

**Israel-Hamas war**

## Arab states endorse alternative to Donald Trump's postwar Gaza plan

Proposals envisage transitional rule by Palestinian technocrats and role for UN peacekeepers in the enclave and West Bank



Beit Lahia in northern Gaza. Egypt has been leading efforts to devise an alternative whereby Hamas is no longer in power in the enclave and develop a plan to rebuild © Bashar Taleb/AFP/Getty Images

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Published YESTERDAY

Updated 06:54

Arab states have adopted a plan for the postwar administration and reconstruction of Gaza in an attempt to provide an alternative to President Donald Trump's proposal for the war-shattered enclave to be emptied of Palestinians and taken over by the US.

The plan, endorsed at a summit of the Arab League in Cairo on Tuesday, envisages [Gaza](#) being governed in a transitional phase by a technocratic committee of Palestinians, not affiliated to any political factions, but under the umbrella of a "Palestinian government".

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi said Cairo was training Palestinian forces who would take over the role of security in Gaza, which has been controlled by militant group Hamas since 2007.

Badr Abdelatty, the Egyptian foreign minister, said the transitional administration would be in place for six months before the Palestinian Authority took over.

The plan also called on the UN Security Council to deploy peacekeepers in Gaza and the occupied West Bank, which is home to hundreds of thousands of Israeli settlers, as part of efforts to move towards the establishment of a Palestinian state

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Arab powers have been struggling to come up with a detailed plan for Gaza that secures US backing in the hope Trump pressures Israel to end the [nearly 17-month war](#) against Hamas and prevents it indefinitely occupying the strip. A central element would be measures to ensure Hamas no longer rules the strip.

New impetus was injected into Arab efforts to come up with a postwar plan for Gaza after the US president alarmed regional leaders by saying last month that all Palestinians in the strip should be resettled and the enclave [developed into the "riviera of the Middle East"](#).

Egypt has been leading efforts to devise an alternative that not only ensures Hamas is no longer in power in Gaza, but also to develop a plan to rebuild the strip that allows the estimated 2.2mn Palestinians to remain in the territory.

Arab states have rejected any moves to displace Gazans, fearful that it would destabilise regional security and carry echoes of a period known as the Nakba, or catastrophe, when hundreds of thousands of Palestinians either fled or were driven from their land after Israel declared independence in 1948.

The proposal is expected to be presented to a meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation this week. It would then be submitted to the Trump administration, Arab diplomats said.

Sisi said it was time to begin a "serious and effective political path" that would lead to a "just and permanent resolution" to the Palestinian issue. He added that he was confident that Trump was "capable of carrying out" this role.

There are, however, massive challenges to implementing the Arab plan, which Israel is unlikely to accept. Oren Marmorstein, an Israeli foreign ministry spokesperson, said on X that the plan "fails to address the realities of the situation" after Hamas's assault on Israel on October 7 2023 triggered the Gaza war.

A White House spokesperson said: "The current proposal does not address the reality that Gaza is currently uninhabitable and residents cannot humanely live in a territory covered in debris and unexploded ordnance."

Abdelatty blasted Israel's rejection of the Arab plan as "unacceptable", describing its position as "stubborn and extremist".

"There will be no security or stability, neither for Israel nor for the region," without establishing an independent Palestinian state in accordance with UN resolutions, he

establishing an independent Palestinian state in accordance with UN resolutions, he said.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu continues to insist he will pursue all Israel's war goals, including the destruction of Hamas. He refuses to agree to a permanent end to the war and to withdraw the country's troops from the strip.

A fragile ceasefire deal, under which Hamas agreed to release hostages seized on October 7, also [appears close to collapse](#).

Israel this week [halted all humanitarian aid](#) to Gaza after Hamas rejected a proposal to extend the ceasefire. That proposal called on the militant group to release half of its remaining hostages, about 30 people, on the first day of the second phase of the deal, rather than in a sequenced fashion as previously agreed.

Israel has also repeatedly rebuffed Arab and western pressure to allow the Palestinian Authority, which has limited administration in parts of the West Bank, to have a role in Gaza. Netanyahu has also rejected taking any steps towards the creation of a Palestinian state.

A joint study by the World Bank, the UN and EU estimated that the damage to infrastructure and housing in Gaza amounted to at least \$30bn as Israel's offensive has reduced the strip to rubble-strewn wastelands. It is expected that oil-rich Gulf states would have to foot the majority of the costs.

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