

# Gaza - Israel's endgame

On Monday 10 June the UN Security Council passed its 'resolution 2735' which is binding in international law.

**Phase one** proposes a six-week ceasefire and the release of captives held in Gaza in exchange for Palestinian prisoners, the withdrawal of Israeli forces from populated areas in Gaza and the return of Palestinian civilians to all areas in the territory. It also includes the safe distribution of humanitarian assistance 'at scale throughout the Gaza Strip'. If the negotiations during this phase take longer than six weeks, the ceasefire will still continue as long as the negotiations continue.

**Phase two** proposes that with the agreement of Israel and Hamas, reached in phase one, there will be 'a permanent end to hostilities', an exchange for release of remaining hostages and a full withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza'.

**Phase three** proposes 'a major multi-year reconstruction plan for Gaza and the return of the remains of any deceased hostages still in Gaza to their families'.

**The plan is nearly the same as that accepted by Hamas in early May and rejected by Israel.**

## WHO RESPECTS THE UN?

The resolution was immediately welcomed by Hamas who said that it was ready to cooperate with mediators and enter indirect negotiations over implementation of the principles of the agreement. Their written response, submitted to the mediators on 12 June, reaffirmed the movement's stance that a ceasefire must lead to a



*Over 270 Palestinians killed in massacre at Nuseirat – Getty images*

permanent end to hostilities in Gaza, withdrawal of Israeli forces, reconstruction of the Palestinian enclave and release of Palestinian prisoners in Israel.

## ISRAEL'S INDECISION

US representatives repeatedly claim that the proposal is Israel's, that Prime Minister Netanyahu has accepted the UN resolution and that Hamas is to blame for the delay. But in truth the proposal is America's and Israel's hopelessly divided government cannot make up its mind. Several have quit the war cabinet to call for a deal, while hardline ministers threaten to bring down the government if there is a ceasefire short of 'total victory'. Netanyahu cannot be allowed to dither. Israeli troops are still killing hundreds of Palestinians and Gaza continues to starve. Where is the respect for international law?

**The killing must stop — permanent ceasefire now!**

**Please send this message to all candidates in the coming General election. Put them on the spot!**

"We are writing to urge you, as one of our current and prospective political representatives, to state publicly your support for the recent UN Security Council resolution that sets out a plan for immediate aid, steps to a permanent ceasefire and the reconstruction of Gaza. In the light of this resolution we also urge you to call for a two-way arms embargo on Israel.

"Given the horrendous and unacceptable death toll in Gaza it is vital that you make your voice heard now, for an immediate ceasefire and an end to the Israeli occupation."