

Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, who intended to travel to Washington, canceled his trip to the US in reaction to this plan, indicating that Egyptians strongly oppose the implementation of it in their country. Egyptians themselves are currently facing many security problems in the Sinai Desert as Sinai is the main birthplace of Salafist groups in Egypt. Currently, Islamist groups reside in, for example, the Al-Arish region of Egypt, which is predominantly Salafist. If a large number of Gazans were to be added, this would undoubtedly multiply the problems between the Egyptian government, which is secular, and the Islamists. This is an

other reason why Egyptians have reacted more harshly to Trump's plan. Overall, it seems that the plan cannot be implemented at this time.

It seems that Trump is also aware of the difficulties in implementing this plan and perhaps does not expect it to be operationalized. He proposed another plan in 2020 related to this, known as the "Deal of the Century," which was fully outlined in legal terms. However, all Palestinian parties, even the Palestinian Authority, opposed that plan and refused to come to the negotiating table. But in the case of the current plan, the details of its implementa-

tion are non-existent. As for whether Trump is bluffing about raising such an issue, it is also unclear, but what is certain is that raising this plan has so far worked in favor of Netanyahu within Israel. When the cease-fire between Hamas and Israel was established, we saw that the extremist right-wing party of Itamar Ben-Gvir, the then-Israeli national security minister, left its coalition with Netanyahu. They further declared their opposition to the cease-fire and stated that the war should not have been halted until Hamas was completely destroyed. Bezalel Smotrich, the Israeli Finance Minister, who belongs to another far-

right faction, is still part of Netanyahu's coalition, and if he also leaves Netanyahu's cabinet, it will collapse. After prisoner exchanges with Palestinian detainees took place and humanitarian aid was allowed in, Smotrich declared that Israel should re-enter the war with Hamas; Otherwise, he would also leave the cabinet. This is while we are gradually moving towards the second phase of the cease-fire agreement, and the significant event that should occur in the second phase is the official announcement of the end of the war, which should happen in the second six weeks. In such conditions, Smotrich might leave the cabinet, leading to its

collapse. If, however, Netanyahu had backed out of the cease-fire agreement and re-entered the war then, it would have incurred serious security and other costs for him, creating many complexities in violating the cease-fire. However, with the introduction of Trump's plan, a sense of satisfaction and euphoria seems to have emerged within the Israeli political sphere for Netanyahu, and all opposition against him has temporarily calmed down. Now, Smotrich no longer expresses dissatisfaction, and Ben-Gvir has stated that the likelihood of his return to the cabinet has increased. Therefore, the forced relocation plan has, in the current situation and

in the short term, positively impacted Netanyahu within Israel. However, we do not know how long this impact can last. Thus, the main goal of the forced relocation plan might have been to reduce pressure on Netanyahu, and it may not necessarily lead to new changes in the region. Of course, there is also the possibility that Trump proposed this plan to test its feasibility and see the reactions to it. If, perchance, it did not face strong opposition, he would implement it and change the political geography of Palestine; Otherwise, by making gestures and bluffing, he aimed to improve the situation for Netanyahu.

Ethnic cleansing under guise of security, reconstruction

Trump, by reintroducing the idea of American ownership over Gaza, has stated that the people of Gaza should be settled in Arab countries and reiterated his intention to forcibly displace Gaza's residents, aiming to take over the region and initiate a large-scale real estate project in Gaza. Egypt, Jordan, and other Arab countries have recently expressed their clear opposition to the plan, while the US president has threatened to cut off financial aid to Egypt and Jordan if they do not accept Gaza's residents. Israel, over the course of more than 15 months, dropped over 85,000 tons of bombs on the Gaza Strip, martyred around 50,000 people, and imposed various blockades, leading to the spread of numerous diseases in Gaza and leaving the people in dire conditions. But did the people of Gaza leave? No. In fact, as soon as the most recent cease-fire agreement was implemented, the people of Gaza enthusiastically returned to Gaza, to a city that had been turned into a pile of rubble with no homes left to live in. Regardless, the people of Gaza had emphasized that they would come back and rebuild their homes right there, and that it is Israel who should think about leaving. Trump now claims that this plan will turn the Gaza Strip into the Riviera of the Middle East (Riviera is a very beautiful and scenic region in Italy that has become a symbol of tourism) and a tourism hub in the region. Behind the scenes, the reality is different: The goal is to annex the Gaza Strip to Israel since, compared to the total land area of the Middle East, the land currently under Israel's control is very small, and this land must be expanded. That is why they have set their sights on Gaza. However, this plan is in stark contradiction with the realities within Palestine and among resistance groups, and it is simply not feasible to implement this plan. It has also faced widespread backlash within the US from American senators and the public. The first reason why this plan



is not feasible is that American legislators have stated that the forced displacement of Gaza's residents constitutes ethnic cleansing as it involves displacing an ethnicity and a nationality from their own land, which is a war crime. The second reason is that they want to relocate Palestinians to Egypt and Jordan, but Egypt has clearly stated that it will not accept them. Jordan also cannot accept them under any circumstances as 70% of Jordan's population consists of Palestinian refugees who migrated there in the past. Now, imagine adding another million

people from Gaza to Jordan's two million, turning them into a new threat to the Zionist regime. The wave of opposition in the region against the plan to relocate Gaza's population is unprecedented. We see that, apart from regional countries that are all against this plan, countries like France and China have also opposed it. Within the US, apart from the hardline circle around Trump, there is no support. Resistance groups and Arab countries, including Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and even Qatar as key players in the region, have firmly opposed this

plan. Saudi Arabia has clearly expressed its opposition to this plan, stating that it will normalize relations with Israel only after the establishment of a Palestinian state. A Saudi official has also said that the Palestinian people are not illegal migrants to be relocated to other lands. Arab countries are well aware that if they allow the residents of the Gaza Strip to be displaced, it would mean the end of the plan to establish a Palestinian state. If there is no Gaza, the West Bank, much of which is under Israeli control, has just a few villages, not enough to make a Palestin-



OPINION *The Palestinian issue has now become a global concern. The recent plan that Donald Trump has repeatedly emphasized at various events, stating that the residents of the Gaza Strip must move out of Gaza and relocate to Jordan and Egypt since it is purportedly "much safer and maybe even much better and more comfortable," has been met with widespread criticism. This plan has been so absurd and insane that even American officials themselves consider it unrealistic and fantastical. The plan has faced a wave of international backlash, with over 90 international organizations and allied countries condemning the forced displacement of Gaza's population. These organizations have labeled Trump's statements as explicit claims of ethnic cleansing, and the UN secretary-general has once again warned against ethnic cleansing in Gaza. Former German chancellor Olaf Scholz has called Trump's plan a "scandal".*

US President Donald Trump (R) and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu
● ELIZABETH BROCKWAY/
THE DAILY BEAST

ian state. A concession like forced displacement, which Netanyahu managed to secure from Trump during his visit to the US, is not feasible in reality and has only provided short-term media fodder for Netanyahu's opponents. Perhaps Netanyahu wanted to use this plan to maintain his hold on power as he well knows that the end of his political career would mean trial and imprisonment. The cease-fire agreements, which even the Zionists admitted were a major victory for Hamas, as well as the specifics of the prisoner exchange, demonstrated Hamas's distinct power. The Palestinian Islamic Jihad movement has also emphasized that 15 months of relentless Israeli bombing with American weapons did not displace the people of Gaza. Does Trump think that his racist and deceptive statements, disguised as humanitarianism, can achieve this? A senior Hamas official has also said that they see these requests as "a recipe for creating chaos and tension in the region," and that Palestinians in the Gaza Strip "will not allow these plans to pass". The residents of Gaza have also stated in recent days that, even if given the opportunity to live in other countries, they will not leave Gaza, to prevent another catastrophe in Palestinian history, similar to the Nakba Day and the establishment of the Zionist regime in 1948, which led to the displacement of at least 700,000 Palestinians who were forced to leave their homeland forever.

The article first appeared in the Persian-language newspaper Jam-e Jam.

Displaced Palestinians return to their homes in the northern Gaza Strip following the establishment of cease-fire, on January 27, 2025.
● JEHAD ALSHRAFI/AP

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