

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, **organized** citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead

<https://leandroherrero.com/the-missing-word-in-the-famous-margaret-mead-quote/>

## DOCUMENT OVERVIEW

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VI	FRIDAY HARD NEWS: NOTES, REFERENCE MATERIALS

## I B B S RADIO - ACCESS TO THE THREE WEEKLY CALLS <https://bbsradio.com/>

DAY	B B S Station	TIME	PROGRAM	CONFERENCE CALL	HOSTS
Thursday	#1	6 pm Pacific 9 pm Eastern	<b>A Night at the Round Table</b>	None	<b>Panel Members</b> Guests Callers welcome.
Friday	#1	6 pm Pacific 9 pm Eastern	<b>Friday Night Hard News</b>	<b>720-716-7301</b> Pin Code: 353 863#	<b>Rama, Tara</b> Callers welcome.
Saturday	#2	1:30 pm PT/ 4:30 Eastern	<b>History of our Galactic World &amp; NESARA aka The True History</b>	<b>720-716-7301</b> Pin Code: 353 863#	<b>Rama, Tara</b> callers welcome.

**NOTE: 2<sup>nd</sup> CONFERENCE CALL # for both Friday, Saturday**  
**605-313-5166**  
 Pin Code: 353 863#

## ADDITIONAL HELP FOR LISTENERS

### B B S LISTENER TOOLS

**B B S RADIO STATION 1**  
 A Night at the Roundtable  
 Friday Night Hard News

**B B S RADIO STATION 2**  
 Saturday History Call

### LISTEN ON LINE

CLICK ON **AUDIO ICON**



CLICK ON **AUDIO ICON**



### LISTEN BY PHONE

**1-631-359-9353**  
**[NO code needed]**

**1-804-220-6484**  
**[No code needed]**

**CALL IN TO INTERACT** **During live calls ONLY**

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**1-888-429-5471**  
 Direct: 323-744-**4841**

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### B B S ARCHIVES

- go to [www.bbsradio.com](http://www.bbsradio.com)
- In **Search** box, enter the name of the required program;
- scroll down to heading **TALK SHOW PROGRAM ARCHIVES FOR PODCASTING.**
- Find the table listing the dates. Click on required date.

## II ACCESS TO OTHER CALLS SUPPORTED BY Rainbow Roundtable

NAME OF CALL / HOST	WEEKDAY / TIME	ACCESS POINT	TELEPHONE NUMBER
<b>Aboriginal Moabite Nation Call</b> Grand Goddess Lillie	<b>Wednesday</b> 6:00 – 7:30 MST	<b>Telephone Only</b>	<b>1-605-472-5406</b> <b>PIN 402-493#</b>
<b>Abundance Call</b> Caroline Oceana Ryan	<b>Every 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday</b> <b>5:45 PM PT/ 8:45 PM ET</b>	<b>Telephone</b> <b>ZOOM</b>	

**To be notified: email <https://www.ascensiontimes.com/the-abundance-group>  
Scroll down to the sign-up sheet and enter the requested info.**

<b>Ascension Call</b> Cheryl Croci	<b>Every Sunday, Monday</b> <b>9 – 10:30 EST</b>	<b>Telephone Only</b>	<b>1-425-436-6260</b> <b>PIN 9467 441#</b> Call Cheryl for # in your area
<b>Ashtar Legacy Calls</b> Fran Pearre	<b>Every 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday</b> 5 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday – no call <b>9:00 – 10:00 pm EST</b>	<b>Telephone</b> <b>1-717-908-1834</b> <b>PIN 980 339#</b> Call is free; LD charges are not <b>VOIP/ H D</b> <b>1-717-908-1834</b> <b>PIN #980 339#</b> <a href="https://www.freeconferencecallhd.com/hd-conferencing/">https://www.freeconferencecallhd.com/hd-conferencing/</a> <b>via Skype</b>	

**To access past ALC calls**, go to [Ashtar Legacy Teleconferences \(ashtarontheroad.com\)](http://ashtarontheroad.com)

## III ARCHIVES: provided by **B B S RADIO RAINBOW ROUNDTABLE**

### ARCHIVES: B B S

- Go to [www.bbsradio.com](http://www.bbsradio.com)
- In **Search** box, enter the name of the desired program;
- scroll down to the heading **TALK SHOW PROGRAM ARCHIVES FOR PODCASTING**
- Find the table listing the dates. Click on desired date.

### ARCHIVES: Rainbow Roundtable

- Go to <https://www.rainbowroundtable.net/>
- **WRITTEN**
  - Go to **"Archives" tab**: See NOTES on RHS
- **AUDIO**
  - Go to **"Archives" tab**: See AUDIO on LHS:  
Included are both BBS podcast + Conference Call Links

## IV OPENING MEDITATION; MAYAN CALENDAR; HOUSEKEEPING

### A. Opening Meditation:

Rainbird

### B. Mayan Calendar / Record of Days:

Rainbird

- Go to <https://www.spacestationplaza.com> – to locate specific days & lots more information: on the home page, you can find out what your Mayan signature is; while there, look and see where the wave – the birth wave - began
- to learn about the Mayan Calendar, Go to <https://www.spacestationplaza.com> which will link you further to [www.lawoftime.org](http://www.lawoftime.org) website for further information.

**PLEASE LISTEN TO THE PODCAST TO HEAR THE ENTIRE DISCUSSION OF EACH DATE**

Also note: **This is not a 3<sup>rd</sup> dimensional calendar! It's a Record of Days.**  
[www.Spacestationplaza.co](http://www.Spacestationplaza.co) Click on the tzolkein – it's on page 2 of the link.

**PORTAL DAYS = extra dimensionality**

**17<sup>th</sup> Friday**

**2 LAMAT**

**Yellow Lunar Stargate**

**Visionary**

Started a new wave yesterday: Healing Hand. Today is also Beatles' galactic signature when the band started. Sun is guiding power today; occult star is the red crystal skywalker; challenge is white lunar mirror; this energy is about working with the illumination of human kind. The pioneer spirit, can see beyond. . .

**18<sup>th</sup> Saturday**

**3 MULUC**

**Red Electric Moon**

**Artist**

About wise use of mind; listen to moon and what she is telling us – remember what we came here to do – embrace universal mind as our mind – the moon is waxing

**19<sup>th</sup> Sunday**

**4 OC**

**White Self-Existing Dog**

**Artist**

Unconditional love; healing the pain of the past. Gift of contact with our spirit guides; awareness of our loyalty to human kind

**20<sup>th</sup> Monday**

**5 CHUEN**

**Blue Overtone Monkey**

**Artist**

About balancing work and play; paying attention to clarity of mind; wise use of artistry; ability to play and laugh – let go of jadedness and resistance to compassion

**21<sup>th</sup> Tuesday**

**6 EB**

**Yellow Rythmic Human**

**Healing**

Attuning to spirit – let go of ?

**22<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday**

**7 BEN**

**Red Resonant Skywalker**

**Warrior**

Strive toward ? Let go

**23<sup>rd</sup> Thursday**

**8 IX**

**White Galactic Magician**

**Visionary**

Thanksgiving – about illumination for others; embrace the gift of being jaquar woman; let go of control

**24<sup>th</sup> Friday**

**9 MEN**

**Blue Solar Eagle**

**Visionary**

Putting all our intentions forward and commitment to service; moving consciousness to Source – let go of feelings of despair

### C. Housekeeping:

- We are asking to **have more people contribute**, as some of the regular, long-term donors are stressed and stretched: **any and all small amounts are helpful and very welcome.**
- Re **T & R**: Their full-time, life-time commitment is to be tuned in to what is really going on behind the scenes of the artificial world we see around us. They don't ask for anything but they do require food, a home, gas for the car, and access to BBS Radio in order to compile and distribute this information to the world.
- Donations via Paypal button on the **homepage** [www.rainbowroundtable.net](http://www.rainbowroundtable.net)

### B B S RADIO:

- The radio programs are supported by us, the listeners.
- The THREE radio programs cost \$300 each week.
- The mailing address for those who do not like paying

## B B S RADIO

**B B S RADIO**  
**58 N Marshside Place**  
**Sporing, TX 77389**

Please put **"Attention Don"** on the envelope  
And note inside "for Thursday,  
Friday AND Saturday calls"

- All BBS archives can be accessed **FOR FREE** by everyone.
- NB: TO BE FOUND AT [www.rainbowroundtable.net/archives](http://www.rainbowroundtable.net/archives)
  - **AUDIO ARCHIVES** (BBS Radio Podcasts plus Conference Calls) **and**
  - **PROGRAM NOTES** (downloadable and printable **PDFs** )

## OTHER FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR RAMA, TARA:

**FOOD MONEY:** VIA PAYPAL OR See the PAGE ON [www.rainbowroundtable.net](http://www.rainbowroundtable.net)

Rama has a pride of Paschats + 2 inside kitties + 2 HUMANS = up to 13 in total

	Financial Requirements	Other details
<b>WEEKLY</b> <b>B B S RADIO/week</b>	<b>\$941.00</b>	For 2 weeks of October Three programs each week- see above
<b>PERSONAL</b> Gas, food, etc Bills Miscellaneous/Other	<b>\$200.00</b> <b>ALL CAUGHT UP!!!</b>	<b>NEED GAS &amp; FOOD!!!</b>  Caroline set up a GoFundMe a/c <a href="http://www.rainbowroundtable.net">See the link on rainbowroundtable.net</a>
<b>MONTHLY</b> <b>Rent - \$1,150 / mo</b> <b>Total</b>	<b>Paid</b>	

## CONTACT INFO

- Please notify Rama when sending something [koran999@comcast.net](mailto:koran999@comcast.net)
- Mailing address for checks, money orders, etc  
Ram D Berkowitz  
PO Box 280  
Santa Cruz, NM 87567

## EVERY \$5 HELPS - ALL GRATEFULLY RECEIVED: THANKS TO ALL FOR THEIR HELP . . .

- Remember you can book a session with Mother, as well!

**\*\* [www.rainbowroundtable.net /page/donate](http://www.rainbowroundtable.net/page/donate) \*\***

- Tara and Rama continue to appreciate each & every donation received for food.
- Please continue to go to [www.rainbowroundtable.net](http://www.rainbowroundtable.net) and link to their Paypal account: choose **family and friends option so Paypal takes off no fees.**

They are under orders by Rama's boss (former President Obama's security chief, known as the King of Swords) to live entirely by donations from the Light community.

Your support is invaluable and greatly appreciated. Thank you so much for your kindness and generosity!

Namaste.

## V KESHE FOUNDATION INFO; N F T REWARDS PROGRAM

(1) **MAIN address for KFSSI.org** <https://kfssi.org/>  
**Keshe Foundation Spaceship Institute:** The Home of Plasma Science & Technology

- To access **Keshe Foundation** <https://keshe.foundation/>  
**Keshe Foundation:** the place where Science meets the Soul of Man

- **KFWiki** <https://kfwiki.org/>  
The free **Plasma Cyclopedia** of the Keshe Foundation

- **Weekly YouTube Presentations** <https://www.youtube.com/c/KeshfoundationOrg>  
Public can join by ZOOM: the link is 939 474 503

- **More information** Carolyn - Rainbird – [lightenergync@gmail.com](mailto:lightenergync@gmail.com)

## (2) N F T Rewards programs

NFT/reward.biz/register  
Enter: koran999

## VI FRIDAY HARD NEWS: ACCESS TO THIS WEEK'S PODCAST; NOTES, REFERENCE MATERIALS

This week's PODCAST <https://bbsradio.com/podcast/hard-news-friday-november-3-2023>

### TO LISTEN TO CALLS ON THE PHONE:

1-631-359-9353  
1-631-359-9008  
1-804-220-6538

1-518-801-1159  
1-667-930-9417

**FRIDAY HARD NEWS: Rama, Tara:**

**R, T**

**Greetings to all !!! Thanks to everyone**

**Thanksgiving day – will replay yesterday's program, A Night at the Roundtable . . .**

R: message from Natasha, Kathryn and Heidi– at Lake in Mongolia: ship sightings from out of the lake going up into the atmosphere – rumours are that Lord Hatonn of the silver Fleet is bringing out his fleets from the Inner Earth to let people – Inner Earth ships coming out and into the upper atmosphere! ! !

the declaration comes with  
Lord Adama and Lord Hatonn- their message is prepare the world for world peace

**AUDIO: AURORA RAY**  
**The Light Body Activation: Unlocking your Inner Potential**  
<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1073504863824398>



What does Rama want to be when he grows up?? Into his light body  
a star ship captain!  
The energies are available for fully integrating our light body into our physicality  
can meditate 4 minutes a day – several times a day . . .

R: knows the time we are in, this moment, is so amazing to behold each day and the frequencies of the sun:  
it is shifting every bit of matter  
as we let go of the old timeline we can learn to trust o each other  
we are still dealing with the remnants of the last days of Atlantis

there was a time on Earth when the animals did not eat each other, nor humans ate animals: we lived on liquid  
light  
all Natasha asked was for us to send more of the emerald green ray into the situation

NESARA is a simulcast with the Declaration of World peace. . .

## CONFERENCE CALL

Sasquatch – they are close enough to certain populated areas where they can observe humanity and help  
out - there are also not so nice stories about sasquatch/the abominable snowmen  
somewhere after Lemuria, people began to distrust each other –

they come from Andromeda 100,000 x larger than our galaxy; our galaxy is - Listen to the Galaxy Song –  
the math is correct in that song! ! !

R: family are all around us  
talks of seeing beings on the balcony  
they are here to look after us and keep an eye on us

Pad: speaks of someone she knows walking in the forest: we have to be quiet and not disturb the sasquatch

T: the dark ones are not happy campers – they are disturbed by the energies coming in

Pad: beginning to feel better . . . flickers / birds she sees from her home

Pad: solar plexus related to self will – each chakra

T: solar p has to do with right use of will – if there is something I am using the will to bring in, call in a  
balance of – if you use colour sound and vibration on the will chakra

e – strong female

o – strong male

OOH -3<sup>rd</sup> – this can bring to a more balanced use of the will:

Pad: it's the energies! Yellow is will power – self-forgiveness is a hard one for all of us  
sometimes the sacral and the heart can be so full  
the heart chakra is love and can be blocked by grief  
and sometimes the heart chakra sits right on the 3<sup>rd</sup> chakra

**B B S RADIO**

**Ave Sache**

**AUDIO: 2023-11-14 THE BIGGER PICTURE by Patricia Cota-Robles**

[www.eraofpeace.org](http://www.eraofpeace.org)

**VLOG 11**

**THE POSITIVE EFFECTS OF THE LAW OF THE CIRCLE**

**SEE TRANSCRIPT**

<https://rumble.com/v3uxnje-vlog-11-the-positive-effects-of-the-law-of-the-circle.html>

**VIDEO LINK**

<https://rumble.com/v3uxnje-vlog-11-the-positive-effects-of-the-law-of-the-circle.html>



**AUDIO: Goddess Lakshmi Transmission: (11:11) Inviting a New Age of Light.**



[https://www.linkedin.com/posts/the-soul-matrix\\_goddess-lakshmi-transmission-1111-inviting-activity-7129450322975969281-Jaum](https://www.linkedin.com/posts/the-soul-matrix_goddess-lakshmi-transmission-1111-inviting-activity-7129450322975969281-Jaum) **44:45 min**

The Goddess Lakshmi is both the consort and the divine counterpart of the Hindu god Vishnu. Vishnu is the deity responsible for preserving and protecting the Multiverse of creation. Lakshmi assists Vishnu in his role to create, protect, and transform the universe. The Goddess Lakshmi is also known as the Goddess of Universal Wealth. She is depicted as sitting on a lotus, representing self-realization that blooms regardless external circumstances.

In Hinduism the current Age of Darkness is known as Kali-Yuga and the Dawning Age of Light is known as Satya Yuga. This Dawning Age of Light is known as a Golden Age of Truth.

We have entered two sacred days, the 11:11 portal on the 11th November and also of the celebration of Diwali commencing 12th November. Diwali is a festival of new beginnings and the triumph of good over evil and light over darkness. This transmission was created and uploaded on the 11:11 portal.

At this powerful moment we call upon the Goddess Lakshmi to bring to an end the Age of Darkness, or Kali-Yuga in our own being and reality. Also, for this Age of Darkness to be brought to an end in the world. We request the Goddess initiate the New Age of Light, or Satya-Yuga in our own being and reality. And all gifts of that Age be activated. Also, for this gift of light to radiate out into the world, touching those who are open to this time of blessing.

<https://lnkd.in/eEe22kez>

**Steve Nobel The Soul Matrix.**

## **MOTHER / ALCYONE**

**[M / A]**

Greetings in the Light of the Most Radiant one. In the Office of the Christ and only in the Office of the Christ, we invoke the loving energies of St Germain and the Violet flame.

### **Greetings, Children of Ra!**

We are in most auspicious times, with the shift of the Ages at hand. Everything is moving in greater measure into the Light! All the beings are here to raise all of us up. We do our part on ourselves. Gotta work with the Light pouring in each day; it's a bit of challenge these moments each day and place lots of stuff going on!

T: agrees with Mother – calling for greater understanding, inner standing

**M/A:** yes. All of it in this moment of NOW! This like what we're hearing: it's the energies that are pouring in from the sun, from the other folks - we call them 'folks: the planetary bodies that interact with this awesome place called Gaia/ Vyamus. There are so many adventures yet to be sought, so this is what has been called The Garden.

We have barely touched the surface of what can be everything that's unfolding is moving us into the higher wisdom how to bring this planet back from this so-called story of extinction.

It is a most auspicious time to be alive, and feel what's coming in; it's a challenge yet we have to say we commend you for sticking it out!

T: well we want to go into with the pane intolerable

**M/A:** that would be a most logical choice

T: logic is not a popular choice with a certain party we know

**M/A:** Yes, it might seem to feel the crazy logic of an extra ordinary moment

T: at midnight tonight we were supposed to have the gov shut down, and the Speaker implemented something that will take us to Jan 16<sup>th</sup>

**M/A:** Kicking the can down the road

Yesterday have to eliminate what is known as this fiasco

**T:** there is no interest in governing in the particular party

**M/A:** as there is no interest in governing, there's no place for these lifeforms to be there; no what?

What comes next is this this great rectification, purification as it has been spoken of in the Hopi prophecy the age of the 6<sup>th</sup> Sun – Quetzalcoatl and all the folks are here it's

this cosmic story about Love as we can love our so-called enough to have a change of heart, miracle could come about

on iota the power of magic in this realm; it is the nature of what's unfolding

T: oriented mind sets – how does that find a compromise at the table?

When you have a civilization where there are controllers rather than folks that want to share, you're speaking of the present day moment; this word Fascism – ideas of control separation, there is this so-called concept folks needing a strong father figure – the patriarchy the goddess is here she takes no



prisoners! It is about the end of this time Sat Yuga is at hand.

Thjs old patriarchy is out of business – our children – we'll deal with them as such. In the next little while

Kodoish, Kodoish, Kodoish Adonai 'Tsebayoth  
iliahu iliahu iliahu  
Yod Hey Vod Hey  
YHWH

Holy holy holy is the Lord God of Hosts  
Illumine Illumine Illumine  
Yod Hey Vod Hey of the Living Everlasting Light  
The Revealed Name to our Father universe of the Living  
God behind all Creator Gods

**Rama returns:** Was at the Solar Tribunal on Saturn, listening to one of the commanders talk about the upcoming trials on Dracos – of the 500,000 who will be getting their just desserts. It is about re-integrating them into Cosmic law – this started in Orion and comes back full circle to Orion. It is in good hands: paws? What is unfolding is so wonderful he has no words; it's about the gold dust

T: will be about who we are- we've got ta do something to redirect the younger ones - all the infrastructures have to go

when we life in structures that that suck our energies and not use spherical structures

T: mentions Ed [who built the spherical structures]  
brings up **The Keys of Enoch**

The message: just that the more love we can pour into the Middle East, the better – stops all the matrix

Blaze the Violet Fire!

## DEMOCRACY NOW

**2023- 11-17 Headlines** <https://www.democracynow.org/2023/11/17/headlines>

**2023-11-17 Capitol Police Violently Break Up Jewish-Organized DNC Protest Calling for Gaza Ceasefire**

[https://www.democracynow.org/2023/11/17/dnc\\_headquarters\\_ceasefire\\_gaza\\_protest\\_ifnotnow](https://www.democracynow.org/2023/11/17/dnc_headquarters_ceasefire_gaza_protest_ifnotnow)

**2023-11-17 Sharif Abdel Kouddous on the Targeting of Journalists & Israel's "Colonial Fantasy" to Depopulate Gaza**

[https://www.democracynow.org/2023/11/17/israel\\_gaza\\_sharif\\_abdel\\_kouddous](https://www.democracynow.org/2023/11/17/israel_gaza_sharif_abdel_kouddous)

**2023-11-17 Cop City Protest Tear-Gassed as Activists Face "Unprecedented" RICO & Domestic Terrorism Charges**

[https://www.democracynow.org/2023/11/17/cop\\_city\\_week\\_of\\_action](https://www.democracynow.org/2023/11/17/cop_city_week_of_action)

## AUDIO: ECONOMIC UPDATE

**2023-11-07** [Social & Labor Movements Claim Real Victories](https://economicupdate.libsyn.com/social-labor-movements-claim-real-victories)

<https://economicupdate.libsyn.com/social-labor-movements-claim-real-victories>

**AUDIO: The late show with Stephen Colbert** – guest is Rachel Maddow

**CLOSING: Rainbird**

See everyone this afternoon! ! !

## INFORMATION RELATED TO THE NOTES

**2023- 11-17 Headlines November 17, 2023** <https://www.democracynow.org/2023/11/17/headlines>

### **Israel Lays Siege to Gaza's Hospitals, Strikes Jabaliya Refugee Camp Amid Telecoms Blackout**

Nov 17, 2023



Israel's unceasing bombardment of the Gaza Strip has entered its seventh week, with fresh attacks on residential buildings in the Jabaliya refugee camp that killed at least 18 people. On Thursday, Gaza's main telecommunications companies went out of service due to a lack of fuel for generators, plunging most of the besieged territory into another communications blackout. Israeli troops occupied the Al-Shifa Hospital for a third straight day, where some 7,000 trapped medical workers and patients face a worsening humanitarian crisis. A doctor at Al-Shifa said 43 out of 63 intensive care patients who were on ventilators have now died after supplies of oxygen and fuel ran out; a "large number" of premature babies have also died due to Israel's siege on the hospital.

On Thursday, Israeli and Egyptian authorities allowed a handful of wounded Palestinians through the Rafah border crossing for treatment in Egypt. This is Ahmed Mazen Abu Shahma, a Palestinian boy whose leg was amputated after he survived an Israeli missile strike on his family's home.

**Ahmed Mazen Abu Shahma:** "People are torn into pieces, a head on one side and a leg on the other side. Entire buildings in one block are demolished by bombings. The Israeli pilot of the plane, doesn't he know that there are people in these buildings? They want Hamas. What do the people have to do with this? Innocent children, what do they have to do with this to be bombarded? Doesn't the pilot know that they are children?"

Also on Thursday, the Indonesian Hospital in northern Gaza reported it had been forced to halt services, leaving dozens of patients who urgently need surgery untreated in a reception area. This comes after Israel bombed the Jordanian field hospital in Gaza, an attack Jordan's government condemned as a war crime. The U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, says it may soon be forced to suspend all humanitarian operations in Gaza due to a lack of fuel. UNRWA's chief said Thursday, "I do believe there is a deliberate attempt to strangle our operation."

### **Israeli Drone Strike Kills 3 Palestinians in Occupied West Bank**

Nov 17, 2023



An Israeli drone strike on the occupied West Bank overnight killed three Palestinians and injured 14 others. The bombing came as part of a major raid on Jenin and surrounding communities by Israeli soldiers who used armored bulldozers to destroy streets and surrounded four medical sites, including the Ibn Sina Hospital. Dozens of Palestinians were arrested. Since October 7, Israeli forces have killed more than 200 Palestinians in the West Bank.

## **U.S. CENTCOM Commander Meets Top Israeli Officials Amid Mounting Regional Violence**

Nov 17, 2023



The head of U.S. forces in the Middle East is in Israel today for talks with senior Israeli officials. Axios reports General Michael Erik Kurilla, the commander of U.S. Central Command, is meeting Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant and top general Herzi Halevi to discuss Israel's assault on Gaza and fighting along Israel's border with Lebanon.

On Thursday, Israel's military shelled villages in southern Lebanon and launched drone strikes after Hezbollah fighters fired anti-tank missiles across the border. It was some of the heaviest cross-border violence since fighting erupted in October.

Meanwhile, Israeli airstrikes hit several targets around Damascus early on Friday. This follows a series of Israeli strikes across Syria, including attacks that took Damascus and Aleppo airports out of service last month, killing two civilian workers.

## **Protesters Shut Down Boston and San Francisco Bridges Demanding End to U.S. Support for War on Gaza**

Nov 17, 2023



In California, hundreds of protesters shut down all westbound lanes of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge for several hours on Thursday morning, demanding President Biden call for an immediate ceasefire and an end to U.S. military aid to Israel. Police arrested 81 people. The protest came as President Biden met with world leaders in San Francisco at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit.

In Boston, Massachusetts, Jewish peace activists led a sit-in protest Thursday that shut down traffic on the Boston University Bridge. In a social media post, the group IfNotNow Boston apologized to anyone stuck in traffic, but added, "We have tried everything else. We have called, we have marched, we have sung, we have prayed. We have written letters, and visited offices. Yet politicians like [President Biden] and [Senator Elizabeth Warren] continue to stonewall, and Israel continues to slaughter innocent Gazans by the thousands."

We'll have more on protests against Israel's assault on Gaza after headlines, when we'll speak with IfNotNow spokesperson Eva Borgwardt.

## Vermont Rep. Becca Balint Becomes First Jewish Congressmember to Call for Ceasefire

Nov 17, 2023



Democratic Congressmember Becca Balint of Vermont called Thursday for a lasting bilateral ceasefire in Gaza. Balint is the first Jewish member of Congress to call for a ceasefire. In a commentary published Thursday, she wrote, "Like me, there are thousands of American Jews that share a deep emotional connection to Israel because of what it meant for the survival of the Jewish people in the face of extermination. This same history also drives so many of us to fight for the protection of Palestinian lives."

Meanwhile, more than 300 delegates to the 2016 and 2020 Democratic National Convention who backed Bernie Sanders for president called on the Vermont senator to introduce a resolution for a ceasefire in Gaza. Sanders has so far rejected a ceasefire and has called only for short "pauses" to the fighting.

## L.A. Times Calls for Gaza Ceasefire to End Israel's "Indiscriminate Killing of Palestinian Civilians"

Nov 17, 2023



The Los Angeles Times has become the first major U.S. newspaper to call for a ceasefire. On Thursday, the paper's editorial board wrote, "It has become impossible to distinguish between Israel's decidedly non-surgical operation against Hamas militants in Gaza and the indiscriminate killing of Palestinian civilians. When so-called humanitarian pauses in the bombardment and ground operations are too brief to realistically permit innocents to flee, or when there is no place for non-combatants to go that is not also in the line of fire, such pauses are so deficient as to be meaningless."

## Russian Artist Gets 7 Years in Prison for Replacing Grocery Price Tags with Antiwar Messages

Nov 17, 2023



In Russia, artist Sasha Skochilenko was found guilty Thursday of spreading “false information” about the Russian military and sentenced to seven years in prison for replacing supermarket price tags with antiwar messages. The labels featured messages like “The Russian army bombed an art school in Mariupol. Around 400 people were hiding inside.” Skochilenko was convicted under new wartime legislation that criminalizes any antiwar messaging or activism. In her closing statement after her year-and-a-half trial, Skochilenko said, “How little faith does our prosecutor have in our state and society if he thinks that our statehood and public security can be ruined by five small pieces of paper?” This is opposition politician Boris Vishnevsky.

**Boris Vishnevsky:** “This verdict is unfair. There is no guilt, because Skochilenko is not guilty of anything. I will not even speak about humanity here or about equality before the law, because sometimes people receive fewer years in jail for murder than for five price tags in a shop. It’s not justice. It’s an execution.”

In other news from Russia, a former police officer sentenced to 20 years in prison for the 2006 contract killing of Russian journalist Anna Politkovskaya has been pardoned after a military tour in Ukraine. Politkovskaya was best known for reporting Russian abuses in Chechnya, often writing for the now-banned Novaya Gazeta.

### **Ismael Villagómez Becomes at Least 5th Journalist Killed in Mexico This Year**

Nov 17, 2023



Another journalist has been killed in Mexico. Ismael Villagómez was fatally shot in Ciudad Juárez Thursday while working his second job as a driver. He was a photographer for the newspaper El Heraldo de Juárez who had worked in media for nearly two decades. At least three people were arrested in connection to his death. His colleagues are demanding justice.

**José Ramón Ortiz:** “Ismael was a good and honest person. He was a good co-worker whose life was taken away in this way. We don’t want his case to remain unsolved, as has happened with the deaths of other journalists. If the cause was something other than his work in journalism, we want this to be clarified by authorities. And if this is related to his journalistic activity, we want authorities to investigate this even further. The Mexican Editorial Organization, Ismael’s family and the journalistic community demand clarification of the facts.”



At least four other journalists have been killed this year in Mexico, one of the most dangerous countries for media workers in the world outside a war zone. Violence has skyrocketed in Mexico following the enforcement of the U.S.-backed war on drugs.

### **100+ Imprisoned Immigrants in Washington State Launch Hunger Strike**

Nov 17, 2023



Over 100 immigrants held at the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, Washington, have started a hunger strike protesting indefinite detention and other inhumane and dangerous conditions. They're denouncing Immigration and Customs Enforcement for failing to properly handle and resolve immigration cases. The group La Resistencia says at least 25 of the hunger strikers have been placed in isolation. Northwest is run by the for-profit prison corporation GEO Group.

### **Judge Declares Mistrial for Officer Who Shot into Breonna Taylor's Home During Deadly Raid**

Nov 17, 2023



Image Credit: Reuters

In Kentucky, a judge declared a mistrial in the federal civil rights trial of the ex-Louisville police officer who fired his gun during the deadly 2020 raid on Breonna Taylor's home. The jury deadlocked over whether to convict Brett Hankison, who was charged with using excessive force and violating the rights of 26-year-old Breonna Taylor, her partner and Taylor's next door neighbors, where some of the officer's stray bullets ended up. Hankison faced a maximum sentence of life in prison. He was acquitted last year on three state counts of endangering Taylor's neighbors. Federal prosecutors will now have to decide whether to hold a retrial.

### **Paul Pelosi Attacker Found Guilty of Attempted Kidnapping, Assault**

Nov 17, 2023



A federal jury in California has found a right-wing conspiracy theorist guilty of attempted kidnapping and assault charges, after he invaded the San Francisco home of then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi in 2022 and attacked her husband, Paul Pelosi, with a hammer. Ahead of the attack, 43-year-old David DePape shared QAnon conspiracy theories and false claims about the 2020 election and the January 6 Capitol insurrection. He faces up to 50 years in prison at a future sentencing hearing.

### **Disgraced NY Rep. George Santos Will Not Run in 2024 Amid Myriad Findings of Fraud**

Nov 17, 2023



Image Credit: Reuters

Embattled New York congressman and serial liar George Santos said Thursday he won't seek reelection, after the House Ethics Committee found substantial evidence the freshman Republican committed numerous felony crimes. In their report, House ethics investigators found Santos "sought to fraudulently exploit every aspect of his House candidacy for his own personal financial profit. He blatantly stole from his campaign. He deceived donors into providing what they thought were contributions to his campaign but were in fact payments for his personal benefit."

### **UAW Members Vote to Ratify Contracts with "Big 3" Despite Some Lingering Dissent**

Nov 17, 2023



United Auto Workers members have approved new contracts with the Big Three automakers. Among other things, union members will see their pay increase by 25% over the course of the deal. Two-thirds of Ford workers voted in favor of the deal, while only about 55% of workers at General Motors agreed to ratify their contract. Stellantis appears set to approve the deal at

similar margins to Ford. Some more senior employees have objected to the deal, saying pay increases should be higher. Others have expressed disappointment that pension benefits weren't expanded to employees hired after 2007.

In related news, Stellantis has offered buyouts to half of its nonunionized U.S. staff as part of a cost-cutting move.

### Thousands of Starbucks Workers Walk Off the Job on "Red Cup Day"

Nov 17, 2023



Thousands of Starbucks workers held a one-day strike Thursday on "Red Cup Day," one of Starbucks's busiest days of the year. Workers say frequent promotional events and giveaways like yesterday's create extra stress and unmanageable workloads. Organizers say Thursday's walkout was the largest in the coffee chain's history. A historic union drive has swept over Starbucks stores nationwide in the past two years; over 360 locations are now unionized. This is Edwin Palma Solis, a Starbucks worker in New York.

**Edwin Palma Solis:** "We want to make sure that we have better pay, staffing, scheduling, and we have the right amount of hours to work, because they've been improperly staffing us. And sometimes it just makes it harder for us to work. You know, sometimes we feel like we work for two people instead of one, and we're just tired. We're just really tired of overworking ourselves."

### 2023-11-17 Capitol Police Violently Break Up Jewish-Organized DNC Protest Calling for Gaza Ceasefire

[https://www.democracynow.org/2023/11/17/dnc\\_headquarters\\_ceasefire\\_gaza\\_protest\\_ifnotnow](https://www.democracynow.org/2023/11/17/dnc_headquarters_ceasefire_gaza_protest_ifnotnow)

#### Guests

- [Eva Borgwardt](#)  
national spokesperson for IfNotNow.

#### Links

- [IfNotNow](#)
- [Jewish Voice for Peace](#)

Image Credit: Ryan Harvey (Right Image)

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As protests for a ceasefire in Gaza continue around the United States, the Jewish-led peace organization IfNotNow helped organize Wednesday's protest at the Democratic National Committee's headquarters in Washington, D.C. The protesters held hands to block the entrance to the building and were met with pepper spray and police use of force. "Let's be clear that police escalated the protest," says Eva Borgwardt, national



spokesperson for IfNotNow. "Our Jewish values and our safety as Jews is extremely, extremely contingent on calling for a ceasefire now," Borgwardt, who is Jewish, continues. She also comments on Democratic Party leaders' resistance to and suppression of public calls to rein in Israel's lethal assault on Gaza, as well as the role of the powerful lobbying group AIPAC in policing public dissent.

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## Transcript

This is a rush transcript. Copy may not be in its final form.

**AMY GOODMAN:** President Biden is facing increasing pressure to call for a ceasefire in Gaza. But instead, the White House is rushing more arms to Israel. Bloomberg is [reporting](#) the U.S. has quietly sent Israel more laser-guided missiles for Apache gunships, as well as new army vehicles, bunker-buster munitions and more ammunition. On Wednesday, the United States abstained from a United Nations Security Council vote in support of extended humanitarian pauses in Gaza.

Meanwhile, protests are continuing across the United States calling for a ceasefire. In California, police arrested at least 81 protesters after they blocked traffic on the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge for several hours. In Boston, protesters shut down the Boston University Bridge.

Many of the protests calling for a ceasefire have been organized in part by two Jewish organizations: IfNotNow and Jewish Voice for Peace. On Wednesday, the groups helped organize a protest at the Democratic National Committee's headquarters in Washington, D.C., where House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries and other lawmakers were gathered. U.S. Capitol police violently moved in on the protesters as they held hands to block the entrance to the DNC. Police described the protest as, quote, "not peaceful" and claimed that protesters pepper-sprayed officers. But images from the protest shows it was officers who deployed pepper spray and that officers used force to remove the demonstrators. This is Eva Borgwardt, national spokesperson for IfNotNow, speaking during the police action.

**EVA BORGWARDT:** We're outside the Democratic Party headquarters because this party claims to be on the side of life and peace and equality, and we're saying that we want them to live up to their values and oppose this horrific war and call for a ceasefire now. And we're being responded to by the police shoving antiwar activists down the stairs, shoving peaceful protesters back with their bikes. And because our party, our party that 80% of us want a ceasefire, would rather beat up protesters than —

**CHUCK MODI:** Hold on. To be continued. One second. One second. One second.

**AMY GOODMAN:** Protest organizers say 90 people were injured outside the DNC. Capitol police say six of their officers sustained injuries. One person was arrested.

One lawmaker who was inside the DNC, California Congressman Brad Sherman, took to social media to describe the demonstrators as, quote, "pro-terrorist, anti-Israel protestors." On Thursday, President Biden called into a DNC meeting to express his appreciation for how law enforcement handled the protest.

We're joined right now by that person you just heard, Eva Borgwardt, national spokesperson for IfNotNow.

Thanks so much for joining us from D.C., Eva. If you can start off by calling — by explaining why you focused on the DNC? And then describe what happened and respond to Congressman Sherman saying you are pro-terrorist.

**EVA BORGWARDT:** Well, Amy, thank you so much for having me.

And, yes, the focus on the DNC was because, as we know, the majority of Americans, and certainly the majority of Democrats, want a ceasefire. And our lawmakers are not listening to the thousands of calls and constituent meetings that we've been trying — ways that we've been trying to reach them over the past

month. And so, this was, like many protests across the country, an act of nonviolent civil disobedience. The goal was to assemble peacefully, call attention to the urgent situation in Gaza and ask for Democratic leadership to act and call for a ceasefire now, a release of the hostages, a hostage exchange and a deescalation and to address the root causes of this violence — decades of occupation, apartheid and siege.

And unfortunately, police chose to escalate. And with no verbal warnings or communication with police liaisons who were trying to speak with them, they started shoving protesters down the stairs and shoving protesters back with their bicycles and trampling on the 11,000 tea lights that protesters had brought to represent the Palestinians who have already been killed in Gaza.

And as you mentioned, Democratic lawmakers, including Congressman Brad Sherman, have said that these protesters are pro-Hamas. Speaker Mike Johnson said that this was an antisemitic protest, which is, frankly, absurd, because — for many reasons, but primarily so many of the protesters are not only Jews, but who have loved ones who were either murdered by Hamas on October 7th or Jews and Palestinians who have loved ones either in Gaza or who know people in Gaza who have lost dozens of members of their families over the past month. And so, to say that these, again, many of them personally grieving protesters are pro-terrorist is absurd. And let's be clear that police escalated this protest.

**AMY GOODMAN:** Rather than characterize what Congressman Brad Sherman said, as I did at the beginning, let's hear what he said on CNN Wednesday night.

**REP. BRAD SHERMAN:** There were over 200,000 pro-Israel demonstrators, with a permit, entirely peaceful. And here you have a demonstration less than one-thousandth as large that's also getting publicity. And it's getting publicity because of their willingness to attack police, as they did with pepper spray, is a force multiplier.

**AMY GOODMAN:** So, he's contrasting the protest you had in front of the DNC with the pro-Israel march that took place a few days ago. Your response to what he's saying? Also, I know a number of reporters outside were scratching their heads when he talked about pro-terrorist protesters.

**EVA BORGWARDT:** Yes. Thanks, Amy. And, yes, his words do speak for themselves. I mean, first of all, let's also be clear that there have been hundreds of thousands of nonviolent — hundreds of thousands of peace activists — Palestinian, Jewish, multiracial, multifait — rising up across the U.S., and millions around the world. And so, to contrast Wednesday night's demonstration only with the Tuesday demonstration, the pro-Israel march at the Capitol, is telling, because it's impossible for politicians like Brad Sherman, who are refusing to call for a ceasefire, to acknowledge the massive peaceful uprising that is happening around the world in support of the people of Gaza because the public, the international community, sees Palestinian lives and Israeli lives as equal.

**AMY GOODMAN:** Eva, on Thursday, yesterday, Vermont's sole Congressmember Becca Balint became the first Jewish congressmember to call for a ceasefire. That's very interesting because one of the senators of Vermont, Bernie Sanders, has not called for a ceasefire. In fact, IfNotNow protesters have been arrested in his office requesting that he call for a ceasefire. Your response to both Balint and Sanders?

**EVA BORGWARDT:** Yes, well, and I was also at that protest at Senator Sanders' office earlier this month. And I think, in particular, for Jewish lawmakers, as a Jewish movement, as the Jewish movements that have been protesting for ceasefire, we are doing this for safety and freedom for Palestinians who are under siege, and also because we are terrified for our loved ones in Israel and in the entire region if this escalates into a broader regional war. And our disappointment in Senator Sanders so far refraining from calling for a ceasefire is that he has made his legacy as an antiwar champion. And so, we are extremely grateful to Congresswoman Balint for speaking out from a Jewish perspective for ceasefire, because we feel that our Jewish values and our safety as Jews is extremely, extremely contingent on ending this horrific violence and calling for a ceasefire now.

**AMY GOODMAN:** And finally, Eva, you were an organizer for President Biden during his 2020 campaign. If you can talk about your response to his position now, and what this means, and what you feel Biden

supporters then are feeling today?

**EVA BORGWARDT:** Yes. So, like you mentioned, I worked for President Biden in Arizona in the 2020 election. Let's be clear: I am terrified of Donald Trump and the white supremacist, antisemitic movement that's behind him. And I feel immense stake in the Democratic Party winning in November 2024. And frankly, again, I am deeply terrified and angry at Democratic leadership for ignoring the calls from the majority of their base for a ceasefire, a hostage exchange and a deescalation, and creating a lack of faith in the Democratic Party that I am very concerned will hurt Democrats' chances in November.

And I encourage them, with the fullest, fullest emphasis possible, to reverse course now. We have seen so far that for some Democrats, 1,400 Israeli deaths and over 4,000 Palestinian deaths were enough. Now, for other Democrats, 11,000 Palestinians in Gaza killed are not enough for them to call for ceasefire, which is how we know this horrific violence will end and move toward a political solution in the region. And so, we are waiting to see how many Palestinian lives our Democratic politicians need in order to call for ceasefire. And every day, every hour that they wait has, I fear, implications for what will happen in November.

**AMY GOODMAN:** Finally, I wanted to ask about the powerful lobby group AIPAC — that's the American Israel Public Affairs Committee — stepping up its support for primary challengers to lawmakers who voice support for a ceasefire. *Slate* magazine [reports](#) AIPAC is expected to spend somewhere around \$100 million in Democratic primaries backing opponents of House progressives, like the Squad. Your response?

**EVA BORGWARDT:** Yes. So, IfNotNow is currently — prior to October 7th, IfNotNow's main focus was around the campaign around AIPAC and making sure that the Jewish public, in particular, and the American public understand that these days AIPAC is — those \$100 million and the money that AIPAC is spending in these elections is primarily from far-right billionaires and that AIPAC is functioning essentially as a way for these Republican billionaires to interfere in Democratic primaries.

And in particular around escalating their spending or threats of spending against those calling for ceasefire, AIPAC has always been determined to prevent any kind of conditionality on U.S. support for Israel, any human rights conditions consistent with U.S. law and any daylight between the U.S. and Israel. And now in attempting to punish any of the lawmakers who are taking a moral and pragmatic stand in calling for ceasefire, they are demonstrating that even the genocidal — and let's call it genocidal, because it is — rhetoric from — as you have on this show many times, rhetoric from the Israeli leaders in the government right now is not enough to warrant conditionality in U.S. support. And frankly, I am also extremely terrified about the implications of punishing politicians for not supporting, again, this assault on — this massacre in Gaza, because if we say — if AIPAC is determined to tell the American public that supporting an unfolding genocide — that speaking out to oppose an unfolding genocide is beyond the pale in the realm of political acceptability, what is going to become of us, and what is going to happen to this world?

**AMY GOODMAN:** Eva Borgwardt, I want to thank you so much for being with us, national spokesperson for IfNotNow, one of the organizers of Wednesday's protest at the Democratic National Committee headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Coming up, independent journalist Sharif Abdel Kouddous on the latest in Gaza and the West Bank, and his new documentary on the Cop City protests in Atlanta. Stay with us.

## 2023-11-17 Sharif Abdel Kouddous on the Targeting of Journalists & Israel's "Colonial Fantasy" to Depopulate Gaza

[https://www.democracynow.org/2023/11/17/israel\\_gaza\\_sharif\\_abdel\\_kouddous](https://www.democracynow.org/2023/11/17/israel_gaza_sharif_abdel_kouddous)

### Guests

- [Sharif Abdel Kouddous](#)  
independent journalist.

### Links

- ["Israel's endgame is to push Palestinians into Egypt — and the west is cheering it on"](#)
- [Mada Masr](#)
- ["The Killing of Shireen Abu Akleh"](#)



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As the United Nations calls again for a ceasefire in Gaza, Palestinian health officials are warning thousands of women, children and sick people could soon die as Israel continues its bombardment of Gaza. Gaza is also facing a second day of a communications blackout. "Gaza City itself is a hollow shell" where "the streets have been turned into graveyards" and "the smell of death is everywhere," says independent journalist Sharif Abdel Kouddous. "It increasingly seems that Israel is trying to push Palestinians into Egypt, which is a long-standing colonial fantasy," he says of Israel's campaign of Palestinian displacement in Gaza. Kouddous also calls out the journalism community's silence in the face of what is the deadliest conflict for journalists in decades, noting the "bias being laid bare."

### Transcript

This is a rush transcript. Copy may not be in its final form.

**AMY GOODMAN:** This is *Democracy Now!*, [democracynow.org](http://democracynow.org), *The War and Peace Report*. I'm Amy Goodman.

As we continue to look at Israel's bombardment of Gaza, I want to turn to the words of the British Palestinian surgeon Ghassan Abu-Sittah describing the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. He had been working in the Al-Ahli Arab Hospital, which was one of the last functioning hospitals in the Gaza Strip.

**DR. GHASSAN ABU-SITTAH:** Day before yesterday, there was a major airstrike, over 50 killed, on a mosque. And Al-Ahli was completely inundated with the wounded, and we were operating all through the night. And by the early hours of yesterday morning, we had realized that we have basically run out of medication for the anesthetic machines, and we had to stop the operating room. We had finished early, and that is when we made the decision.

At the same time, in the early hours of the morning, there was heavy bombing all around the hospital. I mean, we — close to the hospital, you could feel the building being shook. And we were being — and it sounded like tank fire. It didn't sound like air raids. And so we made the decision that it was time for at least the operating room staff, since we were being — not going to be able to provide a service, to evacuate. And so, yesterday morning we left. And we could — you could hear the sounds of the tanks around the hospital when we walked out. And we literally walked all the way to Nuseirat camp in the central zone.

When we left, there were over 500 wounded needing the urgent medical care, needing surgical intervention, that we cannot provide because we had run out of medication. We had run out. The operating room could no longer function. And at the best, there were two operating rooms in Al-Ahli. We were always overwhelmed with the number of wounded, compared with what we were able to provide.

**AMY GOODMAN:** The British Palestinian surgeon Ghassan Abu-Sittah, speaking through his surgical mask in Gaza. We've been trying to reach people there, but it's the second straight day of a telecommunications blackout. This is only the latest one.

To talk more about Israel's bombardment of Gaza, we're joined now by independent journalist Sharif Abdel Kouddous, produced the award-winning documentary *The Killing of Shireen Abu Akleh* for Al Jazeera's documentary series *Fault Lines* and has reported from Gaza for *Democracy Now!* and other outlets.

Sharif, it's so important to talk about what's happening there even as this telecommunications blackout is happening. Also, the leaflets that are being dropped on Khan Younis, which is where so many thousands of Palestinians have been instructed to go, to head south, from northern Gaza south — now leaflets are being dropped there, saying they must move further south. Can you respond to this overall situation?

**SHARIF ABDEL KOUDDOUS:** Well, I mean, you have a situation where the northern part of Gaza, north of Wadi Gaza, and Gaza City itself, which was home to nearly 1 million people, is now a hollow shell. Most neighborhoods in Gaza City and in northern Gaza, in general, have been very badly damaged or destroyed. You have these armored columns of Israeli forces going in and tearing up the roads. Electricity, water, sewage infrastructure basically no longer exist.

And, you know, there are reports that the smell of death is everywhere, as an untold number of bodies are lying under the rubble. The U.N. estimates that about 2,700 people, including 1,500 children, are missing and believed to be buried under the ruins. And there's reports of the people that have remained in the north digging with their bare hands, trying to find their family members. And the streets have been turned into graveyards.

So, only a fraction of the people who lived in northern Gaza remain there, and most have been forcibly displaced to the south in scenes that are reminiscent of the Nakba. One-point-five million people have been displaced in Gaza. That's nearly double the number that were ethnically cleansed in 1948 and were never allowed to return to their homes. And many of these people are people who were displaced, or their descendants, from 1948. We have to remember that 80% of Palestinians in Gaza are not from Gaza. They're refugees. So, most of the Palestinians in northern Gaza are now packed into the south. There's no indication if or ever they'll be able to return to the north. The Israeli military effectively controls most of the northern area. And northern Gaza is basically uninhabitable now. You know, it's been destroyed.

And there's hardly any aid coming in. You know, Gaza is now receiving only about 10% of its needed food supplies. Dehydration, malnutrition are growing. Nearly all of the people in Gaza, the 2.3 million people, are in need of food, according to the U.N. And as you mentioned, the communications systems are down now for second day. And this is a more serious telecommunications blackout, because it's the result of no fuel to power the internet and phone networks, so it may be a more permanent communications blackout. And this communications blackout is actually causing disruptions to the little amount of cross-border aid deliveries that were coming in.

And as you mentioned, the Israeli forces now have dropped these leaflets just the other day telling Palestinians in areas east of Khan Younis, which is, you know, a bigger city in the south of Gaza, to evacuate. Where are these people supposed to go? It increasingly seems that, you know, Israel is trying to push Palestinians into Egypt, which is a long-standing colonial fantasy. And, you know, there are plans that have been documented for this. There was a document leaked last month from Israel's intelligence minister that detailed a durable postwar situation solution for Gaza, which includes the long-term transfer, forcible transfer, of Palestinians to northern Sinai. There's something called the Eiland plan, which is named after a retired major general, who outlines a proposal to forcibly transfer Palestinians to Sinai.

But right now, yeah, we don't know what the situation is. Egypt has staunchly refused this kind of mass displacement of Palestinians into its territory, and it has tried to negotiate aid to come in. But there's increasing pressure right now on Egypt, because at the end of the day, this is an Egyptian border, the Rafah border crossing. It's the only border crossing into Gaza that is not controlled by Israel. Egypt right now is letting in maybe 50, maybe 80, maybe a hundred trucks a day, just a fraction of the amount of aid that used to come into Gaza even before October 7th. And the reason it's only letting in a fraction is that it's allowing Israel to dictate the terms. So it gets approval from Israel of how many trucks can enter the Rafah border crossing. Those trucks then enter. They go up to an Israeli border crossing, where they're checked. They come back down and then enter into Gaza.

And there's increasing pressure on Egypt from civil society in Egypt, from people around the world, for Egypt to just open the border and let the aid in. If Israel wants to bomb U.N. aid trucks, then, you know, that's something else. But right now Egypt is coordinating with Israel on how much aid gets in, and people are beginning to starve, and infectious disease is spreading because of no water, and it's an incredible crisis.

**AMY GOODMAN:** Sharif, the number of journalists who have been killed, I think Committee to Protect Journalists says at least 42 journalists and media workers have been killed since October 7th. It's the deadliest month for journalists since the group began collecting information in 1992. If you can talk about the global response, the global journalist response? And then we'll talk a bit about the latest on Shireen Abu Akleh, who was killed not in Gaza by the Israeli forces, but was killed last year outside the Jenin refugee camp.

**SHARIF ABDEL KOUDDOUS:** Yeah. I mean, what can you say? I don't know what the number is even now. You know, it's at least 35. Maybe 40 Palestinian journalists have been killed in just over a month, by far the highest number of journalists killed in such a short amount of time. And, you know, foreign journalists can't get into Gaza. Israel is not letting them in, and nor is Egypt. So you have a situation where you're killing most of the journalists, the registered journalists in Gaza. You're not letting other journalists in. And then we've seen very problematic coverage from newsrooms, Western newsrooms, of what's happening on the ground, problematic language, and people have been protesting this. And we just saw — you know, people have been resigning from *The New York Times*. The poetry editor of *The New York Times* just resigned from there, you know, because of the language used by *The New York Times* in this coverage.

But also, you know, you haven't seen the type of outcry that one would imagine from the journalistic community for their colleagues who are being killed in Gaza. And the ones that aren't killed in Gaza have lost so much. They've lost their families. They've lost their homes. When Jamal Khashoggi was brutally murdered by the Saudi government, there was massive condemnation from Western news outlets for the murder, and rightly so. When Evan Gershkovich, *The Wall Street Journal* reporter, who remains in prison in Russia, was arrested, there has been and still remains a massive outcry over his arrest. But we haven't seen the same kind of outcry over this record number of journalists, Palestinian journalists, that have been killed in Gaza. I think it's deeply, deeply problematic and reveals a bias that is being laid bare in many ways.

And as you mentioned Shireen Abu Akleh, you know, when this all kind of — the assault on Gaza began on October 7th, we saw people post on Twitter, on social media kind of photos of Shireen and just saying that — kind of wishing that she was around, that she was alive to report, because she was such an incredible journalist and so needed in a time like this. You know, even the Lebanese journalist who was killed in shelling in southern Lebanon by Israel —

**AMY GOODMAN:** Issam Abdallah.

**SHARIF ABDEL KOUDDOUS:** — one of his last tweets — Issam Abdallah, yeah, Issam Abdallah — one of his last tweets was a photo of Shireen. And he just wrote, "Shireen," with a heart. And then, after he was killed, someone put up his photo and said "Issam," with a heart.

**AMY GOODMAN:** And the latest news —

**SHARIF ABDEL KOUDDOUS:** So, yeah, Shireen — go ahead.

**AMY GOODMAN:** — about the Israeli army bulldozing the memorial for her where she was killed?

**SHARIF ABDEL KOUDDOUS:** Right. I mean, as we heard in headlines, you know, Israel has repeatedly conducted very brutal raids on Jenin, on the Jenin refugee camp, which is the heart of militant Palestinian resistance in the West Bank. We've seen drone strikes on Jenin. Just a few days ago, a drone strike killed about 14 Palestinians in Jenin, one of the deadliest days in the West Bank since 2005. And we saw drone strikes just the other day, as well, and raids on the hospital.

And during one of these raids, they came in — the site where Shireen was shot by an Israeli sniper has become a memorial area. When I went there last year to report on her killing, there's photos of her everywhere. There's flowers. There's written pieces of tribute that are all hung up. The tree where she was killed under, you can still see the bullet holes. And it's a place where family and friends have sought some solace by visiting this area and remembering Shireen. And an Israeli bulldozer came in during one of these raids and completely destroyed this road and this area where this memorial was. And it doesn't seem — it seems to just be some kind of vindictive act, because there was no reason to destroy this road that leads to the entrance of the Jenin refugee camp.

They've also — you know, in an earlier raid, they destroyed this memorial which was in the shape of a horse, which was kind of well known in Jenin, in a main roundabout, and was built from the pieces of an ambulance that was blown up in an airstrike by Israel in 2002. And it was — they used the parts of the destroyed ambulance to kind of create this horse monument, which was a testament to Jenin's spirit of resistance. They also came in and kind of removed that. So there seems to be also an attack on symbols of resistance to Israel, as well.

**AMY GOODMAN:** Well, Sharif, we're going to ask you to stay with us. We're going to switch gears. Sharif Abdel Kouddous is a journalist who won a George Polk Award for documentary *The Killing of Shireen Abu Akleh* for Al Jazeera's *Fault Lines* series. After the break, Sharif will stay with us, and we'll be joined by another guest to talk about his new documentary and all the latest developments around Cop City in Atlanta. Back in 20 seconds.

## 2023-11-17 Cop City Protest Tear-Gassed as Activists Face "Unprecedented" RICO & Domestic Terrorism Charges

[https://www.democracynow.org/2023/11/17/cop\\_city\\_week\\_of\\_action](https://www.democracynow.org/2023/11/17/cop_city_week_of_action)

### Guests

- [Kamau Franklin](#)  
founder of Community Movement Builders.
- [Sharif Abdel Kouddous](#)  
independent journalist.

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Protesters in Atlanta held a week of action to stop the construction of the massive \$90 million police training complex known as "Cop City" in the Weelaunee Forest. This comes as activists have been organizing for a citywide referendum on the project which officials have tied up in court. Meanwhile, 61 people facing RICO,



or racketeering, and domestic terrorism charges appeared in court this month as the state tries to characterize them as “militant anarchists.” We get an update from Kamau Franklin, founder of the Atlanta-based grassroots organizing collective Community Movement Builders, who describes Atlanta’s repression of peaceful civil disobedience as part of an effort “to protect cops and capitalism.” We also feature excerpts from Al Jazeera’s new *Fault Lines* documentary on the “Stop Cop City” movement and speak with correspondent Sharif Abdel Kouddous, who calls the mass charges against protesters “unprecedented.”

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## Transcript

This is a rush transcript. Copy may not be in its final form.

**AMY GOODMAN:** This is *Democracy Now!*, [democracynow.org](https://www.democracynow.org). I’m Amy Goodman.

We end today’s show in Atlanta, Georgia, where people from around the country joined in a week of action to stop the massive \$90 million police training complex known as Cop City.

**PROTESTER:** Now they’re throwing tear gas into the crowd. They’re throwing munitions — yeah, that’s tear gas.

**AMY GOODMAN:** On Monday, police attacked peaceful protesters with tear gas, pepper balls, flashbang grenades as over 400 marched toward the sacred Weelaunee Forest, the proposed site for Cop City. Participants included the parents of the environmental defender Manuel Esteban Terán, known as Tortuguita, who was fatally shot by Georgia state troopers during a raid on the Stop Cop City protest encampment in January.

**PROTESTERS:** Viva, viva Tortuguita! Viva, viva Tortuguita!

**AMY GOODMAN:** This comes as activists have been organizing for a citywide referendum on the project which officials have tied up in court. Meanwhile, 61 people facing RICO, or racketeering, and domestic terrorism charges appeared in court this month as the state tries to characterize them as militant anarchists.

Al Jazeera’s *Fault Lines* recently covered all of this in their [report](#), “‘Now you’re a terrorist’: Atlanta’s Cop City crackdown.” Sharif Abdel Kouddous spoke to environmental activist Sarah Wasilewski, one of the dozens charged with domestic terrorism for protesting Cop City. She described the January morning when Georgia law enforcement officers violently raided their protests encampment, when state troopers shot and killed Tortuguita.

**SARAH WASILEWSKI:** So, I was sitting in a hammock with my partner at the time. We woke up around like 8:00, maybe quarter ‘til 8:00 in the morning.

**SHARIF ABDEL KOUDDOUS:** Sarah Wasilewski had traveled from Pittsburgh to Atlanta and joined the protest for the weekend.

**SARAH WASILEWSKI:** So, we were just laying in bed talking. And then, all of a sudden, we heard and saw just like 15 or so police in full military, like, combat gear, like, with AR-15s, just like coming through the woods directly at us. We were waiting to be put into a transport vehicle, and that’s when I heard gunshots.

**STATE TROOPER:** Is this target practice?

**SARAH WASILEWSKI:** I screamed when I heard it. And the police officer that, like, had me also responded, like, “Oh [bleep].” Like, they knew something bad happened.

**SHARIF ABDEL KOUDDOUS:** While Sarah was being arrested, a team of officers killed



Tortugueta in a barrage of gunfire.

**AMY GOODMAN:** Sharif Abdel Kouddous also spoke to Indigenous forest defender Victor Puertas in a video call inside ICE's Stewart Detention Center in Lumpkin, Georgia, where Puertas was held for over seven months since his arrest. After being released on bond from DeKalb County Jail, Puertas was immediately taken into custody by ICE.

**SHARIF ABDEL KOUDDOUS:** After weeks of negotiations with the detention center, we were able to speak to Victor by video call.

**VICTOR PUERTAS:** Hello.

**SHARIF ABDEL KOUDDOUS:** Hi, Victor.

This is the first time he's spoken to the media since his arrest.

**VICTOR PUERTAS:** It feels like you're like living a completely parallel life, you know? Like, your life is stopped the moment that you got arrested. And now you have to make meaning of all this, you know?

**SHARIF ABDEL KOUDDOUS:** And why is this movement so important to you, Victor?

**VICTOR PUERTAS:** I care about the land. I care about the people. I care about life. I care about the water. I deeply care about those things. I grew up in that way. I was raised in that way.

**SHARIF ABDEL KOUDDOUS:** So, what do you think it does to movement when the state labels it as a violent extremist organization and then charges its participants, like you, with domestic terrorism?

**VICTOR PUERTAS:** You know, you don't believe it at first, you know? And then you realize, yeah, actually, they're, like, passing these kind of laws, you know, to targeting certain groups of people. What's happening here in Georgia, in Atlanta, you know, it will have a repercussion all over the country.

**AMY GOODMAN:** For more, we're joined by two guests. Sharif Abdel Kouddous is still with us, correspondent for this Al Jazeera *Fault Lines* report. And Kamau Franklin is joining us, founder of the organization Community Movement Builders, who's been part of the now two-year movement to stop Cop City.

We welcome you both back to *Democracy Now!* Kamau, for the latest news of this week, over 60 people in court, many of them charged with domestic terrorism. Can you talk about the significance of what this means, as we heard this woman say domestic terrorism, and how it affects their whole lives?

**KAMAU FRANKLIN:** Yes. Thanks for having me.

I mean, this issue goes to the heart of the militarization of the police and the criminalization of movements. What we're witnessing in Atlanta is a rebirth of the COINTELPRO movement to stamp out organizers and activists, to scare people into not speaking up and participating in movements. You have people who came to Atlanta who previously were not involved in any Cop City activity, but who happened to get rounded up by police. And the police looked at IDs. And if they had Georgia IDs, they let them go. If they had out-of-state IDs, they arrested them and charged them with domestic terrorism and later added on the charge of RICO.

So you have people whose lives have been turned upside down, people who have been engaged in acts — some people who have been engaged in acts of simple civil disobedience by sitting in tents, by sitting in

tree huts, who now, again, have domestic terrorism charges and RICO charges. And so, as you stated and as the documentary was saying, people's lives have been turned upside down because of the state's attempt to criminalize and brutalize activists and organizers who are working against police violence in our city.

**AMY GOODMAN:** Can you talk about the range of opposition? I mean, it's not just one group. It's people who are deeply concerned about police brutality. It's also religious leaders, Indigenous leaders. Talk about the area where it's being built.

**KAMAU FRANKLIN:** Yeah, one of the things about this movement has been, since the very beginning, it's been vast in its outreach, everything from community organizers like myself, environmentalists, religious leaders, voting rights activists, yes, including anarchists, other people who are community members, who have been engaged in this because they see two things happening. One is the — what we spoke about a couple of seconds ago, is the continued overpolicing of Black and Brown communities that will be happening if Cop City is built. Two is the attack against movements, which is the very reason why this vast militarized facility is even being proposed.

And then three is the environmental degradation of the Weelaunee Forest, which is going to be ripped apart. Over 300 acres have been rented at \$10 a year. Ninety acres have already been cut down. This forest has been promised to a working-class adjacent Black community for use of park space, for camping space, for trails, walking trails. All of those plans were ripped away as soon as they decided to put Cop City in. It's already caused environmental degradation in the neighborhood. And that will continue to happen as they go forth with their plans to try to build Cop City.

**AMY GOODMAN:** And what about the referendum? What's happened to it, an Atlanta-wide referendum so people could decide?

**KAMAU FRANKLIN:** The city of Atlanta, along with the Clerk's Office, the Mayor's Office, the City Council, have basically sat on this referendum. They've done nothing to move this forward, even though the organizers who did this, we collected over 116,000 signatures. The City Council and the Clerk's Office could have started verifying these signatures as soon as we turned them in, but they decided to halt that process and to not do it.

Further, the City Council on its own could put a referendum on the ballot without even considering the signatures. And again, they have failed the city of Atlanta, they've failed the people in Atlanta by allowing the people to decide. People, again, over 116,000 signatures of people saying that they want to vote on this, they want a voice on this. But the city has ignored it because it prefers to do backroom deals with corporations and with the Atlanta Police Foundation and with the police themselves and the state government. You have here a right-wing, white Republican state apparatus teaming up with a so-called liberal, moderate Democratic Black mayor apparatus. And the things that they agree upon most is how to protect cops and capitalism. And that's what's happening right now. And the referendum is being put on ice, so that it can't be voted upon by the people in Atlanta.

**AMY GOODMAN:** Sharif, you spoke to Belkis Terán, the mother of the forest defender Manuel Esteban Paez Terán, known as Tortugueta, who was killed by Georgia police in January. Belkis traveled to Georgia from Panama, where she lives. We're going to just play a short clip.

**PROTESTER:** You [bleep]ed your own officer up.

**BELKIS TERÁN:** I really don't believe anything what they say. I think they are lying. And that is nothing new. Everybody knows the police lie.

**SHARIF ABDEL KOUDDOUS:** The county medical examiner didn't find any gunshot residue on Tortugueta's hands. And an independent autopsy suggests that Tortugueta was shot while seated with hands raised.

**BELKIS TERÁN:** Manuel really was pacifist. He disliked the police very much, but not to kill

anybody or to try to kill anybody. Manuel's life and message is to save the world, to save the green areas, to take care of the oceans.

**AMY GOODMAN:** Sharif, one of the first people we hear in your *Fault Lines* documentary, "'Now you're a terrorist,'" is the mother of Tortuguita, Belkis Terán. Your overall take from covering issues all over the world, from going down to Atlanta and seeing what people were confronting here and now what they're being charged with? I mean, that's not to say Tortuguita, who was killed.

**SHARIF ABDEL KOUDDOUS:** Right. Well, I think what's important to note about the movement to stop Cop City and defend the Atlanta forest is its resilience. You know, it's brought together, as you mentioned, abolitionists, environmentalists, Indigenous rights leaders, religious leaders — a multifaceted resistance movement against this massive planned police training center. And the movement's lasted well over two years now. It's still going, despite this massive amount of state repression against it.

And what we try and document in the documentary is that many of these — there's a crackdown on even lawful political activities. And lawyers say this is unprecedented, that it's basically criminalizing political association. The indictment, where 61 people are charged in this wide-ranging racketeering case, the ACLU called the theory in the indictment shocking and unprecedented. And it basically relies on people's beliefs and community organizing as the basis for the sweeping criminal liability.

And just finally, as we're talking internationally, too, you know, there's protests by the Stop Cop City movement in support of Palestine, as well, and against what's called the Georgia International Law Enforcement Exchange, or GILEE, where law enforcement officers from Atlanta, from across the state and the U.S. travel to Israel to receive training from Israeli police forces. And, you know, Israel has long taken these strategies and techniques that are honed on the Palestinian body and then exported them abroad. And so we see these ties —

**AMY GOODMAN:** Four seconds.

**SHARIF ABDEL KOUDDOUS:** — between Israel and police forces in Atlanta.

**AMY GOODMAN:** Sharif Abdel Kouddous, he is the reporter on "'Now you're a terrorist,'" the *Fault Lines* [documentary](#). You can watch it online. And Kamau Franklin of Community Movement Builders.