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By Huzeir Ezekiel Dzulhisham

SYNOPSIS

President Trump's "Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict" has the potential to end the Israel-Hamas War. However, there is considerable speculation whether the Plan will bring lasting peace.

COMMENTARY

On October 9, 2025, Hamas agreed to President Donald Trump's "Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict" (the Plan). This represents the first step to ending the Israel-Gaza War, which has killed [67,000 Palestinians](#) thus far. While this development may signal the war's end, two important questions remain: Will the Plan bring lasting peace between Israel and the Palestinians? And what are its ramifications on the broader Middle East?

Grievances, Governance and Extremism

While the Plan has significant potential to end the war, it does not address the key issues necessary for achieving peace in the long term, i.e., the resolution of Gaza's war grievances and the establishment of a Palestinian government and other stabilising forces in post-war Gaza.

There appears to be an underlying assumption in [Points 5, 7 and 18](#) of the Plan that the return of Gazans imprisoned by the Israelis during the war (250 life-sentenced and 1700 detained), establishment of an interfaith dialogue, reconstruction of the Gaza Strip and entry of aid would placate the Gazans' war grievances.

These aims are clearly inadequate considering the sheer devastation and loss of life suffered by the Gazans. An estimated [90 per cent of homes](#) were destroyed or damaged, and [67,000](#) civilians were killed. At the time of writing, based on the latest available [polls](#) that include Gazan respondents in May 2025, 68 per cent of Palestinians believed that the establishment of an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel in the next five years is “slim or non-existent”. While support for armed attacks against Israel declined, four out of ten respondents still supported “armed struggle against Israeli occupation”. These statistics suggest that post-war grievances are significant and unlikely to diminish easily.

Furthermore, the Plan’s governance proposals could potentially undermine long-term stability in the Strip. Point 9 [proposes](#) that “Gaza will be governed under the temporary transitional governance of a technocratic, apolitical Palestinian committee”. This committee will be supervised by a “Board of Peace” that includes President Trump and former British Prime Minister Tony Blair. It also suggests that Gaza’s governance will be handed back to the “reformed” Palestinian Authority (PA). At the same time, Point 15 [proposes](#) the creation of an “International Stabilisation Force” (ISF), which [reportedly](#) compose of Egyptian, Emirati, Qatari, Turkish, and US troops that will train and support the Palestinian police and secure Gaza’s borders.

The main issues are the likelihood of Gaza’s disillusionment and the new governing authority’s lack of public legitimacy. The May 2025 polls cited earlier indicated that [60 percent](#) of Palestinians believe the PA to be a “burden on the Palestinian people”. The inclusion of Tony Blair, who has been [criticised](#) for approving British participation in the 2003 US Invasion of Iraq, would, as is to be expected, be controversial to many Gazans. It is also unspecified if the ISF will be deployed within Gaza, as the US had announced that its force of 200 troops [will](#) be stationed outside Gaza. A remote role could reduce the ISF’s effectiveness in stabilising the Strip. Israel also [rejected](#) the inclusion of Turkish troops in the ISF, placing international cooperation over the ISF in doubt.

The absence of stabilising leadership, combined with existing perceptions of injustice, could cause disgruntled Gazans to support extremist groups and generate new cycles of violence against Israel. This happened during the First Palestinian Intifada in 1987 when extremist factions from the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood rallied together to [form](#) Hamas.

Israel is aware of this possible outcome. Public sentiments on this were reflected in Israeli newspaper Haaretz’s [headline article](#), “Do You Know How Many Generations Want Revenge Now?’ How Gazans See Their Future With or Without Hamas”. Significantly, polling data revealed that only [12 per cent](#) of Israelis believe the 20 Point Plan will be fully implemented.

Israeli Insecurity and Its Implications

Unresolved Gaza grievances combined with the Plan’s proposed relocation of Hamas members out of Gaza into neighbouring Arab states could actually intensify Israeli insecurity. This would have severe implications for Gaza and neighbouring Arab states.

Israel anticipates instability in post-war Gaza. Hence, the Plan does not specify a timeline for a complete Israeli withdrawal from Gaza. Point 16 [mentions](#) that the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) will maintain a “perimeter presence” until “Gaza is properly secure from any resurgent terror threat”. By implication, failure of the Plan to stabilise Gaza and the consequent emergence of new extremist threats could lead to the IDF resuming military action in Gaza to quell perceived security threats.

Concerning Hamas’ future, Point 6 [allows](#) disarmed Hamas members to “be given amnesty”, and Hamas members “who wish to leave Gaza will be provided safe passage to receiving countries”. However, Israeli suspicions that Hamas would rebuild itself and attempt to rally support outside Gaza could create targets for Israeli strikes across the Middle East. This was demonstrated by the unprecedented [September 2025](#) Israeli missile strikes against Hamas’ leadership in Qatar.

Since the October 7 attacks, Israel has demonstrated that it will take proactive action against threats in the region. It targeted Hezbollah in Lebanon and attacked Iran’s military and nuclear sites. Some scholars have [compared](#) Israel’s current military doctrine with Iran’s forward defence strategy, which proactively targets external threats, pushing conflicts away from the homeland. Such strikes could destabilise the region and worsen relations between Israel and the rest of the Middle East.

Complicating Geopolitical Tensions

The Plan also does not specifically address the future of Israel-Middle East relations, which could be adversely affected by Israeli military actions to quell militant extremism arising from unresolved Gazan grievances. The Israel-Hamas War brought to a halt the diplomatic recognition of Israel by several Arab states under the 2020 Abraham Accords. Furthermore, Israel’s attacks on Gaza, Lebanon, Syria, Iran, and Qatar ignited tensions between it and the rest of the region, with many states perceiving it as a [threat](#) to regional stability.

Military escalation has already occurred between Turkey and Israel. In protest of Israel’s military offensive against Gaza, Ankara [severed](#) diplomatic relations and closed its territory to Israeli shipping and flights in 2024. In April 2025, Israel [bombed](#) three Syrian airbases, which the Turkish military had planned to occupy. In September, nationalist Israeli media [labelled](#) Turkey as “Israel’s most dangerous enemy”.

Conclusion

In essence, if the Plan is unable to resolve Gaza’s grievances and provide for effective governance, it could generate more extremism towards Israel. This could provoke Israeli military retaliation, which besides worsening regional perceptions of Israel, reduce the prospects for normalised relations and entrench regional hostility towards it.

Ultimately, President Donald Trump’s “Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict” hinges directly on Hamas’ willingness to abide by and agree with it. It is uncertain if Hamas will cede political control of Gaza and disarm. It is reported that

as Israeli troops withdrew from Gaza, Hamas [mobilised](#) 7,000 fighters to secure their positions, triggering Israeli airstrikes.

While the 20 Point Peace Plan has significant weaknesses, a return to stability, however fragile that would be, is a possibility if leaders such as President Trump and likeminded allies in the Middle East exercise their influence and manage the root causes of the conflict in a consistent manner, although some of these will remain intractable for a long time to come. The 20 Point Peace Plan in its current form, must be regarded as the first step to ending the war rather than a comprehensive solution for lasting peace.

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