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# The Peace Board: Re-engineering Gaza in Line with Israel's Post-War Vision

Unit for Political Studies

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Series: **Situation Assessment**

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## Unit for Political Studies

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# Table of Contents

The Board of Peace and the Post-Ceasefire Period .....	1
The Product of Two Years of Genocidal War .....	3
Gaza after the Ceasefire .....	4
Conclusion .....	5



The Gaza report presented by the so-called "Board of Peace" to the UN Security Council in mid-May 2026 did not attribute any responsibility to Israel for breaches of the ceasefire. It ignored its refusal to end killings and assassinations, its expanding military deployments, and its intensification of the blockade imposed on Gaza – despite observing violations, "some" of which were "serious".<sup>1</sup> Instead, the report – which is the first of its kind to be submitted by the Board since it was officially launched by US President Trump on 15 January 2026 – emphasized that "the ceasefire has largely held for seven months". This despite the fact that Nickolay Mladenov, the body's High Representative for Gaza, conceding on 13 May that no meaningful progress had been made towards implementing the basic principles of the ceasefire agreement.<sup>2</sup> Stranger still, Mladenov blamed Hamas for this lack of progress, directly linking implementation and the beginning of reconstruction to the disarmament of the Palestinian factions.<sup>3</sup> In fact, during his talks with Hamas in Cairo, he adopted an explicitly threatening tone – warning his interlocutors that they would "pay the price" if they did not agree to his proposals.

All this raises serious questions around the Board of Peace. Above all, we are forced to ask: what purpose is it supposed to serve, if it is unable to prevent Israel from violating the Gaza ceasefire on a daily basis or impede its attempts to reimpose control over the Strip via long-term political and security arrangements intended to reshape the reality on the ground – using the international community as a fig leaf?

## The Board of Peace and the Post-Ceasefire Period

The Board of Peace was established as part of US-brokered attempts to restructure the politics and security of the post-war Gaza Strip in such a way as to allow Israel to achieve in peace what it had not been able to by war – with international cover. The Board was created under UN Resolution 2803, issued in November 2025.<sup>4</sup> Trump described it as an international transitional body that would oversee reconstruction and manage the transitional period, alongside the "National Committee for the Administration of Gaza" (NCAG), the "Gaza Executive Board", and the "International Stabilization Force" (ISF).<sup>5</sup> Mladenov, as High Representative for Gaza, was granted a wide remit over coordination of funding and oversight of "day after" measures.

The actions taken by the Board, however, have quickly shown that its real priority is to reshape political and security realities in the Strip in line with an Israeli vision. It has made reconstruction, civilian

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1 Ibtisam Azim, "Key Findings of the "Peace Board" Report on Gaza Submitted to the Security Council", *Alaraby Aljazeera*, 20/5/2026, accessed on 22/5/2026 at: <https://acr.ps/hBxMvNZ>

2 "Peace Board Envoy: Gaza Ceasefire Has Failed to Meet Palestinian and Israeli Expectations", *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 13/5/2026, accessed on 22/5/2026 at: <https://acr.ps/hBxMw1A>

3 "Mladenov: Hamas Could Become a Political Movement and Lay Down Its Arms", *al-Mudun*, 13/5/2026, accessed on 22/5/2026 at: <https://acr.ps/hBxMwfb>

4 "Text of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2803 on the Gaza Strip and Ending the War", *Wafa*, 17/11/2025, accessed on 22/5/2026 at: <https://acr.ps/hBxMwsM>

5 "The 'Peace Board'... An International Mechanism Led by Trump", *Al Jazeera Net*, 22/1/2026, accessed on 22/5/2026 at: <https://acr.ps/hBxMvCj>



government, and humanitarian aid conditional on security measures – specifically, disarmament of the Palestinian resistance. This was first made clear at the Board's briefing of the UNSC on 28 April 2026. Tony Blair, a member of its Executive Board, explicitly tied the removal of restrictions imposed on the Strip to disarmament of the Palestinian resistance. He argued that Hamas in its current form could play no role, whether direct or indirect, in the government of the Strip, so long as it retained its weapons.<sup>6</sup> The point was made again when the Board submitted its May 2026 report. There, too, it maintained that reconstruction could not begin without "full decommissioning by Hamas and all armed groups in Gaza". It described this as the "critical variable – the single factor that unlocks every other element of the plan".<sup>7</sup>

Hamas, for its part, has called this an attempt to "change the balance of power". It has accused the Board of impeding implementation of the peace agreement and the stages that both sides agreed to, complaining that in practical terms the body has endorsed the preconditions and security priorities of the Israeli occupation.<sup>8</sup> That the Board is indeed impeding implementation is shown particularly clearly by the question of the status of the NCAG. The NCAG is an all-Palestinian committee of technocrats, intended to govern the Strip during the transitional period and oversee aid, reconstruction, and humanitarian assistance. All parties agreed to its formation in the peace deal, and all the Palestinian factions, and the presidency of the Palestinian Authority, have endorsed it as an appropriate administrative framework for this stage of the process.<sup>9</sup> Nonetheless, it has not even been allowed to enter the Strip and begin its operations.

On 30 April, NCAG chief commissioner Ali Shaath said that he had received, via Mladenov, preliminary agreement for the Committee to enter Gaza. He also took the opportunity to reiterate that the Committee was ready to start work immediately.<sup>10</sup> But as of the date of writing, the NCAG still has not been allowed into Gaza – because Israel has a free hand and is protected by its relationship with the Board. The Board has maintained that Hamas is responsible for the NCAG remaining outside Gaza, claiming that the organisation has refused to hand over government of the Strip. Hamas, however, rejects these claims, noting that it has repeatedly expressed its willingness to do so. It has called for the "re-empowerment" of the NCAG and has placed the blame squarely with the Occupation.<sup>11</sup>

This all shows that, just as with reconstruction, the Board has made the work of the NCAG conditional on political and security measures that serve an Israeli vision for the future of Gaza. Even as all this

<sup>6</sup> "UN Security Council Discusses the Palestinian Question and Hears a Briefing from the Peace Board", UN News, 28/4/2026, accessed on 22/5/2026 at: <https://acr.ps/hBxMvPU>

<sup>7</sup> Azim.

<sup>8</sup> "Hamas Rejects the 'Peace Board' Report and Accuses It of Adopting the Occupation's Narrative", *Al Araby Al Jadeed*, 19/5/2026, accessed on 22/5/2026 at: <https://acr.ps/hBxMw3v>

<sup>9</sup> "Palestinian Support for the Formation of a Committee to Administer the Gaza Strip", *Al Araby Al Jadeed*, 14/1/2026, accessed on 22/5/2026 at: <https://acr.ps/hBxMwh6>

<sup>10</sup> Husni Nadim, "Ali Shaath: We Have Received Preliminary Approval for the Gaza Administration Committee to Enter the Strip," *Anadolu Agency*, 30/4/2026, accessed on 22/5/2026 at: <https://acr.ps/hBxMwuH>

<sup>11</sup> "Hamas Rejects the 'Peace Board' Report"

has happened, and despite the ceasefire, Israel has been expanding its presence on the ground. Israeli forces have pushed back the "Yellow Line" of control far to the west of its original location, establishing no less than 32 permanent or long-term military positions.<sup>12</sup> Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu has boasted of this expansion publicly, claiming that "in Gaza, now, we are no longer in control of a mere 50% - in reality, we control 60% [of the territory]".<sup>13</sup>

Between October 2024 and January 2026, the UNHRC recorded 167 Palestinian deaths in the vicinity of the areas of separation, including women and children. Medecins Sans Frontieres has blamed Israel's expansion of control for destroying or restricting access to water supplies and medical facilities.<sup>14</sup> UNRWA, meanwhile, reports that 127 of its facilities are now within areas that can only be accessed in coordination with Israel.<sup>15</sup> All this shows exactly how Israel has been exploiting the ceasefire to reshape the security geography of the Strip, with the Board of Peace providing the necessary political and administrative cover. This extends even to the financing of the Board. Member states had initially committed some 17 billion USD, but only a small fraction of this has materialised.<sup>16</sup> As a result, the US has proposed transferring Palestinian funds confiscated by Israel to the Board's control and using them to fund post-war measures in the Strip. In practice, this would mean making Palestinians themselves pay for political and security measures that serve a US-Israeli vision for the future of the Strip. It would mean granting Israel a direct role in the management of Palestinian financial resources at a time when the humanitarian crisis in the Strip is only getting worse.<sup>17</sup>

## The Product of Two Years of Genocidal War

The joint EU-UN Final Gaza Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment, published in April 2026, concluded that Israel's genocidal war had led to one of the most destructive humanitarian crises in modern history.<sup>18</sup> The report recorded more than 71,000 people killed and 171,000 injured, as well as thousands of people lost beneath the rubble. It also noted that more than 1.9 million Palestinians within the Strip had been displaced, "often multiple times", and that more than 1.2 million – about 60% of the population – had lost their homes. The Assessment put the direct physical damage caused by the Israeli war machine at around USD 35.2 billion, with additional economic and social losses amounting to another USD 22.7 billion. It estimated that the Strip would need about USD 71.4 billion for recovery and reconstruction. This reflects the sheer scale of the destruction inflicted on the residential, commercial, and productive fabric of Gaza.

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<sup>12</sup> "Gaza: Israel Restricts Aid and Kills Civilians During the Ceasefire: Famine Risk Returns Amid the 'Peace Board's' Failure to Fulfil Its Commitments", *Human Rights Watch*, 19/5/2026, accessed on 22/5/2026 at: <https://acr.ps/hBxMvEe>

<sup>13</sup> "Netanyahu: Israeli Forces Currently Control 60% of Gaza", *Asharq Al-Awsat*, 17/5/2026, accessed on 22/5/2026 at: <https://acr.ps/hBxMvRP>

<sup>14</sup> "Gaza: Israel Restricts Aid and Kills Civilians"

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> "Reuters: Washington May Request the Transfer of Withheld Palestinian Clearance Revenues to the 'Peace Board'", *Ultra Palestine*, 16/5/2026, accessed on 22/5/2026 at: <https://acr.ps/hBxMw5q>

<sup>17</sup> "Peace Board Announces Funding Shortfall in Trump's Gaza Reconstruction Plan", *France 24*, 19/5/2026, accessed on 22/5/2026 at: <https://acr.ps/hBxMwj1>

<sup>18</sup> "Gaza Strip Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment," United Nations, European Union & World Bank (April 2026), accessed on 22/5/2026, at: <https://acr.ps/hBxMwwC>



The war has left more than half Gaza's hospitals and around 62% of its primary healthcare centres out of action and deprived more than 728,000 Palestinian children and young people of their education. It has destroyed more than 95% of agricultural infrastructure and caused damage to, or left unusable, around 96% of all agricultural land – at a time when 1.6 million Palestinians are facing a severe shortage of food because of the ongoing blockade. The war has also brought economic activity in Gaza to the brink of collapse, with real GDP falling by about 83%. The employment rate has collapsed to around 9.3%, one of the lowest worldwide. These figures reflect the loss of around 77 years of human development in the Strip, with the Human Development Index score at its lowest level since records began. The war has destroyed almost totally the basic components of human life in the Strip and radically reshaped the conditions of survival there.

## Gaza after the Ceasefire

On 9 October 2025, Trump announced that an agreement had been reached to end the war in the Gaza Strip.<sup>19</sup> But only a few of the provisions set out in this agreement have been implemented in practice – in particular, those pertaining to the exchange of prisoners and repatriation of fighters' remains.<sup>20</sup> While the Palestinian resistance has met its obligations for the first phase, Israel has remained evasive on most of its own commitments, including withdrawal to the Yellow Line, permitting regular entry of aid, and reducing the military restrictions imposed on the Strip. Although Israel has disregarded much of the peace deal and has failed to comply with the ceasefire, in January 2026 the US administration announced that the first phase of the agreement had been completed and the second phase – reconstruction and transition to the "day after" – would now begin, in accordance with the road map based on UNSC Resolution 2803. The White House was eager to begin disarming Hamas.

Nonetheless, Israel has prevented any actual transition to this phase from going ahead. This is not surprising, given that it has treated the ceasefire more as a temporary security measure than a real end to the war. Between the beginning of the ceasefire on 10 October 2025 and mid-May 2026, 871 Palestinians were killed and another 2,562 wounded. Rescue teams and Civil Defence units recovered 776 bodies from various places around the Strip, with many others remaining irretrievable because of a lack of necessary equipment.<sup>21</sup> These figures make it clear that the Israeli war on Gaza is ongoing and that the Strip continues to be targeted on a daily basis despite a notional ceasefire.

Notwithstanding the "ceasefire" and the creation of the "Board of Peace", Israel has continued its policy of assassinations against Hamas commanders, most recently Izzeddin al-Haddad, Mohammad al-Sinwar's successor as commander of the al-Qassam Brigades. Other figures assassinated by Israel include Raid Saad, the commander of the Operations Division of the al-Qassam Brigades and member

<sup>19</sup> Nidal al-Mughrabi, Matt Spetalnick, and Trevor Hunnicut, "Israel and Hamas Agree on First Phase of Trump Plan to End Gaza War", *Reuters*, 9/10/2025, accessed on 22/5/2026 at: <https://acr.ps/hBxMvG9>

<sup>20</sup> Dedi Hayun, "Israel Buries Last Captive Recovered from Gaza, Ending a Painful Chapter," *Reuters*, 28/1/2026, accessed on 22/5/2026, at: <https://acr.ps/hBxMvTK>

<sup>21</sup> "US Announces Start of Second Phase of 'Gaza Plan' with Formation of Committee to Administer the Strip", *CNN Arabic*, 14/1/2026, accessed on 22/5/2026 at: <https://acr.ps/hBxMw71>

of their Military Council; Muhammad al-Houli, the al-Qassam Brigades' deputy commander of the Central Region; and a number of field commanders, such as Na'il al-Barawi and Taj al-Din al-Wahidi. Most of these assassinations have been carried out as negotiations were ongoing over the second phase of the agreement.

The Gaza government's Media Bureau has reported more than 2,400 Israeli violations of the ceasefire between 10 October 2025 and 10 April 2026, including 1,109 air raids and strikes and 921 incidents of soldiers firing on civilians, as well as attacks on gatherings of displaced people, police officers, journalists, aid workers, and even fishermen along the Gaza coast.<sup>22</sup>

Israeli abuses have extended to the humanitarian sphere. The restrictions on the entry of aid, fuel, and medical supplies have continued, exacerbating the existing humanitarian crisis. With the beginning of the US-Israeli war on Iran on 28 February 2026, Israel closed all the border crossings with the Strip, slashing the average number of trucks entering Gaza weekly from 4,200 to only 590.<sup>23</sup>

Although the Karam Abu Salem crossing was partially reopened in March 2026, the amount of aid getting in remains far below the actual requirements of the Gaza population. Over the course of April 2026, food aid reached around 197,000 families – meeting only 75% of minimum daily need. 68% of the population has been forced to burn rubbish in order to cook food because of the near-complete lack of cooking gas. The health sector has continued to operate at crisis levels, with only 19 hospitals partly functional at a time when 43,000 people have suffered life changing injuries and more than 50,000 in need of long-term rehabilitation. Estimates from the Ministry of Health in Gaza suggest that more than 1,400 patients have died while waiting for medical evacuation, while 18,500, including 4,000 children, are on waiting lists for treatment outside the Strip.

Israel is continuing to use the blockade and humanitarian restrictions as a means of pressuring the Strip and its inhabitants to leave.

## Conclusion

By making reconstruction, aid deliveries and improved living conditions conditional on disarmament of the Palestinian resistance, the so-called "Board of Peace" aims to force Palestinians to accept security and political measures aligning with an Israeli vision for the future of the Strip. It is for this reason that in late March 2026, the Board presented a proposal to Hamas under which the organisation would have had to commit to destroying its tunnel network and handing over its weapons over an eight month period. Offered in exchange were measures relating to government of the Strip, reconstruction, and Israeli withdrawal – once total decommissioning of Palestinian arms had been confirmed. There was no reference whatsoever to Palestinian statehood or an end to occupation.

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<sup>22</sup> "Death Toll in the Gaza Strip Rises to 72,763 and Injuries to 172,664 Since the Start of the Aggression", *Wafa*, 17/5/2026, accessed on 22/5/2026 at: <https://acr.ps/hBxMwkW>

<sup>23</sup> Mera Aladam, "Full List of Israel's Ceasefire Violations in Gaza, Seven Months on," *Middle East Eye*, 15/5/2026, accessed on 22/5/2026, at: <https://acr.ps/hBxMwyx>



The Board is using the prospect of reconstruction and removal of humanitarian restrictions as a tool to exercise political and security pressure. By doing so, it aims to impose Israel's conditions on the future of the Strip and the Palestinian resistance – allowing Israel to achieve in peace what it was unable to by war. This interpretation is borne out by the US's ongoing talks with the Board. There are now serious proposals to implement an alternative plan in those parts of the Strip outside Hamas's control – including bringing in the NCAG and the ISF and beginning partial reconstruction efforts. This would amount to a political and military partition of the Strip in which basic human rights would be linked less to the end of a genocidal war and a humanitarian crisis and more to concerns of control and political loyalty.