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**Gaza**

# **A Bitter Account, Two Years into the Catastrophe**

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**Despite Israel's strenuous attempts to commemorate the tragic events of 7 October 2023, and the overwhelming Western sympathy it received in the wake of Operation Al-Aqsa Flood, what dominates the global conscience today – two years after the operation – is primarily the far greater tragedy that the Zionist state has since inflicted on the people of Gaza and Palestine.**

The recognition that Israel's actions over the past two years constitute genocide is now widely accepted by experts and ordinary people in Western countries traditionally supportive of Israel. A recent poll shows that nearly 40% of American Jews themselves acknowledge that "Israel has committed genocide" (an additional 10% remain undecided). Today, only a minority in Western countries – along with governments and organizations that remain pro-Israel – deny the reality of this genocide. Every genocide, of course, has its deniers, as seen with the Armenian genocide or the Holocaust.

That the horror of the Zionist army's genocidal war has generated over time intense global condemnation and growing sympathy for the people of Gaza offers little solace however, compared to the magnitude of the ongoing catastrophe. Worse still, the "peaceful settlement" on the horizon threatens to be far worse than the already disastrous framework established by the 1993 Oslo Accords.

Two years ago, it was easy to predict the catastrophe that would unfold for Gaza (see "Al-Aqsa Flood Risks to Sweep Gaza Away", Al-Quds al-Arabi, 10 October 2023, in Arabic). Hezbollah's 2006 operation – crossing the southern border of Lebanon, killing three Israeli soldiers and kidnapping two others – led to a devastating Israeli attack on the party's civilian strongholds, including Beirut's southern suburbs, known as Dahiya. Hassan Nasrallah later admitted that had he known the consequences, he would not have ordered the operation. Given the far greater scale of the Hamas-led operation across Gaza's border on 7 October 2023 – resulting in the deaths of 1,200 and the kidnapping of over 250 on the Israeli side – it was clear that a much greater tragedy would follow.

This is not to mention the fact that the Zionist government at the time, and one that continues to this day, is the most extremist in Israel's history. Thus, the planners of Operation Al-Aqsa Flood could not say, "If I had known", as Hezbollah's leader did (see "The Madness of Zionist Violence from the Dahiya to Gaza", Al-Quds al-Arabi, 7 November 2023, in Arabic). Indeed, when a few months ago a member of Hamas's political leadership attempted to express some regret over what had happened, the military wing quickly refuted his statement (see "Mousa Abu Marzook's 'If I Had Known'", Al-Quds al-Arabi, 25 February 2025, in Arabic).

The leaders of Hamas's military wing, and those within the political wing who share their viewpoint, have consistently maintained that their strategy was justified, despite the catastrophic outcome (see "On the Logic of Hamas's Maximalist Wing", Al-Quds al-Arabi, 20 May 2025, in Arabic). Eight months ago, they were still claiming victory as a result of the 7 October operation (see "Hamas: 'We Are the Flood... We Are the Day After'", Al-Quds al-Arabi, 11 February 2025, in Arabic). Let us measure this claim of victory in the light of the outcome and consider Hamas's statement on the plan recently announced by Donald Trump, which was drafted by his son-in-law, Jared Kushner, and the infamous former British Prime Minister, Tony Blair (see an initial comment on the plan in last week's article).

In its statement issued last Friday, Hamas asserts that it has adopted a "responsible position" toward the U.S. plan and is ready to contribute to a "comprehensive Palestinian national framework" (with the Ramallah Palestinian Authority, that is) "with full responsibility" – as if it wanted to acknowledge that its previous positions were less "responsible". The statement declares that the movement "appreciates... the efforts of US President Donald Trump,

calling for an end to the war on the Gaza Strip, an exchange of prisoners, the immediate entry of aid, the rejection of the occupation of the Strip and the displacement of our Palestinian people from it". This, despite the fact that Trump, who has proudly boasted about being the most pro-Israel president in U.S. history and has previously approved Israel's annexation of Arab Jerusalem and the Syrian Golan Heights, is the same person who allowed the Netanyahu government to openly state its intention to displace Gaza's residents (claiming, of course, to be merely talking about "voluntary" migration, a point reiterated by the latest plan) and transform the Strip into a "Riviera" under U.S. ownership.

The new plan stipulates that Trump himself will chair a quasi-colonial "Board of Peace", with Tony Blair among its members, that will oversee the "technocratic, apolitical Palestinian committee" in charge of governing Gaza, with the aim of implementing the "Trump Economic Development Plan" (sic). No doubt that, in the U.S. president's mind, this latter plan is about turning the Strip into a U.S.-controlled "Riviera". As for "rejection of the occupation of the Strip", the plan asserts indeed that "Israel will not occupy or annex Gaza", but it fails to set a timeline for the withdrawal of Israel's armed forces, rather submitting it to conditions that are quite difficult to achieve. Moreover, the plan allows Israel to remain in control of a "security perimeter" along the Gaza's borders, including the border with Egypt (the Philadelphi Corridor), for as long as it deems necessary.

The intention here, to be sure, is not to claim that Hamas should have fought on until the last Gazan. Rather, the argument is that the movement could have secured a better outcome and spared Gaza further devastation, had it adopted a more "responsible" approach from the outset. This opportunity remained valid even in recent months (see "Pity the people of Gaza!", *Al-Quds al-Arabi*, 3 June 2025), as it became clear that the ceasefire declared earlier this year was only a temporary pause, allowing the Zionist army to regroup and prepare for a new phase of invasion. Meanwhile, Israel deliberately organized the starvation of the people of Gaza in cooperation with the administration of Donald Trump, whose efforts Hamas now "appreciates".

Hamas has found itself cornered by the Zionist army's resumption of the genocide, alongside mounting pressure from Arab and Muslim states that have aligned with the Trump administration. The movement thus faced a difficult dilemma: either it rejected the U.S. plan and proclaimed its determination to continue fighting, thereby assuming further responsibility for the ongoing catastrophe in Gaza and exposing itself to the loss of funding from Arab and Muslim sponsors; or it surrendered, which appears to be its current course. Hamas has now offered to give up the last remaining card in its hand by releasing all hostages it detains in exchange for Israel's release of 250 Palestinian prisoners and the return of 1700 Gazans the Zionist army has taken as hostages over the past two years.

Much like Netanyahu accepted Trump's initial plan five years ago – knowing that the Palestinians would reject it – he now embraces the new plan. His main objective is the release of the hostages, after which he would be much freer to maintain his grip on Gaza. He knows very well that the terms of the U.S. plan are designed to be so unequal and humiliating that they are likely to be rejected by most Palestinians, possibly including the Ramallah Authority itself.

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*Translated from the Arabic original published in [Al-Quds al-Arabi](#) for the author's [blog](#).*

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