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Palestine and the United States Peace Plan—Continuing the Deception

By: D.J. Ravindran

History shows how previous attempts have only continued to deny Palestinians the right to self-determination. With its silence on Palestinian statehood, the US plan -- now in its first phase of implementation -- deceives; it will not bring peace on equal terms.

The 20-point “Plan to End the Gaza Conflict” proposed by the United States on September 29 includes measures such as a ceasefire, the return of Israeli hostages and Palestinian prisoners, and providing humanitarian aid – but is silent on the crucial questions of Palestinian statehood and the end of the Israeli occupation.

|| Israel continues to strongly oppose the establishment of a Palestinian state.

US President Donald Trump [announced the plan](#) while shaking hands with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Several Arab and Muslim countries, as well as the United Kingdom and the European Union, welcomed the peace plan. In India, the pro-government media focused on Prime Minister Narendra Modi welcoming it in seven languages and Trump reposting Modi’s message.

On 9 October, Israel and Hamas agreed to implement the first phase of the United States plan. It involves, the release of all hostages in Gaza, Israeli withdrawal to an agreed point and release of some Palestinian prisoners. This will lead to delivery of humanitarian aid. In essence these are the most deliverable parts of the plan. The rest particularly post-war governance of Gaza and Hamas status including disarmament would require much deliberation with the risk of upending the truce.

Moreover, scholars and legal experts point out that the [peace plan is vague](#) and that [it favours Israel](#). It makes no mention of the expanding Israeli settlements in the West Bank and the settler violence against the Palestinians. The peace plan has no mention of accountability for war crimes committed by the Israeli forces, nor any provision for reparation. Instead, it provides for Israeli troops to remain in Gaza’s “security perimeter” and thereby sanctions indefinite Israeli occupation.



Donald J. Trump  
@realDonaldTrump

I am very proud to announce that Israel and Hamas have both signed off on the first Phase of our Peace Plan. This means that ALL of the Hostages will be released very soon, and Israel will withdraw their Troops to an agreed upon line as the first steps toward a Strong, Durable, and Everlasting Peace. All Parties will be treated fairly! This is a GREAT Day for the Arab and Muslim World, Israel, all surrounding Nations, and the United States of America, and we thank the mediators from Qatar, Egypt, and Turkey, who worked with us to make this Historic and Unprecedented Event happen. BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS!

DONALD J. TRUMP
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Israel also continues to strongly oppose the [establishment of a Palestinian state](#), In fact, Netanyahu himself pointed out, “it is not written in the agreement”.

On October 3, a [group of United Nations experts](#) criticised proposals such as temporarily outsourcing administration over the Gaza Strip to a US-supervised committee and the establishment of an “International Stabilisation Force”, as reflecting a colonial outlook. They maintained that “International Stabilisation Force... would replace Israeli occupation with a US-led occupation, contrary to Palestinian self-determination”.

As history shows time and again why previous efforts at establishing peace have failed. Will the latest plan meet the same fate?

Stolen land

In 1922, at the end of the Ottoman Empire, the League of Nations placed the Palestine territories under the administration of the United Kingdom. Previously, in 1917, the UK had issued the “[Balfour Declaration](#)” which supported the “establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people”.

Edward Said had opposed the Oslo Accords because, like Trump’s 2025 peace plan, it did not address the Israeli occupation.

The UK aided and abetted large-scale Jewish immigration to the Palestinian territories. Persecution by the Nazi regime strengthened the Zionist idea of a Jewish homeland and the numbers swelled. Arab nations resisted the influx of the Jews and demanded the

establishment of an independent Palestinian state. The UK faced violence by Jewish settlers and failed to find a solution agreeable to both parties. In 1947, it handed over the issue to the newly established United Nations.

In 1948, the UN voted for the partition of the territory between the Arab and Jewish states. Of the two proposed states, only the Jewish State proclaimed independence and began expelling the Arab population. Zionist paramilitary groups and the nascent Israeli army carried out attacks and massacres against the Arabs.

In what Palestinians call the “**Nakba**”, which is Arabic for “catastrophe”, the State of Israel expelled around 750,000 Palestinian from their villages and towns. Israel controlled 77% cent of the territory, including a significant part of Jerusalem. The UN resolution which partitioned the territory assigned the remainder to Jordan and Egypt. In 1967, Israel occupied the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, which led to the exodus of half a million Palestinians from their territories.

Oslo Peace Accords

In 1964, the Palestine Liberation Organisation was established to resist the occupation. In 1974, the United Nations and the Arab League recognised the Palestine Liberation Organisation as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

Israel persisted in resorting to armed attacks on the Palestine Liberation Organisation, which fled first from Jordan and later from Lebanon. The 1982 attack against the Palestine Liberation Organisation in Lebanon led to what is known as the massacre in the Sabra and Shatila camps. In 1983, a UN independent commission concluded that the Sabra and Shatila massacre was a form of genocide.

|| The sidelining of Hamas as a political entity implies victor’s justice.

Despite Israel’s repression, Palestinians living in the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip continued to resist the occupation. The First Intifada, a mass uprising, lasted from 1987 to 1993, with widespread participation from the grassroots. Israel responded violently, which led to renewed international efforts to find a solution to the Palestinian question.

Under the 1993 Oslo I accord, the Palestine Liberation Organisation recognised Israel and renounced violence. Israel recognised the Palestine Liberation Organisation as the representative of the Palestinian people. The accord provided for the establishment of the Palestinian Authority and self-rule over parts of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

It divided the territory into three areas: Area A, under complete Palestinian civil and security control; Area B, under Palestinian civil control with joint security control between both parties; and Area C, under complete Israeli civil and security control.

Demise of the Oslo Accords

Israel was unwilling to abide by the terms of the agreement. In violation of the accord, Israel routinely conducted military and security operations in areas under Palestinian Authority control and in other areas. As a leader of the right-wing Likud party in Israel, Netanyahu opposed the Oslo Accords and the two-state solution.

In 1995, an extremist Israeli assassinated Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin for signing the Oslo Accords. Permanent status negotiations never happened. The interim arrangements under the accord have prolonged Israel’s occupation rather than ending it.

President Donald J. Trump’s Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict:

1. Gaza will be a deradicalized terror-free zone that does not pose a threat to its neighbors.
2. Gaza will be redeveloped for the benefit of the people of Gaza, who have suffered more than enough.
3. If... pic.twitter.com/veqhr9MW28

— Rapid Response 47 (@RapidResponse47) September 29, 2025

As of 2023, more than 700,000 Israeli settlers were living in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, according to the UN. Israel has also fragmented the West Bank, ensuring that a Palestinian state, even if established, will not have a contiguous territory. The Gaza Strip remains physically and politically separate from the West Bank.

American-Palestinian scholar Edward Said's words ring true. He had called the Oslo Accord “an instrument of Palestinian surrender, a Palestinian Versailles”. Said had opposed the Oslo Accords because, like Trump's 2025 peace plan, it did not address the Israeli occupation.

Doomed to fail?

But even otherwise, the US peace proposal falls short on several counts.

Before formulating the Oslo Accord, Norway conducted secret negotiations with the parties for several years, building confidence between them. The Oslo Accord had partners for peace, despite its eventual failure. But the US did not consult the Palestinian Authority or Hamas in formulating the 20-point plan. The peace plan does not have a Palestinian partner. Instead, it envisions a “technocratic, apolitical Palestinian committee”, to run the local administration, which will be supervised by a “Board of Peace” headed by the US president and the members of other heads of state, including former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair. The “Board of Peace” is not under the United Nations, raising the spectre of colonial practice. The temporary International Stabilisation Force, launched in collaboration with Arab and international partners, is similarly flawed.

|| The peace plan provides for Israeli troops to remain in Gaza's “security perimeter” and thereby sanctions indefinite Israeli occupation.

Since the US and Israel deny the legitimacy of the Palestinian Authority, it will not be part of the peace plan's implementation mechanism. There is also no mention of what will happen in Palestinian territories like the West Bank, thus creating a political vacuum. Such a proposed governance structure violates the right of Palestinians to self-determination.

The US peace plan seeks the dissolution of Hamas as a military and political force. “Hamas and other factions agree to not have any role in the governance of Gaza, directly, indirectly, or in any form,” it says.

However, Hamas has controlled Gaza since 2007 and has deep roots in Gazan society. The sidelining of Hamas as a political entity implies victor's justice. In the absence of a credible disarmament process implemented by the UN or other multilateral agencies, there is a risk of Israel eliminating disarmed Hamas leaders and members.

Perpetuating the occupation

The latest truce will bring much needed respite for the Palestinians who were subjected to unimaginable level bombings in the last two years and solace to the families of Israeli hostages . However, lasting peace will not prevail without ending the occupation.

|| For more than a hundred years, Palestinians have lost their land and dignity, culminating in Israel's genocidal assault on Gaza.

The International Court of Justice in its advisory opinion issued in 2024, categorically states that the Israeli occupation must end immediately, totally and unconditionally, with due reparations made to the Palestinians.

For more than a hundred years, Palestinians have lost their land and dignity, culminating in Israel's genocidal assault on Gaza. The current peace plan, with Netanyahu as the main interlocutor, is most likely to continue the deception and occupation.

DJ Ravindran was the Director of Human Rights in Peace Keeping Operations in Libya, Sudan and Timor Leste (East Timor) and has worked in post-conflict situations including Cambodia and Uganda. He is presently a member of the UN Working Group on the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination. Views expressed are made in personal capacity.

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