



Statement on the Ceasefire in Gaza

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The Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention & Human Security welcomes the [announcement of a ceasefire](#) in Gaza and the return of hostages & prisoners on both sides. The most essential thing in the immediate term is saving the lives of Palestinians who are facing ongoing genocide and returning all hostages and other illegally detained persons being held on both sides, including Palestinians who have not yet been released. Any ceasefire is to be embraced -- and it must be enforced, so that needed humanitarian aid can reach the Palestinian people.

We acknowledge the important role played by US President Trump in realizing this difficult agreement on the first phase of a [proposed 20-point peace plan](#). He now has the significant responsibility of ensuring that Israel does not violate the ceasefire, as it has previous ones, and that it allows in "full aid," including medical aid, via the United Nations, the Red Crescent, and other organizations, as the peace plan requires. As the Lemkin Institute warned in a previous [statement](#), ceasefires and peace deals must not devolve into deals brokered by genocidaires to benefit themselves or their fellow genocidaires' colonial projects at the expense of victim populations.

The Lemkin Institute reminds the world that this ceasefire does not mean the end to the genocide. The military attack on Gaza was but one [pattern](#) of genocide – the mass murder pattern – being pursued by Israel against Palestinians. Israel's occupation of the [West Bank](#) and [East Jerusalem](#), its [expansive settlements](#), and its cruel and unjust [detention and prison system](#) are all part of an overall genocidal process. For there to be a sustainable peace, these issues must be addressed.

Furthermore, the Lemkin Institute maintains that for an enduring peace to emerge from genocide, there must be justice for the victims. Without a justice mechanism in this case as in others, it will be difficult to ensure that necessary changes are made in the perpetrating government and society to guarantee safety to the victim population. If such changes are not made, survivors cannot – and should not – trust that the perpetrators will not continue their genocide through other means,

such as the forced displacement process that is in full swing in the [West Bank](#), for example. The reality is that both the Israeli government and Israeli society are currently deeply imbued with [genocidal ideology](#) towards Palestinians. This cannot be allowed to continue if there is to be any hope for peace.

President Trump's Peace Plan, in its current form, focuses on future economic prosperity but avoids the issue of justice. We hope that future iterations of the peace plan will take very seriously the importance of a justice mechanism to sustainable, long-term peace, which is the necessary foundation of prosperity. Expecting Palestinians in Gaza to forget and move on without justice, when they have lost so much and will be coping with this loss for generations, is a form of genocide denial no different from the Western world's attitude towards the [Nakba](#). Expecting Israelis to wake up from long-term inculcation with genocidal ideas is fantasy. Palestinians have a right to demand accountability and Israelis will need to be held accountable. For there to be peace, external actors, including Israel's allies, must support the ongoing efforts of Palestinians to secure justice for decades of persecution and suffering.

Rebuilding peace after genocide requires a transformative process that addresses and corrects the structures, systems and patterns that led to genocide. A crucial part of this involves hearing the grievances of survivors, legitimating them, and working to repair and heal the harm that has been caused. This is often a resented process within the perpetrating state and society, but it is absolutely necessary to everyone's security and only external powers can guarantee it. It is on all of us to ensure that this happens in Israel and Palestine.

To this end, we welcome the Peace Plan's concepts of an "interfaith dialogue process" and the establishment of "a dialogue between Israel and the Palestinians" about a shared and peaceful future. These are very important projects and could become stepping stones to transformative justice initiatives. Ultimately it is up to Israelis and Palestinians to craft a sustainable future together, one in which they each feel recognized and to which they feel connected.

However, the existing power asymmetry between Israelis and Palestinians will make this very hard. Structural changes not mentioned in the 20-point peace plan will need to be enforced in order for Palestinians to have a voice. Many of the provisions of the current peace plan appear to work against Palestinians having a voice by granting external actors, including Israel, power over governance, economic development, planning, assessment of reform, mobility, and security in Gaza. We agree that external oversight will be critical to maintaining any peace. But we also believe that, for a genocidal process to be transformed, Palestinians must exercise full sovereignty over their lands.

Furthermore, any external actors securing the peace should exercise oversight not just over Gaza, but over Israel as well. Netanyahu's Israel [chose](#) the path of the mass murder form of genocide

after October 7, 2023. The citizens of Israel [support](#) it, and often cheered it on. As the history of genocide has demonstrated time and again, genocidal regimes and societies, when left to their own devices, always continue with genocide using a variety of creative tactics. Enormous reform is needed in Israel for Palestinians to be safe, including an end to the occupation, a dismantling of settlements, and justice mechanisms for Palestinian losses during the Nakba, including possibly a right of return.

A real dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians will also require a shared fact base, which can be achieved through trials and other justice mechanisms. President Trump should actively support the immediate creation of an independent fact finding mission for Gaza under U.N. oversight to document the full extent of Israel's crimes and he should pressure Israel to allow a similar fact finding mission into Israel to document the full extent of Hamas' (and others') crimes on October 7, 2023. Evidence will provide necessary clarity for any productive dialogue. President Trump should also shift gears and support the work of the ICC and the ICJ for similar reasons. With a shared fact base Israelis and Palestinians who support a sustainable and just peace will have greater resources to pursue community-based transformative justice initiatives, which are the backbone of genocide prevention.

Overall, the Lemkin Institute believes that the current peace plan errs in radically underestimating the ongoing threat that Israel poses to Palestinian life. We encourage President Trump to consider the implications of Israel's genocide for the realization of any sustainable peace. Reform of Israel's security sector, its justice and education systems, its media, and so forth will be necessary to realize peace. Of course lessening the threat of terror committed against Israelis will help Israel start on a path towards its own de-radicalization, but the peace plan focuses too exclusively on Israel's need for security at the expense of Palestinian security. Certainly the threat that Israel poses to every single Palestinian is evident in the horrific destruction of life, culture, and infrastructure in Gaza. Every effort must be made to recognize Palestinian self-determination and establish effective Palestinian sovereignty over Palestinian lands as fast as possible. Mechanisms must be established immediately to protect Palestinian borders from Israeli incursions. If necessary, the U.N. General Assembly should authorize a peacekeeping mission through a [Uniting for Peace](#) resolution. We understand that the issue of land is one that will take many years to address, given Israel's expansive settlements in the occupied territories and the still unaddressed land claims from the Nakba. But the solutions to the land issue will ultimately determine whether any peace plan is successful.

Getting Israel on a path towards recognizing the full humanity and rights of its Palestinian neighbors, including the right to self-determination, will be one of the most important things that President Trump can do, and that will require carrots and sticks. Currently, Prime Minister Netanyahu, many members of his cabinet, and many Israeli citizens are deeply wedded to a plan for Greater Israel that requires the ongoing genocide of Palestinians, whether through mass

murder or forced displacement. We welcome President Trump's public stance [against the forced displacement](#) of Palestinians from Gaza. This a departure from Trump's [previous rhetoric](#) which asserted that the U.S. would take ownership of Gaza after the conflict and "redevelop" it into the "Riviera of the Middle East" while forcibly displacing over 2 million Palestinians to Egypt and Jordan. We hope he will stand his ground. In the meantime, Israel will need to commit to repairing the harm that has been done to Palestinian life since 1948. Such a commitment is in Israel's interest, since an ethical society is always stronger and more secure than one that embraces (and seeks to hide) mass atrocity. Nevertheless, it is hard to encourage perpetrator societies to see this. We hope that Israel's allies will understand how important it will be for the security of Palestinians and Israelis in the coming decades and that they will finally put real pressure on Israel to change course.

We know there are voices in Israel who can lead the nation on a more secure and ethical path forward, and we know there are many, many partners on the Palestinian side who will be willing to help them. Any effective and successful peace plan will ensure that these voices in Israel and Palestine are lifted up and given the space to thrive against the voices of hatred, violence, and destruction. We deeply hope that this ceasefire holds and that this phase becomes a pathway to enduring peace, real justice, and shared prosperity -- and joy -- for Israelis and Palestinians.