

Who'll Stop Bibi?

Gaza is a 21st century human tragedy. Those who can, won't end the war. Those who wage the war, will send aid

Palestinians in Gaza are protesting against Hamas. Israelis in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem are denouncing Netanyahu's renewed assault on Gaza since March. After a bloody weekend of bombing, Netanyahu escalated the offensive Monday vowing to take "full control" of Gaza. The death toll has estimatedly crossed 50,000. One in five Palestinians is starving. Three points.

One, Qatar was part of the ceasefire dealmaking and has said the international community must react to Israel's escalation, which, per a Qatari minister, will "give legitimacy to non-state actors". This is more of the Arab states' hands-off approach, leaving it to US to stop the Israel-Hamas war. The Arab world seems to find no major reason to upset smooth bilateral ties with US, by talking of Washington's role in regional stability.



Hamas is a terror group – little can be expected from it. But Washington can stop fellow democracy Israel's by now wildly disproportionate retaliation to Hamas's Oct 7 terror act. Yet Trump 2.0 is content snatching credit for a pause in fighting. If Israel didn't hold up its side of the deal,

ah well, what can Trump do? If anything, Trump's return has emboldened Netanyahu, who faces no consequences. Over 3,000 Palestinians are estimated killed since March 18.

Three. What *has* triggered sharp reactions from EU, UK and Canada is Netanyahu's weaponising of food and aid. For 80 days and counting, Israel has blockaded food, water, and medicine from entering Gaza. Tel Aviv has decided a US and Israel-backed aid organisation will be the conduit for relief. So, forces driving the offensive will provide aid instead of neutral UN organisations. That's almost Trumpian. Calling Israel's aid blockade "catastrophic", EU – Israel's biggest trade partner – will review their trade, valued at over €42bn a year. UK too has suspended trade talks. In short, Netanyahu's pounding of Gaza cannot be stopped by talking to him, but he can be taken on for flouting humanitarian law. Whatever it takes.