



Seeking Peace in Gaza

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For many decades the U.S. has supported calls for a two state solution to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. Over that time, Israel has offered Palestinians a state several times, but each time it was refused. Now, there are additional calls from the International community to recognize a Palestinian state due to the destruction in Gaza but there is opposition from the U.S., Israel and many other democracies.

There are many unanswered questions. What will be the boundaries of a new Palestinian state? Who will govern the new entity? How will security be maintained both for the internal population and in a way that prevents future attacks against Israel? Will it be conditioned upon the full release of all the hostages? Will Hamas, the Palestinian Authority or an international coalition be involved to ensure a transition from a terrorist entity to one that establishes civic security and democratic rule? There never has been a Palestinian state. How will a new state connect Gaza and the West bank? These are all complicated questions.

How can a Palestinian state be declared without answers to the above and a negotiated solution between Israel and the Palestinians?

The West Bank and Gaza are not within the State of Israel. The West Bank (of Jordan) refers to that part of the territories that were part of the Kingdom of Jordan before the Six Day war in 1967 when Israel was involved in a war against a coalition of Arab states led by Egypt. Israel won that war and took over administration of those areas. Israel now shares administration of the West Bank with the Palestinian Authority (formerly the Palestinian Liberation Organization).

Parts of the West Bank continue to be disputed territories, according to the United Nations. Jordan does not want to take back the West Bank. Palestinians are already a significant part of the Jordanian population and are seen as a threat to the Hashemite Kingdom under King Abdullah Hussein.

Gaza is a small territory formerly part of Egypt and just north of its border along the Mediterranean Sea. For many years Gaza was under the Palestinian Authority but Hamas (the Islamic Resistance Movement) won elections in 2007 and initiated rocket attacks on Israel that continue to this day. Hamas was also responsible for the 2023 invasion, and killing of over 1200 Jews, Muslims, Christians, Buddhists and others who were living near or attending the music festival in Southern Israel. Hamas has enshrined in its charter a call for the complete destruction and elimination of Israel and has never recognized its right to exist.

Let's operate on facts and history and not on social media slogans. Calling to "globalize the intifada" or engage in chants "from the river to the sea Gaza will be free" does not help Gazans in need. It shows support for Hamas and their desire to completely eliminate the State of Israel. There is a war going on and lots of innocent people are dying and made homeless in Gaza and Israel. Let's support those affected by the war.

Please advocate for Hamas to release the hostages and for Israel to have a ceasefire. Spreading false information will not help. Let's advocate and pray for peace.

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