

Geopolitics as a contemporary threat, focussing on how external interventions and competition for resources may constitute forms of re-colonization and exacerbate Indigenous vulnerability.

1. Contextual Overview

The start of the Nakba launched by Zionist militias in 1947–1948 became instrumental in the consolidation of Israel’s settler-colonial domination over the Palestinian people. In the immediate aftermath of the mass expulsion of indigenous Palestinians from and within historic Palestine, the foundations of Israeli apartheid, already enshrined in Zionist institutions, were operationalised through laws, policies, and practices, most notably those aimed at denying Palestinian refugees and displaced persons their right of return, thereby entrenching their dispossession, fragmentation, and domination.¹

Since 1967, when Israel unlawfully occupied the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, the indigenous Palestinian population has been governed under emergency military rules of belligerent occupation. Despite the occupied Palestinian territory (OPT) being rich in oil, gas and shale oil which, if developed, would make Palestine economically self-sufficient and negate its reliance on energy sources appropriated by Israel and international aid, Israel has systematically prevented Palestine from extracting its natural resources. Instead, it has stunted growth of the Palestinian economy and exploited Palestinian energy dependence for private commercial profit,² exacerbating their involuntary reliance on Israel, an unlawful Occupying Power that subjugates and racially dominates the indigenous population while pursuing their permanent erasure from their ancestral lands.

Israel has annexed Palestine’s maritime waters by imposing a lethal naval blockade and occupying the Palestinian continental shelf. Israel routinely attacks, injures and kills Palestinian fishermen present within its unilaterally imposed coastal limit of six nautical miles, stripping them of their livelihoods and means of survival, while awarding exploration leases to international companies in its declared Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), which absorbs contiguous Palestinian resources, and encroaches deeply into the State of Palestine’s EEZ.³ Israel’s manifestly unlawful conduct amounts to violations of Articles 43, 46, 52 and 55 of the Hague Regulations, along with Articles 53 and 147 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

In blatant disregard of the manifest illegality of Israel’s policies and practices in the OPT, including its maritime territory, international corporations and States, including members of the European Union (EU) which are bound by the ‘EU Guidelines on Promoting Compliance with International Humanitarian Law (IHL)’, have concluded agreements with Israel that directly fund and facilitate the continuation of Israel’s genocidal, settler-colonial apartheid regime, further violating the indigenous Palestinian people’s right to development, self-determination and permanent sovereignty over their natural resources.

Companies have driven and enabled the process of displacement and replacement of the Palestinian population, foundational to the logic of settler-colonial erasure. The corporate sector has materially contributed to and benefitted from Israel’s apartheid, occupation and genocide against the Palestinian

¹ See Al-Haq, *Israeli Apartheid: Tool of Zionist Settler-Colonialism* (2022) <https://www.alhaq.org/cached_uploads/download/2022/12/22/israeli-apartheid-web-final-1-page-view-1671712165.pdf> 11-12

² See Al-Haq, *Annexing Energy: Exploiting and Preventing the Development of Oil and Gas in the Occupied Palestinian Territory* (2015) <https://www.alhaq.org/cached_uploads/download/alhaq_files/publications/Annexing_Energy.pdf>

³ Ibid

people by providing Israel with the weapons and machinery required to destroy critical infrastructure, cultural spaces, livelihoods and productive assets, such as olive groves and orchards, as well as segregate and control communities and restrict access to natural resources.⁴ By helping to militarise and incentivise illegal Israeli presence in the OPT through increasing investment and corporate activity, and consequently the physical and mental destruction of the indigenous Palestinian population, the corporate sector has contributed to the creation of the conditions necessary for the mass forcible displacement, dispossession and erasure of the Palestinian people.

2. External Intervention and Competition for Resources

In 2005, Israel concluded an agreement with Egyptian company East Mediterranean Gas (EMG) to route a gas pipeline – secured by its naval blockade – across Palestine’s maritime space from Ashkelon to El-Arish. United States (US) corporation Noble Energy and Israeli corporation Delek Drilling, with approval from the State of Israel, rapidly exploited the Noa field from the Israeli side violating customary international law. The accelerated rate of gas production from the Noa well means that the entire resource is more than likely damaged beyond use.⁵ Chevron Corporation, in consortium with Israeli NewMed Energy (a subsidiary of the OHCHR database-listed Delek Group), extracts natural gas from the Leviathan and Tamar fields, paying Israel \$453 million in royalties and taxes in 2023 alone and supplying more than 70 per cent of Israeli energy consumption.⁶ Chevron also profits from its part-ownership of the East Mediterranean Gas pipeline, and from gas export sales to Egypt and Jordan. As reported by the UNSR on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, “[a]t a time of increasing brutality, the British company BP PLC is expanding involvement in the Israeli economy, with exploration licences confirmed in March 2025, which allow BP to explore Palestinian maritime expanses illegally exploited by Israel”.⁷

Over the past five years, US intervention has exacerbated the vulnerability of the indigenous Palestinian population through its abandonment of traditional diplomacy, however insincere, to the unlawful imposition of a permanent, foreign and profit-driven corporate governance framework that will both internationalise and entrench Israel’s control over the Palestinian territory. Al-Haq’s ‘Trump Trilogy’ series lays this bare. Through its in-depth analysis of the Trump administration’s 2020 ‘Peace to Prosperity Plan’;⁸ August 2025 ‘Gaza Reconstitution, Economic Acceleration and Transformation’ (GREAT) Trust;⁹ and September 2025 ‘Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict’ (‘20-Point Plan’),¹⁰ Al-Haq highlights the neocolonial, capitalist aims of US involvement in the alleged

⁴ UN Human Rights Council, *From economy of occupation to economy of genocide: Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967*, Francesca Albanese, UN Doc. A/HRC/59/23 (2 July 2025) <<https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/59/23>> paras 22-23

⁵ Al-Haq, ‘New Report, “Annexing Energy” reveals Israel’s systematic and forced closure of Gaza to protect the interests of American and Israeli gas companies’ (5 December 2015) <<https://www.alhaq.org/publications/6455.html>>; See Al-Haq, *Annexing Energy: Exploiting and Preventing the Development of Oil and Gas in the Occupied Palestinian Territory* (2015) <https://www.alhaq.org/cached_uploads/download/alhaq_files/publications/Annexing_Energy.pdf>

⁶ UN Human Rights Council, *From economy of occupation to economy of genocide: Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967*, Francesca Albanese, UN Doc. A/HRC/59/23, 2 July 2025, para 58, available at: <https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/59/23>.

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Al-Haq, *Trump Trilogy – Part I: Economic Peace to Prosperity Plan* (November 2025) <https://www.alhaq.org/cached_uploads/download/2025/11/29/al-haq-trump-trilogy-part-1-1764430029.pdf>

⁹ Al-Haq, *Trump Trilogy – Part II: The ‘GREAT Trust’ – A US-Israeli Annexationist Plan for Gaza* (November 2025) <https://www.alhaq.org/cached_uploads/download/2025/12/06/al-haq-trump-trilogy-part-2-1765044261.pdf>

¹⁰ Al-Haq, *Trump Trilogy – Part III: The ‘Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict’ (‘20-Point Plan’)*, (December 2025) <https://www.alhaq.org/cached_uploads/download/2025/12/10/trump-trilogy-part-3-1765384677.pdf>

reconstruction and “peace-building” process in Gaza – which it views as little more than a business venture and source of untapped resources from which they can both profit and exert control over.

The US has reclassified Israel’s genocide as a concluded “war”, framing the levelling of Gaza as a governance failure by Hamas, rather than the direct result of US-backed unrelenting Israeli bombardment. This has subsequently been presented as an opportunity for economic development, rather than a marker of the need to bring an end to Israel’s genocidal, settler-colonial apartheid regime, the US, alongside regional allies, seeks to further obstruct the fundamental right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. Under the 20-point plan, unlawfully endorsed by UN Security Council Res. 2803, a so-called ‘Board of Peace’ (BoP) will work on ‘*attracting investment*’ and deal with ‘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’.¹¹ Donald Trump will be the Chairman of the BoP, in which he also represents the US, and can only be replaced if he resigns or is found incapacitated by an almost unattainable unanimous decision. As Chairman, Trump has exclusive authority to designate his successor; invite Member States to the BoP; renew memberships; and ‘create, modify, or dissolve subsidiary entities’.¹² Hence, the BoP will inevitably be composed of States that share Trump’s geopolitical agenda. Israel has already accepted its invitation and will be represented by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu,¹³ wanted by the ICC for international crimes committed in Gaza.

Under the framework of the 20-point plan, there will be an ‘Executive Board’ tasked with operationalising the BoP’s vision.¹⁴ Trump’s role as Chairman also grants him exclusive authority to appoint and remove members of the Executive Board and veto its decisions ‘at any time’.¹⁵ This grants Trump near-complete control over Gaza’s governance. As outlined in a recent White House statement, each Executive Board member will oversee ‘a defined portfolio critical to Gaza’s stabilization and long-term success, including, but not limited to...investment attraction, large-scale funding, and capital mobilization’.¹⁶ The Executive Board is completely unregulated, as it will ‘determine its own rules of procedure’ as it carries out the BoP’s mission.¹⁷ Unsurprisingly, there is no Palestinian representation on the BoP or the Executive Board, which instead includes staunch supporters of Israel and its Zionist, settler-colonial ideology. Executive Board members currently include Trump’s son-in-law Jared Kushner, a businessman, billionaire Marc Rowan, an investment firm co-founder, US Special Envoy Steve Witkoff, a real estate developer, and former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair.

At the World Economic Forum in January 2026, Kushner further confirmed the capitalist goals underpinning US intervention in Palestine when stating that they will apply the same free market

¹¹ 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’), point 9 (emphasis added)

¹² ‘Subsidiary entities’ appears to refer to companies controlled by the BoP, which would function as a parent company within a profit-driven structure rather than a genuine international organisation serving a public interest

¹³ Prime Minister of Israel (@IsraeliPM), Post on X (21 January 2026)

<<https://x.com/IsraeliPM/status/2013866433067864089>>

¹⁴ The White House, ‘Statement on President Trump’s Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict’ (16 January 2026)

<<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/2026/01/statement-on-president-trumps-comprehensive-plan-to-end-the-gaza-conflict/>>

¹⁵ Article 4.1(e) *see* Times of Israel, ‘Full text: Charter of Trump’s Board of Peace’ (18 January 2026)

<<https://www.timesofisrael.com/full-text-charter-of-trumps-board-of-peace/>>

¹⁶ The White House, ‘Statement on President Trump’s Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict’ (16 January 2026)

<<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/2026/01/statement-on-president-trumps-comprehensive-plan-to-end-the-gaza-conflict/>>

¹⁷ Times of Israel, ‘Full text: Charter of Trump’s Board of Peace’ (18 January 2026) <<https://www.timesofisrael.com/full-text-charter-of-trumps-board-of-peace/>>

economy principles in the Gaza Strip as adopted in the US.¹⁸ This will entail the wholesale exploitation of Palestine’s natural resources, as Kushner reaffirmed in the presentation of his entrepreneurial “Master Plan” at Davos which included the development of ‘energy and digital infrastructure’ alongside an image of a coastal gas rig.¹⁹ This comes as no surprise. Immediately prior to the 20-point plan, the GREAT Trust revealed how the Trump administration and international partners 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’.²⁰ The GREAT Trust further noted the ‘strategic benefits’ for the US in exploiting 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’.²¹ 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.²² All US proposals therefore have one common objective — the exploitation of Palestine and the destruction of the Gaza Strip in order to build a ‘Riviera of the Middle East’²³ overseen by a US-led multilateral trusteeship.

Notwithstanding the fact that UN Security Council Resolution 2803 – which is legally invalid in and of itself based on it violating the UN Charter and peremptory norms of international law – limits the BoP’s functions to Gaza specifically and only until 31 December 2027, the recently released Charter outlines an alleged mission to promote stability, restore lawful governance and secure enduring peace in ‘conflict-affected’ or ‘*threatened*’ areas.²⁴ Not only does the BoP seek to extend its unlawful administration beyond Gaza to wherever it deems geopolitically or financially advantageous, the Trump Charter makes it abundantly clear that the Palestinian people will be subject to perpetual foreign occupation that only further fragments the Palestinian territory and divides and isolates its indigenous population since members of the BoP would serve three-year terms, while *permanent* positions are sold for one billion US dollars or more.²⁵ According to Article 5.1, funding is ‘voluntary’ from Member States, third States and other undefined organisations and ‘sources’ seeking to capitalise on Israel’s unlawful occupation, genocide and destruction of Gaza and pillage Palestine’s resources. Under Article 6(a) of the Charter, the BoP claims the ability to ‘enter into contracts, acquire and dispose of immovable and movable property, institute legal proceedings, open bank accounts, [and] receive and disburse private and public funds’, despite the absence of a lawful international mandate. It additionally claims privileges and immunities it deems ‘necessary’ to fulfil its functions and grants itself authority to delegate powers to its officials and subsidiaries to negotiate and conclude agreements with any State in

¹⁸ Drop Site (@DropSite News), Post on X (22 January 2026)

<<https://x.com/DropSiteNews/status/2014325333055410259?s=20>>

¹⁹ BBC, ‘US unveils plans for ‘New Gaza’ with skyscrapers’ (22 January 2026)

<<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cy7nmpljze7o>>

²⁰ 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 (emphasis added)

²¹ 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

²² 20-point plan, point 11

²³ 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>>

²⁴ Article 1, see Times of Israel, ‘Full text: Charter of Trump’s Board of Peace’ (18 January 2026)

<<https://www.timesofisrael.com/full-text-charter-of-trumps-board-of-peace/>> (emphasis added)

²⁵ Article 2.2(c), see Times of Israel, ‘Full text: Charter of Trump’s Board of Peace’ (18 January 2026)

<<https://www.timesofisrael.com/full-text-charter-of-trumps-board-of-peace/>> (emphasis added)

which it operates.²⁶ Hence, rather than Palestine's natural resources being used to fuel Palestinian industrial independence or provide affordable energy to Palestinians subject to an 18-year long crippling blockade, and 78-year settler colonial apartheid regime, it is envisioned as a strategic asset to exert ownership over and attract foreign investment for private gain. The consequence of this resource-centric, capitalist model is the creation of a permanent state of engineered vulnerability for the indigenous Palestinian population. **Denied sovereignty and the ability to self-govern, instead reduced to a labour force for the very industries extracting their wealth, the Palestinian people will lose the material basis for self-determination.**

3. Conclusion

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 implemented, also by the US and its Western and regional allies. By placing Gaza under the administration of an externally appointed, technocratic committee, the 20-point plan strips the indigenous Palestinian population of their political agency while rendering economic independence, essential to any sovereign State, impossible. The perpetual foreign occupation it establishes serves to entrench Israeli impunity by legitimising Israel's settler-colonial apartheid regime, which continues to dictate the terms of Palestinian governance and development on ever-shifting Israeli security benchmarks and the facilitation of foreign profit. The need for accountability for Israel's commission of mass atrocities, historical and ongoing, is entirely absent from each plan presented by the Trump administration.

Rather than take part in a neocolonial, capitalist venture – the latest chapter in the history of US imperialism – States and the international community must reject both the 20-point plan and UN Security Council Resolution 2803. Presented to the indigenous Palestinian population as an ultimatum with the potential of ending Israel's manmade famine and genocide, the terms of the 20-point plan continue to be routinely violated by Israel, despite now allegedly entering Phase Two of the process – 492 Palestinians have been killed during the so-called 'ceasefire', bringing the total killed since 7 October 2023 to 71,667.²⁷ This constitutes a flagrant violation 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 the Occupying Power'. As stressed by the International Court of Justice in its Advisory Opinion on the *Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem*, such agreements 'cannot be understood to detract from Israel's obligations under the pertinent rules of international law'.²⁸ International law does not permit the legal rights of Palestinians to be extinguished nor the legal obligations upon Third States to be abandoned.

²⁶ Article 6(b), see Times of Israel, 'Full text: Charter of Trump's Board of Peace' (18 January 2026) <<https://www.timesofisrael.com/full-text-charter-of-trumps-board-of-peace/>>

²⁷ UN OCHA, Humanitarian Situation Update #355 | Gaza Strip (29 January 2026), <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/humanitarian-situation-update-355-gaza-strip>

²⁸ International Court of Justice *Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem* (Advisory Opinion, 19 July 2024) <<https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/186/186-20240719-adv-01-00-en.pdf>> para 102