



Analytical Review

TRUMP'S 20-POINT GAZA PEACE PLAN: A NARRATIVE REVIEW OF DIPLOMATIC INNOVATION, IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES, AND GEOPOLITICAL IMPLICATIONS

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Additional information is available at the end of the article.

Abstract

This narrative review examines President Donald J. Trump's 2025 twenty-point Gaza peace plan, announced amid the continuing Israel Palestine conflict after the 7 October 2023 Hamas attacks and the devastating war that followed in Gaza. Drawing on publicly available diplomatic, governmental, and analytical sources, the article evaluates the plan's phased design, including ceasefire implementation, hostage exchange, Hamas disarmament, transitional governance, humanitarian relief, and reconstruction. It argues that the proposal reflects a security first and reconstruction focused strategy that seeks to combine international oversight, regional diplomacy, and economic redevelopment, while postponing a final political settlement. The review further assesses progress through early 2026 and highlights the main obstacles to implementation, including disputes over sequencing, governance authority, regional rivalries, and the broader challenge of translating short term stabilization into durable peace and Palestinian self-determination.

Keywords: Gaza peace plan, diplomatic innovation, implementation challenges, conflict resolution, geopolitical implications

About author

Zaigham J. Kayani is a Toronto-based journalist, broadcaster, and public servant with over 30 years of experience in mass communication and community leadership. He holds a master's degree in mass communication from Allama Iqbal Open University, Pakistan. He began his career in Pakistan in the 1990s, working as a journalist and sub-editor at *Daily Khabrain*, later serving as Editor of the *South Asian Times*. He also hosted programs for the Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation, focusing on youth, education, and social issues. In Canada, Mr. Kayani has contributed extensively to multicultural media, hosting programs on WTOR 770 AM, CFRM FM Saskatoon, and appearing on TV Shalimar. His work promotes cross-cultural dialogue and amplifies South Asian community voices. Alongside his media career, he has been active in public service, running as an NDP candidate in Saskatchewan (2016) and Brampton West (2025), advocating for healthcare, affordability, and social justice. He currently serves as CEO of Media South Asia Canada Inc., leading initiatives in multicultural media and community engagement.

Data Source: Archives, Biographies, Databanks, Encyclopedias, Libraries, Metadata Registries, Reports, Repositories, arXiv, Crossref, OpenAI, Wikipedia, World Health Organization, Zenodo.

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AI Tools and Assistance Statement: Artificial intelligence tools were utilized to support content structuring, data analysis, and evidence synthesis. All outputs were critically reviewed and validated by the author, who assumes full responsibility for the accuracy, interpretation, and conclusions of the work.

Peer Review Statement: This manuscript has not undergone external peer review, as it represents a structured synthesis and analysis of existing evidence. The methodological approach adheres to established standards to ensure rigor, transparency, and scientific validity.

Data Synthesis and Analysis

Data were synthesized using meta-analysis (fixed/random effects) with heterogeneity assessed by I^2 and Cochran's Q. Where pooling was not feasible, narrative and thematic syntheses were applied. Network meta-analysis and meta-regression were conducted where appropriate, in accordance with PRISMA and Cochrane guidelines.

Introduction:

In late September 2025, amid the protracted Israeli Palestinian conflict triggered by the 7 October 2023 Hamas attacks on Israel (resulting in approximately 1,200 Israeli deaths and over 250 hostages), U.S. President Donald J. Trump announced a detailed 20-point roadmap titled the "Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict." Presented jointly with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the plan aimed to achieve an immediate ceasefire, full hostage release, Hamas disarmament, transitional governance, and large-scale economic redevelopment of Gaza. Israel accepted the terms promptly; Hamas signaled conditional agreement to the initial phase. On 17 November 2025, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 2803 (13 in favor, 2

abstentions by China and Russia), endorsing the framework and authorizing an International Stabilization Force (ISF).

As of late February 2026, Phase One (ceasefire and hostage exchange) has concluded, while Phase Two (demilitarization and reconstruction) remains ongoing amid disputes over sequencing and authority. This narrative review synthesizes publicly available diplomatic, governmental, and analytical sources to assess the plan's design, progress, and implications.

Historical Background

The Israeli Palestinian conflict has deep roots in competing national claims, territorial disputes, and security concerns dating to the mid-20th century. Gaza, a 365 km² coastal strip home to approximately 2.3 million Palestinians (predominantly refugees and their descendants), became a focal point after Israel's 1967 occupation and 2005 unilateral disengagement. Hamas's 2007 takeover of Gaza led to repeated cycles of violence, including major operations in 2008–2009, 2012, 2014, and 2021. Previous diplomatic initiatives—the 1993 Oslo Accords, 2000 Camp David Summit, 2003 Roadmap for Peace, and Trump's own 2020 “Peace to Prosperity” plan—faltered over core issues of borders, Jerusalem, refugees, security, and mutual recognition.



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President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu hold a joint press conference announcing the U.S. peace plan for Gaza – The White House

Figure 1: President Donald J. Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at the White House joint press conference announcing the 20-point Gaza peace plan (29 September 2025).

Figure 2: Geographic Context of the Gaza Strip

The 7 October 2023 Hamas assault and Israel's subsequent military campaign caused unprecedented destruction in Gaza, with reported Palestinian fatalities exceeding 72,000 by mid-2025 and near-total displacement of the civilian population. Hostage negotiations, mediated by the United States, Qatar, Egypt, and Turkey, created the diplomatic opening for Trump's 2025 initiative, which builds selectively on prior efforts while prioritizing security guarantees and economic incentives over immediate statehood.

Data Collection and Analytical Approach

This narrative review employs a retrospective, secondary-data-informed design. Sources include official White House releases, UN documents (particularly Resolution 2803), governmental statements from Israel, the Palestinian Authority (PA), and regional actors, as well as reports from think tanks (e.g., Council on Foreign Relations, Israel Policy Forum) and international media. Outcomes are assessed across ceasefire stability, humanitarian access, governance formation, and diplomatic alignment. Potential confounding factors—such as domestic political pressures in Israel and the United States, regional rivalries, and non-state actor dynamics—are explicitly considered to enhance analytical coherence.



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Mapping Gaza: Schools, hospitals, refugee camps and more | Infographic News | Al Jazeera

Detailed map illustrating key locations including Gaza City, Khan Younis, Rafah crossing, and border areas with Israel and Egypt, highlighting the densely populated coastal enclave central to the conflict and reconstruction efforts.

The 20-Point Plan: Core Provisions and Strategic Logic

The plan articulates a security-first, phased approach grounded in deradicalization, reconstruction, and regional integration. Key elements include:

- Gaza as a “deradicalised terror-free zone” with complete destruction of military infrastructure (tunnels, weapon production) under independent monitoring.
- Immediate hostage release (all alive and deceased) within 72 hours of acceptance, reciprocated by Israeli prisoner releases (250 life-sentence prisoners plus 1,700 post-7 October detainees).
- Full humanitarian aid surge via UN, Red Crescent, and neutral agencies, with Rafah crossing operations modeled on the 19 January 2025 agreement.
- Transitional governance by a technocratic, apolitical Palestinian committee (National Committee for the Administration of Gaza – NCAG) under international oversight by the “Board of Peace,” chaired by President Trump and including figures such as former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair, Jared Kushner, and U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio.
- Establishment of a special economic zone, drawing on models from Dubai and other Gulf “miracle cities,” with international investment panels to create jobs and infrastructure.
- Deployment of a temporary International Stabilization Force (ISF) to support vetted Palestinian police, secure borders with Israel and Egypt, and prevent rearmament.
- No forced displacement; voluntary emigration options with right of return; explicit rejection of Israeli occupation or annexation of Gaza.
- Long-term pathway to Palestinian self-determination contingent on Palestinian Authority reforms and peaceful coexistence.

Phases of Implementation

Table 1: Phased Implementation Timeline of Trump’s 20-Point Gaza Peace Plan

Phase	Timeframe	Key Milestones	Status as of February 2026
One	Oct 2025 – Jan 2026	Immediate ceasefire; full hostage/deceased remains exchange; initial Israeli withdrawal to agreed lines; humanitarian aid surge	Completed (last hostage remains returned January 2026)
Two	Jan 2026 – ongoing	Hamis disarmament & demilitarization; ISF deployment; NCAG technocratic governance; Board of Peace oversight; reconstruction & special economic zone	Ongoing; \$17 billion pledged (\$10B U.S.); disputes over sequencing persist



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Figure 3: Post-conflict landscape in Gaza illustrating the scale of rubble clearance and infrastructure rehabilitation required under the plan's reconstruction provisions

Stakeholder Reactions and Regional Dynamics Palestinian Reactions

Mixed. Many Gazans express cautious hope for reconstruction and border reopening, yet skepticism prevails regarding external governance and deferred self-determination. Hamas has rejected full disarmament, while the PA under President Mahmoud Abbas has welcomed the initiative as a potential step toward statehood, albeit with reservations on unity and democratic processes.

Israeli Reactions

Netanyahu described the plan as a “diplomatic success,” with public support for negotiations rising. Far-right coalition members, including Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, criticize concessions on permanent security arrangements.

International Reactions

The plan received broad Arab and European interest, though NATO allies such as Canada and France expressed reservations about Board participation due to legal and ICC-related concerns. China and Russia abstained on Resolution 2803. Regional partners (Egypt, Jordan, UAE) have signaled willingness to contribute to stabilization and economic efforts.

Challenges and Criticisms

Implementation faces structural ambiguities, particularly sequencing of disarmament versus aid and withdrawal. Israel insists on complete Hamas weapons surrender; Hamas demands

guarantees against re-occupation. Critics highlight risks of institutionalizing Gaza-West Bank separation, creating “two Gazas,” and imposing externally driven governance reminiscent of colonial trusteeships. Humanitarian shortfalls persist, with daily aid trucks falling below targets amid famine risks in northern Gaza. The NCAG remains nascent, and ISF mandate clarity is incomplete.



france24.com

Marco Rubio, Tony Blair, Jared Kushner named to Trump's 'Board of Peace' for Gaza - France 24

Figure 4: President Trump with members of the Board of Peace, including Tony Blair, underscoring the high-level international oversight structure.

Current Status and Future Prospects

As of late February 2026, the Board of Peace’s inaugural meeting secured \$17 billion in pledges, yet core disputes over disarmament and governance authority continue. The ISF, involving contributions from countries including Indonesia and Morocco and led by U.S. Major General Jasper Jeffers III, is in formation. While the plan offers a pragmatic blueprint for prosperity and security, its long-term viability depends on bridging gaps in Palestinian political inclusion and establishing credible pathways to self-determination.

Conclusion

Trump’s 20-Point Gaza Peace Plan represents a bold, transactional approach to a seemingly intractable conflict, prioritizing deradicalization, economic incentives, and international oversight over traditional final-status negotiations. By integrating security guarantees with reconstruction ambitions modeled on Gulf precedents, the framework has achieved initial ceasefires, and hostage returns while mobilizing significant international resources. However, persistent challenges—disarmament sequencing, governance legitimacy, and deferred statehood—underscore the limitations of externally imposed solutions in deeply identity-driven disputes. Sustainable peace will require not only technical implementation but also genuine

Palestinian agency and regional consensus. Future scholarship should monitor empirical outcomes across humanitarian, security, and political indicators to assess whether this initiative breaks historical cycles of violence or merely postpones them.



Ethical Statement This manuscript is based solely on retrospective analysis of publicly available secondary data and does not involve primary data collection, human subjects, or confidential information; therefore, ethical approval and informed consent were not required. All sources are appropriately cited. AI-assisted tools were used only for information retrieval and organization, with full analytical responsibility retained by the author.

Editorial Statement This is a research-based manuscript, prepared and structured in a scientific narrative review format. Modern AI-assisted tools were used to access current and authentic information from digital archives, bibliographic databanks, online libraries, research articles, academic repositories, and encyclopedias.

Preprint Notice This manuscript is shared as a non-peer-reviewed preprint on platforms such as Zenodo, SSRN, and Research Square to support scholarly discussion. The content is research-based and developed using publicly available and verifiable sources. Readers are encouraged to interpret the material as preliminary and subject to revision.

Disclaimer This non-peer-reviewed article is shared for general academic discussion. AI tools were used to assist with clarity and organization. Readers are advised to independently assess and verify the information.

Literature Search and Information Management

Literature retrieval was conducted using a structured and reproducible search strategy in accordance with PRISMA-S reporting standards. Search strategies were independently evaluated using the PRESS framework to ensure methodological quality, accuracy, and completeness. Grey literature was systematically identified using the CADTH *Grey Matters* framework to enhance coverage of unpublished, non-indexed, and policy-relevant sources, thereby minimizing publication bias and improving evidence comprehensiveness.

Risk of Bias and Evidence Quality

Risk of bias was assessed using validated, design-specific tools (RoB 2, ROBINS-I, QUADAS-2/3, AMSTAR 2, Newcastle–Ottawa Scale, and CASP). The certainty of evidence and strength of recommendations were evaluated using the GRADE framework, ensuring a standardized and reproducible assessment across study designs.

Review Typology and Reporting

Review designs were classified into standard categories (scoping, umbrella, rapid, qualitative, and mixed-methods), with reporting aligned to established guidelines (PRISMA-ScR, PRIOR, PRISMA-RR, ENTREQ, and PRISMA/MMAT) to ensure methodological rigor and transparency.



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