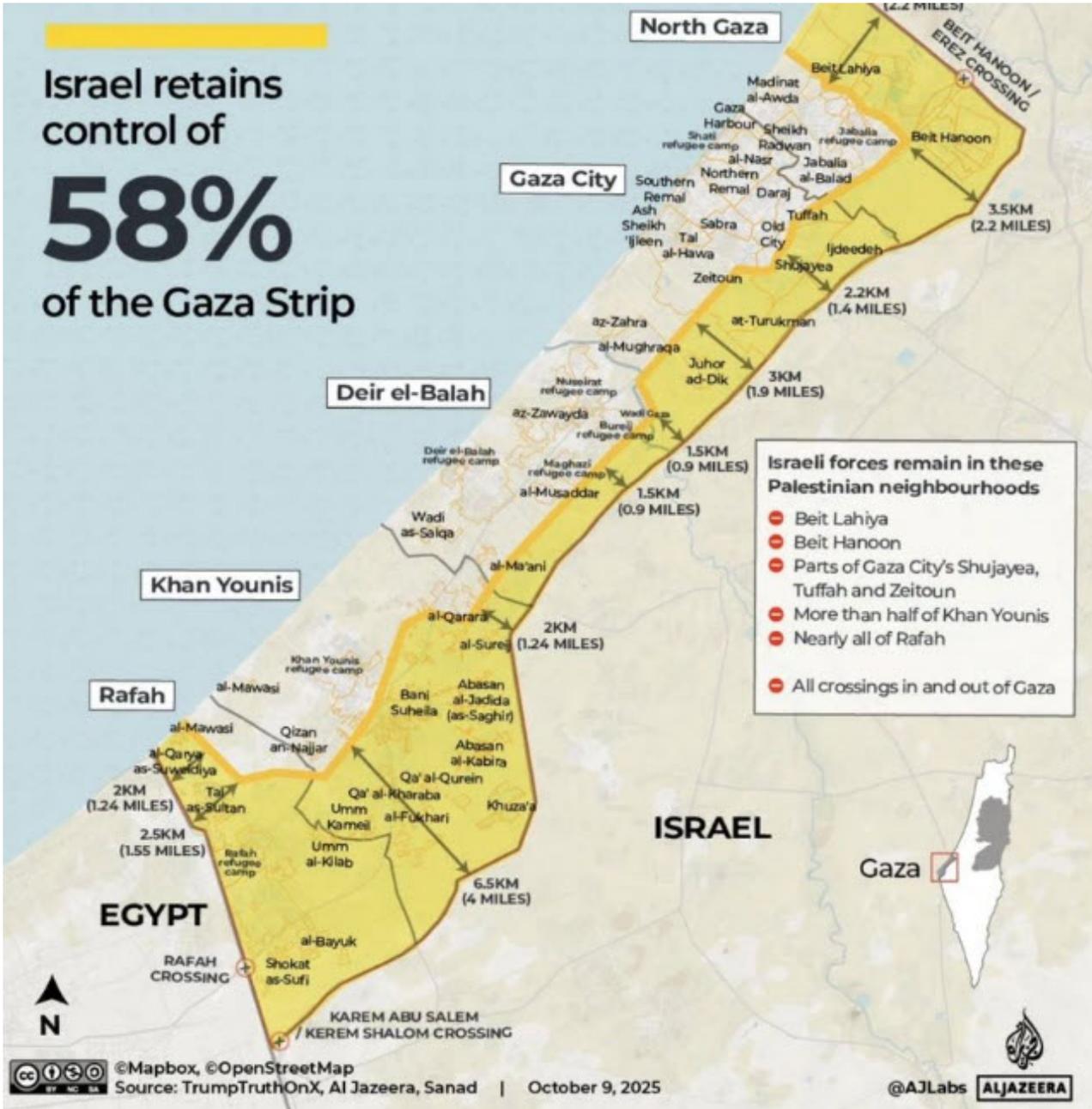


# FLAME **HOTLINE**

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Map showing division of the Gaza Strip into Israeli-controlled (yellow) and Hamas-controlled zones. (Note: Updates now peg Israel at 53% of the territory and Hamas at 47%). If Trump's problem-fraught peace plan fails, a split of Gaza into two quasi-states may offer a solution.

# Two-State Solution for Gaza May Be Shortest, Surest Path to Peace

Dear Friend of Israel, Friend of FLAME:

The Trump administration has submitted a draft resolution to the UN Security Council requesting a mandate for the U.S. and its allies to govern the Gaza Strip for the next two years, yet it seems far-fetched. It faces both staffing and funding issues, plus the refusal of both Hamas and Arab states to cooperate.

Indeed, Trump's plan is so problem-fraught, it demands a solid Plan B.

The two biggest—seemingly irresolvable—problems Trump's vision faces are 1) Hamas's intractable resolve to hold military and political power in Gaza and 2) the absolute refusal of Arab states to participate in any military force charged with disarming Hamas and dismantling its rule in Gaza.

In contrast, Gaza's Plan B, already poised to begin, would require neither Hamas cooperation nor Arab enforcement. Israel currently retains control of some 53% of Gaza, splitting the territory into two quasi-states. This division could function as a two-state solution for the territory resembling the Allies' post-WWII split of Germany.

Since Israel already holds Gaza's territory in the north, south and east—it is free to continue eliminating Hamas's remaining fighters there, while rebuilding and reforming a New Gaza.

In this scenario, Israel would be relatively unfettered to create a peaceful, prosperous alternative to Hamas's devastated western sector, competing with the terrorists' autocratic death-cult and encouraging peace-seeking Gazans to move to the eastern sector.

**Trump's strategy weakened by uncertainty.** While Trump succeeded in halting the fighting in Gaza and facilitating release of all remaining Israeli hostages, his plan to the UN is extremely vague on huge questions. The plan imagines new governing structures for Gaza, including a "Board of Peace," chaired by Trump himself, which would supervise a committee of "qualified Palestinians and international experts." How would Palestinians be chosen to exclude enemies of Israel? Above all, what power would this board wield—backed by what authority?

Furthermore, massive questions loom regarding funding of Gaza's redevelopment, since most donors insist on stability in the territory before participating, starting with Hamas's disarmament and removal. Indeed, just as Hamas has prevented peace since 2006, it is moving rapidly to regain its iron grip on power.

**Hamas is the incorrigible elephant in the room.** Beyond looming logistical challenges, Trump's vision faces the unresolved Hamas problem. First, Hamas has declared it will never disarm or relinquish power in Gaza. Senior Hamas official Bassam Khalaf said "the possibility of disarming Hamas is beyond impossible." Indeed, as soon as the ceasefire went into effect, Hamas deployed thousands of armed thugs to murder their opponents and reassert control. No surprise: Hamas's charter proclaims only violent force can liberate "Palestine."

The second dealbreaker is also Hamas: Arab states have indicated they won't contribute troops or development funding if Hamas remains armed and in control of Gaza. Indeed, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have already expressed their refusal to contribute unless Hamas is disarmed and a path to Palestinian statehood is agreed on.

Clearly, Trump's plan cannot proceed without Hamas's disarmament or defeat—both unlikely. Thus, it would seem wise for Trump—and Israel—to develop a fallback Plan B. Some commentators have suggested that an alternative plan may already effectively be in place—a Gaza two-state solution.

**Divide the Strip into Old and New Gaza—reduce risk and simplify implementation.** There are already two Gazas—about 53% (the “yellow” zone) controlled by Israel and the other 47% controlled by Hamas. Experts such as Israeli reporter Ari Shavit and researcher Ofer Guterman suggest a two-state solution for Gaza is feasible, where all reconstruction aid would go to Israeli-controlled Gaza, leaving Hamas-controlled Gaza in ruins. Two Trump advisors, Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff, have also alluded to the advantage of economically and politically isolating Hamas from a “New Gaza.” This plan would weaken Hamas while enabling Israel's military to conduct operations that further erode the group's ability to fight.

A Gaza two-state solution would require no foreign forces, with Israel guaranteeing security in its zone of control. This means the two biggest problems with Trump's plan—Hamas's refusal to disarm and relinquish control, and countries' refusal to contribute troops—would be muted, making U.S. allies feel more at ease to participate.

Moreover, a divided Gaza would allow Israel and international partners to secure and stabilize a defined zone without being forced into full reoccupation of the territory, thus avoiding the political, moral and human costs of indefinite military rule over two million Gazans.

A two-state solution would also have a notable demonstration effect. As eastern New Gaza rebuilds and begins to blossom, Gazans in Hamas-controlled Old Gaza would see prosperity and political freedoms contrasting with life under Hamas. They could be motivated to leave, just as East Germans were attracted to the openness of West Germany.

**How Israel can implement a Gaza two-state solution.** With Gaza divided, Israel could concentrate on stabilizing and rebuilding its zone, clearing it of tunnels, rockets, and terrorists, while cultivating ties with Gaza's tribal leaders, as opposed to foreign forces who might be seen as occupiers. Some of these leaders have expressed their desire to live without Hamas, including militia leader Hussam Al-Astal, who told the *Times of Israel*, “Gaza wants to live without Hamas and without terror.”

**Lessons from Germany's post-WWII division.** West Germany eventually became a prosperous, democratic state, while East Germany stagnated economically under communist tyranny. This motivated East Germans to move to West Germany, even risking their lives to do so. Obviously, post-war Gaza is not post-war Germany, but lessons can be learned from the Allies' bold experiment.

Gaza, in any case, is a disaster—physically, economically and politically. Hamas has not surrendered, but rather indicated it will continue fighting to the death. While a Gaza two-state strategy with Israel doing most of the heavy lifting would be costly—both militarily and economically—it would likely be less expensive than re-invading Gaza entirely and trying to govern two million residents with Hamas nipping constantly at its heels.

Please make the point when speaking with family, friends, colleagues—or in letters to the editor—that as Trump’s plan runs increasingly into obstacles, circumstances call for a backup. One that divides Gaza into two de facto states could show Palestinians the stark contrast between an open, prosperous society and a hopeless tyranny.

If you agree we need to spread this truth, please use your email browser to forward this Hotline issue to fellow lovers of Israel—and encourage them to join us by subscribing to the Hotline at no charge.

Best regards,

James Sinkinson, President

Facts and Logic About the Middle East (FLAME)

P.S. Surely you’ve recently read of some celebrity, politician, radical student, foreign head of state or media pundit slander Israel with the “Gaza genocide” lie. Many who spread this lie are ignorant, but most are anti-Israel haters. They care nothing for the truth. The tragedy is, when they utter the Gaza genocide falsehood, too few knowledgeable people—and virtually no media—stand up to refute it. Indeed, when you share the simple facts, the genocide lie crumbles. Upon learning that Israel conducts its war against Hamas terrorists with the highest ethical standards—and that *nothing* Israel does in Gaza fits the definition of genocide—fair-minded people quickly see through the lie. I hope you’ll agree that we supporters of the Israel-U.S. relationship need to speak out. FLAME’s new *hasbarah*—explanatory message—“**Facts Shatter Gaza Genocide Lies**”—describes what genocide is *and is not* and proves factually that Israel’s tactics in the war are ethical and righteous. It also reveals demographic data showing that the Palestinian population in Gaza is actually increasing. Finally, it notes that those who spread the Gaza genocide lie fit the classic definition of antisemites. Please review this convincing, fact-based editorial, which FLAME is about to publish to millions—in leading social media, as well as in the *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Post*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Tampa Bay Times*, *Denver Post* and *Los Angeles Times*. This piece will also be sent to all members of Congress, the President and Vice President. If you agree that this kind of public relations effort on Israel’s behalf is critical, I urge you to **support us** with a donation.

