

What the UN Gaza vote revealed about the imperialist world order

written by Gary Wilson
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Millions worldwide march for Gaza, challenging the imperialist world.

A colonial plan in diplomatic clothing

A U.S.-drafted UN resolution endorsing President Donald Trump's Gaza "peace plan" passed in the Security Council on Nov. 17. Palestinians responded immediately: This was not peace — it was a blueprint for foreign control.

At the heart of Washington's scheme is a new "Board of Peace," a U.S.- and British-dominated governing body personally chaired by Trump. This board would control Gaza's borders, security, reconstruction, and political life. It alone would decide when Palestinians are "ready" to govern themselves. Sovereignty becomes a permission slip issued by the same powers that arm, fund, and defend Israel's occupation.

For Palestinians, this is not a transition. It is a takeover.

The plan is a modern remake of the colonial mandates, with Washington assuming the power once wielded by the British Empire over Palestine. By severing Gaza from the rest of Palestine and granting Washington and Israel authority over any future "withdrawal," the resolution repackages occupation in the deceptive language of "governance" and "stability."

Imposing through diplomacy what Israel failed to win through war

The resolution is Washington's effort to impose through paperwork what Israel could not achieve through genocide. After months of bombardment failed to crush Palestinian resistance or force Gaza to submit, the plan steps in to finish the job by other means. It aims to deliver, through UN seals and diplomatic signatures, the foreign control that Israel's military could not win. It is an attempt to convert military failure into political domination — occupation by administrative order.

This was the resolution before the Security Council. And in this moment — with Gaza under bombardment, tens of thousands dead or displaced, hospitals destroyed, and entire neighborhoods flattened — the world looked to see whether Russia or China would block it.

Neither did. Both abstained.

Only Russia and China had the actual power to stop the resolution. The other members — including the U.S.-aligned Arab regimes — were never going to block a plan drafted in Washington. The fact that the only two states with veto power chose abstention is what allowed the plan to pass.

Why the abstentions happened

Their abstentions puzzled many observers. How could two states that condemned the plan's colonial framework allow it to pass? But these questions can't be answered by treating the vote as a move in a geopolitical chess game. The abstentions make sense only when we understand the deeper reality shaping world politics today: The world remains dominated by imperialism, and every struggle — from Gaza to the Sahel to the Caribbean — unfolds inside that system's contradictions.

Both Russia and China sharply criticized the resolution. China warned that the text was “deeply worrisome,” lacking any guarantee of Palestinian sovereignty. Russia argued that the plan would entrench occupation, not end it. But neither government challenged the Arab regimes that lined up behind the measure. These regimes are not independent actors exercising sovereign will; they are U.S.-aligned neocolonies, tied to Washington through military dependence, IMF discipline, weapons systems, and security arrangements. Yet they also sit at the center of major trade, energy, and investment networks. Neither Russia nor China was prepared to jeopardize those economic relationships — especially when opposing the resolution would not

have stopped Washington's colonial takeover.

States inside an imperialist system

This outcome exposes something crucial: States do not operate outside the global system. They operate inside it — a system still structured by imperialist domination, where a handful of wealthy powers dictate the rules of global politics and where oppressed nations are treated as bargaining chips. Even states at odds with Washington face these pressures.

Russia, as a capitalist state dependent on energy exports and integration into global markets, maneuvers according to the interests of its own ruling class.

China, as a state pursuing a socialist path, must still navigate a world economy dominated by capitalist rules and monopoly power. China's foreign policy reflects the interests of a nation-state operating inside that order — interests that do not always align with internationalist solidarity.

Economic entanglements that expose structural limits

These limits are most visible in the economic networks that link governments — including those claiming to oppose U.S. domination — to Israel's role in the imperialist world market. Israel's ports, technology sectors, and energy systems are deeply integrated into global commerce.

China maintains major infrastructure projects in Haifa and Ashdod because it must operate in a global economy still governed by capitalist accumulation, not because it supports Israeli policy. Russia's fuel flows into Israel through Central Asian routes because it is tied to global energy markets structured around profit, not solidarity. India's growing military and energy ties with Israel reflect its ruling-class alignment with Washington's regional agenda.

None of these contradictions arise from political confusion or moral weakness. They emerge from the structure of the world itself — a world where monopoly capital and its institutions bind states into relationships that collide head-on with the demands of workers and oppressed peoples fighting for liberation.

BRICS cannot substitute for anti-imperialist struggle

The same reality shapes the character of BRICS. Many hoped BRICS would challenge Washington's dominance and create space for sovereign development in the Global South. But BRICS is not a unified alternative to imperialism. It is a coalition of states — some socialist, others deeply capitalist — operating within a world economy still controlled by monopoly capital. BRICS calls for “reform” and “greater representation,” not for dismantling the institutions that enforce global inequality.

China participates as a socialist state confronting imperialist pressure, but it cannot use BRICS to overturn a world order still ruled by capitalist domination. The other BRICS governments — India, Brazil, South Africa, Russia, and the expanded membership — defend their own ruling classes' interests, not a collective project of liberation.

Some deepen military cooperation with Washington. Others align with Western corporations while seeking better deals for themselves. These contradictions were visible in the Security Council vote: A formation some imagined would block Washington's colonial plan instead fractured along familiar lines, with states protecting their economic relationships rather than confronting the imperialist system.

What the Security Council vote makes unmistakable is that the power to decide Gaza's future will not come from governments acting within the imperialist system. The forces capable of changing the course of the struggle are the peoples

themselves — the resistance in Palestine, the movements for sovereignty rising across the Global South, and the mass mobilizations inside the imperialist centers demanding an end to genocide, war, and occupation.

