

# MP-IDSA *Issue Brief*

## Israel-Hamas Ceasefire: An Assessment

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### **S**ummary

The Trump-backed ceasefire has halted major hostilities, but leaves core issues unresolved in the light of Hamas' refusal to disarm and continued political-military influence in Gaza, Israel's security control, and divergent interests among regional actors.

President Donald Trump’s 20-point peace plan, agreed to by Israel on 29 September 2025 and Hamas on 3 October, aims to end the war in the Gaza Strip, mandate Israel’s withdrawal, and establish a demilitarised and re-developed Gaza under international supervision. After the 7 October 2023 attack, which killed around 1,200 Israelis, the Benjamin Netanyahu government’s three stated war goals were to destroy Hamas’ military and governing capabilities, free all hostages and ensure that Gaza does not pose a threat to Israel. By August 2025, acknowledging that Hamas could not be destroyed entirely, Israel shifted the goalpost for ending the war to the group’s disarmament, Gaza’s demilitarisation, establishing a non-Hamas and non-Palestinian Authority (PA) government, the release of all hostages and Israeli military control in Gaza, including a security perimeter.<sup>1</sup>

Trump’s 20-point plan broadly addresses Israel’s core principles, including continued IDF presence along the borders and the Philadelphi corridor.<sup>2</sup> The peace plan has significantly reduced hostilities and enabled a partial Israeli withdrawal. During the first phase, Hamas released all 20 living hostages on 13 October 2025. Due to the difficulty of locating all the deceased hostages within the designated 72 hours, Hamas has so far returned 26 dead bodies, while two are yet to be recovered.<sup>3</sup> As part of the peace plan, Israel released 1,950 Palestinian prisoners, including 250 out of 303 Palestinians serving life sentences.<sup>4</sup>

The peace plan dismissed Israel’s proposed occupation or annexation of Gaza and envisions a complete IDF withdrawal. The ceasefire has eased mobility for Palestinians in Gaza, including the prospect of returning and restoring their homes. It has also facilitated the reopening of border crossings for humanitarian aid. The plan provides a pathway towards Palestinian self-determination and eventual statehood. The US-sponsored resolution proposing Trump’s plan was passed by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) on 17 November 2025. It referenced potential statehood, contingent on substantive PA reforms in the main text, reflecting pressure from Arab and Islamic states and the Trump administration’s broader priority of cultivating ties with regional Arab partners.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [\*\*“Statement by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu”\*\*](#), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Israel, 14 August 2025.

<sup>2</sup> Philadelphi Corridor is a narrow buffer zone, around 14 kms long, that runs along Gaza’s border with Egypt and includes the Rafah border crossing. The corridor was established during 1979 Egypt–Israel peace treaty.

<sup>3</sup> [\*\*“Israel Identifies Deceased Hostage Returned by Hamas as Dror Or. Two More Hostage Bodies Remain in Gaza”\*\*](#), *CNN*, 26 November 2025.

<sup>4</sup> [\*\*“Statistics”\*\*](#), Addameer-Palestine Center for Prisoners’ Studies, 5 October 2025; Amos Harel, [\*\*“How Netanyahu Aims to Obstruct the Gaza Plan He Was Forced to Accept From Trump”\*\*](#), *Haaretz*, 1 October 2025.

<sup>5</sup> [\*\*“UN Security Council Passes US Resolution Backing International Gaza Force”\*\*](#), *Al Jazeera*, 17 November 2025.

## Hamas’ Disarmament

The 20-point plan envisions a de-radicalised terror-free zone in Gaza, Hamas’ exclusion from governance and disarmament, offering amnesty and safe passage to its members. Currently, there remains a lack of clarity regarding the mechanisms for disarmament of Hamas, the process for dismantling its military infrastructure and tunnels, the authority to which its weapons would be surrendered, the extent of its permitted armament for self-protection and the issue of arms surrender by other Palestinian factions, requiring a unified Palestinian position.

Senior Hamas official Mohammed Nazzal, speaking to *Reuters*, expressed unwillingness to disarm, but offered a five-year ceasefire to rebuild Gaza, with future guarantees contingent on Palestinians being given “horizon and hope” for statehood. Hamas rejected the 17 November 2025 US-drafted UNSC resolution, opposing disarmament and the proposed international trusteeship under an International Stabilisation Force (ISF) tasked with deterrence, training, security and demilitarisation. Hamas argued that assigning operational duties, including disarmament, to the ISF would compromise its neutrality. Hamas also insists that armed resistance against occupation remains a legitimate right.<sup>6</sup>

For Israel, security gaps persist due to Hamas fighters’ refusal to disarm and fear that its members who received safe passage to move to other states could regroup and resume violent activities. Currently, around 200 Hamas fighters remain holed up inside the IDF-controlled territory in Gaza behind a temporary demarcation line, i.e., the Yellow Line. US Special Envoy to the Middle East, Steve Witkoff and Trump’s son-in-law and Advisor, Jared Kushner, recommended that Israel offer amnesty and safe passage to the surrendered fighters, serving as a pilot programme for a broader decommissioning and amnesty initiative for Hamas fighters to apply in the rest of Gaza. Israel has resisted allowing safe passage to all fighters who could face prosecution for attacks on Israelis.<sup>7</sup> The recent legislation to use the death penalty for Palestinians guilty of murder could further complicate the amnesty clause.

Israel wants to ensure that any pause in fighting should not be exploited for rearmament or regrouping, and ensure checks on smuggling and inspection of aid flows.<sup>8</sup> Israeli intelligence has indicated that Hamas has resumed building tunnels, collected a large amount of unexploded IDF ordnance and stockpiled advanced weapons

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<sup>6</sup> [“Rejecting UN Resolution, Hamas Says It Won’t Disarm and That Resistance Against Israel ‘By All Means as a Legitimate Right’”](#), *The Times of Israel*, 18 November 2025.

<sup>7</sup> Jacob Magid and Emanuel Fabian, [“US Pressures Israel to Allow Safe Passage for 100 to 200 Hamas Operatives in Rafah”](#), *The Times of Israel*, 5 November 2025.

<sup>8</sup> [“If an Imperfect Deal is What Brings Home the Hostages, Then We Need to Accept It – Editorial”](#), *The Jerusalem Post*, 5 October 2025; Emanuel Fabian and Stav Levaton, [“Amid Talk of Its Disarmament, Hamas Said Stockpiling Advanced Weapons Abroad”](#), *The Times of Israel*, 17 November 2025.

abroad, hoping to smuggle them into Gaza in the future.<sup>9</sup> The US has prioritised creating the right conditions, deconfliction, humanitarian aid, demilitarisation and retrieving the remaining hostages’ bodies in Gaza.<sup>10</sup> The US has limited power to enforce Hamas’ disarmament and ensure that the group is not part of the government. It is unlikely that ISF, local security forces, or a PA-linked police force could directly confront Hamas to establish security dominance.

## Security Responsibility and Regional Players

After the return of 20 living and a handful of dead hostages, on 14 October 2025, the ‘Trump Declaration for Enduring Peace and Prosperity’ was signed by the US President, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, and Qatari Emir Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani to outline international support for reconstruction, governance reforms, and security enforcement through the ISF. All the regional players are seeking to boost their regional status, advance economic and security goals and preserve domestic credibility.<sup>11</sup> Although the key regional partners, i.e., Egypt, UAE, Qatar and Turkey, share the goal of ending the war, securing a permanent ceasefire, and easing humanitarian aid flows, divergent strategic interests could disrupt coordination to implement subsequent stages. While Egypt and the UAE seek to weaken Hamas, Qatar and Turkey want to enhance their own political influence, preserve Hamas’ weapons repository and provide the group a new platform to rehabilitate and reorganise them for participating in Gaza’s daily governance and reconstruction.<sup>12</sup>

On the subject of ISF’s duties, there are significant gaps in the positions of Hamas, PA and the moderate Arab states. Hamas, while willing to hand over civilian-security management to the technocratic committee, remains opposed to ISF’s enforcement powers to undertake disarmament, linking it to the end of occupation. The PA views an ISF sanctioned under a UNSC resolution, as a mechanism to monitor the ceasefire, enable the Ramallah-based government to renew its control and assist in Palestinian security, border protection and training. The PA wants internal security to be entrusted to official Palestinian entities. The moderate Arab states prefer ISF as a peacekeeping model, limited to monitoring. The moderate Arab states, while reluctant to deploy troops on the ground, are prepared to assist, train and provide funding. The lack of cooperation between Palestinian actors, both Hamas and the PA

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<sup>9</sup> Chaim Levinson, [“Trump’s Gaza Stabilization and Hostage Recovery Plan Contains More Gaps Than Details”](#), *Haaretz*, 17 October 2025.

<sup>10</sup> Jacob Magid, [“Slowed Establishment of Postwar Gaza Government Fuels Hamas Revival, Diplomats Warn”](#), *The Times of Israel*, 16 October 2025.

<sup>11</sup> Yoel Guzansky, [“The Gulf States and Trump’s Peace Plan”](#), Institute for National Security Studies (INSS), 15 October 2025.

<sup>12</sup> Yoel Guzansky, [“A Danger Ahead: Qatar Returns To Gaza”](#), INSS, 20 October 2025; Yair Golan, [“Once Again, Netanyahu Chooses Hamas Over Israel’s Security”](#), *Haaretz*, 19 October 2025.

and the hesitation of Arab states and the international community to intervene directly in Gaza could affect its long-term stabilisation.<sup>13</sup>

## Gaza Security and Israel’s Stakes

Israel’s stated strategic objectives, i.e., an end to Hamas’s rule, disarmament and destruction of the group’s military capabilities, remain relevant even after the ceasefire. Israel seeks an ISF endowed with enforcement powers to implement the disarmament of all Palestinian armed factions, while ensuring that the IDF retains broad operational freedom of action and overarching security responsibility to counter emerging threats and prevent re-establishment of Hamas’ military infrastructure. Israel has reserved the right to respond to any perceived threat. It has conducted occasional airstrikes and fired on civilians approaching the Yellow Line, killing around 350 Palestinians in Gaza since 10 October 2025.<sup>14</sup> Israel seeks to convey that any breach by Hamas, such as refusal to disarm or relinquish political authority, could provide grounds for the continuation of military operations, while enabling the IDF to restore both domestic and international legitimacy for renewed use of force.<sup>15</sup>

The deployment of peacekeepers from Arab states could intensify frictions with the IDF by constraining the latter’s operational freedom, while any casualties inflicted on Arab personnel by the IDF, whether accidental or otherwise, could further escalate tensions and undermine the ISF’s effective functioning.<sup>16</sup> Israel remains concerned about the composition of the ISF, categorically rejecting the deployment of Turkish troops in Gaza. Israel’s scepticism regarding the success of the ISF is premised on historical experiences such as the UN Truce Supervision Organisation (UNTSO), the UN Emergency Force (UNEF) and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) that failed to prevent violence.<sup>17</sup>

The ISF’s overall functioning will, however, remain dependent on IDF’s satisfaction with progress, consent and withdrawal framework. With no fixed withdrawal timeline, Israel intends to define security standards, milestones and timeframes

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<sup>13</sup> Udi Dekel and Noy Shalev, [“Israel’s Demands for the Demilitarization of the Gaza Strip and the Operating Principles of the International Stabilization Force”](#), INSS, Insight No. 2057, 9 November 2025.

<sup>14</sup> [“Israel Rushes to Shape Ground Reality in Gaza Before International Troop Deployment: Report”](#), *Middle East Monitor*, 23 November 2025; Rushdi Abualouf and David Gritten, [“Israeli Strikes Across Gaza Kill 25 Palestinians, Health Ministry Says”](#), *BBC News*, 19 November 2025.

<sup>15</sup> Tamir Hayman and Ofer Guterman, [“Trump’s Initiative for the Gaza Strip: Risks and Opportunities”](#), INSS, 30 September 2025.

<sup>16</sup> Lazar Berman, [“Gaza Deal is Stunning Achievement for Trump, and for Netanyahu – Provided It Holds”](#), *The Times of Israel*, 9 October 2025.

<sup>17</sup> Jacob Stoil, [“Building the ISF for Gaza: Key Components for Effective Implementation”](#), Mitvim, November 2025.

linked to demilitarisation, enabling indefinite presence and a continued siege of Gaza. The gradual withdrawal format preserves IDF’s long-term control over the Gaza perimeter to protect Israeli communities in western Negev and the Philadelphi corridor to prevent smuggling of weapons.

Israeli control of Gaza (currently around 53 per cent) would reduce to 40 per cent and later to 15 per cent, with a final security perimeter remaining, until Israel deems Gaza free of terror threats.<sup>18</sup> The planned buffer zone from the north to the south along the Palestinian side of the border would invariably alter the Gaza Strip’s borders and size, squeezing the Palestinian population to a 365 sq. km patch of land, about 40 km long and between 3 km and 12 km wide.<sup>19</sup> Additionally, reference to Trump’s 2020 peace plan in the 29 September 2025 deal drastically reduces the area to be placed under Palestinian control, which could create a form of statelet with Palestinians involved in day-to-day administration, with the IDF maintaining overall military control.<sup>20</sup>

Beyond the security perimeter, the de facto division of Gaza has become a reality. The Yellow line dividing Gaza into IDF-controlled territory and areas with the majority of the Palestinian civilian population, in which Hamas has begun reasserting its dominance, reflects the current position. Trump’s plan clarified it as an interim step towards a complete IDF withdrawal, not a new political division. However, the history of the Israel–Palestine conflict is riddled with instances of temporary arrangements becoming permanent. As Hamas resurges and refuses to disarm across the Yellow Line, Israeli opinion may turn against further withdrawals.<sup>21</sup>

Trump’s plan indicates that if Hamas resists or delays implementation, the ISF will administer aid and governance in “terror-free” zones, i.e., Israeli-controlled areas, allowing for phased reconstruction under IDF control. Senior Trump advisers suggested creating up to 16 “Alternate Safe Communities” behind Israeli lines to shelter vetted civilians during Hamas’ disarmament and political transition. Hamas sources expressed concern that Israel’s control over Gaza could be part of a broader strategy to recreate the Lebanese experience, setting unilateral terms regarding what constitutes a ceasefire violation and continuing perpetual war in non-IDF-controlled areas.<sup>22</sup> Israel’s military strikes and permanent control over parts of Gaza could

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<sup>18</sup> [“What Happens Next in Gaza Ceasefire Plan After Hostage Release?”](#), *BBC News*, 14 October 2025.

<sup>19</sup> Jacob Magid, [“Israel Said to Tell Neighbors and US of Plans to Create Gaza Buffer Zone After War”](#), *The Times of Israel*, 2 December 2023.

<sup>20</sup> Hassaan Bokhari, [“The Grand Betrayal of Palestine”](#), *Middle East Monitor*, 1 October 2025.

<sup>21</sup> Alex Lederman, [“In Gaza, the Israeli Far Right May Still Get Its Way”](#), *The Times of Israel*, 26 October 2025.

<sup>22</sup> Dov Lieber, Summer Said and Alexander Ward, [“A U.S. Plan Splits Gaza in Two – One Zone Controlled By Israel, One By Hamas”](#), *The Wall Street Journal*, 22 October 2025; Hana Kiros, [“The Trump Administration Has a New Plan for Gaza”](#), *The Atlantic*, 10 November 2025.



trigger a counterattack by Palestinian fighters, followed by asymmetrical retaliation reaching a state of “no war, no peace” and setting the stage for another Gaza war.<sup>23</sup>

Currently, Israel’s operational autonomy in Gaza has been somewhat reduced after the formation of the US-led Civil-Military Coordination Center (CMCC) on 17 October in Kiryat Gat, involving troops from the US, Britain, Germany, France, Spain, Denmark, Greece, Netherlands, Cyprus, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Jordan and the UAE. The CMCC is tasked with overseeing the ceasefire implementation, recovering dead hostages, aid delivery and facilitating Phase Two of Trump’s plan, including ISF deployment and reconstruction. The CMCC has relegated Israel to a secondary role, sidelined the Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) to a contractor role in aid flow and affected the IDF’s manoeuvrability and freedom of operation in Gaza, with Kushner, Witkoff and US Central Command chief Adm. Brad Cooper directing the mission behind the scenes.<sup>24</sup>

The US is utilising its own intelligence and surveillance assets, including drones, to monitor Hamas’ activities, independently verify Israel’s compliance with the ceasefire, supervise aid distribution and ceasefire lines and at times direct the IDF to cancel operations that could jeopardise the deal.<sup>25</sup> Many Israelis feel their country is being compelled to follow Washington’s directives, with 44 per cent believing the Trump administration wields greater influence over Israel’s security decisions.<sup>26</sup> The inclusion of French and Spanish troops in CMCC, both states remaining critics of Israel’s conduct during the war, has been criticised by Israeli commentators.<sup>27</sup>

Moreover, the Trump administration has suggested allowing foreign journalists into Gaza in light of the prevailing ceasefire conditions.<sup>28</sup> Israel is concerned about renewed criticism over wartime destruction further denting its global image. Israel, citing an unstable security situation, risks to IDF troops and the likelihood of Hamas advancing its propaganda campaign, has denied independent access to journalists inside Gaza. Israel has proposed allowing embedded reporters to accompany IDF

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<sup>23</sup> [\*\*“Assassinations Despite Truce: Hamas Fears ‘Lebanon Scenario’ In Gaza”\*\*](#), *Asharq Al-Awsat*, 22 October 2025; Justin Salhani, [\*\*“How Israel is Using ‘No War, No Peace’ Lebanonisation Model in Gaza”\*\*](#), *Al Jazeera*, 4 November 2025.

<sup>24</sup> Itamar Eichner, [\*\*“How the US Command Center in Israel Operates — And Why It Worries Jerusalem”\*\*](#), *Ynet*, 25 October 2025.

<sup>25</sup> Itamar Eichner, [\*\*“Washington Takes Charge: Inside the International Ceasefire Command Center in Kiryat Gat”\*\*](#), *Ynet*, 22 October 2025; Jacob Magid, [\*\*“US Sideline Israel on Decision-Making at Gaza Ceasefire HQ, Official Says”\*\*](#), *The Times of Israel*, 8 November 2025; Karen DeYoung, Claire Parker, Alex Horton and Cate Brown, [\*\*“US Steps Up Gaza Aid Role to Support Fragile Ceasefire”\*\*](#), *The Washington Post*, 8 November 2025.

<sup>26</sup> [\*\*“Plurality of Israeli Think US Has More Influence Over Israel’s Security Than Netanyahu Government – Poll”\*\*](#), *The Times of Israel*, 11 November 2025.

<sup>27</sup> Itamar Eichner, [\*\*“How the US Command Center in Israel Operates — And Why It Worries Jerusalem”\*\*](#), *Ynet*, 25 October 2025.

<sup>28</sup> [\*\*“Trump Administration Presses Israel on Letting Journalists into Gaza”\*\*](#), *The Media Line*, 3 November 2025.

units only up to the Yellow Line, thereby limiting media coverage to roughly half of the Gaza Strip.<sup>29</sup>

## Gaza Governance

The proposed 20-point peace plan envisions the establishment of a Gaza International Transitional Authority (GITA), composed of apolitical Palestinian and international technocrats, to manage public services and municipalities, alongside a Board of Peace, chaired by Donald Trump, to oversee reconstruction.<sup>30</sup> Critics point to the plan’s asymmetrical nature, primarily decided by Israel and the US. Netanyahu secured key revisions in the final wording of the Trump plan, including phased IDF withdrawal terms; conditional amnesty for Hamas tied to complete disarmament, dismantling and a commitment not to rebuild military infrastructure and changes in wording on Palestinian statehood.

The guarantees are directed only towards Israel, without challenging Netanyahu’s opposition to statehood or promoting moderation within Israel to revive a two-state framework, ignoring accountability for alleged war crimes and obfuscating any discussion on freedom, justice, sovereignty, borders and reparations. The Palestinian demands addressed in the plan are limited to immediate humanitarian aid, release of prisoners and conditional rights based on the level of de-radicalisation.<sup>31</sup> The responsibility for de-radicalisation rests solely on Palestinians without addressing Israel’s far-right extremism, settler violence and provocations at the Al Aqsa Mosque compound.<sup>32</sup>

Palestinian apolitical technocratic administration complements Netanyahu’s preference for a non-Hamas, non-PA governance mechanism. Realistically, the administration is expected to coordinate with the PA under Arab states’ pressure through personnel composition in local administration leadership, functioning and training of police forces. The administration’s tenure does not have a rigid timeframe, unlike the March 2025 Egyptian initiative, which proposed a six-month timeframe.

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<sup>29</sup> Jeremy Sharon, [“High Court Gives State 30 Days to Clarify Policy on Press Entry to Gaza Amid Ceasefire”](#), *The Times of Israel*, 23 October 2025; Abdel Raouf Arnaout and Mohammad Sio, [“Fearing Global Coverage of Atrocities, Israel Prepares Propaganda-Driven Media Access for Journalists Entering Gaza”](#), *Anadolu Ajansi*, 28 October 2025.

<sup>30</sup> Adnan Hmidan, [“Why Palestinians Cannot Trust a Promise from Donald Trump?”](#), *Middle East Monitor*, 30 September 2025; Mohammed Jamil, [“Tony Blair, A High Commissioner in the Model of His Predecessors”](#), *Middle East Monitor*, 30 September 2025.

<sup>31</sup> Ismail Patel, [“Why Trump’s ‘Peace Plan’ is a Disaster for the Palestinians”](#), *Middle East Eye*, 30 September 2025; Jack Khoury, [“Trump’s Cease-Fire Plan Gives Hamas a Stark Choice: Accept Surrender or Risk Israeli Occupation”](#), *Haaretz*, 30 September 2025; Mohamad Elmasry, [“Trump’s 20-Point Plan for ‘Peace’ is Call for Palestinian Surrender”](#), *Middle East Eye*, 1 October 2025.

<sup>32</sup> Ammiel Alcalay, [“Trump-Netanyahu Deal: A New Recipe for Palestinian Subjugation”](#), *Middle East Eye*, 1 October 2025.



The technocratic administration’s tenure could extend for years, depending on the level of PA reforms.

The pre-conditions for PA reforms, based on the 2020 peace plan and the July 2025 French-Saudi initiative, include good governance, new elections, tackling corruption, ensuring transparency, fiscal sustainability, and combating incitement and hate speech.<sup>33</sup> Israeli demands regarding PA reforms particularly stress changing school textbooks that denigrate Israel and Zionism, halting allowances to families of Palestinian prisoners, stopping incitement in the media and ending lawfare against Israel at the International Criminal Court (ICC) and International Court of Justice (ICJ).<sup>34</sup> Israel may link their peace process commitments to dropping the war crimes charges, i.e., allegations of genocide before the ICJ and a pending ICC warrant against Netanyahu.<sup>35</sup>

Any possible long-term plan would require Israel’s compliance, and the majority of facets must facilitate a situation that Israel can live with. A reformed PA fulfilling Israel’s demands could be assigned governing responsibilities in Gaza with the IDF maintaining security control. Hamas’ rivalry and mistrust against Fatah could complicate the PA’s governance in the Strip. Hamas’ actions to kill rival clans reflect its drive to preserve its military and political preponderance in post-war Gaza.

Currently, Hamas recognises the necessity of cooperating with the internationally recognised PA. Hamas’ familiarity with and understanding of the PA could be utilised to enhance its influence in the West Bank. According to Hamas official Mohammed Nazzal, during the transitional phase, the group’s ground presence will co-exist with the technocratic administration handling day-to-day affairs.<sup>36</sup> Hamas, therefore, is seeking to preserve its political role in Gaza’s future as part of a unified Palestinian movement. However, Hamas’s fundamental differences with the PA could jeopardise administrative functioning under a unified Palestinian leadership.<sup>37</sup>

Trump’s plan avoids dismantling Hamas and leaves space for its evolution into an unarmed political movement. As with the gradual acceptance of the Taliban in Afghanistan and Hayat Tahrir al Sham in Syria, Trump may view Hamas as

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<sup>33</sup> [“New York Declaration”](#), Permanent Mission of France, 29 July 2025.

<sup>34</sup> Dov Lieber, [“Palestinians Vow to End Controversial Prisoner Payment Program”](#), *The Wall Street Journal*, 13 February 2025; Ismail Patel, [“Why Trump’s ‘Peace Plan’ is a Disaster for the Palestinians”](#), no. 31; Azmat Ali, [“Trump’s Gaza Plan: Sovereign Restoration or Neo-Colonial Management”](#), *Middle East Monitor*, 1 October 2025.

<sup>35</sup> Chantal Da Silva, [“As Trump Celebrates ‘Peace’ in the Middle East, Experts Focus on Next Steps”](#), *NBC News*, 14 October 2025.

<sup>36</sup> [“Senior Hamas Official: Terror Group Can’t Commit to Disarm, is Open to 3-5 Year Truce”](#), *The Times of Israel*, 18 October 2025.

<sup>37</sup> Elie Podeh, [“Trump’s Plan: Euphoria Alongside Challenges – Opinion”](#), *The Jerusalem Post*, 12 October 2025.

acceptable if it complies with some form of conditional disarmament.<sup>38</sup> The US could therefore allow Hamas a temporary role in maintaining internal security, providing it with practical legitimacy despite not joining the formal civilian government.

## Conclusion

Trump’s 20-point ceasefire plan has halted large-scale hostilities, facilitated hostage release barring two bodies, Palestinian prisoner exchanges, and nullified the relocation option and annexation of Gaza, aiming towards a complete IDF withdrawal. The end of hostilities has rebuilt the impetus for Israel to smooth ties with friendly Arab states. The two facets in the first phase, i.e., uninterrupted entry of aid into Gaza and handover of all deceased hostages, remain incomplete. The subsequent phases require Hamas’ disarmament, Gaza’s demilitarisation, deployment of the ISF, and a technocratic Palestinian administration supervised by a Trump-led ‘Board of Peace’.

The unclear modalities for disarmament have enabled Hamas to retain weapons and political relevance, arguing that surrender is contingent on concrete progress towards statehood. Every delay, therefore, strengthens Hamas’ ability to reassert control. The US may claim diplomatic credit, but implementation of the peace plan will fall to the Arab states, and past reconstruction efforts have shown limited coordination and political will.

The US hopes that an Arab–Islamic coalition could improve local legitimacy. The ISF’s composition remains a highly sensitive issue. Israel rejects Turkish participation and distrusts the effectiveness of peacekeeping forces based on experience. Regional states share an interest in ending the war but diverge strategically, with Qatar and Turkey seeking to preserve Hamas’ political role. The ISF troops risk casualties in case of clashes with Palestinian groups or friction with the IDF, leading to operational paralysis.

Israel’s core security concern, i.e., Hamas’ disarmament and dismantling its military infrastructure, has remained unresolved. The IDF has intermittently resumed military campaigns to stall rearmament or re-grouping outside the Yellow Line. Israel seeks an ISF with enforcement powers to disarm Hamas, while retaining freedom to conduct unilateral operations. With no fixed withdrawal timeline, Israel seeks to link pullback to demilitarisation benchmarks, enabling indefinite security control over Gaza’s perimeter. Despite Netanyahu’s opposition, the apolitical technocratic administration will likely coordinate with the PA. Israel’s rejection of assigning a governance role to the PA and Hamas’ domestic competition with Fatah and other Palestinian groups could disrupt political functioning under the PA.

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<sup>38</sup> Zvi Bar’el, “[Without a Viable Governing Alternative, Trump’s Peace Plan May Legitimize Hamas in Gaza](#)”, *Haaretz*, 16 October 2025.

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