upon the indigenous people of Palestine, the survivors of a genocide, a set of provisions that violate international law. This is very very dangerous. And it means that unless the Security Council is reigned in, in some way, any time you have a powerful state like the U.S. that can deploy threats and inducements and bribes and mobilise, you know, the use of all of its power to compel 15 members of the Security Council to either vote in favour or to not oppose the resolution, we are all at risk. It's a very dangerous development.

DL: So I'd like to focus in particular on the legality of this resolution or its compliance with international law on the decision last year. I believe it was an advisory opinion issued by the International Court of Justice as to the illegality of the occupation. And broadly speaking, the ICJ determined or opined that the occupation, that both the Gaza Strip and the West Bank are occupied territory for purposes of international law. This is not the first time it's so held, this was simply a reaffirmation of that but it went on to say that the occupation is illegal. Can this resolution adopted Monday be reconciled with the ICJ's advisory opinion as to the illegality? And if not, please talk to us about the ways in which it violates the opinion expressed by the ICJ last year.

CM: Yeah, it clearly cannot be reconciled with the decisions and opinions of the International Court of Justice and cannot be reconciled with requirements of international law. The series of findings by the International Court of Justice, especially those during the genocide itself, were completely rejected in this resolution of the Security Council. This resolution openly denies the Palestinian right to self-determination and reinforces the Israeli regime's impunity even as the genocide continues. The International Court of Justice has affirmed Palestinian self-determination and has called out the accountability of the Israeli regime. This resolution denied self-determination and reinforced Israeli impunity. Despite the ICJ's findings that the Palestinian people have a right to determination on their land the resolution strips that right away and it empowers hostile foreign forces to govern them, as well as allowing the continuation of the occupation of the Gaza Strip by Israeli forces that has already been ruled as illegal by the International Court of Justice. And despite the court's findings that Gaza, as well the West Bank and East Jerusalem, are illegally occupied and that the occupation must end quickly and completely the resolution extends the Israeli occupation, it endorses the indefinite presence of Israeli regime troops in Gaza, and then it superimposes a second U.S.-led occupation on top of that occupation. In your most creative moments, you can't think of a way that you could be more directly contrary to the requirements of international law on this issue. And despite the court's findings that Palestinians don't have to negotiate for their rights with their oppressors, and that no agreement or political process can trump those rights, this resolution nullifies those rights and assigns them to the discretion of the United States and, as you see in the terms of resolution, and to its Israeli and other partners.

So even in the midst of this ongoing genocide that's being perpetrated by the apartheid regime together with the United States, nowhere in the resolution is there a single mention of the crime of genocide for which the Israeli regime is on trial in the International Court of Justice in a case that has resulted in a series of provisional measures that in which Israel is in violation. No mention by the way of the apartheid being practised by the state that the International Court of Justice has recognised apartheid and racial segregation being perpetrated by Israel, no mention of the colonisation, no mention of thousands of Palestinians who as we speak are still being held in Israelian torture and death camps, no mention of the international legal requirement of accountability for perpetrators or redress for the victims of the genocide. And Israel is not even required to meet its legal obligations, as the court has affirmed, of compensation and reparations. Instead, this resolution takes that responsibility away from Israel and hands it to international donors and to international financial

institutions, like the World Bank, in what amounts to a multibillion dollar bailout of the Israeli regime, even as it perpetrates these crimes. So the resolution guarantees the impunity of the Israeli regime, advances its normalisation and in the process denies the rights of the Palestinian people and violates multiple provisions of international law. It is an outrage of historic proportions and how we got here I think is a question that's going to be examined for generations.

DL: So let's take a closer look at this outrage. I'd like to start by focusing on paragraph two. This is the actual text of the resolution. And by the way, the highlighting is mine. It reads that the "Council welcomes the establishment of the board of peace as a transitional administration, which will set the framework and coordinate funding for the redevelopment of Gaza pursuant to the comprehensive plan", that is Donald Trump's so-called peace plan, "and in a manner consistent with relevant international legal principles, until such time as the Palestinian Authority has satisfactorily completed its reform programme as outlined in various proposals, including President Trump's peace plan in 2020 and the Saudi French proposal, and can securely and effectively take back control of Gaza. And after the PA reform programme is faithfully carried out, the conditions may finally be in place for a credible pathway to Palestinian self-determination and statehood." So Craig, as I'm sure you know as well as anybody, Mahmoud Abbas is deeply unpopular, both in the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip. And a poll done as recently as May of this year showed that if an election were held, either a presidential election or a parliamentary election in occupied Palestine, Mahmoud Abbas and his party would take a drubbing. In fact, the poll about a presidential election showed that if Marwan Barghouti were authorised to run, were freed and were able to run he would win with about 50% of the vote. And the Hamas leader would come second with about 38 % of the vote and Mahmoud Abbas would be down at a lowly 11 %. So the United Nations Security Council undoubtedly is aware or should be aware of public sentiment in occupied Palestine towards Mahmoud Abbas and the Palestinian Authority. It could have called for free and fair elections so that Palestinians themselves could choose those who would govern them, but it didn't do so. Why do you think it didn't call for democratic elections?

CM: Well, there's nothing in this resolution that defers to ideas like human rights, democracy, the rule of law. This is the opposite of this. This is a resolution that was crafted on 19th century ideas of colonialism. And you're right that the Palestinian authority has no legitimacy. Any standing that it has been granted to it by external actors, not by the Palestinian people themselves and they, I think, share a very significant measure of the blame for this monster that's been adopted in the Security Council because the Palestinian Authority encouraged other states to support and to not veto this resolution. It encouraged other states to support the Trump plan even before this resolution was presented in hopes that it itself will receive some crumbs in the process. And if you look at the resolution that was adopted, they didn't even receive crumbs. There's no promise that the Palestinian Authority is going to be governing even the Gaza Strip in a limited way here. And here's the proof of the lack of legitimacy of the Palestinian Authority, is that this resolution has been rejected by all of Palestinian civil society, all of the human rights organisations and civic organisations, the main coordinating

mechanisms of Palestinian civil society by almost all of the political factions except for Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah faction. Across the globe, human rights defenders and specialists in international law, this thing has been roundly rejected, and yet here it is supported by the Palestinian authority. And the problem with Palestinian foreign policy is that the PLO and the so-called state of Palestine and its representatives in the UN and elsewhere, become effectively merged with the Palestinian Authority under Mahmoud Abbas and his colleagues, so that you have this authority without legitimacy living under occupation, literally under the boot of the Israeli regime, under the thumb of the Americans, and dependent on funding from Europe and from the Gulf monarchies, which is controlling the positions that are taken by the PLO and the state of Palestine in the UN, which became complicit in this effort to strip away the rights of the Palestinian people. And when you are a country representative in the UN that's consulting on what position you should take on a Palestinian question, they go to the Palestinian Authority for that advice. They go to the permanent mission of Palestine in New York attached to the UN. And there, they were instructed to support this initiative, which is not, by the way, an excuse for having supported it.

Anyone who can read the text in one of the official languages of the UN knows exactly what they were doing and there's a lot of blame to be heaped on the 15 members of the Council for this but the Palestinian Authority made it much more difficult to oppose this and so you get this resolution welcoming, even annexing the Trump plan, the 29th September version of the Trump plan, to this resolution of Security Council, legitimising this colonial land grab, empowering this so-called board of peace, a colonial governance body, headed by Donald Trump himself to serve as the transitional administration governing all of Gaza. It will have the power to control all services and aid, to control the movement of people in and out of Gaza, to control the framework and funding for the reconstruction of Gaza. Imagine Donald TRump – and by the way, people like Tony Blair and Jared Kushner having decision-making authority over the funding of the reconstruction of Gaza, any chance for corruption there? It's absolutely outrageous. It includes this also dangerously – I mean, you can't believe this is a Security Council resolution – and it includes this dangerously broadly formulated authorisation for this Trump body to take any other tasks as may be required. That's it, just a blanket grant of authority. And it gives it upfront authority for Trump to establish undefined operational entities and transactional authorities at its own discretion. And yes, it envisages a kind of quizzling body of Palestinian technocrats that will be taking orders from Trump's board of peace on their own land and will report to Trump's board of peace on their own land. And that's not even guaranteed to be the Palestinian Authority. That's gonna be some, who knows, some complicit actors to be brought on board. And this is a clear breach of international law because the resolution rejects Palestinian control of their own territory in Gaza until Donald Trump and his collaborators decide that the Palestinian Authority has satisfied the so-called reform requirements set by Trump himself and by the, I have to say, equally odious French-Saudi proposal that's referenced in the agreement, which was another colonial land grab. And remember, some of those conditions that Trump has been setting for reform is that the Palestinian people give up their legal claims in the International Court of Justice, in the International Criminal Court and other forums. It's a complete disarming not just – and we'll get to disarming – not just a material disarming of the Palestinians but even

legal disarming of the Palestinians and Mahmoud Abbas instructed other countries to support this. There is no promise anywhere in this document or in the original Trump document of Palestinian independence or sovereignty or statehood. Instead, it has this, and this again, directly in contradiction to the findings of the ICJ, it sets back the cause of Palestinian freedom and self-determination with this vague, hyper-qualified, very non-committal line that says, well, after the Trump-led bodies decide that the Palestinians may have met undefined reform and development criteria, then conditions may finally be in place for a credible pathway to Palestinian self-determination and statehood. That's what Mahmoud Abbas got; it's nonsense. And any shred of hope for progress that's left within those outrageous, highly qualified conditions is erased completely because any process toward those ends in the resolution itself says that that process is to be controlled by the United States itself. So in other words, the Security Council has given a veto over Palestinian self determination to the United States. The Israeli regime's chief sponsor and co perpetrator of the genocide. That's what Mahmoud Abbas is endorsing.

DL: And just to so people understand, you know, the basis of your critique, I mean, I think you're probably focusing here on the provisions of Article 4 of this resolution, which says that the Security Council authorises member states participating in the board of peace and the board of peace to enter into such arrangements as may be necessary to achieve the objectives of the comprehensive plan. And then it says establish operational entities with, as necessary, international legal personality, blah, blah blah, regarding the implementation of a transitional governance administration, including the supervising and supporting – so there's an express provision here for the board of peace to supervise the Palestinian technocratic apolitical committee of competent Palestinians from the strip, which shall be for what they call the day-to-day operations of Gaza. And they also get to supervise the reconstruction of Gaza, that's the board of peace, and humanitarian assistance. So I think you'll agree with me, Craig, that really what they've established here is a hierarchy of authority, and at the apex of that hierarchy is Donald Trump. Have I got that right?

CM: That's exactly right. No one has ever seen a resolution like this in history. And the one piece you didn't mention there is that all of this is in coordination with the Israeli regime explicitly in the resolution. So this colonial board that's going to govern is going to coordinate with the Israelis. The proxy occupation force that I guess we'll talk about later is going to be coordinated with the Israelis. So the two co-perpetrators of the genocide are now given official control over the lives, the livelihoods, the well-being, the rights of the people that they have been perpetrating a genocide against. That's what this resolution does.

DL: Okay Craig, let's turn now to the ISF. So this is clause 7 of the Security Council resolution I put up on the screen. It authorises member states working with the board of peace to establish a temporary international stabilisation force in Gaza and it will operate under a unified command acceptable to the board of peace with forces contributing by participating states in close consultation of cooperation with Egypt and Israel. And to use all necessary measures to carry out its mandate consistent with international law. And there will be a newly trained and vetted Palestinian police force, vetted by whom presumably that would be the

board of peace and to help secure border areas, stabilise the security environment and ensure the process of demilitarising the Gaza Strip and effectively organising and implementing what it calls the permanent decommissioning of weapons from non-state armed groups. And it also says that the ISF will establish control and stability. As it does so, the Israeli defence forces will withdraw based on standards, milestones and timeframes linked to demilitarisation that will be agreed between the IDF, ISF and the guarantors, all of whom are the United States or puppets of the United States. So there's no timeline in here at all for the withdrawal, some vague linkage to demilitarisation. But what I really want to focus upon here is the idea that these – and by the way, I'm not sure that we know which countries will actually contribute, if any, to this international stabilisation force – but given that Israel has failed, despite all of the destruction that has afflicted upon Gaza and all of death that it has caused the Palestine population to disarm the groups there, and I guess this is more a military question than a legal one, but do you think there's any realistic prospect of this ISF disarming the Palestinians without causing massive amounts of death and destruction?

CM: No, there is zero hope of that. And this is one of the, you know, the metaphor has to be stretched because there are multiple achilles heels in this resolution that's been adopted in addition to its lack of legality and legitimacy is this, this idea that Israel and the United States pouring every piece of murderous technology that they have on the heads of the Palestinians for over two years, unable to defeat or disarm the resistance groups in Gaza that suddenly some Indonesian forces are going to come in looking like peacekeepers and they're going to disarm the resistance in Palestine. And by the way, it's another legal problem here because the Palestinian people have a right to defend themselves. And the fact that we even have to argue this as they are suffering a genocide, that they have a right to defend themselves against that genocide, it seems to me is a moment of insanity in international discourse. But this is another area where the resolution ignores the right of a people to use armed force to resist foreign occupation, colonial domination, and racist regime, that's the language of international law. But there's no way that they're going to succeed in doing so. And this is one of the purposes of this resolution and this Trump plan was to try to finish the job that the Israeli regime could not finish even with unlimited US support and to legalise that effort. And you'll see it, Dimitri, throughout this resolution; this is a resolution that could have been drafted in Tel Aviv, right? So this proxy occupation force which is what the international stabilisation forces, by the way stabilisation, so you're going to go in there with armed forces and challenge the resistance and that's going to stabilise the situation? These are proxy occupation forces that would be acting on behalf of the United States in Israel to finish the job in ways that Israel could not do through over two years of genocide. So it's going to be mandated to secure the borders. In other words to cage the Palestinians and to protect the Israeli regime. When they say to stabilise the security environment, that means to suppress any resistance to occupation, apartheid, genocide, that's that stabilisation. It says that it's gonna demilitarise Gaza. So here again the resolution is about de-militarising the people that were the victims of genocide, not the Israeli regime that perpetrated the genocide in any other situation to which the international community responds in the wake of or during the genocide. The point is not to demilitarise the victims, it's to de-militarise the perpetrator; but not here. It says that they're going to destroy Gaza's military defence capacity. And again,

not to dismantle Israel's military capacities that have been used not only to perpetrate genocide and unlawful occupation in Palestine, but to attack Lebanon and Syria and Yemen and Iran and Iraq and humanitarian boats in the Mediterranean to assassinate people, to carry out a booby-trapped pager transnational terror attack in Lebanon and in Syria; not to remove those capacities, but only those of the victims. It says they are going to decommission the weapons of the Palestinian resistance but not going to touch the weapons of the perpetrator regime, right? It says they're going to train the Palestinian police force. What is the purpose of the Palestinian police force? It's to control the Palestinian people inside of Gaza. So this entire thing is an extension of Israeli occupation and control over the Palestinian people and does nothing to address the reality on the ground, which is a reality of genocide, apartheid, unlawful occupation and colonialism.

DL: You know, this resolution does not make any substantive reference to the West Bank or what is happening there. Would you agree, Craig, that this genocidal project extends to the West Bank and that what is happening there is a genocide?

CM: Absolutely and has been a genocide. When I was first ringing alarm bells in the United Nations in 2023, it was in the spring of 2023, because of the upsurge of really awful violence against Palestinian civilians there, including pogroms in villages like Huwara and so on. That the new government in Israel, led by extremists like Benjamin Netanyahu and Ben Gvir and Smotrich and these others, had made it very clear what they were up to. And not only were they stating these things out loud already in the spring, but they were carrying them out in the West Bank, even as they tightened the noose on Gaza at the same time. And there is no distinction between them. The Israeli genocide is perpetrated against the Palestinian people. And while, for the most part, the tactics have been different inside the green line of Israel, in Gaza, in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and by the way, in surrounding communities where Palestinian refugees are, Palestinian refugees in Lebanon are being bombed today as we speak by the Israelis. But also the persecution of Palestinians living in the diaspora, in places like Canada and the United States and the U.K. And Germany, where Israel and its proxies are persecuting people in those countries on behalf of the genocide that they are perpetrating. In the West Bank, they started using the traditional weapons that they've used for decades, which is mass imprisonment and torture and confiscation of land and settlement activity and gradual ethnic purging. But during this genocide, they waged full-scale war against parts of the West Bank. So their intent is the same across Palestinian society wherever those Palestinians are living and increasingly the tactics are matching themselves. And just the last line on that is Palestinians who live inside the green line in Israel are facing unprecedented persecution during this genocide as well. They are not going to be spared. So yeah, this is an effort to peel off Gaza for the nefarious plans of not just Donald Trump, but people, as I said, like Jared Kushner, like Tony Blair, the Israelis themselves, of course, who want their chunks of Gaza, and to separate that from the West Bank, that they will then, in turn, deal with at some appropriate moment. The genocidal machine marches on, and this resolution by the United Nations Security Council has become a part of that machine.

DL: You just said something which I really hadn't thought of before, but I want to make sure I understood it. I understood you to say that, and by the way, having heard it for the first time, I find it has a lot of intellectual appeal, that what is being done to Palestinians in the diaspora, including in the West, the persecution namely, is an element or a tactic being employed by Israel and its backers to carry out this genocide. It's actually part of the genocidal project. Is that a fair characterisation of your view?

CM: Absolutely. The genocide could not have continued as it has without the support of Western countries. Palestinians in the diaspora and those working in solidarity with them are a threat to Western support because they are telling the truth, disseminating the information of what's really happening on the ground, breaking through the curtain which has been drawn by Western corporate media in support of the Israeli regime and showing people what's happening through independent media like yours, through social media, through all sorts of means, demonstrations and protests and encampments on universities and so on. They and those acting in solidarity with them are a threat to the plans of the Israeli regime because Israel could not do these things without the support of the West. And especially in those countries where the persecution of human rights defenders and Palestinians in diaspora have been greatest, namely countries like the United States and Canada, countries like the United Kingdom, countries like Germany, the Netherlands. These countries are all major suppliers, not just of weaponry and money and aid to the Israeli regime, but also of diplomatic support to the Israel regime. And that could not be sustained if you have a popular groundswell against it to the point where complicit corporate media and complicit politicians could no longer sustain that support. So, as a part of the genocide, the Israeli regime is attacking Palestinians in the diaspora and all of those who are standing in solidarity with them, and it's doing it in all sorts of ways, including weaponizing the legal systems of the countries of the West to persecute people just for standing up against genocide, defending human rights, exercising their rights to free speech, free association, free assembly. These countries are actually passing laws and mobilising their police forces and expelling and suspending people from universities and firing professors with tenure and firing people from their jobs and locking people up and deporting people; I mean, using the awesome power of the state in order to advance the genocidal objectives of this one oppressive foreign regime called Israel.

DL: Now, I'd like to turn, Craig, to the statement of the Russian representative to the UN Security Council on Monday, and here's part of what he had to say.

Russian representative UN: The starting point, the premise that the resolution must reflect the universally recognised international legal basis, reaffirming fundamental decisions and principles. First and foremost, the cornerstone formula of two states for two peoples. After all, it is precisely this approach that was endorsed by an overwhelming majority in the New York Declaration, adopted following two fora in support of the two-state solution. Colleagues, this is not a theoretical issue, but a very practical one, and it remains particularly relevant in light of the unequivocal public statements coming from the highest echelons of Israel's leadership, asserting that creating a Palestinian state is nothing but unacceptable. Unfortunately, these key components did not make it into the U.S. draft, neither is there any

clarity in the draft regarding the timelines for the transfer of control over Gaza to the Palestinian Authority, PA, nor any certainty vis-à-vis the board of peace and the International Stabilisation Force, ISF, which judging by the text of the resolution adopted today by the Council, we'll be able to act absolutely autonomously, without any regard for Ramallah's position and opinion. This may entrench the separation of the Gaza Strip from the West Bank, and it is reminiscent of colonial practices and the British mandate for Palestine granted by the League of Nations.

DL: I could go on, there's more and it was quite critical of the resolution but I think that'll give people a good flavour of what was said by the Russian representative. By the way, he left a good deal of things out like he never actually said there was a genocide being perpetrated. He never actually pointed out that the perpetrators of the genocide are now in charge of the Gaza Strip under this resolution. He never pointed out that the Palestinians have a right to armed resistance and that it is an outrage for the perpetrator of the genocide to remain armed to the teeth while its victims are divested of their light weapons by force if necessary. He didn't say any of these things but what he did say was very critical and yet, Craig, the Russian Federation did not veto this resolution nor did China. And of course their rival the United States, also U.K. and France, have not hesitated to use the veto to advance their own nefarious agenda again and again and again. Why do you think they didn't veto this resolution?

CM: Everything in the Russian statement is true, but they are crocodile tears. And I don't think they're going to succeed in washing their share of the responsibility for this atrocity in the Security Council. Russia and China are P5 member states. They had huge reservations and objections, and yet they did not exercise their veto. And anyone who watches the Council knows that for over two years, the veto has repeatedly been deployed to deny Palestinian human rights by the United States. Two days ago, we had an opportunity for the veto to be used to protect Palestinian human rights, and the veto was nowhere to be found. So they have a special responsibility, those two states, because remember, the other three countries that have veto power, the United States, the United Kingdom, and France, all three countries, that are complicit in the genocide. So it wasn't going to come from them. And so what happened here? We had a perfect storm of complicity. And I have to say Donald Trump, who learned all of his mafia skills from Roy Cohn, his lifelong advisor who was a mafia lawyer, deploys those things as skillfully in the international arena as he does in the national arena in order to threaten and cajole and terrorise people into voting his way. They deployed every threat and inducement, carrot and stick that they had at their disposal from trade deals to tariffs. Now Russia is in the middle of sensitive negotiations with the Americans over Ukraine. Are they going to be committed to the principles of international law and the rights of the Palestinian people or are they going to look to get some favour from Russia over what they're engaging with the U.S. on Ukraine?! China is in the middle of intense negotiations with the U.S. over issues of trade and tariffs. Are they going to support international law and the rights of the Palestinians, or are they going to prioritise what they're hearing from the Americans as a quid pro quo on that side?! We now know the answer from both of those countries. But there are other issues.

One of the threats that was being deployed by Mike Walz, the U.S.'s UN ambassador in of this vote was: If you don't vote for this, we're going to unleash the dogs of genocide on the Palestinians in Gaza again. That's not the term he used, but he warned that now it's either this or a continuation of the war, whatever language they used. But that was a barely veiled threat that either you do this, and here's the mafia tactic, or we're going to destroy these people. That was the threat. And that is a legitimate concern when you're negotiating. The other factor they had to deal with was the betrayal of the Palestinian authority. Which was asking them to support the resolution and not to veto it. So the Palestinian authority was talking to the Europeans and the Latin Americans, the G77, the Global South, the non-aligned movement, the Arab and Muslim countries and saying, please support this, as well as the P5. And they, you heard there in a statement referring to Ramallah, so that's the Palestinian Authority to which he is deferring in that case, which as you have said, and I have affirmed, does not represent the Palestinian people, as has been made clear by the rejection of this resolution by the people of Palestine, both in civil society and the human rights groups and in the political factions and resistance of Palestine. Then to make matters worse in this perfect storm, you have the Arab countries, especially Egypt and the Gulf countries also pressing states to support the Trump proposal and the broader Arab group, right? So you've got the Saudis at this moment negotiating with the Americans to get a NATO-style defence agreement, right? So the Saudis was just declared a major non-NATO ally the day after the vote of the United States, which means they will be protected. Their illegitimate regime will be protected by the United States with security commitments. And they're negotiating for advanced fighter aircraft with the United States at the same time. So they get security guarantees and weapons and promises that they will be defended against all forces by the US. Egypt, the second largest recipient of US foreign aid after Israel, because all contingent on Egypt serving as the southern defence of the Israeli regime, also encouraging, together with others from the Gulf encouraging this, which is why you had Algeria and Pakistan and Somalia and Sierra Leone, all majority Muslim countries, Algeria, the lead voice in the Council for the Arab League, Pakistan, Somalia, all of them not just voting in favour, but publicly supporting the proposal alongside China and Russia. And of course, the U.S. had so many allies in the Council at this moment because the elected members, in addition to the UK and France, who are permanent members, they had Denmark and Slovenia and Greece and Korea, Republic of Korea, so it was a perfect storm of complicity. And the result of that is a resolution that has so deeply discredited the UN Security Council and for which there will be collateral damage also for the broader UN undoubtedly, that I'm not sure that the Council at least will ever be able to recover from this blow, this self-inflicted blow to its legitimacy.

DL: I want to come back to that at the very end about the future of the United Nations, but before before we get there, I did have a couple other questions about the lay of the land here, I mean looking at this objectively if Israel's leaders were rational given their objectives they would say this is a pretty good deal for us. But officially at least they don't seem to be particularly excited about it. They don't like, I think it's fair to say, the idea that foreign troops are going to be introduced into the Gaza Strip, although there's no definitive timeline for their withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, there is an explicit call for that to happen eventually under certain conditions, which may never be fulfilled. But in any case, they want the Gaza Strip.

They've been very clear about wanting to colonise the Gaza Strip. Do you think that this is all just a show, their complaints about this resolution, or do you think they're fully on board with it? I mean, when I say they, let me be clear, I'm not talking about the most extreme elements in Netanyahu's cabinet, I'm talking about Netanyahu himself and the cabinet as a whole. Do they actually support this plan, or do they view it as just a smokescreen for the attainment of their ultimate objectives?

CM: Well, I think that the Israeli regime benefits greatly from this plan. This is a pro-Israel plan in every respect. I mean, it's in the specific terms, for example, you mentioned foreign forces; Israel effectively has a veto over which forces will be included in this so-called stabilisation force. The members of the stabilisation force, according to the resolution, are to be identified, quote, "in cooperation with the Israeli regime" and it's supposed to work with this stabilisation force to meet its ends, which are all about rendering the Palestinians more and more defenceless and more and more under the control of these foreign actors. So they're not losing that. The terms of the resolution allow the Israeli troops to stay until basically the U.S. and Israel decide that they should redeploy. And in any event, the terms of the resolution include effectively a permanent presence of Israeli regime forces in the so-called perimeter. And by the way, if you look at a map of Gaza, the most fertile land, the agricultural land, the stuff that's not sand, is all inside the area of Gaza that is controlled by the Israeli regime now. And a significant portion of that would be controlled by the Israel regime indefinitely in this so-called security perimeter, which is unlawful according to the International Court of Justice. And all of a sudden the Israelis have some veil of legitimacy over their conquest of this territory. And everything that happens with this force is in the hands principally of the United States and more directly of Donald Trump, who is effectively a proxy for the Israeli regime in any event. So I think they know that this is a huge win for them. They have constituencies that won't be happy about how this might slow down the completion of the genocide and the resettlement of all of Gaza with Israeli settlements. I'm sure there are some that are not thrilled about that, but they know that this is a win for them. And Benjamin Netanyahu, you know, there's this trick that goes on in the West where people who want to criticise the genocide, but not the broader Israeli regime, they try to personalise it on Benjamin Netanyahu or on Smotrich and Ben-Gvir. But what they miss is that the majority of the Israeli people who for generations have been indoctrinated with this violent racist ideology, want the Palestinians out of Gaza. And polls have shown this consistently, they want it ethnically cleansed and they want it taken over completely by the Israeli regime. So he will make his statements, in which he is also reassuring them and you will see that immediately before and right after the adoption of this, Benjamin Netanyahu, speaking in Hebrew, reassuring everyone that there will never be a Palestinian state as long as it's under his watch, he has said he has dedicated his career to that and he will continue to do so. And so no one needs to lecture him, which means people from his extremist constituencies in the Israeli regime. So yeah, I think they know it's a win in the end.

DL: So the last time we had you on Reason2Resist, Craig, we talked about the Uniting for Peace Resolution in the General Assembly as a mechanism to deal with this genocide and bring it to an end. It seems like it's dead in the water at this stage. Would you agree with that

assessment, and if not, why?

CM: Well, first, the Uniting for Peace proposal was always going to have a narrow political window. And it was up against an effort by the French and the Saudis and other collaborators, and it was up against this initiative by Trump working with the Israeli regime. And anyone who got to the gate first was going to have a certain advantage. Unfortunately, the Uniting for Peace initiative didn't make it. And this Trump plan, let me say again, is going to come unravelled. It is not going to succeed. It can do a lot of damage in the meantime, but there are gonna be several junctures at which it is extremely weak and it's gonna come unravelled. One of them is trying to find forces willing to go to war on behalf of Israel against the indigenous Palestinian people and do battle with the resistance. But also it's going to have several moments in which it's gonna be very weak and start to unravel. But in the meantime, it can do a lot of damage, not just the damage it's already done to the United Nations, but it can do a lot damage to the situation on the ground as well. And one of the pieces of damage that it does is it defers other action. So, you already have a lot of people saying: Okay, there's a peace plan, there's this thing, there's a ceasefire, which of course, as we know, there is no ceasefire. Israel has not respected this ceasefire for one day since it was called. It's been murdering Palestinians in their hundreds, destroying Palestinian civilian infrastructure in their 100s, blocking aid trucks in their thousands. It has never respected this so-called ceasefire, and this is not a peace plan. This is not something they can hope to lead to plan, let alone a plan for ending the genocide, holding the perpetrators accountable, providing redress for the victims, freeing the Palestinian people. None of that is before us. But this will now deter other action, including this Uniting for Peace initiative.

Now on the Uniting For Peace initiative, there were two pieces of that. One of them was the Protection Force, which for the time being is gonna be impossible to get political. The UN is not going to deploy two different forces. The Trump colonial force and UN protection. They're not going to do it. But there's another piece to that Uniting for Peace initiative, which is all of the accountability mechanisms to get the General Assembly to convene under Uniting For Peace to adopt, for example, provisions for the rejection of the Israeli credentials in the General Assembly, to adopt strong language on sanctions and a military embargo to reactivate the anti-apartheid mechanisms, to focus on Israeli apartheid, to establish an accountability mechanism like a tribunal or other mechanism to work to hold Israeli perpetrators to account. None of that is mentioned in this Trump proposal. The Council is not seized of these questions and so there's no problem there. And delegations cannot say that those things are already being addressed. And by the way, those same delegations a year ago in September of 2024 adopted a resolution saying they intended to do all of these things and further measures if Israel did not comply within one year of its requirements and those of the International Court of Justice. Well, it has not done so. It has moved backwards on all of those things. And so now there needs to be increased pressure to get the General Assembly to take up its responsibilities under Uniting for Peace, even if it can't deploy a protection force to adopt these accountability measures for the regime. Even that piece is going to be harder now as a result of this nonsense.

But as it begins to fall apart, as the Trump plan and this atrocious resolution begin to fall apart, hopefully we will see new political openings for this kind of action. The last thing I'll say on that, Dimitri, is President Gustavo Petro showed real courage in stepping up to support this Uniting for Peace proposal. And indeed, it was the day that he attended a rally organised by Uniting for Peace activists outside the UN that he was then sanctioned by the U.S. who immediately pulled his visa and then began threatening him with everything from sanctions to a coup d'etat to an invasion to potential arrest in science. And no member states really came openly to his defence or to join in the Uniting for Peace initiative. And that includes the Hague Group, which has committed to these kinds of actions. None of them stepped forward in this period of trepidation in front of the U.S. empire to take up the cause. So if any of these elements are ever gonna be supported, we need a stronger political constituency in the UN and that will not come out of a sense of morality from member states. That will come from the demands of people on the ground and capitals around the world, pressing their governments to take this action so that when it all falls apart in Trump land as it will, that there are alternatives in place that will not further subjugate the Palestinian people but actually take action to advance their liberation.

DL: So lastly, Craig, I'd like to talk to you about the future of the United Nations. It's long been my view, and now I'm absolutely convinced of it that this is a fatally flawed organisation. And my own perspective is that in its current form, it cannot fulfil the role which was assigned to it at the conclusion of the Second World War or any of the lofty principles underlying the United Nations Charter. And I've always been of the view, again, I'm more convinced of it now than ever, that the fundamental problem with the United Nations is it is anti-democratic in character. For example, and perhaps this is the most important example of its anti-Democratic character, there are five permanent members on the UN Security Council, each of whom exercises a veto. That body of states, those five states, although collectively they do constitute a significant proportion of the population of the world, their governments don't reflect the will of humanity as a whole. And I think that was demonstrated more vividly than ever on Monday of this week because I very much doubt that if people in this world were allowed to vote on whether or not this plan should be implemented, it would be roundly rejected by the human population. So my question to you is, do you think that it is possible, practically speaking, at this stage, for the United Nations in its current form, and focusing particularly on the structure of the UN Security Council, to fulfil its mission? Or do you think that we need to radically restructure this organisation for that to have any realistic prospect of happening?

CM: So as always, when you and I talk about this, I say, you know, which UN? We have to think about which part of the UN we're talking about part, you know, the entire UN has failed, I think miserably to effectively address the genocide in Palestine over the course of the last two years, which has revealed all of its flaws. Some of those flaws are by abdication and that is, you know, the Secretary General, the senior officials of the United Nations, I think the General Assembly, they have failed because, you know, the High Commissioner of Human Rights, the Special Advisor on the Prevention of Genocide, they have failed due to abdication. They have, out of this trepidatious approach, out of the sphere of powerful

Western countries and the Israel lobby and other forces, they have decided not to assert whatever power and mechanisms they had to directly confront the genocide and to work for accountability of perpetrators and to address for victims. That is for their eternal shame for that. And that's a question of appointing the right people to those kinds of positions to make sure that this failure by abdication doesn't become as common as it is now. But a part of it as you point out is failure by design. The Security Council was designed to not be able to act, where any of the P5, the winners of the Second World War, are opposed to action. And so it has repeatedly failed, not just in this genocide, but long before. And now we're seeing just how dangerous that mechanism can be, because inaction is one thing, but mandated action, using the force of the Council to impose unlawful and illegitimate acts on the indigenous people in countries anywhere, that's a real threat to all of us. And so the challenge of reform is to find a way to increasingly marginalise the Security Council and to empower, as you call them, the more democratic institutions of the United Nations, like potentially the General Assembly. The Uniting for Peace mechanism, why so many people have grabbed onto that, is because there are these historic precedents where it was used to stand up to the P5 of the Security Council, stand up the U.S. empire, stand up to the great powers. And use the power of the majority in the United Nations to get something done by circumventing the U.S. veto; that's what Uniting for Peace provides.

There are moments in history, especially in the late 60s and early 70s, when the UN, because of the General Assembly and because of a new majority of former colonised countries asserting their collective power, actually used it as a tool for decolonization, for liberation, for anti-apartheid, for support for the Palestinian cause. Those were the glory years of the United Nations and actually working for the liberation of peoples. And it could do so again. The problem is that the unilateral moment that lasted from about 1990 until very recently, ruled by the U.S. empire, it pushed back on the General Assembly and reasserted the dominance of the Security Council. And as we've seen in these votes, even as the empire declines in power, it still has the awesome power to intimidate and coerce and bribe countries from all regions of the world to do its bidding. And that's what this resolution I think reveals most of all. But if the global majority led by the Global South, led by countries that have stepped forward to some degree like the Hague group, by other multipolar points like the Shanghai forum, like the BRICS, like the Hague group and others, if they could come together to assert their collective power, they could return the United Nations to one of its principal purposes, which was freedom, human rights, the maintenance of peace and security in a real, in a legitimate way, and to some degree disarm the threat that emanates from the UN Security Council. Because I think most of the criticism you hear of the Security Council is because of its inaction, but the one thing that is worse and more threatening to the human rights of people around the world than the inaction of the Council is the action of the Council when it acts outside the law and outside the bounds of legitimacy. And as I've argued, *ultra vires*, extends powers that it should not have under the UN Charter.

So yeah, I mean, if the UN doesn't reform, I think along the lines of what we are discussing here, it will increasingly fade into the background. It cannot function for long without legitimacy. It's just taken another, as I say, massive self-inflicted wound to its legitimacy with

this resolution, but not the first. And I fear it will not be the last. If anything is going to change the United Nations, it's going to be pressure from people inside the member states of the United Nations, not in New York, but in their capitals, in Latin America, in Africa, in Western Asia, in Asia more broadly, in Europe, in all of our countries, to bring pressure to bear, to insist that it does the right thing. That helped to dismantle apartheid, where the UN played a very important role, not because member states wanted to do so, although there were the frontline states of Africa and some solidarity in the Global South, but also because people mobilised in the Western countries that were obstructing progress in this regard. We have a lot to learn from the South African experience and from the experience of decolonization that we need to apply to Palestine and more broadly. If that happens there are parts of the UN system well worth serving. I point again to the very principled action of the independent human rights mechanisms of the United Nations, like special rapporteurs like Francesca Albanese, the commission of inquiry. I point again to the humanitarian parts of this system, most especially the heroic performance of the people of UNRWA murdered in their hundreds during the Israeli regime's genocide in Gaza, but still working to provide relief to their neighbours. There are parts of the UN that are well worth saving, but there are parts that have got to go foremost among them, the Security Council and the appointment of trepidatious officials who are just operating under the direction effectively of powerful Western states. That has to change. Otherwise, from my perspective, having spent more than 30 years in the UN, good riddance.

DL: Hear, hear to that. So, as always, Craig, it's a great pleasure speaking with you. Thank you for agreeing to talk to us on short notice, and I look forward to continuing the conversation in the future.

CM: Absolutely my pleasure. Thank you, Dimitri.

END

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