

Hello Debrief readers! For the foreseeable future, we are going to turn our Progressive Foreign Policy Debrief into a crisis tracker for the ongoing, tragic events in Palestine. Our tracker will be sent out regularly, but we will return to our original format later down the line. You can also follow the tracker at your own pace [here](#). -Shahed

Tracking the Crisis in Israel and Palestine

A news and information roundup to help all those working to end the fighting, protect humanitarian access, and prevent the outbreak of regional war.

Friday, November 3, 2023

Key updates and takeaways

News: [Keep 155mm shells out of Gaza](#)

Analysis: The Pentagon has confirmed that it intends to provide the Israeli military with tens of thousands of 155mm artillery shells that had been designated to go to Ukraine. These shells – unguided high explosive rounds with a casualty radius of between 100 and 300 meters – are meant for use in conflicts like the Ukraine war, where artillery and armor play a major role, not for use in highly-populated urban areas. As Oxfam writes in a new [report](#), “there are no known scenarios in which 155mm artillery shells could be used in Israel’s ground operation in Gaza in compliance with international humanitarian law.” As Oxfam shows, Israeli forces have used 155mm shells in past operations in Gaza in 2014, 2009, and 2005-7, resulting in huge numbers of civilian deaths and injuries.

Takeaway:

- The Biden administration should prevent the transfer of these munitions to the IDF before they are again used to indiscriminately kill civilians, and if it won’t, Congress should pass a law prohibiting the transfer.
- The administration must stick to its revised [Conventional Arms Transfer](#) (CAT) policy, which rules out transfers where serious IHL violations are “more likely than not”.

News: [Dissent within the Biden administration](#)

Analysis: Senior administration officials are increasingly alarmed by how the Israeli government is conducting its military operations in Gaza, as well as the reputational repercussions of the Biden administration's support for a collective punishment strategy that clearly violates international law. Many worry that the U.S. will be blamed for the Israeli military's indiscriminate

attacks on civilians, particularly women and children. Yet dissenting voices appear to [be largely excluded](#) from decision-making. One State Department official divulged, “It feels like we are advocates on the outside or civil society banging on the doors of government and that’s not our role.”

Takeaways:

- We applaud those in government who advocate for de-escalation, and who articulate the moral and strategic case for a ceasefire.
- The policy process is meant to be a robust, expert-driven discussion, and the Biden administration should heed dissenting voices rather than trying to shunt them aside.

News: [Hezbollah not at full-scale war, for now](#)

Analysis: In his long-anticipated speech today, Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah did not declare a full-scale war against Israel. However, he [did threaten](#) that “all scenarios are open on our Lebanese southern front,” where tit-for-tat attacks have increased in recent weeks, and that a [broader war](#) “is a possibility.” Military escalation will depend on how the violence in Gaza and the Lebanese-Israeli border violence continues to unfold. Increased [border fighting](#), and the documented use of [white phosphorus](#) in Israeli strikes into Lebanon, could still lead to larger-scale violence between Hezbollah and Israel.

Takeaways:

- Though we are cautiously relieved that Hezbollah did not articulate a military escalation, the situation could change at any moment.
- The safest and surest path to prevent a regional war — a very real and frightening possibility — is through a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, followed by an intentional de-escalation of the violence in Gaza and at the Lebanese-Israeli border.

Humanitarian situation

- The UN reports that 9,061 people have been [killed](#) in Gaza, including more than 3,700 [children](#). The death toll for Israelis remains at roughly [1,400](#), with [242 hostages](#) held by Hamas (November 2).
- UNOCHA [reports](#) that 132 Palestinians in the West Bank have been killed as of November 2, and almost [1,000 forcibly displaced](#), since October 7 (November 1).
- The Committee to Protect Journalists [reports](#) that at least 36 journalists have been killed in the conflict (November 3).
- [UNOCHA](#) and [Palestine Red Cross](#) reported that 102 aid trucks entered Gaza on November 2. This is the largest aid delivery since Israel intensified its blockade of Gaza, but it is still far less than is needed.

Further Win Without War resources

- [Here's What We Mean When We Say Ceasefire](#)
- [Increasing Escalation in Gaza Reaching Tipping Point](#)
- [Win Without War to President Biden: De-Escalate to Prevent Region-Wide War in the Middle East](#)
- [People in Gaza Need Fuel Immediately to Survive](#)
- [Win Without War Condemns Hamas Attack on Israel](#)