

PALESTINE-ISRAEL CONFLICT: LATEST DEVELOPMENTS AND PATHWAYS TO RESOLUTION

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Abstract

The decades long Palestine-Israel Conflict has passed through different stages of tension. The world community has tried to adopt many strategies for the resolution of the conflict but no substantial outcome has been agreed upon by the parties. The situation got escalated in October 2023 between Hamas and Israel resulting in the death of thousands of people, followed by the Gaza Peace Plan. The peace plan caters for 20-Points Peace Plan by the US President, Donald Trump revolving around the composition of 'Board of Peace' for Gaza with Donald Trump as the chairman. The board has been joined by countries of the world and shows its determination for the conflict- resolution. This article aims at analyzing the Palestine-Israel conflict and the resultant developments and pathways for the resolution of the conflict. Main findings of the study prognosticate that ceasefire is sine qua non for the restoration of peace, role of the board of peace in resolving the conflict, process of reconstruction, maintenance of security and stability in political atmosphere would lead towards the normalization of relation.

INTRODUCTION

Since the Palestine-Israel Conflict, irreparable loss has been accrued by the Palestinians in terms of human loss, injuries, displacement of people and destruction of the infrastructure. The Palestinian Bureau of Statistics at the 76th Anniversary of the Nakba (Great Catastrophe) indicating that since 1948 approximately 134,000 Palestinians and Arabs have been killed both inside and outside Palestine (Topcu, 2024). The bureau's report details the grim statistics of death, detention, settlement construction and land confiscation in Palestine coinciding with the anniversary of May 15, 1948. While since the war began on October 7, 2023 Israeli genocide has resulted in the killing of 71,769 Palestinians and wounding of 171,483 people while 1,139 people have been killed from the Israeli side and 250 taken captives

(Mohamed, 2026) & (Hedy Amir, 2025). It is important to mention that in one of the deadliest attacks on Palestine at least 31 Palestinians including six children have been killed in the aerial attacks on Gaza City and Khan Younis in the Gaza Strip (Caolán Magee, 2026). The violence came a day before when the Israel reopened the Rafah Border for the first time after May 2024 (Caolán Magee, 2026).

According to data from the Palestinian Prisoners' Society and the Palestinian Authority's Commission of Detainees and Ex-Detainees Affairs, approximately 1 million people have been detained since 1967 (Topcu, 2024). Since Oct. 7, 2023, Israel has destroyed or severely damaged a total of 89,000 buildings in Gaza, including 104 belonging to the UN (Topcu, 2024). The cost of

the war in Gaza, including damage to infrastructure, roads, electricity, water networks and agricultural land, is estimated to total \$30 billion (Topcu, 2024). In the West Bank, Israel partially or completely demolished 659 buildings and facilities in 2023. Additionally, demolition orders were issued for 1,333 Palestinian facilities on the grounds of lacking permits. Also in 2023, Jewish settlers and Israeli forces carried out 12,161 attacks against Palestinians and their properties, including 3,808 against properties and religious sites, 707 against lands and natural resources, and 7,646 against individuals. The attacks resulted in damage to around 21,700 trees, including 18,964 olive trees (Topcu, 2024). The Palestine-Israel conflict dates back to decades long period having roots in 1947 with the crisis building from the UN 1947 initial UN partition plan to the 1973 Yom Kippur War, to the recent Israel-Hamas war that sparked in 2023 (Salem, 2025). Many efforts have been taken from time to time to reach out a viable solution to the dispute but of no avail. The international community and stakeholders tried their level best through many forums and summits to resolve the dispute once for all with no substantial outcome to be reached at. It is a matter of great concern that all the efforts in the form of Camp David Accords, the Oslo Accords of 1992, and the 2020 Abraham Accords could not help in resolving the issue (Salem, 2025). Efforts were even taken twice to reach a viable ceasefire in November 2023 and March 2025 respectively but all in vain (Ferragamo, 2025). Keeping in view the nature of the dispute and gravity of situation, both the regional and the international community have been pondering over concrete measures for the resolution of dispute but credit for practical steps goes to the US President, Donald Trump for taking initiative for the Gaza Peace Plan with a pragmatic approach towards the issue.

Gaza Peace Plan

The Gaza Peace Plan proves to be milestone in the history of Palestine for adopting a very pragmatic approach by the US President, Donald Trump. The peace deal aims at a ceasefire to be followed by a number of other steps looking

forward for a long-lasting peace in the Middle East. The peace plan was signed between Israel and Palestine in the presence of US President Donald Trump and Prime Minister of Pakistan, Shahbaz in Sharif Sharm-el-Sheikh, Egypt on October 9, 2025 (Ferragamo, 2025). The peace plan is a result of Israel's parliament approving the ceasefire with Hamas, on 9 October, 2025. The historic event came on October 8, 2025 when the Israeli government and Hamas agreed on the first part of the peace plan proposed by the US President, Donald Trump resulting in cessation of hostilities on October 10, 2025. The event was attended by more than twenty countries in Sharm-el-Sheikh, Egypt paving the way for the ceasefire in Gaza though neither Israel nor Hamas made their representation on the occasion (Ferragamo, 2025) & (Tariq, Amair, & Bano, 2025). The absence of both Israel and Palestine in event puts a question mark on the applicability of the peace plan because these two are the contending parties whereby the former is suppressing the freedom struggle of the later is trying its best to retaliate with limited resources of warfare technology (Tariq, Amir & Bano, 2026).

The United Nations Independent International Commission of inquiry on the occupied Palestinian Territory has stated in its report that the Israel has committed genocide against the Palestinians (Rights, 2025). The commission is of the view that all the states should abide by the international law and support each other's sovereignty. It also envisages Israel and other states to end the genocide and penalize those involved in this crime against other states (Rights, 2025). One of the greatest hurdles in the way of proper implementation of the peace is the disarmament of Hamas since most of the Palestinians condition their disarmament the complete ceasefire in the region. It is also a matter of concern that about 70% of Palestinians though polls have expressed their view opposing the disarmament of Hamas, even if that means a return to Israeli attacks, poll conducted by the Palestinian Centre for Policy and Survey Research (PCPSR) from 22nd October to 25th

October 2025 (Mathews, 2025). While about 80% of the respondents opposed the disarmament of the Hamas in the occupied West Bank as the group's armed wing wants to keep their weapons for security and defense. It is important to mention that West Bank is governed by the Palestinian Authority and is dominated by Hamas, secular rival group, Fatah (Mathews, 2025).

The Gaza Peace Plan aims at the immediate ceasefire in the region, the return or the exchange of the hostages, exchange of prisoners, the demilitarization of the Gaza Strip, and the deployment of the International Stabilization Force for maintaining peace and order in the region and the process of reconstruction. As a result of the peace plan, Hamas has released the twenty hostages and also those taken into custody in October 2023, were released back to Israel as a result of the peace initiative (Ferragamo, 2025). Of the 251 hostages taken into custody by the Hamas, 147 has either been released or exchanged in deals (Ferragamo, 2025). In response to the release of prisoners, Israel has begun the release of 250 Palestinian prisoners who have been sentenced to life imprisonment in Israel, and 1,700 detainees from Gaza. The most significant thing is the ceasefire and efforts to keep it maintain through all possible efforts, which can resultantly lead towards peace, stability and prosperity in the region. The role of the International Stabilization Force (ISF) is of utmost significance since it comprises many countries of the world and can act in a judicious way. The function of the ISF is not only to maintain peace and order in the region but to also provide training to the law enforcement agencies of the Palestine.

Trump's 20-Points Plan for Gaza

Trump's 20-Points Plan for Gaza is part of the United Nations Resolution No. 2803 (2025) in September 2025 endorsing President Trump's Comprehensive Plan providing for the creation of a 'Board of Peace' in Gaza to bring peace and stability in Palestine (Barron, 2026) & (Khubchandani, 2025). Since the initial announcement, 'Trump's Comprehensive Plan'

has been fruitful in achieving the ceasefire and the hostage exchange (Barron, 2026). On September 29, 2025 US President, Donald Trump along with Netanyahu announced the "20-Point Gaza Peace Plan" to bring an end to war in Gaza (Barron, 2026). The plan calls for the immediate ceasefire and release of Israeli hostages within 72 hours through agreement by Hamas and Israel. US President Donald Trump congratulated the formation of the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza, which proved to be a vital step forward in implementing step two of the Comprehensive Plan to end the Gaza Conflict; a 20-point roadmap for lasting peace, stability, reconstruction and prosperity in the region (House, 2026). The Plan provides for a very comprehensive strategy encompassing; immediate steps enshrined in points 1-8, governance and reconstruction enshrined in points 9-14, maintenance of security enshrined in points 15-17 and future political horizon enshrined in points 18-20 (Barron, 2026).

The first eight points speaks about the de-radicalization and terror-free zone of Gaza to be followed by the process of reconstruction. Once the plan has been accepted by both the parties, military operations would be frozen; Israel would withdraw to the 'Yellow Line', separating the Israeli-held areas of Gaza from the rest of the territory, return of the hostages and exchange of prisoners. It also talks about the post-ceasefire scenario in the Middle East while granting amnesty to Hamas and other armed groups wishing to opt for peaceful co-existence and disarmament (Barron, 2026). Points 9-14 relate to governance and reconstruction as envisioned in the peace plan. During the transition period, Gaza will be temporarily governed by a technocratic apolitical Palestinian Committee comprising qualified Palestinians and international experts from the board of Peace to be chaired by Trump and assisted by heads of states and other members. "Trump Economic Development Plan" would provide help in building the atmosphere for attractive investment, creating jobs opportunities and the

establishment of special economic zone in Gaza for investment and business enterprises.

Points 15-17 speak about the critical stabilization and security component during the transition period. The role of the International Stabilization Force (ISF) is of utmost importance for maintaining stability in Gaza and providing training to the police force of Palestine. It also bars Israel from either the annexation or occupation of Gaza and favors the grant of independent status to Palestine. Points 18-20 talk about the future of political horizon in Gaza while focusing on the interfaith dialogue with the aim of shifting mindsets and narratives between Palestine and Israel (Barron, 2026). It also makes allowance to the United States for establishing a formal dialogue between Palestine and Israel to establish a long-term political horizon for peaceful co-existence. This phase is very crucial in shaping the future politics of Palestine and Israel through the aspects of interfaith harmony, change of mindsets and reshaping of the narratives leading towards the establishment of cordial and harmonious relations between Israel and Palestine.

The Board of Peace

The creation of the Board of Peace for Gaza is one of the most important developments with specific focus on the resolution of the Palestine conflict through a 'Board of Peace' to be chaired by the US President, Donald Trump. The board found its practical manifestation on January 22, 2026 when twenty founding countries of the world including the United States attended the signing ceremony in Davos, Switzerland (Boxerman & Kershner, 2026). Those who attended the ceremony include Argentina, Hungary, Indonesia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar. Pakistani Prime Minister, Shahbaz Sharif signed the Board of Peace during the ceremony in Davos on January 22, 2026 (Khwaja, 2026). The initiative was taken by Pakistan to participate in the peace-focused platform amid continued international efforts for addressing the humanitarian and political fallout of the Gaza conflict (Khwaja, 2026). The proposed

charter has divided some of the United States' longtime allies about joining the board. France, Britain, Norway, and Sweden have refused to join the board at this time arguing that it has raised questions regarding international law and the respect for the United Nations' role in the world. British Foreign Minister, Yvette Cooper, has expressed concerns about the prospect of Russia being part of the Board of Peace despite the fact that it has invaded Ukraine.

The board's membership is open to countries of the world with US President, Trump to send invitations for joining the board. A unique feature of the board is the granting of permanent seat in the board on contributor of \$1 billion during the first year of the transition period (Dawn, 2026). The body was initially envisioned as a mechanism to bring peace in the Palestinian territory as a result of Israel's war while its charter does not restrict its mandate solely to the occupied Palestinian area (Dawn, 2026). Several countries of the world including Pakistan have been approached to join the board. Prime Minister, Shahbaz Sharif accepted the invitation by participating in the initiative with the aim of 'achieving lasting peace in Gaza' (Dawn, 2026). The board will function under the chairmanship of the US President Donald Trump and will be called as an 'international organization' (Tariq, Amair, & Bano, 2025), seeking to promote stability, restore dependable and lawful governance, and secure enduring peace in the areas affected or threatened by the conflict' (Boxerman & Kershner, 2026). The board will be entrusted with the functions of undertaking. Peace building measures as enshrined in the international law (Tariq, Hameed Ullah, & Gul, 2026). The board will be entrusted with the functions of undertaking peace building measures as enshrined in the international law (Tariq, Hameed Ullah, & Gul, 2026).

The board of Peace will have extensive powers in maintaining peace and stability in the areas affected or threatened by conflict not only in Gaza but in other parts of the world too (Boxerman & Kershner, 2026). The board foresees a more effective and stronger international peace-building body than the

United Nations (Boxerman & Kershner, 2026). Trump's new Board of Peace for resolving global conflicts has drawn sharp cynicism from some of the US allies, criticizing that it would dismantle the post-World War II international system (Kershner, 2026). The body largely comprising the heads of state or government was originally expected to supervise the ceasefire between Israel and Palestine. The charter of the board gives extensive, global mandate in resolving the conflicts faced by the world. Some analysts are of the view that the US President, Donald Trump is trying to create a rival forum to the United Nations putting him in charge of the forum (Kershner, 2026).

Jurisdiction of the Board of Peace

The Board of Peace is an international organization comprising thirteen chapters; each chapter has been assigned a specific power and function. The main function of the board the promotion of stability, restoration of dependable and lawful governance, and procurement of enduring peace in the areas affected or threatened by conflict (Jacob, 2026). It aims at undertaking peace-building in accordance with the international law and as may be approved in accordance with this charter, including the development and dissemination of best practices capable of being applied by all the nations and communities seeing peace (Jacob, 2026) & (Affairs, 2026). No member state shall serve the board for more than three years or unless removed by the chairman of the board. This condition shall not apply to member states who contribute more than USD \$1,000,000,000 in cash to the Board of Peace during the first year of the Charter's entry into force (Jacob, 2026). However, withdrawal by any member from the board can be submitted in written notice to the chairman of the board.

The board has great significance for the Middle East since any area faced with conflict or threatened by conflict will fall under the jurisdiction of the board. The board has been entrusted with powers and functions as enshrined in the charter. The board shall vote on all proposals on its agenda, with respect to

the annual budgets, the establishment of subsidiary entities, the appointment of senior executive officers and major policy disseminations (Jacob, 2026). Voting meetings shall be convened at least once a year or at such locations and additional times as deemed fit by the chairman. Each member state will have one vote and decisions will be made on basis of majority of cast votes with chairman to exercise the right to vote in case of a tie. The chairman will be empowered to create, modify, or dissolve subsidiary entities as necessary or appropriate to fulfill the mission of the Board of Peace (Jacob, 2026). The chairman may establish sub-committees as appropriate and shall set the mandate, structure and governance rules for such committees (Jacob, 2026).

The charter talks about the composition of the Executive Board to be selected by the chairman and will have duration of two years. The Executive Board will be led by the Chief Executive to be nominated by the chairman through a majority of votes. The Chief Executive shall convene the Executive Board every two weeks for the first three months following its establishment and on a monthly basis thereafter, with additional meetings convened as the Chief Executive deems appropriate (Jacob, 2026). The Executive Board shall make decisions by a majority of its members present and voting, including the Chief Executive with the decisions to come into force immediately, subject to approval by the chairman (Tariq, Hameed Ullah, & Gul, 2026). Chapter 5 deals with the financing of the Board of Peace, which will be open to voluntary funding from member states, other states, organizations and other sources willing to contribute (Jacob, 2026). Chapter 6 gives legal coverage and protection to the Board of Peace to have legal capacity as may be necessary to the pursuit of their mission including the capacity to enter into contract (Tariq, Amir & Bano, 2026).

Future Prospects of the Gaza Strip

The peace plan has makes landmark in the history of both Palestine and Israel for focusing on the ceasefire and future of peace and stability

in the Middle East. The peace plan has been made possible through the personal efforts of the US President, Donald Trump for taking the initiative. Palestinians and the Israeli have shown agreement to the ceasefire marks the beginning of a new era in the Gaza Strip and the Palestinian territory (Middleeast, 2025). In order to maintain peace and security in the area, an International Stabilization Force (ISF) comprising the United States, the Arabs and international partners, will be responsible for the peace and security in the territory. The ISF is also supposed to play its role in providing training and support to the Palestinian police forces and security personnel. After the withdrawal of the Israeli forces, the territory of Gaza will be handed over to the ISF for maintaining law and order situation in the area. The combined force comprising the US, the Arab and the international partners will further add to the cause of peace and stability in the region. Both the Arab World and the international community should play a vital role towards the implementation of peace plan and security in the Palestinian territory. It is only through the international community and mediators that peace will be established in the region while at the same time making it sure that no contending party is violating the terms and conditions of the peace plan.

During the transition period, Gaza will have to be governed by a board of apolitical and technocrats where it will be governed by a 'temporary transitional governance of technocrats, known as the apolitical Palestinian Committee 'operating under an international board headed by the US President. The only other member of the board, publicly announced is the former British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, having a central but still undefined role in the committee (Middleeast, 2025). The basic purpose and function of the 'Board of Peace' is setting the framework and monitoring funds for the redevelopment of the Gaza. The Palestinian Authority, which is the governing authority of the West Bank, is tasked with the reform program of preparing peace for governance of the strip. Responsibility for the demilitarization of an independent group, is supposed to oversee the demilitarization of the

Gaza. The independent group is will deal with the placing of weapons permanently beyond use and an internationally funded "buy-back" program leading towards the destruction of all military, terror, and offensive infrastructure.

Economic Reforms Structure

The war-stricken Gaza needs great financial assistance coupled with many relief and medical packages besides the improvement of the infrastructure. Huge economic reforms can lead towards the possibility of peace and restoration of stability and economic soundness. To achieve the purpose of economic stability and soundness a team of experts is tasked to convene and come out with an economic development plan aimed at rebuilding and energizing the Gaza. A special economic zone is also underway to be established with the purpose of preferential tariff and access rates for negotiation with the participating countries. The peace plan did not address the amounts of sources for funding meant for the reconstruction of Gaza Strip but the World Bank estimates the cost to be more than \$ 50 billion (Middleeast, 2025). The plan further mentions the thoughtful investment proposals and exciting development ideas for creating job opportunities, for the people of Gaza. After the territory has been reformed, the Palestinian authority will take over power and governance in the area. The plan also envisages that regional partners have to guarantee that Hamas and its factions will not use force or threats that may jeopardize the peace and stability of the region.

Conclusion

The war-stricken Palestine has been struggling hard for the right of self-determination for some decades but no substantial result has yet been achieved. Many efforts were taken from time to time through different forums for the permanent resolution of the conflict with different possible solutions but all in vain. Tension got escalated between Hamas and Israel in 2023 that led to the death and injuries of thousands of people coupled with huge loss to the infrastructure and buildings. Keeping in view the gravity of the situation and horror of war, the US President,

Donald Trump initiated efforts for the normalization of restoration of peace and stability in the region. His first initiative was the announcement of Gaza Peace Plan that aimed at the immediate ceasefire and release of prisoners and exchange of hostages between Hamas and the Israel. The plan also provided for the disarmament of Hamas and barring of the Israel from attacking each other.

Peace can be possible when only the ceasefire takes place in the affected area, followed by the normalcy of relations and the efforts to address the grievances of the Palestinian people. Though the Palestinian Authority, representing its people in the UN as the State of Palestine yet it has no vote in the 193-member General Assembly of the UN (Nichols, 2025). The General Assembly of the United Nations approved the sanction of a *de facto* recognition of Palestinian State in November 2012 by upgrading its 'observer status' at the UN to "non-member state from entity" (Nichols, 2025). This was given through voting system where 138 votes were cast in its favor, 9 against while 41 abstentions (Tariq, 2025). It is also a matter of concern that 13 years have elapsed but freedom struggle of the people of Palestine are still in progress with no status of an independent and sovereign state.

The 'Board of Peace' can be very helpful in bringing peace and stability in the region of the Middle East if just and impartial steps are taken by the board. The board may take the form of an international organization to be chaired by the US President, Donald Trump even after leaving Washington. Much depends upon the role of the board and the members of the board whose sincere and timely efforts may resolve the issue once for all. Once the issue has been resolved, the board may gain more powers and strength in the regional and the international community. The United Nations has been doing invaluable job in resolving the conflicts and disputes but in some cases it has not produced the efficacious results. Now, it's a real test for the 'Board of Peace' to take concrete measures in resolving the core issue of Palestine once for all. This will give great momentum and further impetus to the board for its pragmatic approach towards issues and

conflicts since its function is to oversee the areas faced with disputes or threatened by conflicts. The constitution of the board is furtherance of the Trump's 20-Points Peace Plan for Gaza.

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