

[Transcript] Global News Podcast / Israel demands resignation of UN chief

You're listening to the Global News podcast from the BBC World Service.

Hello, I'm Oliver Conway.

This edition is published in the early hours of Wednesday, the 25th of October.

Israel is criticised over its airstrikes on Gaza following the Hamas massacre.

It is important to also recognise the attacks by Hamas did not happen in a vacuum.

The Palestinian people have been subjected to 56 years of suffocating occupation.

But the Israeli Foreign Minister hits back angrily at the UN chief.

Mr. Secretary General, in what world do you live?

Definitely, this is not our world.

However, the US is now calling for a humanitarian pause.

So will Israel agree?

Also in the podcast, 33 US states sue Metta and a judge in Canada approves billions of dollars in compensation for indigenous families who suffer discrimination in the child welfare system.

Israel is coming under increased diplomatic pressure over its response to the Hamas massacre of more than 1,400 people two and a half weeks ago.

In a heated exchange at the UN Security Council,

Israel's ambassador demanded that the UN chief, Antonio Guterres, resign.

After he said the attacks by Hamas didn't happen in a vacuum.

From UN headquarters in New York, his Netta Taufik.

UN officials gave a sobering briefing on the plight of two million Palestinians in Gaza facing nonstop Israeli airstrikes and a humanitarian catastrophe.

And the more than 200 hostages held by Hamas.

The first to speak was the organization's head,

the Secretary General Antonio Guterres, who said he was deeply concerned about the clear violations of international humanitarian law being witnessed in Gaza.

He reiterated that there was no excuse for the appalling violence by Hamas militants on October 7th, but also that it did not justify the collective punishment of the Palestinian people.

And seeking to put the latest flare up in violence and context,

he said it was important to recognize that the attacks by Hamas did not happen in a vacuum.

The Palestinian people have been subjected to 56 years of suffocating occupation.

They have seen their lands steadily devoured by settlements and plagued by violence, their economy stifled, their people displaced and their homes demolished.

Their hopes for a political solution to their plight have been vanishing.

But the grievances of the Palestinian people cannot justify the appalling attacks by Hamas and those appalling attacks cannot justify the collective punishment of the Palestinian people.

His remarks infuriated the Israeli delegation.

Israel's ambassador to the UN called on Mr. Guterres to resign,

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saying on a social media post that he had expressed an understanding for terrorism and murder.

And Foreign Minister Eli Cohen addressed the secretary general directly in the council.

Young babies, children are held in Gaza.

This is beyond imagination, a living nightmare.

They have not caused evil, but they are victims of evil.

These kids witness horror, which cannot be described.

Mr. Secretary General, in what war do you live?

Foreign Minister Rear Al-Maliki, of the Observer State of Palestine,

as it's called within the UN, appealed to council members,

saying only international law and peace were worthy of their unconditional support.

Neda Taufiq in New York.

Well, others at the UN also urged Israel to temper its attacks on Gaza.

The Jordanian Foreign Minister said killing thousands of Palestinian civilians

was not self-defense, while the US Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken,

called for humanitarian pauses in Israel's air strikes

to allow civilians in Gaza to get out of harm's way,

though he also condemned Hamas for using civilians as human shields.

So will all this affect Israel's military plans?

Shortly before recording this podcast,

I spoke to the diplomatic and defence analyst Jonathan Marcus.

I think it's already affecting Israel's calculations.

I mean, remember who we thought that Israel might begin its ground operation a few days ago now, but the visit of President Biden,

his comments, his urging on the need to allow at least some aid into Gaza.

That has, I think, effectively delayed the operation already.

I think there are divisions within the Israeli government itself.

I think the Defence Minister and the military commanders

are probably far more eager to get going with the ground operation.

I think Mr Netanyahu, perhaps, is a bit hesitant as well.

And of course, this rising crescendo of criticism

as the Israeli air operations and some artillery attacks continue.

That, of course, complicates the matter even further.

I mean, it's becoming a huge diplomatic mess.

As you say, the Israeli military has been ready to go in for some time.

Does this delay degrade their readiness?

Not necessarily.

I mean, clearly it gives them a little extra time to hone their plans, to be prepared and so on.

But of course, remember, this is a huge mobilisation in Israel.

Most of these people have been taken away from their civilian jobs.

That cannot go on forever.

But of course, none of the questions really that the Israelis have to answer have been answered.

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You know, what really could they achieve in a ground operation in Gaza beyond causing huge numbers of civilian casualties and probably incurring significant military casualties themselves? Now, that isn't to say that they aren't going to do something. That isn't to say that the Hamas massacres on the 7th of October need some response. But it's a hugely complicated picture now as the air campaign goes on, the Palestinian suffering and the Palestinian death toll among civilians grows. A kind of moment has passed. And I think the US Secretary of State's comment for a humanitarian pause is another important straw in the wind.

Jonathan Marcus, Defence and Diplomatic Analyst.

Well, in Gaza itself, eight lorries arrived from Egypt late in the day. The fourth emergency aid convoy so far, carrying water, food and medicine. President Biden has said aid isn't getting in fast enough. While the main UN agency in the Gaza Strip has warned it will have to stop work on Wednesday night if it doesn't receive urgent deliveries of fuel, which Israel is blocking. The World Health Organization, meanwhile, says the shortage of clean water is now critical.

Ahmad Abu Asi is with his family in Canunis in the south of the Gaza Strip. I managed to nib around here local shop to get some pasta. I couldn't find the bread this morning. I couldn't find any veg, no electric, of course, nothing. People, they got solar balance next door. They just managed to charge my phone. People helping each other here, but for how long? I reckon in the next two, three days, people just starting killing each other for a bit of food here.

Ahmad Abu Asi, well, Faisal Shahwah has been forced to leave his home in Gaza with his wife and son. He spoke to the BBC's Sarah Montague. I am now with my family and other friends in the middle area as their instruction of the Israeli army. The situation is very difficult. We're lacking everything, food, medicine. Of course, there is no electricity. We are lucky we have solar energy. It comes two, three hours a day. It's a miserable situation. We're just waiting for some good news to end bombardment of the Israeli army everywhere. We have nothing lifting us. That's what we hear.

But I don't know exactly the situation,
but I think you know better than us.
And each night, you hear the airstrikes nearby?
Of course, it's everywhere.
I think we need wisdom now.
Enough is enough.
We need a ceasefire.
We lost everything now.
And we need a real solution for the situation.
Every year, every two years,
we have some kind of Israeli invasion to Gaza or war on Gaza.
They destroy Gaza and then we rebuild Gaza.
Enough is enough.
Everybody wants to live in peace and nobody wants to lose lives.
And Faisal, do you know many people who have been killed?
Of course, many, many people.
Gaza is a small place and everyone knows everyone.
And believe me, sometimes to be killed better than be injured.
You die and hopefully you will go to heaven.
But the one who is injured, nobody can take care of him or her.
That's the misery.
What is the feeling about Hamas there and what they did on the 7th?
It's not about the feelings.
It did not start on the 7th.
No one in Gaza wants to kill anybody.
We should be honest now.
We don't want to make Hamas is a big army
and then Israel is allowed to use whatever weapons they want to experiment on us.
Because the Gaza Strip is an experiment field for everybody,
for the American weapons, for the Israel weapons.
And who pays the price?
We pay the price.
Do you think Hamas should release hostages to try to move the situation on?
There should be a solution.
Of course, we want to end this.
No civilian should be a prisoner, neither here nor in Israel.
But believe me, it's not about today.
It's not about October the 7th.
Let's be frank and be kind to each other.
Majority of Palestinians living in Gaza, we believe in peace.
We stop killing, end the killing, stop the killing.
For God's sake, how many Palestinians should be killed to be satisfied?
We have 5,000 today, 5,500.
Is it 7,000 is a good number?

Faisal Shah, talking to Sarah Montague.

Some other stories now and a judge in Canada has approved the nation's largest ever agreement to compensate indigenous families for the discrimination they experienced at the hands of the child welfare system.

More than 300,000 children and their families will share a settlement of nearly \$17 billion.

Here's Kat Wiener.

In 2019, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal found that the services provided by the country's welfare system to First Nations children, especially through the foster care system, were chronically underfunded and discriminatory.

Despite making up less than 10% of Canadian children, indigenous children account for more than half of those in foster care.

A further \$15 billion have been earmarked for reform of the welfare system itself.

The decision comes as Canada attempts to come to terms with historic injustices against indigenous children.

In recent years, hundreds of unmarked graves have been found at residential schools where First Nations children were forcibly placed up to as late as the 1990s in a move investigators have described as cultural genocide.

Kat Wiener reporting.

33 states in the US have grouped together to file a lawsuit accusing the Facebook and Instagram owner of contributing to a youth mental health crisis for the sake of profit.

A suit filed in a federal court in California said Metta had repeatedly misled the public about the substantial dangers of its services.

Metta said it tried to make young people safe online.

Our North America business correspondent Michelle Fleury told me more.

At the heart of it, Metta is accused of hooking teenagers to its platforms, creating products, whether it's on Facebook or Instagram, that kind of keeps young people coming back again and again and again and spending longer and longer. It comes at a time when America is facing this mental health crisis amongst young people. And so it's a particularly explosive issue here.

In addition to that, the company has been accused of collecting data of children under the age of 13, and that breaks its obligations under a law known as the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act.

So some serious allegations, a lot of the lawsuit actually was blocked out.

So we weren't able to read all of it.

But I mean, just to give you an example, it's things like those nudges that you get that kind of alert you to new feeds, things coming in that kind of keep you coming back that prod you.

That's the sort of behavior that these attorneys general say has basically contributed to the pain that children are going through right now.

And they say it's time for Facebook and Metta, its parent company, to be held accountable. And what do the states want to happen as a result of this case?

That's where it gets a bit willier.

When pressed on this, they sort of held a briefing and asked exactly that. You know, do you want kids barred from using these platforms all together? What is it that you want? They said it's the specific things that push kids to spend longer and keep coming back. That's what they want rolled back. Again, try to get a more specific definition of that. And that's where it kind of gets into a gray area. Metta for its part said they were disappointed by the lawsuit today. They said, look, we've rolled out about 30 tools that can help kids and families navigate this, whether it's sort of parental controls or such. But clearly lawmakers not satisfied at the moment. But a reflection of the growing legal and regulatory difficulties facing these kind of tech companies. Well, and this is where it gets interesting. I mean, at the moment, Google, the other big tech giant, is facing a case right now about its dominant market position. I think it feeds into a broader debate about how, whether it's congressional leaders or whether it's lawmakers, they are trying to rein in big tech, but their track record hasn't been that good. And it was interesting hearing from one of the attorneys general from Colorado who acknowledged that the task ahead in this particular case was formidable, but they felt it was important and that's why they're moving ahead. On North America, business correspondent Michelle Flary. And still to come on the Global News Podcast. In 20 years, obesity has increased by 20 percent and the most popular restaurants are fast food. That's why we have to win this battle. And the minister, of course, has the support of all proper restaurateurs. Why French restaurants are being encouraged to make their own food. A powerful storm has started making landfall in southern Bangladesh. Cyclone Hamoon is crossing near the Chattergram coastal region, bringing wind speeds of more than 50 kilometers an hour. Our South Asia regional editor, Anbarasen Etirajan, has the details. The main body of Hamoon is expected to hit southern Bangladesh in the next few hours. Weather officials say the wind speed could go up to 90 kilometers an hour if the storm gains momentum. The region is already being lashed by heavy rain and gusty winds. Several trees have been uprooted and low lying areas inundated. Officials say tides may be more than a meter higher than normal. And there are warnings of flash flooding. Volunteers and rescue workers have already moved to more than a million people to safety in 10 districts. There are no reports of casualties so far. Operations at Bangladesh's biggest port in Chattergram have been suspended with boat transport and fishing halted.

Bangladesh used to witness heavy casualties during cyclones. But in the past 10 years, better forecasting and more effective emergency evacuation have reduced the number of those killed in such disasters. Anbarasen Etirajan, a German rescue team in the North Sea, has been trying to locate four seamen who may be trapped inside a British cargo ship, which sank on Tuesday. The Varity went down in waters around 30 meters deep after colliding with a larger freighter called the Polsi. One of the seven people on the Varity was found dead in the water. Another two have been rescued, but four were still missing. Christian Stiepeldi is from the German Sea Rescue Society. There is always hope for rescuers. We will not stop our search and rescue operation. As long as there is a small chance of finding survivors, no one can say when that will be. No one knows how these seafarers were equipped when they went to sea. Well, our correspondent, Harold Griffith, is following the story. So we know that the Varity was carrying a consignment of steel, leaving Bremen last night at 9pm local time. And it made its way up to the North Sea coast of Germany. Then at about 5am local time, its path crossed this far bigger cargo ship, the Polsi, which is heading from Germany to Spain. And at that time, we understand the collision left the Polsi crew uninjured. Twenty two people on that ship, but the Varity started to sink with its seven crew members. Two of the crew members were found alive, and sadly one was found dead in the water. But the whereabouts of the other four at the moment is still unknown. Initially, a big sea and air operation was launched with the German Navy sending a sea king into the air, closing the airspace so they could scour the tops of the waves. Then later in the day, we were told about this diving mission down to the seabed with the belief that potentially the four crew members could still be in there in some kind of airlock or if there was any sort of provision for oxygen for them to remain alive underwater. That at the moment seems to be the best hope. So that operation is underway? It was launched a few hours ago by the German authorities and they've not put a time limit on it. Clearly, with divers, it's time limited. They only have their own oxygen supply to go up and down to continue to search the vessel. But they're clearly throwing everything at this, both in the air, on the surface of the water and with the divers on the seabed. And have they actually located the vessel? Yes, we understand that they know where the vessel is. And if you look at marine tracking data, you're able to see pretty closely where the ship went down.

Six German rescue vessels were sent to it.

Even a piano cruise liner that happened to be in the area joined in with the rescue effort.

We were told some doctors on board who could potentially help any survivors.

But we understand actually the two survivors they found could be taken on to Germany to seek medical assistance there.

How old Griffith?

It is said to be the world's only museum devoted to censored art.

And it's just opened in the Spanish city of Barcelona.

The gallery features artworks that have been denounced, attacked or removed from exhibition.

They come from a collection of 200 pieces built up by the Spanish journalist and businessman, Tacho Bennett.

He spoke to Julian Marshall.

We have works from Picasso, from Klimt, Goya, My Way Way, from Andy Warhol, Banksy from many different artists all over the world.

The only characteristic of all of them is that all of them in one way or the other has suffered censored prohibition or some kind of violence.

Or the artist has been banned in some way, this kind of thing.

Do you have any particular favourites yourself?

I think that the one that I have more care for, for it is one from Celica Buldela, an artist from Algeria and France, because after buying this piece,

I really decided I was going to be a collector of censored art.

The name is Silence, Rouge et Bleu.

It was censored in Clichine, France, because the piece is formed by 30...

Sorry, I don't remember the name in English.

You know these small pieces where the Muslims do their prayers.

And on top of each of them, there is an Estiletto, a nice woman's shoe.

So it gives you a vision of the way that the Muslim world is treating women.

And it was censored in Clichine, France, because it was close to the Charlie Hebdo killings and the mayor of the city just decided that it was not due to show that piece.

So this is a collection of prayer mats with women's shoes on top of them.

Yes, exactly.

And you've got a collection of drawings by former prisoners in Guantanamo Bay.

Yes, we have also the prisoners of Guantanamo Bay.

They were allowed to do draws or paintings and an art gallery in New York.

Just show them and that created a great scandal.

Because the Association of Victims of 9-11 protest about it.

Then the US government decided that the prisoners of Guantanamo Bay they were allowed to paint or to draw.

But once they were freed, they had to leave their work there to be destroyed.

You've got works from Andy Warhol and Pablo Picasso.

They weren't censored, were they?

They were what, vandalized in some way?

Specifically, the work that I have from Andy Warhol, for instance, is Mao Zedong and it was banned in China.

And Picasso is interesting.

Those are pieces that Picasso create showing the painter Rafael and his mistress making love and the Pope looking at them through a hole.

So and it was banned for many years in many places of the world.

Are there any artworks that offend you, particularly that you would not exhibit?

No, I think that the limits of freedom of expression have to be determined by the artist and the other that can express limits is the viewer, the viewer can decide, I don't want to see that.

So I'm going to look to another place.

Me as a promoter, I don't have any limit at all.

As far as there is a piece of art that has been censored,

I will try to show them in my collection.

That's your Bennett talking to Julian Marshall.

France is famous for its haute cuisine,

but amid concerns about declining gastronomic standards, the French government has announced new rules obliging restaurateurs to indicate on menus which dishes are not homemade.

The Minister for Small Businesses said it would give a helping hand to those restaurants that do actually cook all their own food.

As Hugh Scofield reports from Paris,

such establishments are now in a distinct minority in France.

It might come as some surprise.

It's definitely not something the food business likes much to talk about, but the fact is that at your average, affordable French bistro or brasserie, what you're eating has almost certainly not been cooked on the premises.

Far more likely, especially if the menu's a long one,

your dish has been bought, ready-prepared and frozen,

or it's been delivered that day from a big out-of-town mega kitchen

where Blanquette de Vaux or whatever are mass produced and then put in vans.

There's no disgrace, it's pure economics.

Most restaurants would go under

if they'd to hire all the extra staff needed to go homemade.

But it is a little unfair, on those establishments,

that do actually make the effort.

So genuine, bona fide restaurateurs are delighted by this new initiative,

which means that dishes produced by their competitors

which aren't fait maison will have to be signaled as such.

À la fontaine, runs le musturer in central Paris.

In 20 years, obesity has increased by 20% in France

and the most popular restaurants are fast food.

Our grand-mothers and mothers taught us how to eat well,

so how did we end up like this?

That's why we have to win this battle

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and the Minister, of course, has the support of all proper restaurateurs.

Behind it all is that ever-present French food business.

Behind it all is that ever-present French fear of losing status,
of being déclassé,

saying goodbye to what once made the country great.

One international food website last year

ranked French gastronomy in ninth position

behind Turkey and the United States.

That is a humiliation which French chefs find hard indeed to swallow.

Youscofield, in Paris.

And that's all from us for now,

and we'll be a new edition of the Global News Podcast very soon.

This one was mixed by Caroline Driscoll and produced by Emma Joseph.

Our editor is Karen Martin.

I'm Oliver Conway. Until next time, goodbye.