

October 2025

Re: Deficiencies of President Trump's 20-point "peace plan" and remaining legal obligations of the U.S. government under international law

Dear Senator Mike Lee, Senator John Curtis, Congressman Blake Moore, Congresswoman Celeste Maloy, Congressman Mike Kennedy, and Congressman Burgess Owens:

There has been much fanfare about President Trump's [20-point "peace plan"](#) for Gaza. Phase 1 of the plan – ceasefire, securing the return of the Israeli hostages and release of Palestinian prisoners, an Israeli military pullback in Gaza, and resumption of humanitarian aid – is, as of this writing, still unfolding in fits and starts. Negotiations for Phases 2 and 3 are ongoing.

The plan claims to aspire to a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. But without addressing the root causes of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, nothing will be gained by diving into real estate development in a modern-day iteration of the reservations established for Native Americans.

What is in this plan for the Palestinians? No sovereignty. No free and fair elections reflecting the full range of Palestinian political expression. No protection from arbitrary Israeli military incursions. No dismantling illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank. No war reparations. No return for millions of exiled Palestinian refugees or return of their properties seized illegally.

President Trump's plan is a completely biased proposal that attempts to lock Palestinians into firm commitments while leaving a wide array of loopholes for Israel to renege on the "deal." Palestinians are expected to commit to disarmament, governance reforms, and sidelining Hamas, while Israel is given multiple outs to delay implementation or resume military invasions based on vague "security" rationales. Since the ceasefire went into effect on 10/10/2025, Israel has already killed [about 100 Palestinians in Gaza](#) as of this writing.

We've seen this playbook before with the 1993 Oslo Accords, which specifically prohibited unilateral changes to the status quo. However, the Israeli government facilitated massive settlement expansion following Oslo. Settlers nearly tripled in the 30 years since Oslo.<sup>1</sup> All Israeli settlements are completely illegal under international law, as confirmed by the International Court of Justice ("ICJ") in its [07/19/2024 advisory opinion](#).

Instead of adhering to the ruling of the ICJ, the Trump "peace plan" contemplates imposing a settlement from the outside – via a Tony Blair viceroyship or otherwise. This is a recipe for failure. There has to be buy-in from the Palestinian side for a lasting peace to prevail. The U.S.

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<sup>1</sup> In 1993, there were approximately 110,000 settlers in the West Bank, 140,000 in East Jerusalem, and 4,800 in the Gaza Strip prior to the 2005 disengagement. As of March 2025, according to a [report from the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights](#) citing data from Peace Now, there are now 503,732 Israeli settlers in the West Bank in 147 settlements and 224 outposts, with an additional 233,600 settlers in 14 settlements in East Jerusalem.

should seek Palestinian input on the outstanding “final status issues” of Jerusalem, refugees, settlements, borders, and security. These issues were postponed during the 30-year “Oslo process” and have again been postponed in the Trump “peace plan.”

None of this changes the underlying responsibility of the U.S. government to “prevent and punish” genocide under international law, as codified in the 1948 Genocide Convention. Multiple legal experts – including the U.N. Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory – have concluded that Israel committed/is committing genocide in Gaza. (See [UN Report dated 9/16/2025](#).)

The obligation to “prevent and punish” genocide is not optional or dependent upon approval or consent by the perpetrating state. As [Human Rights Watch explains](#), “governments [including the U.S.] should **suspend arms transfers to Israel** and their **preferential trade deals**, **ban trade with illegal [Israeli] settlements** [in the West Bank], and **impose targeted sanctions on Israeli officials** responsible for ongoing crimes against Palestinian civilians.”<sup>2</sup>

In addition to genocide, Israeli authorities have committed war crimes and crimes against humanity (including extermination, apartheid and persecution). The U.S. should support the International Criminal Court (“ICC”) in its mandate to combat impunity for atrocity crimes internationally. The U.S. should **stop hosting war criminal Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at the White House** and instead should **arrest him** for rendition to the ICC at The Hague. The U.S. should **remove U.S. sanctions** against ICC judges/officials, leading Palestinian human rights organizations, and the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territory Occupied Since 1967 (Francesca Albanese).

In 1939, the U.S. turned away a ship called the MS St. Louis carrying over 900 Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi persecution, forcing it to return to Europe where many of the passengers perished in the Holocaust. That event remains a great moral stain on the U.S.

We submit that the U.S. is facing another such moment of moral reckoning. The overwhelming opinion in the human rights and legal community is that Israel committed/is committing genocide in Gaza. The U.S. has the power, and the obligation, to “prevent and punish” this genocide. Will U.S. political leadership rise to the challenge?

Sincerely yours,

The undersigned Utah constituents

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<sup>2</sup> The International Court of Justice just issued another [advisory opinion dated 10/22/2025](#) in which it held that Israel must allow sufficient humanitarian aid into Gaza and that its failure to do so over the past two years constitutes a breach of its international law obligations. The U.S. should support this opinion, **reinstate funding for UNRWA** (the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East), and **ensure that UNRWA can resume operations in the Gaza Strip**.