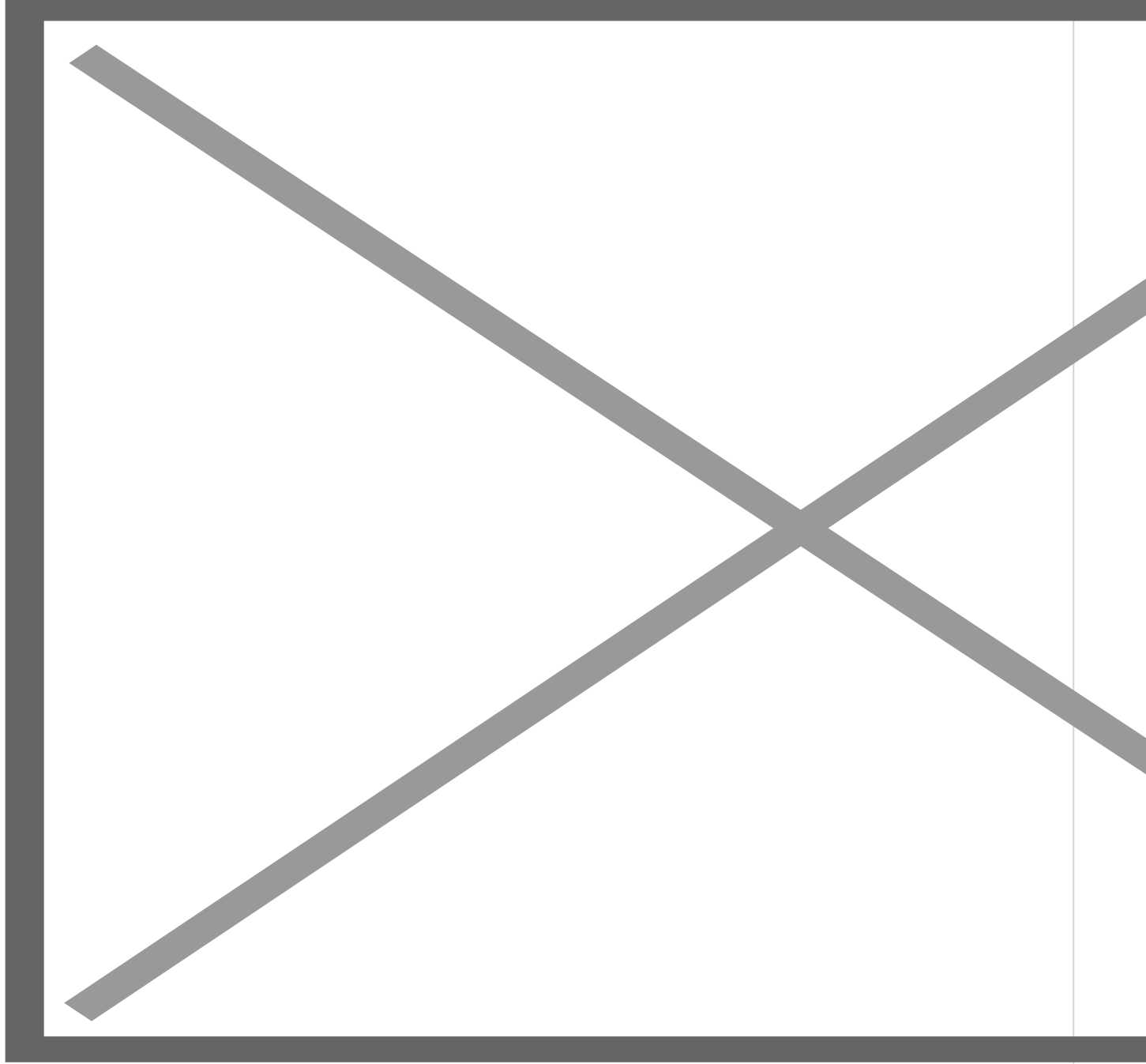


Massive protests held around the world as genocidal war of aggression against Gaza nears 100 days

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Protests outside U.S. consulate in Johannesburg, South Africa on Saturday

London, January 13 (RHC)-- Hundreds of thousands are taking to the streets across the world to protest against the war in Gaza, as it nears the 100-day mark, and to demand an end to Israel's offensive.

At rallies on Saturday in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, people gathered at the United States embassy to send a message to Israel's staunch ally. The U.S. has vetoed United Nations resolutions backed by a vast majority of the UN Security Council calling for an immediate ceasefire.

"We've spoken to people here who say they've come to show solidarity with Palestinians. People are holding up placards that read: 'Stop the genocide', as well as 'Bombing children is not self-defence'," said Al Jazeera's Florence Looi, reporting from Kuala Lumpur.

The demonstrations are part of a "global day of action for Palestine" and to call for an end to the bloodshed that has killed 23,843 people and wounded more than 60,317, according to Palestinian health officials.

Israel on Friday rejected accusations of genocide in Gaza during a public hearing at the International Court of Justice, claiming the case filed by South Africa with the top UN court was a distortion of truth that amounted to libel. Its arguments were based on its alleged right to self-defense following the attack by Hamas in southern Israel on October 7, which killed 1,139 people, as well as a lack of genocidal intent against the Palestinian people.

Last month, Malaysia's government said it would no longer allow Israeli-owned ships to dock in Malaysian ports. It also said any vessel en route to Israel would not be allowed to unload cargo at any Malaysian port. The protest movement in Malaysia, organised in collaboration with dozens of NGOs, said it aimed to educate people not only about the atrocities that are happening in Gaza, but also about the history of the occupation.

Thousands of people also gathered outside the US embassy in Indonesia's capital, Jakarta, waving Indonesian and Palestinian flags and holding signs that read "Boycott Israel" and "Ceasefire Now."

Demonstrators gathered outside the U.S. consulate in Johannesburg, South Africa, where Al Jazeera's Fahmida Miller said many in the crowd accused the U.S., which has supplied Israel with thousands of tonnes of military equipment since the war started, of "complicity in the bombardment of the Palestinian people." The protest has been bolstered by South Africa's case at the ICJ, Miller said.

Roshan Dadoo, a leader of South Africa's Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions movement, who attended the protest, said: "We're going to be here until we can make sure there is a ceasefire and sufficient humanitarian assistance for Gaza."

Smaller protests also took place in India in cities like Hyderabad and in the Sri Lankan capital Colombo's Kollupitiya neighbourhood.

Meanwhile, massive rallies have kicked off in world capitals including London, Paris, Vienna, Berlin and Amman and are expected to in Washington, DC and other American cities.

Jeanine Hourani, a member of the Palestine Youth Movement attending the march in London, said protesters are angry over the injustice in Gaza and determined to keep marching for Palestinian rights.

"The sentiment is one of rage and frustration" she told Al Jazeera. "We have been taking to the streets every week since October 7." Hourani said that while the British public largely supports a ceasefire in Gaza, "the UK's politicians have continued to fund and support the genocide." "Ultimately, we know that in the grand scheme of things – in the long arc of justice – we are winning," she said. "We are going to continue taking to the streets, continue applying pressure, until Palestine is free."

Thousands have gathered at Bank Junction in central London, the Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) said. The seventh National March for Palestine featured an appearance by Little Amal, a giant puppet of a Syrian child refugee, joining a group of Palestinian children.

"Little Amal", a 3.5 metre tall puppet of a young Syrian refugee girl, arrives at St Paul's Cathedral, as part of its 8,000 km tour across Europe from Turkey to Britain to raise awareness for the plight of young refugees

'Little Amal', a puppet of a Syrian refugee girl, has become an international symbol of human rights [File: Tom Nicholson/Reuters]

The 3.5-metre puppet, whose name means hope in Arabic, became an international symbol of human rights after she journeyed 8,000km (4,970 miles) from the Turkish-Syrian border to Manchester in July 2021.

About 1,700 officers were deployed to police the march in London, the Metropolitan Police said.

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