

Explainer

Trump's Gaza peace plan faces pitfalls in attempt to shift to its second phase

Impasses remain in key points, such as Hamas disarmament, postwar governance of the Strip, funding reconstruction, and a path to Palestinian statehood

By [AP](#) and [ToI Staff](#) December 9, 2025



Tents sheltering displaced Palestinians stand amid the destruction left in Gaza City by the war between Israel and Hamas, December 5, 2025. (Abdel Kareem Hana/AP)

With the remains of one hostage still in Gaza, the first phase of the US-brokered ceasefire in the war between Israel and Hamas is nearly complete, after a two-month process plagued by delays and finger-pointing.

Now, the key players — including Israel, the Palestinian terror group Hamas, the United States, and a diverse list of international parties — are to move to a far more complicated second phase that could reshape the Middle East.

US President Donald Trump's 20-point plan — which was approved by the UN Security Council — lays out an ambitious vision for ending Hamas's rule of Gaza. If successful, it would see the rebuilding of a demilitarized Gaza under international supervision, normalized relations between Israel and the Arab world, and a possible pathway to Palestinian independence.

But if the deal stalls, Gaza could be trapped in an unstable limbo for years to come, with the Hamas terror group remaining in control of parts of the territory, Israel's army enforcing an open-ended occupation, and its residents stuck homeless, unemployed, unable to travel abroad and dependent on international aid to stay alive.

Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, the prime minister of Qatar and a key mediator, said over the weekend that the ceasefire is at a critical point, while Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is set to travel to the White House this month to discuss the next steps.

Here is a closer look at the next stages of the ceasefire and the potential pitfalls.

Troops for Gaza

Trump's plan calls for the formation of an international force — known as the International Stabilization Force — to maintain security and train Palestinian police to one day take over. That force has not yet been formed, and a deployment date has not been announced.



US President Donald Trump speaks during a roundtable event in the Cabinet Room of the White House in Washington, DC, on December 8, 2025. (ANDREW CABALLERO-REYNOLDS / AFP)

Some countries — including Egypt, Turkey, Indonesia, Pakistan, and Indonesia — have expressed willingness to participate. But no firm decisions have been made. Israel is insistent that Turkey, which has hosted senior Hamas figures and been virulently critical of Israel, not be involved.

A US official, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss diplomatic talks, says partner countries are holding meetings this month to finalize operations. He predicted “boots on the ground” in early 2026.

But there are pitfalls. The force’s command structure and authorities remain unknown.

Hamas says it will oppose any attempts by the force to disarm it, and contributing nations may not want to risk clashes to take

away its weapons. Israel, meanwhile, is hesitant to trust an international body with its security needs.

Board of Peace

Trump has said he will head an international board to supervise a committee of Palestinian technocrats running Gaza's day-to-day affairs. The board will oversee reconstruction and an open-ended reform process by the Palestinian Authority, with the goal of one day allowing the internationally recognized authority to govern Gaza.

So far, Trump is the only board member officially named, though former British prime minister Tony Blair's name has been floated as a possibility. Another US official, also speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss closed-door deliberations, says members of the board will be announced in the coming weeks.

The key challenge will be forming a board that can work with Israel, Hamas, the mediators, and international aid agencies.



Buildings destroyed by the war between Israel and Hamas lie in ruins around the Shejaiya neighborhood of Gaza City, during an army-organized tour for journalists, November 5, 2025. (Ohad Zwigenberg/AP)

Reconstruction

Trump's plan calls for an economic development plan to "rebuild and energize Gaza," which suffered widespread destruction during the war and where most of the territory's 2 million people are displaced and unemployed.

Still, no such plan has been announced. Egypt is expected to host a conference this month for donor nations to pledge reconstruction aid.

The United Nations has estimated the cost of rebuilding Gaza would amount to \$70 billion. Raising that money will be difficult. Even more difficult would be finding a plan acceptable to the many governments involved, along with their private sector partners.

Disarmament

The ceasefire deal calls for Hamas to surrender all of its weapons under the supervision of international monitors. Fighters who disarm will be granted amnesty and the option to leave Gaza.

Hamas has previously vowed not to lay down its weapons, though on Sunday, one of its senior officials said the terror group was ready to discuss "freezing or storing" its weapons for a period of years as part of a process aimed toward establishing a Palestinian state.

Failure to disarm Hamas could lead to renewed fighting with Israel, clashes with international troops, and lack of progress on the rest of the peace plan.

A Palestinian government

The Palestinians are to form a "technocratic, apolitical" committee to run daily affairs in Gaza, under the supervision of the Board of Peace.

The committee's members have not been announced, and Israel's opposition to having any Palestinians connected to Hamas or the

Palestinian Authority on it could make choosing them more difficult.

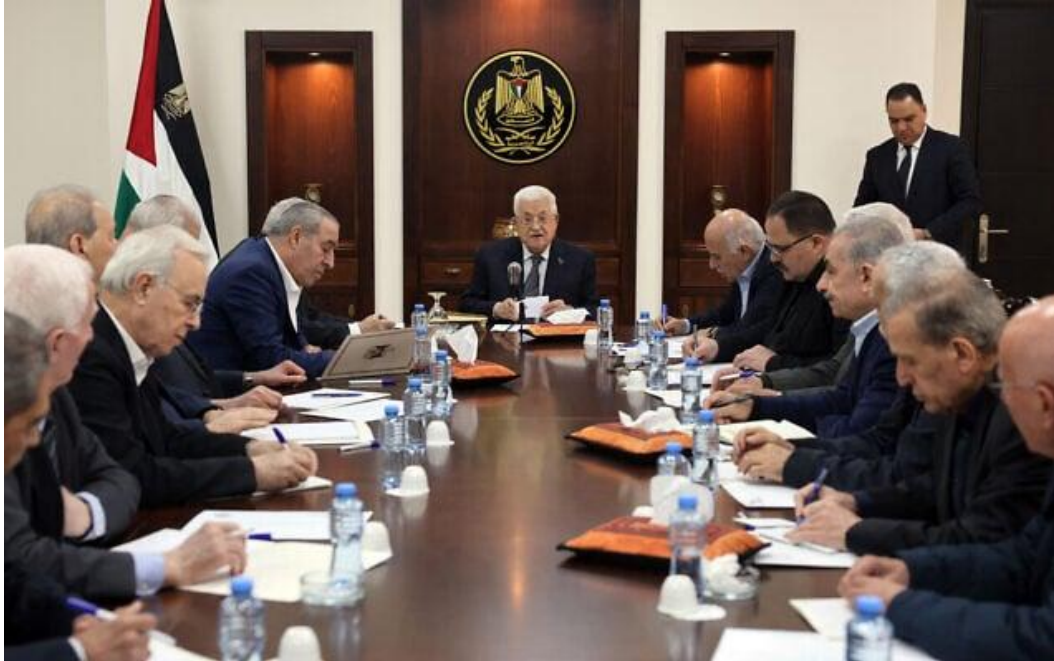
It is also not clear if the committee will give Palestinians any real voice in the government or will exist only to implement decisions by the Board of Peace. If the committee is seen as just a façade, it risks not gaining public support, and some figures may balk at joining it.

Israeli withdrawals

Under the ceasefire, Israel is to withdraw from all of Gaza, with the exception of a small buffer zone along the border. At the moment, Israel retains control of just over half of Gaza.

The plan says further withdrawals will be based upon “standards, milestones and timeframes linked to demilitarization” to be negotiated by Israel, the US, the international force and other “guarantors.”

There are no firm timelines for further withdrawals, and Israel may refuse to pull back further. Its military chief, Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir, called the so-called Yellow Line that divides the Israeli-held part of Gaza from the rest a “new border” that would serve as a “forward defensive line for our communities.”



A handout picture provided by the Palestinian Authority's press office (PPO) shows PA President Mahmoud Abbas chairing a meeting of the Fatah Central Committee, in Ramallah, on February 19, 2025. (Thaer GHANEM / PPO / AFP)

Palestinian Authority

The plan calls for a reform of the Palestinian Authority, which runs the West Bank, and the creation of conditions for a “credible pathway” to Palestinian statehood.

Palestinian officials have met with Blair and US officials, and have said they have begun reforms in key areas such as corruption, the education system, and payments to families of prisoners convicted in attacks on Israelis.

Israel rejects the creation of a Palestinian state, opposes any role for the PA in postwar Gaza, and may oppose attempts to bring it in, even if some reforms are made. Jerusalem is reportedly convinced that the unpopular, West Bank-based Palestinian Authority, which it accuses of incitement to terrorism in schools and through payments to terror convicts, will be unable to reform itself to the extent laid out by Trump's plan, which does not specify the “reform program” the PA is expected to undergo.

Without a pathway to statehood, any Palestinian support for the new system could crumble. The plan also offers no clear benchmarks or timelines for the reform process.

