‘Save us’: Gazans want Trump to end war with Israel

AFP – Palestinians in Gaza on Wednesday want Donald Trump, who won the US election, to end the war between Israel and Hamas that has devastated their territory.
The conflict sparked by Hamas’s October 7 attack has taken an appalling human toll in the Gaza Strip, displacing most of its residents, causing widespread hunger and death, and leaving hospitals struggling to cope.

“We were displaced, killed… there’s nothing left for us, we want peace,” Mamdouh al-Jadba, who was displaced to Gaza City from Jabalia, told AFP.

“I hope Trump finds a solution, we need someone strong like Trump to end the war and save us, enough, God, this is enough,” said the 60-year-old.

“I was displaced three times, my house was destroyed, my children are homeless in the south… There’s nothing left, Gaza is finished.”

Umm Ahmed Harb, from the Al-Shaaf area east of Gaza City, was also counting on Trump to “stand by our side” and end the territory’s suffering.

“God willing the war will end, not for our sake but for the sake of our young children who are innocent, they were martyred and are dying of hunger,” she told AFP.

“We cannot buy anything with the high prices (of food). We are here in fear, terror and death.”

For Palestinians in the occupied West Bank, where violence has also surged since October last year, Trump’s victory was reason to fear for the future.

“Trump is firm in some decisions, but these decisions could serve Israel’s interests politically more than they serve the Palestinian cause,” said Samir Abu Jundi, a 60-year-old in the city of Ramallah.

Another man who identified himself only by his nickname, Abu Mohammed, said he also saw no reason to believe Trump’s victory would be in favour of the Palestinians, saying “nothing will change except more decline”.

He said all US presidents “are in favour of the State of Israel”, the Palestinian from east Jerusalem told AFP.

The United States is Israel’s main political and military backer and despite pressure from President Joe Biden’s administration for a ceasefire, the support has not wavered.

Imad Fakhida, a school principal in the main West Bank city of Ramallah, said “Trump’s return to power… will lead us to hell and there will be a greater and more difficult escalation.”

“He is known for his complete and greatest support for Israel,” he added.

– ‘We expect peace’ –

During his first term in office, Trump moved the US embassy to Jerusalem, recognised Israeli sovereignty over the occupied Golan Heights and helped normalise ties between Israel and several Arab states under the so-called Abraham Accords.

The Accords were condemned as “treason” by Palestinian leaders who feared they undercut their aspirations for a homeland, and led to disgruntlement in Hamas.

The war erupted on October 7, 2023 after Hamas militants attacked Israel, resulting in 1,206 deaths, mostly civilians, according to an AFP tally of Israeli official figures.

Israel’s retaliatory campaign has killed 43,391 people in

Gaza, a majority of them civilians, according to figures from the Hamas-run territory’s health ministry the United Nations considers reliable.

During his campaign for a return to the White House, Trump said Gaza, which is located on the eastern Mediterranean, could be “better than Monaco”.

He also said he would have responded the same way as Israel did following the October 7 attack, while urging the US ally to “get the job done” because it was “losing a lot of support”.

More broadly he has promised to bring an end to raging international crises, even saying he could “stop wars with a telephone call”.

In Gaza, such statements gave reason for hope.

“We expect peace to come and the war to end with Trump because in his election campaign he said that he wants peace and calls for stopping the wars on Gaza and the Middle East,” said Ibrahim Alian, 33, from Gaza City.

Like many of the territory’s residents, Alian has been displaced several times by the fighting. He said he also lost his father to the war.

“God willing the war on the Gaza Strip will end and the situation will change,” he told AFP.

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