

What is at stake in Israel's destruction of Gaza?

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While Israel's destruction of Gaza and its wider wars in the Middle East / SWANA* continue to dominate the news, a [recent article in the Guardian, a British newspaper](#), looks at the damage this war is doing to the international order that emerged after World War II. Award-winning author Moustafa Bayoumi said that Israel's war in Gaza "is chipping away at so much of what we – in the United States but also internationally – had agreed upon as acceptable, from the rules governing our freedom of speech to the very laws of armed conflict.

Bayoumi notes that the West's indifference to Israel's attack on hospitals, civilian infrastructure, and the use of starvation as a weapon of war are a direct challenge to the ideals set forth in the *UN Charter* and the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. It sets a dangerous precedent as the public comes to accept this level of violence as normal and paves the way for even greater violence in future wars.

Bayoumi also reflects on how powerful nations manipulate international law to serve their own interests. "For them, the law exists to bend to their will, to destroy their adversaries, and to provide an alibi for behavior which, in a better version of our world, would be punished as criminal."

Israel's destruction of Gaza also has domestic ramifications. Action in support of justice for Palestine has been met with unprecedented crackdowns, especially on college and university campuses. Freedom of speech and assembly are sacrificed as criticism of the policies of the State of Israel is criminalized. However, Bayoumi observes that "if there's a glimmer of hope in all this rage-inducing misery, it can be found in the growing number of people around the world who refuse to be intimidated into silence."

Note: this is a lengthy article but well worth a read.

* SWANA: Southwest Asia—North Africa