

# AL-HAQ TRUMP TRILOGY

## PART III

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The 'Comprehensive Plan  
to End the Gaza Conflict'  
(‘20-Point Plan’)



AL-HAQ

DECEMBER  
2025

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# I. CONTEXTUAL OVERVIEW

On 29 September 2025, the United States (US) issued an ultimatum to Hamas demanding its agreement to a set of unilateral terms dictated by the Trump administration, developed in conjunction with Israel, in a ‘Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict’, also known as the ‘20-point plan’.<sup>1</sup> These terms are in clear and direct violation of international law and the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the right of return. As affirmed by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in its Advisory Opinion on *Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem* (Palestine Advisory Opinion), self-determination, a peremptory norm of international law with *jus cogens* status, cannot be contracted out, limited, conditional or deferred — it is an absolute right that must be immediately ensured. Therefore, any ‘agreement’ that curtails its full realisation is automatically rendered legally invalid.

However, this is not the first time the Trump administration, or the US, has sought to restrict Palestinians’ right to self-determination, along with

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<sup>1</sup> Al Jazeera, ‘Here’s the full text of Trump’s 20-point plan to end Israel’s war on Gaza’ (29 September 2025) <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/9/29/heres-the-full-text-of-trumps-20-point-plan-to-end-israels-war-on-gaza>>

other protections under international law. Just a month prior, the Trump administration and international partners presented the Gaza Reconstitution, Economic Acceleration and Transformation (GREAT) Trust. The GREAT Trust sought to transform Gaza into a ‘Mediterranean hub for manufacturing, trade, data, and tourism, benefiting from its strategic location, access to markets (Europe, GCC, Asia), resources, and a young workforce, all supported by Israeli tech and GCC investments’.<sup>2</sup> To achieve this goal, Gaza would be governed by a multilateral trusteeship after the US takes control from Israel.<sup>3</sup> In his first term, Trump also proposed a plan titled ‘Economic Peace to Prosperity’ which, for all intents and purposes, represented a blueprint for the annexation of Palestine. The 2020 plan failed to make a single acknowledgment of the fact of occupation, and instead centred on the economic prospects in the unlawfully occupied Palestinian territory.

Despite the manifest illegality of the ‘20-point plan’, whose implementation will be guided by the terms of both Trump’s 2020 plan and the GREAT Trust, on 17 November the UN Security Council voted to enshrine its provisions in Resolution 2803. This is legally impermissible, on the basis of it breaching both the UN Charter as well as peremptory norms of international law.

The basis for any discussion of or reference to the situation in Palestine must be premised on the application of peremptory norms and international humanitarian law, specifically the laws of occupation. Failure to address the

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2     *The GREAT\* Trust: From a Demolished Iranian Proxy to a Prosperous Abrahamic Ally* <<https://www.washingtonpost.com/documents/f86dd56a-de7f-4943-af4a-84819111b727.pdf>> Slide 5

3     *The GREAT\* Trust: From a Demolished Iranian Proxy to a Prosperous Abrahamic Ally* <<https://www.washingtonpost.com/documents/f86dd56a-de7f-4943-af4a-84819111b727.pdf>> Slide 2

underlying legal framework, and ensure compatibility therewith, confirms the extra-legal approach of US proposals, its disregard for Palestine's sovereignty and fixation on power politics, which include the purposefully open-ended 'security' demands of Israel, and capitalist, imperialist interests of its drafters.


## II. TRUMP'S 'COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO END THE GAZA CONFLICT'

### i. Perpetual occupation

Similar to the GREAT Trust, the 20-point plan immediately begins by depicting Gaza as a terrorist stronghold — rather than a territory fragmented under Israel's settler-colonial apartheid regime, unlawfully occupied, held under Israeli blockade for over 18 years and subject to a brutal genocidal assault — in stating: 'Gaza will be a deradicalized terror-free zone that does not pose a threat to its neighbors.'<sup>4</sup> It continues by providing that:

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<sup>4</sup> UN Security Council res 2803 (2025), Annex 1 - President Donald J. Trump's Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict, point 1 ('20-point plan')



If both sides agree to this proposal, the war will immediately end. Israeli forces will withdraw to the agreed upon line to prepare for a hostage [captive] release. During this time, all military operations, including aerial and artillery bombardment, will be suspended, and battle lines will remain frozen until conditions are met for the complete staged withdrawal.<sup>5</sup>

Hamas, a political group with an armed wing, is categorically excluded from having any role in the governance of Gaza ‘directly, indirectly, or in any form’.<sup>6</sup> They will be forced to fully demilitarise and destroy all defence capabilities, notwithstanding their geographical position alongside a genocidal, settler-colonial apartheid State that has stated, on numerous occasions, their intent to resettle the Gaza Strip and annex what remains of Palestine. In further breach of Palestine’s sovereignty, regional partners to the 20-point plan will guarantee ‘that Hamas, and the factions, comply with their obligations and that New Gaza poses no threat to its neighbors or its people’.<sup>7</sup>

The US and regional partners will create a temporary International Stabilization Force (ISF) to immediately deploy in Gaza, which is declared as the ‘long-term internal security solution’.<sup>8</sup> The ISF will work with Israel and Egypt to ‘help secure’ border areas, along with newly trained Palestinian police forces, and ‘prevent munitions from entering Gaza and to facilitate the rapid and secure

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5 20-point plan, point 3

6 20-point plan, point 13

7 20-point plan, point 14

8 20-point plan, point 15

flow of goods to rebuild and revitalize Gaza'.<sup>9</sup>

Systematic violence by US contractors involved with the 'Gaza Humanitarian Foundation' is already well-documented, with *Medecins Sans Frontieres* describing what are supposed to be food distribution sites providing aid to a starving civilian population as 'sites of orchestrated killing and dehumanisation'.<sup>10</sup> Israel's genocide in Gaza could not take place without the unwavering support of the US. The US must be viewed as a partner in, and facilitator of, Israel's genocidal conduct. As Al-Haq has sought to demonstrate through its in-depth analysis of the Peace to Prosperity Plan, the GREAT Trust, and the present report, the US views the Gaza Strip as merely a business venture and source of untapped resources from which they can both profit and exert control over. Therefore, to agree with the US forming part of any stabilisation force in Palestine is to accept the further subjugation, exploitation and destruction of the Palestinian people.

As the ISF establishes control and stability, the 20-point plan requires the Israel Occupying Forces (IOF) to withdraw based on 'standards, milestones, and timeframes linked to demilitarization' that will be agreed upon between the IOF, ISF, the guarantors, and the US.<sup>11</sup> As previously stated, Palestinians will have no role in this decision-making.

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9 20-point plan, point 15

10 *Medecins Sans Frontieres*, 'US-backed aid distribution points in Gaza are sites of orchestrated killing' (7 August 2025) <<https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/latest/us-backed-aid-distribution-points-gaza-are-sites-orchestrated-killing>>

11 20-point plan, point 15

The IOF will retain a security perimeter presence that will remain until Gaza is ‘properly secure from any resurgent terror threat’. Since the creation of the State of Israel, we have witnessed Israel abuse the inherently political ‘terrorist’ label as a means to extinguish the Palestinian people’s lawful struggle for self-determination and quash any opposition or pursuit of accountability for its ongoing and historic commission of international crimes. Hence, hinging Israel’s withdrawal on the absence of ‘any resurgent terror threat’ is in effect synonymous with the permanent occupation and ultimate annexation of more Palestinian territory.

Israel has already breached the parameter of the Yellow Line demarcated as part of the US ultimatum. Notwithstanding the clear guarantee that ‘Israel will not occupy or annex Gaza’ provided in point 16, according to an analysis by the research group T-Politography, the Yellow Line places 57.8 percent — rather than the agreed 52 percent — of the Gaza Strip under direct Israeli control, including: 68.3 percent of the Khan Younis Governorate, 62.9 percent of the Rafah Governorate, 64.3 percent of the Gaza City Governorate, 43.8 percent of the North Gaza Governorate, and 21.9 percent of the Deir al-Balah Governorate.<sup>12</sup>

Despite declaring that ‘Gaza will be redeveloped for the benefit of the people of Gaza, who have suffered more than enough’,<sup>13</sup> Palestinians will have no meaningful role in the governance of the Palestinian territory. Their role will be limited to participation in a technocratic, apolitical Palestinian committee responsible for delivering the day-to-day running of public services and

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12 Gisha, ‘The “Yellow Line”: Approximately 58 percent of the Gaza Strip is still under direct Israeli control’ (4 November 2025) <<https://gisha.org/en/the-yellow-line/>>

13 20-point plan, point 2



municipalities for the people in Gaza.<sup>14</sup> This committee will be dictated to by a transitional ‘Board of Peace’ headed and chaired by Donald Trump, with other members and heads of State to be announced, including Former Prime Minister Tony Blair. The stated function of the Board of Peace is to ‘create modern and efficient governance’ that is ‘conducive to *attracting investment*’ and to ‘set the framework and handle the funding for the redevelopment of Gaza until such time as the Palestinian Authority has completed its reform program... and can securely take back control of Gaza’.<sup>15</sup> This largely mirrors the GREAT Trust, which places Gaza under the governance of a US-led trusteeship ‘for a transition period until a reformed and deradicalized Palestinian Polity is ready to step in its shoes’.<sup>16</sup>

Like the GREAT Trust, the 20-point plan gives no detail as to what constitutes ‘reform’ in this context. The ‘reform program’ remains undefined, instead merely stating: ‘as outlined in various proposals, including President Trump’s plan in 2020 and the Saudi-French proposal’.<sup>17</sup> The 2020 Peace to Prosperity plan referred to equally does not provide a roadmap or any clear, understandable criteria for said ‘reform program’.

In rendering the lifespan of the Board of Peace dependent on the achievement of undefined, ambiguous milestones, the 20-point plan — and now United Nations Security Council Resolution 2803 — effectively makes way for an

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14 20-point plan, point 9

15 20-point plan, point 9 (emphasis added)

16 *The GREAT\* Trust: From a Demolished Iranian Proxy to a Prosperous Abrahamic Ally* <<https://www.washingtonpost.com/documents/f86dd56a-de7f-4943-af4a-84819111b727.pdf>> Slide 10

17 20-point plan, point 9

open-ended foreign occupation of the Gaza Strip, only further fragmenting the Palestinian territory. This is further implied in the intentional wording of the 20-point plan:



While Gaza re-development advances and when the PA reform program is faithfully carried out, the conditions *may* finally be in place for a credible pathway to Palestinian self-determination and statehood, which we recognize as the *aspiration* of the Palestinian people.<sup>18</sup>

Thus, even if the amorphous ‘reform program’ is carried out and Gaza is re-developed, Palestinian self-determination — described as an ‘aspiration’ rather than an inalienable right with *jus cogens* status in international law — is still not guaranteed.

The 20-point plan concludes with the assurance that the US ‘will establish a dialogue between Israel and the Palestinians to agree on a political horizon for peaceful and prosperous co-existence’,<sup>19</sup> thereby blatantly ignoring the fact that high-level Israeli officials, including Prime Minister Netanyahu and Defence Minister Katz, continue to propound that there will be no Palestinian State.<sup>20</sup>

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18 20-point plan, point 19


19 20-point plan, point 20

20 See Al-Jazeera, ‘Israel pushes US to close door on Palestinian statehood before UNSC vote’ (16 November 2025) <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/11/16/israel-pushes-us-to-close-door-on-palestinian-statehood-before-un-vote>>; Times of Israel, ‘PM’s far-right allies up in arms over US plan’s offer of path to Palestinian statehood’ (15 November 2025) <<https://www.timesofisrael.com/pms-far-right-allies-up-in-arms-over-us-plans-offer-of-path-to-palestinian-statehood/>>

## ii. The economic exploitation of Gaza

In each plan proposed by the US, the extent of sociopolitical and economic development Gaza and the Palestinian people may enjoy will continue to be dictated by a colonial, imperialist power whose involvement in and control over the territory is purely motivated by financial interests and a geopolitical agenda that seeks to profit from the most vulnerable groups in society.

The intent to capitalise on the destruction of the Palestinian people, and their land, is directly reflected in the text of the plan which states that the Board of Peace will ‘create modern and efficient governance that serves the people of Gaza and is conducive to attracting investment’.<sup>21</sup> It continues with:



Many thoughtful investment proposals and exciting development ideas have been crafted by well-meaning international groups, and will be considered to synthesize the security and governance frameworks to attract and facilitate these investments that will create jobs, opportunity, and hope for future Gaza.<sup>22</sup>

While economic development post-conflict is of fundamental importance to the viability of any State, Palestine is not in a post-conflict situation. Rather, it remains under unlawful occupation — currently by Israel, which will retain control (alongside Egypt) of Gaza’s borders — and, if the 20-point plan is

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<sup>21</sup> 20-point plan, point 9

<sup>22</sup> 20-point plan, point 10

implemented, also by the US and Western allies in the region that share the US's capital-driven goals, such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. States are even incentivised to collaborate in the exploitation of Gaza through the promise of 'a special economic zone' with preferential tariffs and access rates for participating countries.<sup>23</sup>

### **iii. The conditionalisation of humanitarian aid**

In order for Palestinians in Gaza to receive critically needed life-saving aid, after Israel's creation of a man-made famine, Hamas and other armed factions were coerced into accepting Trump's ultimatum. The 20-point plan states that, upon acceptance, 'full aid will be immediately sent into the Gaza Strip'.<sup>24</sup> At a minimum, aid quantities were to be consistent with what was included in the January 19, 2025 agreement regarding humanitarian aid (600 trucks daily) and should include 'rehabilitation of infrastructure (water, electricity, sewage), rehabilitation of hospitals and bakeries, and entry of necessary equipment to remove rubble and open roads'.<sup>25</sup>

Notwithstanding this, Israel has continued to obstruct the entry and distribution of aid. Only a fraction of the daily minimum amount of 600 trucks are granted entry, while as of 21 November (over six weeks since the "agreement" was reached) just three crossings are open — Karem Abu Salem (Kerem Shalom),

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23 20-point plan, point 11

24 20-point plan, point 7

25 20-point plan, point 7

Zikim, and Kissufim. Rafah, the crossing with the largest capabilities to facilitate unimpeded entry of aid, remains closed. Furthermore, collected aid movements continue to be directed through the Philadelphi Corridor and Al Rasheed Road, while Salah ad Din Road — one of Gaza’s main highways connecting the north, south and middle areas of the Gaza Strip — remains closed to humanitarian movements. According to the Logistics Cluster, the Al Rasheed route is congested and exposes trucks to operational challenges, such as extended mission durations and a heightened risk of opportunistic looting, while limiting the size of the convoys.<sup>26</sup>


Of crucial importance, most of Gaza’s agricultural lands were, prior to being systematically destroyed by Israel, located in areas north and east of the Yellow Line — areas now under direct Israeli control. The continued prevention of farmers’ access to their lands blocks the possibility of rehabilitating local food production. Humanitarian access is also affected by the route, as all movement of humanitarian staff or transportation of food and other forms of aid, including access to the crossings currently open for the transfer of aid, requires coordination with and approval from Israeli authorities.<sup>27</sup>

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26 UN OCHA, ‘Humanitarian Situation Update #342 | Gaza Strip’ (20 November 2025) <<https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-342-gaza-strip>>

27 Gisha, ‘The “Yellow Line”: Approximately 58 percent of the Gaza Strip is still under direct Israeli control’ (4 November 2025) <<https://gisha.org/en/the-yellow-line/>>

Israel's continued restrictions on aid are notwithstanding the 20-point plan's requirement that:



Entry of distribution and aid in the Gaza Strip will proceed without interference from the two parties through the United Nations and its agencies, and the Red Crescent, in addition to other international institutions not associated in any manner with either party. Opening the Rafah crossing in both directions will be subject to the same mechanism implemented under the January 19, 2025 agreement.<sup>28</sup>

## **iv. The exchange of Israeli captives for arbitrarily detained Palestinians**

Under the 20-point plan, within 72 hours of Israel publicly accepting the 'agreement', all captives, alive and deceased, will be returned. Once all captives are released, Israel will release 250 life sentence prisoners plus 1700 Palestinians from Gaza who were unlawfully detained after 7 October 2023, including all women and children detained in that context. For every Israeli captive whose remains are released, Israel is required to release the remains of 15 killed Palestinians from Gaza.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> 20-point plan, point 8

<sup>29</sup> 20-point plan, point 5

Due to the extensive and widespread devastation caused by Israel, and its continuing control of certain parts of Gaza and ongoing denial of entry of equipment necessary to clear the vast amounts of rubble caused by its relentless bombardment of the Palestinian territory, by 13 November the overall number of returned bodies of captives since the ceasefire was 25.<sup>30</sup> On 15 November, the bodies of 15 Palestinians were returned to the Gaza Strip, bringing the total number of released bodies since the ceasefire to 330, of which only 97 were identified due to the degree of torture and mutilation they were subject to in Israeli detention centres.<sup>31</sup>

Allegedly, once all captives are returned, Hamas members who commit to peaceful co-existence and to decommission their weapons will be given amnesty. Members of Hamas who wish to leave Gaza will be provided safe passage to receiving countries.<sup>32</sup> Given Israel's documented history of extrajudicial killings, including through targeted assassinations, the prospect of any member of Hamas — who Israel has vowed to completely eradicate — being granted amnesty is highly unlikely.

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30 UN OCHA, 'Humanitarian Situation Update #342 | Gaza Strip' (20 November 2025) <<https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-342-gaza-strip>>

31 UN OCHA, 'Humanitarian Situation Update #342 | Gaza Strip' (20 November 2025) <<https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-342-gaza-strip>>

32 20-point plan, point 6

## **v. No accountability**

A common thread between each of Trump's plans for Gaza is a blatant lack of accountability for Israeli officials. The 20-point plan equally ignores the need for justice for the vast array of international crimes, including ongoing genocidal acts, Israel is perpetrating against Palestinians in Gaza. It entirely fails to acknowledge the reasons as to why Gaza requires a complete reconstruction. In lieu of accountability, the 20-point plan provides an exit ramp to Netanyahu, who was under pressure both domestically (to secure the return of remaining captives) and internationally (to end its genocide), while simultaneously protecting his impunity and that of other Israeli officials and members of the IOF.

The criminal responsibility of the US, Israel's partner, enabler and main financier is equally entirely omitted. Instead of being prosecuted for complicity (at a minimum) in genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, the US has positioned itself to further profit from the destruction of the Palestinian people and denial of their right to self-determination.



# III. VIOLATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW INHERENT TO “PEACE” AGREEMENTS PROPOSED BY ISRAEL AND ITS ALLIES

## i. Peremptory Norms of International Law

### a. Self-determination

In the context of decolonisation, the UN General Assembly has repeatedly emphasised the significance of the right to self-determination as an ‘inalienable right’ to which there is no alternative.<sup>33</sup> That the Palestinian people are entitled to self-determination under international law is not subject to debate. In its Advisory Opinion on *Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem* (Palestine Advisory Opinion), the Court clearly ‘affirmed the existence of the right of the

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33 UN General Assembly res 40/25 (1985), para. 3; res 42/14 (1987), para. 4; res 49/40 (1994, para. 1; res 57/138 (A) (2002), para. 3; res 59/134 (A) (2004), para. 2

Palestinian people to self-determination'<sup>34</sup> — a matter already noted as 'no longer in issue' by the Court twenty years prior.<sup>35</sup>

The right of all peoples to self-determination is one of the 'basic principles of international law',<sup>36</sup> and the obligation of States to respect this right is owed *erga omnes* as 'all States have a legal interest in protecting that right'.<sup>37</sup> The right to self-determination equally has a 'broad scope of application'<sup>38</sup> and 'in cases of foreign occupation such as the present case...constitutes a peremptory norm of international law'.<sup>39</sup> Therefore, States are under a primary obligation to ensure the realisation by the Palestinian people of this collective human right, which includes the right of return, through the ending of occupation, apartheid, and genocide. Despite this binding legal duty, and Palestine's classification as a Class A Mandate under the League of Nations Covenant along with being recognised as a State by over 80 percent of the UN General Assembly, this inalienable right has been systematically denied to its people.<sup>40</sup>

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34 *Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem*, Advisory Opinion (ICJ, 19 July 2024) (*Palestine Advisory Opinion*), para. 230

35 *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*, Advisory Opinion, *I.C.J. Reports* 2004, para. 118

36 *Palestine Advisory Opinion*, para. 231

37 *Palestine Advisory Opinion*, para. 232. See also *Legal Consequences of the Separation of the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius in 1965*, Advisory Opinion, *I.C.J. Reports* 2019, para. 180

38 *Palestine Advisory Opinion*, para. 234

39 *Palestine Advisory Opinion*, paras. 233-234

40 UN: The Question of Palestine, 'Right of Self-Determination of the Palestinian People' <<https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-196558/>>

In the *Palestine* Advisory Opinion, the Court determined that Israel has systematically and continuously acted in a manner contrary to the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, and has done so in a myriad of ways. The latest example can be found in Israel's support for Trump's 20-point plan, which — rather than ensuring an immediate end to Israel's unlawful occupation of Gaza, as demanded by the Court in July 2024<sup>41</sup> — only further fragments the OPT by isolating Gaza, despite the Court clarifying that it 'constitutes a single territorial unit, the unity, contiguity and integrity of which are to be preserved and respected'.<sup>42</sup>

Notwithstanding the Court's recognition of Israel's unlawful occupation of Gaza, the West Bank including East Jerusalem, and the obligation of the US not to recognize as legal the situation arising from Israel's unlawful presence in the OPT; render aid or assistance in maintaining the situation; and bring the unlawful presence to an end,<sup>43</sup> Trump's plan presents Palestinians in Gaza — whose very existence hangs by a thread due to Israel's vicious genocidal campaign — with an ultimatum that further entrenches an alien occupation, along with control and exploitation of the territory, directly inhibiting their right to self-determination.

The policies and practices of Israel identified by the ICJ as infringing upon the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination include, *inter alia*, the


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41 *Palestine* Advisory Opinion, paras. 88-94, 267

42 *Palestine* Advisory Opinion, para. 78. *See also* UN General Assembly res 77/247, para. 12; Article XI of the Oslo II Accord; UN General Assembly res ES-10/20 (2018); UN Security Council res 1860 (2009); UN Security Council res 2720 (2023).

43 *Palestine* Advisory Opinion, para. 279

appropriation of natural resources, including the exploitation of hydrocarbon, mineral and water resources in the OPT. It is important to recall that prior to the 20-point plan, the Trump administration and international partners presented the Gaza Reconstitution, Economic Acceleration and Transformation (GREAT) Trust.<sup>44</sup> At its core, the GREAT Trust hinges on US ‘strategic benefits’ derived from the exploitation of Gaza’s resources, including the Gaza Marine field, which will drive ‘massive [financial] gains, accelerate IMEC, solidify the Abrahamic regional architecture, strengthen hold in the east Mediterranean, and secure US-industry access to \$1.3T of rare-earth minerals from the Gulf’.<sup>45</sup> Under this framework, the current US administration states:



Gaza can transform into a Mediterranean hub for manufacturing, trade, data, and tourism, benefiting from its strategic location, access to markets (Europe, GCC, Asia), resources, and a young workforce, all supported by Israeli tech and GCC investments.<sup>46</sup>

The 20-point plan envisions the establishment of a ‘special economic zone’ and a ‘Trump economic development plan to rebuild and energise Gaza’, with ‘thoughtful investment proposals and exciting development ideas’ already having been crafted.<sup>47</sup> Similarly, the 2020 ‘Deal of the Century’ titled ‘Peace to Prosperity’ outlined ‘data-driven’ projects intended to ‘unleash

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44 *The GREAT\* Trust: From a Demolished Iranian Proxy to a Prosperous Abrahamic Ally* <<https://www.washingtonpost.com/documents/f86dd56a-de7f-4943-af4a-84819111b727.pdf>>

45 *The GREAT\* Trust: From a Demolished Iranian Proxy to a Prosperous Abrahamic Ally* <<https://www.washingtonpost.com/documents/f86dd56a-de7f-4943-af4a-84819111b727.pdf>> Slide 2

46 *The GREAT\* Trust: From a Demolished Iranian Proxy to a Prosperous Abrahamic Ally* <<https://www.washingtonpost.com/documents/f86dd56a-de7f-4943-af4a-84819111b727.pdf>> Slide 5

47 Al Jazeera, ‘Here’s the full text of Trump’s 20-point plan to end Israel’s war on Gaza’ (29 September 2025) <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/9/29/heres-the-full-text-of-trumps-20-point-plan-to-end-israels-war-on-gaza>>

economic potential’, including ‘extraordinary private-sector investment in entrepreneurship, small businesses, tourism, agriculture, housing, manufacturing, and natural resources’.<sup>48</sup>

All US proposals therefore have one common objective — the exploitation of Gaza in order to build a ‘Riviera of the Middle East’<sup>49</sup> and implement a US-led multilateral custodianship supposedly ‘leading to a reformed Palestinian self-governance’ that would evolve to a formal multilateral trusteeship.<sup>50</sup>

Rather than being able to freely determine its political status, a central element of the right of self-determination, the Israeli-backed Trump 20-point plan requires Hamas and other factions to agree to have no role whatsoever in governing Gaza, directly or indirectly. Instead, Trump envisions a ‘Board of Peace’ of international overseers led by Trump himself and including former British Prime Minister Tony Blair in an undefined role. Gaza will be governed under the temporary transitional governance of a ‘technocratic, apolitical’ committee for an undisclosed period until a ‘reformed’ Palestinian Authority can take charge. The ICJ has made expressly clear that:



[I]t is for all States, while respecting the Charter of the United Nations and international law, to ensure that any impediment

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48 White House, ‘Peace to Prosperity: A Vision to Improve the Lives of the Palestinian and Israeli People – Economic Framework’ <<https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/peacetoprospersity/economic/>>

49 The Guardian, ‘Leaked “Gaza Riviera” plan dismissed as ‘insane’ attempt to cover ethnic cleansing’ (1 September 2025) <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/sep/01/leaked-gaza-riviera-plan-dismissed-as-insane-attempt-to-cover-ethnic-cleansing>>

50 *The GREAT Trust: From a Demolished Iranian Proxy to a Prosperous Abrahamic Ally* <<https://www.washingtonpost.com/documents/f86dd56a-de7f-4943-af4a-84819111b727.pdf>> Slide 2



resulting from the illegal presence of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory to the exercise of the Palestinian people of its right to self-determination is brought to an end.

The latest ultimatum presented by the US, and supported by States seeking to capitalise on Israel's wholesale destruction of the Gaza Strip, constitutes a flagrant violation of this *erga omnes* obligation. As noted by Dr Ralph Wilde, the international trusteeship over Gaza — and Blair's association therewith — 'builds on the tradition of western humanitarians who sought to "humanise" colonialism by grafting onto it a duty of care'.<sup>51</sup> As noted by UN experts, there are 'no concrete benchmarks or timeframes for a transition to representative governance, which belongs to the Palestinians only, without foreign interference'.<sup>52</sup> Colonialism in the form of the open-ended US-led alien occupation of Gaza, outside the control of the Palestinian people, must be considered alongside Israel's long-held goals of permanently controlling, and ultimately annexing, the Palestinian territory.

To put it plainly, no foreign administration of the Gaza Strip — or the West Bank, including East Jerusalem — is compatible with the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, and consequently is impermissible under international law.

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51 Ralph Wilde, 'Why the Trump-Blair Gaza plan is unlawful' (Middle East Eye, 2 October 2025) <<https://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/why-trump-blair-gaza-plan-is-unlawful>>

52 UN OHCHR, 'Palestine: Any peace plan must respect international law, beginning with self-determination and accountability, urge UN experts' (3 October 2025) <<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/10/palestine-any-peace-plan-must-respect-international-law-beginning-self>>

## b. Prohibition on the acquisition of territory by force

A ‘corollary of the right to self-determination’,<sup>53</sup> the right to territorial integrity is recognized under customary international law and has led the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council to call for ‘the respect for and preservation of the territorial unity, contiguity and integrity of all of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem’.<sup>54</sup> The ICJ has noted that Israel — like all other States, including the US and the United Kingdom (UK) — has the obligation not to impede the right of the Palestinian people to an independent and sovereign State. Linked to this obligation, is the *erga omnes* obligation of States to prevent the acquisition of territory by force.


Like the GREAT Trust, which envisioned the custodianship of Gaza as starting with a US-Israel bilateral agreement taking control from Israel to the US (once Hamas is disarmed), under the 20-point plan the IOF will progressively hand over the Gaza territory it occupies to an International Stabilisation Force (ISF), according to an agreement they will make with the transitional authority, until they are withdrawn completely from Gaza, *save for a security perimeter presence* that will remain until Gaza is properly secure from any resurgent “terror” threat. This open-ended presence is sure to continue indefinitely as Israel manufactures perceived threats, from what would be now a demilitarised neighbour, and will amount to the *de facto* annexation of Gaza’s territory.

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53 *Legal Consequences of the Separation of the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius in 1965, Advisory Opinion, I.C.J. Reports 2019 (I)*, para. 160


54 UN General Assembly res 77/208 (2022), ninth preambular paragraph; UN Human Rights Council res 49/28 (2022), para. 5

The UN Security Council has declared on several occasions the inadmissibility of the acquisition of Palestinian territory by force and has determined that ‘all measures taken by Israel to change the physical character, demographic composition, institutional structure or status of the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, or any part thereof have no legal validity’.<sup>55</sup> In its resolution 77/126, the General Assembly also called upon:



[A]ll States, consistent with their obligations under international law and the relevant resolutions, not to recognize, and not to render aid or assistance in maintaining, the situation created by measures that are illegal under international law, including those aimed at advancing annexation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Furthermore, in resolution 32/161 (1977), the UN General Assembly called upon:



[A]ll States, international organizations, specialized agencies, investment corporations and all other institutions not to recognize, or cooperate with or assist in any manner in any measures undertaken by Israel to exploit the resources of the occupied territories or to effect any changes in the demographic composition or geographic character or institutional structure of those territories.

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55 UN Security Council res 465 (1980)



As noted above, the US-led proposals for the future of the Gaza Strip are motivated by capitalist, geopolitical interests derived from Gaza's resources and geographical position. In the *Palestine* Advisory Opinion, the Court clarified that the assertion of sovereignty over the Palestinian territory by Israel constitutes a violation of the prohibition of the acquisition of territory by force — which cannot be overridden by Israel's alleged security concerns.<sup>56</sup> The same reasoning squarely applies to any Israeli or foreign administration seeking to exercise sovereignty over any part of the Gaza Strip.

## **ii. International Humanitarian Law**

The legal basis precluding land swaps is most authoritatively set out in Articles 8 and 47 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Article 8 asserts that 'protected persons may in no circumstances renounce in part or in entirety the rights secured to them by the present Convention and by the special agreements referred to in the foregoing Article.' In its landmark *Palestine* Advisory Opinion, the Court reviewed claims from allies of Israel that there existed, in parallel to the framework of international law, an 'established legal framework' turning exclusively on the Oslo Accords, which would allow the exclusion of the Palestinian people from the protection of the framework of international law. Rejecting such propositions, the Court emphasised the significance of Article 47 of the Fourth Geneva Convention which provides that the protected population 'shall not be deprived' of the benefits of the Convention 'by any agreement concluded between the authorities of the occupied territories and

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<sup>56</sup> *Palestine* Advisory Opinion, para. 254


the Occupying Power'. Together, Articles 8 and 47 affirm that belligerents cannot conclude agreements which derogate from or deny to protected persons the safeguards of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Thus, regardless as to whether representatives of the Palestinian people are coerced into accepting the US demands as a price for seeking to bring a pause to this genocide, international law does not permit the legal rights of Palestinians to be extinguished, nor the legal obligations upon Third States to be abandoned.

With respect to the open-ended custodianship (alien occupation) envisioned by the US, it is crucial to note that 'occupation is a temporary situation to respond to military necessity, and it cannot transfer title of sovereignty to the Occupying Power'.<sup>57</sup> Article 54 of the Fourth Geneva Convention prevents the Occupying Power from altering the status of public officials or judges in the occupied territory. Furthermore, the rule set out in Article 55 of the Hague Regulations confers on the Occupying Power only the status of administrator and *usufructuary* of public buildings, real estate, forests and agricultural estates in the occupied territory. As noted by the ICJ in July 2024, 'these provisions emphasize that occupation is conceived of as a temporary state of affairs, during which the exercise by the Occupying Power of authority over foreign territory is tolerated for the benefit of the local population'.<sup>58</sup> This interpretation is reaffirmed in the third paragraph of Article 6 of the Fourth Geneva Convention sets a temporal limit to the obligations of a State in its capacity as an Occupying Power in stating:

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57 *Palestine Advisory Opinion*, para. 105

58 *Palestine Advisory Opinion*, para. 106



In the case of occupied territory, the application of the present Convention shall cease one year after the general close of military operations.

The preparatory work of the Fourth Geneva Convention indicates that this limit, which does not negate the duties of the Occupying Power with respect to the protected population for the duration of the occupation, was based on the understanding that, within a year after the end of the military operations, the local authorities in the occupied territory largely would have resumed exercising governmental functions.<sup>59</sup> The ICJ clarified in the *Palestine* Advisory Opinion:



If, however, local authorities have not resumed governmental functions, the occupying Power is not released from the obligations that arise out of its continued effective control over the occupied territory. Its basic duty to administer the territory for the benefit of the local population, and all the individual obligations arising thereunder, endures.<sup>60</sup>

The plans put forward by the US and Israel provide a template for future violations of Article 55 of the Hague Regulations, well as Article 53 of the same instrument which only permits the occupation taking possession of property which may be used for military operations. Based on the aforementioned intent to transform Gaza into the 'Riviera of the Middle East', such acts would constitute a clear breach of Articles 47 and 54 of the Fourth Geneva Convention

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<sup>59</sup> *Palestine* Advisory Opinion, para. 107

<sup>60</sup> *Palestine* Advisory Opinion, para. 107

on account of their stripping Hamas of any role in the governance of Gaza which it currently performs.

Finally, the ultimatum's conditionalising of humanitarian aid on the acceptance of US terms aims to reward Israel's unconstrained criminality and ongoing and persistent breaches of its duties as an Occupying Power. Notwithstanding the unlawfulness of Israel's prolonged occupation of the Gaza Strip, it remains legally bound by its obligations and responsibilities under international humanitarian law.<sup>61</sup> Israel is legally obliged to allow access to humanitarian protective organisations, such as UNRWA or the ICRC.<sup>62</sup> Under Article 30 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, the protected Palestinian population of the OPT 'shall have every facility for making application to... any organisation that might assist them' which shall be 'granted all facilities for that purpose by the authorities'. Article 59 provides for the 'free passage' of foodstuffs, medical supplies and clothing supplied by impartial humanitarian organisations. However, this does not relieve Israel from its responsibilities under Articles 55, 56 and 59 to ensure the occupied territory has sufficient food, medical supplies and other necessary resources to maintain the health and hygiene of the occupied population.<sup>63</sup> Of particular relevance is Israel's legal duty to permit the transit and transport of relief consignments on their way to occupied territory, which — subject only to imperative military reasons — protected persons must be permitted to receive.<sup>64</sup>

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61 *Palestine Advisory Opinion*, paras. 107, 264

62 Geneva Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War 1949, Arts. 59-62

63 Geneva Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War 1949, Art. 60

64 Geneva Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War 1949, Arts. 61-62

Israel's duties as an Occupying Power have even been reaffirmed in subsequent Declarations adopted by the Conference of High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Conventions. In a Declaration adopted on 7 December 2001, the Parties called upon Israel to facilitate the activities of the ICRC, UNRWA and other impartial humanitarian organisations, noting their efforts to assess and to improve the humanitarian situation in the field.<sup>65</sup> In a Declaration adopted on 17 December 2014, the Parties called upon Israel to fully and effectively respect the Fourth Geneva Convention in the OPT, including East Jerusalem and reminded it of its obligation to administer the OPT in a way which fully takes into account the needs of the civilian population.<sup>66</sup> Moreover, the 2014 Declaration recalled the primary obligation of the Occupying Power to ensure the protected population in the occupied territory has adequate supplies and (whenever it is not in a position to do so) to allow and facilitate relief schemes. Once again, the High Contracting Parties explicitly referenced the role of UNRWA, reiterating their support for its activities 'to assess and alleviate the humanitarian situation in the field'.<sup>67</sup>

In an Advisory Opinion issued on 22 October 2025, the International Court of Justice held that Israel, the Occupying Power has obligations "to ensure that the population of the Occupied Palestinian Territory has the essential supplies of daily life, including food, water, clothing, bedding, shelter, fuel, medical

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65 Declaration of 7 December 2001 adopted by the Conference of High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, para. 10

66 Declaration of 17 December 2014 adopted by the Conference of High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, para. 4

67 Declaration of 17 December 2014 adopted by the Conference of High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, para. 5

supplies and services”.<sup>68</sup> The Court further found that Israel has obligations “to agree to and facilitate by all means at its disposal relief schemes on behalf of the population of the Occupied Palestinian Territory so long as that population is inadequately supplied, as has been the case in the Gaza Strip, including relief provided by the United Nations and its entities, in particular the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, other international organizations and third States, and not to impede such relief”.<sup>69</sup> Therefore, there are no grounds for confusion or uncertainty regarding Israel’s binding legal duty to both permit the free passage of humanitarian relief and guarantee its protection.<sup>70</sup>

Despite the world’s highest, most authoritative judicial body finding that Israel’s occupation of both Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem is unlawful, Israel continues to deny its classification as an Occupying Power. Nevertheless, even if Israel was not legally recognised as an Occupying Power, it would remain bound by the Fourth Geneva Convention. Article 147 includes ‘wilfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health’ as a grave breach of international humanitarian law.

Existing plans for the future of Gaza take advantage of Israel’s creation of a manmade famine and refusal to agree to and facilitate relief operations in

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68 *Obligations of Israel in Relation to the Presence and Activities of the United Nations, other International Organizations and Third States in and in Relation to the Occupied Palestinian Territory*, Advisory Opinion (ICJ, 22 October 2025), para. 223, section 3(a) <https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/196/196-20251022-adv-01-00-en.pdf>

69 *Obligations of Israel in Relation to the Presence and Activities of the United Nations, other International Organizations and Third States in and in Relation to the Occupied Palestinian Territory*, Advisory Opinion (ICJ, 22 October 2025), para. 223, section 3(b) <https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/196/196-20251022-adv-01-00-en.pdf>

70 Declaration of 17 December 2014 adopted by the Conference of High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, para. 5

Gaza, where the Palestinian population is being starved and subjected to relentless bombardment and acts of genocide. It presents the provision of lifesaving humanitarian aid and rebuilding of infrastructure systematically destroyed by Israel as benefit of the ultimatum, rather than a legal entitlement of Palestinians in Gaza which Israel, as the Occupying Power, is obligated to provide and facilitate. As such, Israel's creation of an environment of total destruction and deprivation has served its Zionist, settler-colonial agenda — and the capitalist, geopolitical interests of its allies — by placing Palestinians in Gaza in such a vulnerable, desperate position that they are being forced to accept unreasonable, manifestly unlawful terms under duress just for a chance of survival.

## IV. CONCLUSION

The exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, on both sides of the Green Line and in the diaspora, cannot be constrained by a narrowly framed imposed ultimatum — packaged and presented as a generous offer and solution to Israel’s genocide against Palestinians in Gaza.

Al-Haq is gravely concerned by the number of States, including the United Kingdom, Qatar, Jordan, UAE, Indonesia, Pakistan, Türkiye, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Lebanon, Australia, Canada, China, France, Germany, Italy, among others,<sup>71</sup> and representatives of the European Union, that have expressed support for this latest US plan. Instead of urging Hamas to accept unlawful terms which violate peremptory norms of international law and give rise to an open-ended foreign occupation, States, international organisations and institutions must condemn the ultimatum as a set of terms that directly contravene the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and violate their rights under international humanitarian and human rights law.

Alleged ‘agreements’ brought about by the unlawful use of force, and in this case genocide, acquiesced to under duress have no legal validity. Moreover, any ‘agreement’ that violates a peremptory norm of international law is rendered null and void. Self-determination is not to be deferred, conditional or limited. The *Palestine* Advisory Opinion applies to any actor or *sui generis*

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71 The White House, ‘Global Support for President Trump’s Bold Vision for Peace in Gaza’ (1 October 2025) <<https://www.whitehouse.gov/articles/2025/10/global-support-for-president-trumps-bold-vision-for-peace-in-gaza/>>



entity impeding the Palestinian people's full realisation of their inalienable right to self-determination. Any plan for the future of the Gaza Strip, or any of Palestine's territory, must be designed and developed by the Palestinian people themselves. Without their direct involvement, any proposal will lack legitimacy.

Al-Haq calls on the international community to:

1. Reject UN Security Council Resolution 2803 and President Trump's 20-point plan, along with any other plan which does not incorporate views of the Palestinian people and egregiously violates international law.
2. Not invest in public partnerships and ventures set up by the 20-point plan, and to enact or implement legislation to prevent national companies from the intentional theft of Palestinian lands and national resources;
3. Uphold the recommendations of International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion on *Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem* (19 July 2024);
4. Impose a full and immediate arms embargo against Israel and immediately cease all diplomatic and trade relations, including a full termination of the EU-Israel Association Agreement;

5. Impose comprehensive sanctions, targeting all Israeli Ministers on the Security Cabinet and military leaders carrying out the genocide, along with settlers and settler organisations, as well as Israeli institutions and entities which aid the maintenance of the settler-colonial apartheid regime, and unlawful occupation.
6. Pursue international justice and accountability for crimes committed against the Palestinian people, including by:
  - Prosecuting suspected perpetrators in their own jurisdictions;
  - Initiating proceedings on the basis of universal jurisdiction;
  - Publicly supporting and cooperating with proceedings by the International Criminal Court in the Situation in the State of Palestine;
  - Calling for a IIIM accountability mechanism for Palestine and participate in and support a diplomatic aid convoy to Gaza;
7. Protect the role of civil society and human rights organisations. The recent US decision to sanction Al-Haq, Al-Mezan, and PCHR is carried out in the broader context of its wholesale attacks against individuals and groups working to promote accountability and ensure international law is abided by. This includes:
  - States exploring other avenues to effectively protect Palestinian civil society, UN mandate holders, and the ICC, and its officials, and those cooperating with it from the effects of current and potential future sanctions, including by adopting protective measures at the national level;

- States publicly condemning such acts as a baseless attack against defenders of the rule of law, and refusing to comply with extraterritorial US laws;
- The EU amending the Blocking Statute to include Executive Order 14203 in the list of laws, regulations and other legislative instruments to which the regulation applies.