

# Gaza Futures Task Force

A Joint Project Of



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**GAZA FUTURES TASK FORCE**  
**Observations and Action Proposal:**  
**The International Trust for Gaza Reconstruction**

➤ **Key Findings**

On October 7, Hamas, as the *de facto* government of Gaza, launched a war against Israel; but this war also arises from a broader program of Iranian regional aggression. With great determination, the Iranian regime disrupts peace in pursuit of its goals of driving the United States from the Middle East, destroying Israel, and asserting Iranian hegemony. To this end, the Iranian regime provides arms, training, funding, and direction to terrorist armies across the region, intimidates or seeks to overthrow legitimate regional leaders and governments, and actively seeks the extinction of the UN-recognized state of Israel. Any “day after” or post-war scenario must consider:

- 1) restoring the deterrence and security needs of Israel, both for its own people and its standing as a powerful regional ally and essential component of resisting Iran’s ambitions;
- 2) dismantling Hamas as a military and governing force and protecting against its reconstitution through Israel’s continued freedom of action against it and against Palestinian Islamic Jihad; and by de-militarizing, de-radicalizing, and improving conditions in Gaza such that major terrorist attacks like October 7 can’t and won’t happen again;
- 3) drawing upon and empowering Gazans dedicated to a peaceful future;
- 4) recognizing a political horizon and thus securing essential participation and support from the United States and its most powerful and influential Arab partners; and
- 5) countering more generally Iran’s aggressive campaign to derail regional peace efforts, including by constraining the threat posed by Hezbollah and resuming progress toward normalizing Israel and Saudi Arabia.

The Israeli and Palestinian people deserve a better life than what Hamas – aided by outside forces – forced upon Gaza: serving as human shields protecting Iranian-backed aggression. The region deserves a better future than Iran strives to impose on others. Restoring a realistic path to a two-state solution can be a part of that better Gazan and regional future and a long-term political horizon for two states should be recognized. In order to move to such a political horizon, the first steps must be reconstruction of Gaza and revamping of the Palestinian Authority (the “PA”).

➤ **Recommendation**

**The Creation and Mission of the International Trust for Gaza Reconstruction**

The United States and concerned states that accept Israel's role in the region, seeking to help the people of Gaza and advance a peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, should immediately create and fund **The International Trust for Gaza Reconstruction** (the "Trust").

The Trust should provide humanitarian assistance and help to restore essential services and rebuild civil society in Gaza as intense combat subsides and over subsequent months. Rebuilding civil society will include assistance with technical and administrative matters on governance and deradicalization.

The PA should be consulted in, and publicly bless, the creation of the Trust and should support the ongoing work of the Trust. The Government of Israel should cooperate to the maximum extent possible with the Trust.

An advisory **Council for Administration and Reconstruction** (the "Council") composed primarily of non-Hamas Gazans from Gaza, the West Bank, and the diaspora should be recruited to serve as the Trust's key advisory body and partner.

Women should be actively recruited in all aspects of the Trust and the Council.

**Trust Governance and Guidance**

Trust activities would be governed by an international board (the "Trust Board") composed of 3 to 7 representatives from the key states supporting the Trust. The United States, as well as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt and others with the capacity to contribute to Gaza's peaceful future might participate, in roles to be negotiated among them. The Trust Board has ultimate decision-making power, provides oversight, and controls funds.

Operations of the Trust would formally be set by the Trust Board (or its Chair or Executive Committee in absence of the full Board) directing the Trust's officers (including a CEO or President and VPs, etc.), who would in turn direct Trust employees and agents.

The Trust Board may create sub-committees that help develop and plan policies for recommendation to the Board in sectors critical to Gaza's postwar recovery and the Trust's mission (humanitarian aid delivery; clearing rubble; repairing critical infrastructure and restoring basic services; housing, healthcare, education; caring for those severely injured and/or orphaned by the war; caring for women and children; economic reconstruction; deradicalization, etc.). The sub-committees could also help oversee the effective

implementation of Board decisions and, in certain cases, be bestowed by the Trust Board with discretion to act.

### **Coordination with Other Efforts**

The Trust should coordinate with other states' efforts and with those of NGOs and international organizations, including the United Nations. However, the Trust should recognize that the activities of UNRWA serve to perpetuate and deepen the Palestinian crisis. While its role is necessary in the immediate term in providing essential relief, plans to replace it with local Palestinian institutions or other international organizations committed to peace should be developed and implemented.

### **The Trust's Initial Tasks (phasing may be required):**

- *Humanitarian Assistance*
  - The Trust should work in tandem with trusted states, international entities, and NGOs with demonstrated capacity to mobilize a large-scale multinational relief effort. This effort may draw upon the logistical and security support of friendly militaries. Both Egyptian and Israeli points of entry should be used, and consideration given to additional options.
  - The Trust should consider negotiations toward Egyptian cooperation on its side of the border with the Trust's security forces guarding the safe delivery and distribution of aid to Gaza.
- *Security*
  - As Gaza will remain a dangerous environment for some time to come, the Trust's mission cannot be performed without adequate security for its aid and personnel and for Gazans with whom the Trust will work.
  - This will require such efforts as guarding shipments from initial entry into Gaza through equitable delivery, protecting the repair and restoration of critical infrastructure and basic services, and assisting in creation of a lawful and orderly environment in which aid can be successfully employed and economic and social recovery can begin ("Aid-Related Security Tasks").
  - To these ends, the Trust Board may seek assistance from and coordination with forces of responsible states from the region or beyond. As necessary, the

Board may hire, train, and equip private security contractors to serve a set of well-defined interim security missions.

- Such a force will be directed by the Trust Board, accountable to it, and, as directed by it, work in close coordination with Israeli security forces.
  - As soon as possible, security forces should include local Gazans willing and capable of aiding responsibly in Aid-Related Security Tasks.
  - The Trust Board should encourage the support, recruitment, and rapid training of a new Gazan police force, whose training might be efficiently conducted by the existing U.S.-led security coordination mission for Israel and the PA.
- To create a secure environment for dispensing aid, the Trust should encourage cooperative efforts with Egypt and Israel to prevent smuggling into Gaza, particularly of weapons and military-related goods and materials.
    - These efforts may include supporting exploration of alternative means of inspection and delivery, including possible sea-based systems involving Cyprus or other ports, with participation by Israeli inspectors and/or approved private firms with high competence in customs and border security.
- *Governance/Essential Services*
- The Trust Board should work closely with the Council and regional partners, including as applicable Israel, Egypt, and the PA, to rapidly identify, incentivize, and protect the emergence of non-Hamas leaders and structures in Gaza that can fill the immediate administrative void.
  - This effort should include vetted Gazan businesspeople, professionals, technocrats, civil servants, and former officials (including those in the Diaspora) who can help advise, administer, and execute the implementation of reconstruction programs, including programs to clear rubble, repair infrastructure, and re-establish key services.
- *Deradicalization*
- The Trust, recognizing that years of radicalization by Hamas has complicated the task of reforming and restoring Gaza, should focus on a long-term program for deradicalizing the media, schools, and mosques.
    - Gazans and the Gazan diaspora should play an active role in developing and implementing these plans, alongside the Trust's Arab members who have hands-on experience in successful deradicalization efforts in their own societies.

- The Trust should also engage with NGOs with expertise in this area and include strategies for schools (teachers and textbooks), religious institutions, and media, including efforts to limit the influence of foreign-owned media that consistently distort reporting as a tool of foreign governments.
- While deradicalization of the West Bank is not a mission of the Trust, the efforts in Gaza could serve as a model to encourage a similar program there that will be essential if a credible two-state solution is to be revived.
- *Economy*
  - The Trust should work with local Gazan businesspeople, Gazan diaspora, other Palestinians, and others to ensure that there are economic opportunities for the Gazan people as soon as practical.
  - In the most immediate timeframe, Gazans will need concrete means to support their families, rebuild, and envision a productive future.

➤ **Next Steps to Implement this Proposal**

The topic might best be pursued in confidential discussions with those nations deemed most likely to participate in the Trust. The UAE and Saudi Arabia would be foremost among them. Egypt might, as well. Quiet negotiations among the parties might then determine the best terms and course by which to create, fund, and progress toward the Trust's important mission.