

“Ceasefire” deal includes permanent Israeli occupation of Gaza

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Israel and Hamas announced Thursday the formal adoption of a “ceasefire” agreement involving the release of all hostages held by Hamas and the permanent Israeli occupation of Gaza.

Hamas political chief Khalil al-Hayya announced, “An agreement has been reached to end the war and aggression against our people.”

In reality, the agreement is yet another step in the Israeli-imperialist plan to dominate Gaza and suppress the national rights of the Palestinian people. It turns Gaza into a colonial protectorate, supervised by a board led by the American president and involves the permanent Israeli occupation of a large portion of Gaza.

Al-Hayya declared that “We received guarantees from the mediators and from the US administration, and everyone confirmed that the war has completely ended.” The very people providing these “guarantees,” however, facilitated the Israeli bombing of Qatar last month that tried to kill Al-Hayya.

The government of Saudi Arabia hailed the agreement, declaring, “This important step will lead to urgent action to alleviate the humanitarian suffering ... achieve a full Israeli withdrawal, restore security and stability, and initiate practical steps to achieve a just and comprehensive peace based on the two-state solution.”

It will do no such thing. It will only cement the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestine and permanently position Israel to strangle Gaza’s food supply, in order to facilitate and continue its plan to ethnically cleanse Gaza.

A particularly foul role has been played by bourgeois nationalist governments in the Middle East and the broader region, including Egypt, Jordan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates, which endorsed the deal and agreed to implement it.

As a part of the agreement, Israeli forces will withdraw to a so-called “yellow line” amounting to 58 percent of Gaza. In the very last stage of the agreement, Israeli forces would retreat to a buffer zone in which they control all land crossings into Gaza, leaving the population subject to the threat of further deliberate starvation.

The deal inscribes a return to the open colonial domination of the Middle East that prevailed in the 19th century. Under the proposal, Gaza is to be governed by a “Board of Peace” that would be “headed and chaired by President Donald J. Trump” and include “Former [UK] Prime Minister Tony Blair.”

The *Washington Post* gloated that the agreement is “A Hamas surrender and a Trump triumph.” It boasted, “Call this deal what it is: a total Hamas surrender” that is “worth celebrating.”

The *Wall Street Journal* joined in the gloating, declaring, “Hamas is giving up its best leverage but Israel isn’t. Even after the hostages are ransomed, Israeli soldiers will remain in more than half of Gaza, including by the Egyptian border.” It concluded, “In accepting these terms, Hamas effectively acknowledges its defeat.”

As the *Wall Street Journal* made clear, the pause in the fighting will create the conditions for the next offensive. “If the new Gulf Arab-led stabilization force to be deployed in Gaza fails to disarm Hamas and demilitarize the strip, Israeli troops will be in position to do so themselves with what Mr. Trump calls ‘full backing.’”

The *Wall Street Journal* added that last month’s Israeli attack on Qatar helped to “influence” the Arab governments to accept the deal. The newspaper counseled Trump to show the same aggressiveness he has used throughout the Middle East to escalate the US

war against Russia. It declared, “If Mr. Trump now reverses his strategy on Russia, next year even the Nobel committee might find it impossible to deny him the peace prize.”

Condemning the “peace” agreement when it was first announced, the International Centre of Justice for Palestinians (ICJP) wrote, “The plan’s inclusion of an international ‘Board of Peace’ ... ensures the exclusion of Palestinian voices from the decision-making of Palestinian futures.”

Órlaith Roe, a spokesperson for the ICJP, noted, “This plan offers Israel yet another opportunity to pause, rearm, and then return to violence with renewed impunity.” He added that it is “Steeped in colonial rhetoric.”

The Associated Press reported that the United States would send an additional 200 troops to Israel to monitor and oversee the agreement.

The two-year-long Gaza genocide has led to the deaths of at least 65,000 Palestinians and the destruction of the vast majority of buildings in the enclave. Gaza has been shattered, and its population has been starved. A study published in *The Lancet* this week estimated that 55,000 children in Gaza are acutely malnourished. Among the children surveyed, 16 percent showed signs of wasting caused by lack of food.



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