

*U.S. says it will block proposed
Gaza ceasefire resolution at
United Nations... again*

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United Nations, February 18 (RHC)-- The United States has said it will block another resolution that will soon be presented at the United Nations urging a ceasefire in Israel's war on Gaza.

Algeria has proposed a new resolution be put to a vote on Tuesday at the UN Security Council (UNSC) that seeks an "immediate humanitarian ceasefire" between Israel and Hamas, the Palestinian group that governs Gaza, while also demanding an "immediate and unconditional release of all hostages".

"Should it come up for a vote as drafted, it will not be adopted," said US Ambassador to the UN Linda Thomas-Greenfield in a statement on Saturday. The envoy said the resolution could "run counter" to the

goals that Washington says can be achieved through diplomacy in talks between Israel and Hamas that Qatar and Egypt are also mediating.

A potential agreement, which has been under discussion for weeks, proposes a weekslong truce, during which Israeli captives held in Gaza can be exchanged for Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, and more humanitarian aid can enter the besieged Gaza Strip.

The talks appeared to suffer a setback last week when Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called Hamas's demands "ludicrous", and mediator Qatar has said the discussions have not been promising.

"The Council has the obligation to ensure that any action we take in the coming days increases pressure on Hamas to accept the proposal on the table," Thomas-Greenfield said.

The U.S. has used its veto power to support Israel at the Security Council on dozens of occasions. It has done so several times since the start of the war on October 7, most recently in early December when it vetoed a ceasefire resolution presented by the United Arab Emirates.

A UNSC resolution was passed in late December, but it was roundly criticised by human rights organisations and others for being a "watered down" version of the original proposal.

The Algerian proposal for a vote on a new resolution comes amid growing fears that Israel is planning a ground invasion of Rafah in southern Gaza, home to around 1.4 million Palestinians displaced from other parts of the territory since October. Aid agencies and the UN have warned that a ground assault on Rafah could be catastrophic.

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