

Tens of thousands rally in Dutch Gaza protest

AFP – Tens of thousands of people dressed in red marched through the streets of The Hague Sunday to demand more action from the Dutch government against what they termed a “genocide” in Gaza.

Rights groups such as Amnesty International and Oxfam organised the demonstration through the city to the International Court of Justice, creating a so-called “red line”.

Many waving Palestinian flags and some chanting “Stop the Genocide”, the demonstrators turned a central park in the city into a sea of red on a sunny afternoon.

Protesters brandished banners reading “Don’t look away, do something”, “Stop Dutch complicity”, and “Be silent when kids sleep, not when they die”.

Organisers urged the Dutch government – which collapsed on June 3 after a far-right party pulled out of a fragile coalition – to do more to rein in Israel.

“People in Gaza cannot wait and the Netherlands has a duty to do everything it can to stop the genocide,” they said in their call to action.

Dodo Van Der Sluis, a 67-year-old pensioner, told AFP: “It has to stop. Enough is enough. I can’t take it anymore.”

“I’m here because I think it’s maybe the only thing you can do now as a Dutch citizen, but it’s something you have to do,” she added.

A previous protest in The Hague on May 18 drew more than 100,000 people, according to organisers, who described it as the country’s largest demo in 20 years.

Police did not give an estimate for that demonstration.

The Gaza war was sparked by the October 7, 2023, attack on Israel by Palestinian militant group Hamas.

That assault resulted in the deaths of 1,219 people on the Israeli side, mostly civilians, according to an AFP tally of official figures.

The militants also took 251 hostages, of whom 54 are still thought to be held in Gaza, including 32 the Israeli military has said are dead.

The health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza says Israel's retaliatory offensive has killed at least 55,207 people, the majority of them civilians.

The United Nations considers the figures reliable.

The International Court of Justice is currently weighing a case brought by South Africa against Israel, arguing its actions in Gaza breach the 1948 UN Genocide Convention.

Israel strongly rejects the accusations.

AFP