

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Event: PPRC Friday rally and march condemns latest Israeli assault on Gaza camps, calls for phone calls and letters supporting viable, independent Palestinian state.

Contacts: (503) 344-5078
pprcnews@yahoo.com
www.pprc-news.org

Date: Friday, October 8th, 2004

Time: 5:00 p.m.

Places: Pioneer Courthouse Square

PPRC Friday rally and march condemns latest Israeli assault on Gaza camps, calls for phone calls and letters supporting viable, independent Palestinian state.

The *Portland Peaceful Response Coalition's* Friday rally and march turns to the latest Israeli assault in Gaza, citing recent statements by Ariel Sharon's government revealing the true intentions behind planned withdrawal. "If the deaths of two Israeli children was not enough, will Ariel Sharon finally be satisfied with the terrible bombings yesterday in Egypt, will that be enough finally to convince him that Israelis have not been made more secure by his brutal, criminal acts of retribution?" asked William Seaman, a volunteer with the PPRC. "This latest bloody assault in Gaza, which has already killed dozens of innocent civilians, including many Palestinian children, promises and now delivers only greater grief and death and suffering for both Israelis and Palestinians alike." Earlier this week, the Israeli human rights organization, *B'Tselem*, reported that the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) have killed 31 civilians in the current assault in Gaza, of which 19 are children aged 17 and younger.¹ The death toll in the Egypt bombings now stands at 30, with scores injured.²

"As US citizens and taxpayers, we are paying for these crimes, our government is supporting this military assault against the people of Gaza, and our government continues to support his illegal occupation, and so we are directly responsible for taking action to bring an end to that support," said Seaman. "We are calling on all people of conscience to contact their elected representatives and demand an immediate cutoff of US support for the Israeli military assault, and for an end to the root cause of this conflict, an end to the Israeli occupation." The United States supplies upwards of \$3 billion in support to the state of Israel each year in direct aid and loan guarantees, as well as diplomatic support and cover for the occupation.

Earlier this week the US vetoed a UN Security Council resolution calling for an end to the Israeli military operations in Gaza.³ This comes on the heels of statements by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's chief of staff on Wednesday revealing that the planned

evacuation of settlements in Gaza is intended to put an end to the creation of a Palestinian state indefinitely.⁴ “This is what was suspected from the beginning, and now we have clear confirmation directly from the Sharon administration,” said Seaman. “The intentions of the Sharon government has always been the theft of more Palestinian land and resources, and the result is greater conflict, more suffering and deaths of innocent Israelis and Palestinians.”

The PPRC is supporting the *US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation*, a diverse coalition working for freedom from occupation and equal rights for all by challenging US policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Campaign is based on human rights and international law. Its strategy is to inform, educate, and mobilize the public so as to change the US role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to support peace, justice, human rights, and international law. A link to the campaign’s website and latest ‘urgent action’ bulletin is posted on the PPRC web page at www.pprc-news.org

1. Press Release, “4.10.04: Data on IDF Action in Northern Gaza Strip - 41% of Fatalities are Civilians”, <http://www.btselem.org/>
2. “Dozens killed in bomb blasts at Sinai resorts”, Conal Urquhart in Tel Aviv, Friday October 8, 2004, *The Guardian* (UK).
3. “US vetoes resolution calling for Israeli halt to Gaza operations”, By Gerald Nadler, AP, 06 October 2004 - *Independent* (UK)
4. “Israel: Palestinian State Shelved with U.S. Blessing”, Wednesday, October 6, 2004 - *World – Reuters*, *Sydney Morning Herald*.