



All India Peace and Solidarity Organisation

Munshi Niketan, Flat No. 16,
2nd Floor, 1/10B, Asaf Ali Road, New Delhi - 110002
Tel : 011-23232801, Tel. fax : 23234831, Mobile : +91 9899067244
E-mail : aipsohq@gmail.com / sengupta.pallab@gmail.com

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Press Statement

ON DANGEROUS DEVELOPMENTS IN WEST ASIA

The All India Peace and Solidarity Organisation (AIPSO) express its concern at the escalation of tensions in the West Asian region. The blame for this lies squarely with Israel, which is carrying out genocide in Palestine.

Israel is acting like a rogue power in West Asia. It is now more than six months since Israel's genocidal war on Palestine started. More than 34,000 Palestinians were killed, a large majority of them women and children. Israel's attacks are not confined to Gaza alone. Hundreds of Palestinians were targeted and killed even in the West Bank. It has extended its attacks to Syria, Lebanon and Iraq and on Iranian diplomatic mission in Damascus, Syria.

On April 1, Israel attacked Iranian embassy and killed 13 people, including two top-ranked generals of Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). This is in violation of the 1961 Vienna Convention governing diplomatic relations and 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations that explicitly ban any sort of attack on diplomatic premises. Israel's act lit the fuse in the highly volatile situation in West Asia and was a provocation for the escalating the conflict. In retaliation to the Israeli attack, Iran had fired dozens of missiles and drones.

The impunity with which is Israeli is acting is due to the unstinting support of the US and NATO. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), between 2019 and 2023 the Israeli military imported 69 per cent of its arms from the US. In fact, Israel has used US arms to attack the Iranian embassy in Damascus. This is in gross violation of US Arms Export Control Act, which says that US weapons should be used only in legitimate self-defense, which the US chose to ignore.

Further, the US, UK and France refused to accept a Russian proposed UN Security Council statement condemning the Israeli strike. Even the Indian government only expressed 'concern' and shied away from 'condemning' the attack. These kinds of inactions embolden Israel and should be condemned universally.

It is not the first time that Israel has targeted Iran. It has carried out many drone strikes, assassinations, and cyber-attacks inside Iran. It is accused of planting bombs in an Iranian city that led to the death of more than 100 people in January 2024. Top-scientists and engineers were assassinated. All this instigation is carried out under the pretext of 'stopping Iran from developing a nuclear bomb' and has US blessings.

Raphael Grossi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) had recently stated (April 14) that "as far as the Agency is concerned, we do not have any information or indications that Iran has a nuclear weapons program". This assessment does not matter to either Israel or the US, as both want to destabilise Iran, a major challenger to their hegemony in the West Asia.

Benjamin Netanyahu is deliberately escalating the war. He has failed to eliminate Hamas, the stated objective of the ongoing genocide in Palestine. Till now, he has also failed to rescue the hostages. These factors have added to the already brewing anger among the people of Israel who are fed-up

with the corrupt and incompetent rule of Netanyahu. Hundreds of thousands of people are protesting regularly demanding the resignation of Netanyahu. He knows that he cannot remain in power, once the war ends.

The US is playing a duplicitous role in West Asia. It wants to project itself as a 'fire-fighter', while in fact it is playing the role of an arsonist. US and its allies like the UK are facing lot of heat from the people of their respective countries who are demanding their intervention to ensure a ceasefire. They can act by withholding the supply of arms and financial support to Israel. But they are not ready as Israel is their trusted ally through which they can retain their influence in West Asia. Nor can they ignore the growing popular sentiment, as these countries are also going to polls in the immediate future. So, they put up an act of trying to 'control Israel'.

The reaction of the US, EU and NATO to Iran's missile strikes has once again exposed this duplicitous character. The US, UK and Jordan played a major role, along with Israel, in thwarting the Iranian missiles from reaching their designated targets. US president Joe Biden has expressed his support to its 'ironclad' ally Israel, which is masked by appealing Israel to not take any further action that could push the region into a wider war.

There are hundreds of thousands of Indians living in West Asia, whose lives will be threatened if the war escalates. Indian government has to actively intervene and ensure their well-being. For this, the current policy of sacrificing our support to Palestine for the sake of friendship with Israel has to be reversed. Sending Indian construction workers to Israel in this background is extremely dangerous and should be stopped forthwith. The government should unequivocally condemn Israeli intransigence, withdraw from all defense and security deals and stand in solidarity with Palestine.

The AIPSO demands all the countries to stop their military, defense and security dealings with Israel. The perpetrators of Israeli genocidal war should be tried in the International Court of Justice and punished. Above all, the State of Palestine, with pre-1967 borders and East Jerusalem as the capital should be recognised. This should start with an immediate ceasefire and withdrawal of Israel from all occupied territories.

