

A socialist response to Turkey's complicity in the imperialist-Zionist takeover of Gaza

Bar?? Demir, Ula? Sevinç
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On Monday, in the Egyptian city of Sharm el-Sheikh, those who signed the so-called “peace agreement” for Gaza proposed by US President Donald Trump included the leaders of the US, Egypt, and Qatar, as well as Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdo?an.

In his remarks after the signing ceremony, Trump thanked Erdo?an, saying, “He is my friend, and he is always there when I need him.”

The agreement means that these countries are committing to Trump’s four-stage plan placing Gaza under full new colonial rule. Gaza will be governed by a “Peace Council” led and chaired by Trump. Trump’s roadmap does not recognize any rights for the Palestinians remaining in Gaza. It grants the Zionist regime the status of a permanent occupation force that controls the borders and can carry out bloody attacks at will.

Erdo?an’s signing of this dirty agreement is the culmination of the Turkish ruling class’s complicity and hypocritical stance in the ongoing genocide over the past two years.

Despite its rhetorical statements, the Erdo?an government has aided the Zionist regime’s genocide of the Palestinians by maintaining trade with Israel “through Palestine”, allowing oil to flow from Azerbaijan to Israel, and the use of US bases in Turkey for the benefit of Israel.

The agreement was conditional on Hamas disarming and relinquishing control over Gaza. Exposing its political bankruptcy and impasse as a bourgeois nationalist movement, Hamas was instructed to accept this surrender agreement by countries such as Turkey, Egypt, and Qatar.

Following his meeting with Erdo?an on September 25, Trump responded to the question of whether an agreement had been reached regarding sanctions against Turkey over the F-35s, saying, “We may do that, yes. It depends. If he [Erdo?an] does something for us.” Erdo?an has done something important for US imperialism by participating in efforts to pressurize Hamas and by signing the agreement.

However, Ankara’s role is not limited to merely facilitating Hamas’ acceptance of the agreement. The Turkish ruling elite seeks to play a role in implementing the agreement and establishing a new colonialism in Gaza as part of a “new Middle East” under full US control, and to share in the spoils. This includes lucrative investment opportunities under the guise

of Gaza’s “reconstruction” and the plundering of Palestinian hydrocarbon resources in the Eastern Mediterranean together with Israel. Although not yet certain, Ankara may send Turkish troops to Gaza for this purpose.

When asked, “Will Turkish soldiers be part of the task force in Gaza?” Erdo?an replied, “Discussions regarding the structure of the task force are currently ongoing. There are very critical tasks that need to be done in Gaza. Both construction and rehabilitation are important. We have addressed the issue of ‘Who can take on a role with us?’ regarding construction work. We want and will want the support of everyone from the Gulf countries to the United States and European countries.”

Erdo?an stated on October 9, “We will monitor the implementation of the agreement on the ground, and as Turkey, we will hopefully be part of the task force.” If Turkey joins the task force composed of mediating countries, it will have to work alongside the US, Qatar, Egypt, and Israel. Ankara has never severed diplomatic ties with Tel Aviv, which it accuses of genocide, and despite widespread hostility toward Zionism among the public, it will seek to establish closer ties with Israel, as it did before October 7, 2023.

The Turkish ruling elite, which has been involved in and supported the bloody wars waged by US-NATO imperialism in the Middle East, Central Asia, the Balkans, and North Africa, especially after the Stalinists dissolved the USSR in 1991, has added Gaza to this long list of crimes.

Israel’s genocide in Gaza, which could not have been carried out without the support of Washington and its European allies, is one front in the global war waged by US imperialism. The US war, which primarily targets Russia and China, is directed against Iran and its allies on the Middle East front, which possesses strategic energy resources and major trade routes. Israel’s genocide in Gaza is part of imperialist/Zionist aggression targeting Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Bashar al-Assad regime in Syria, and the Houthis in Yemen. Gaza is of critical significance in plans to develop the India-Middle East-Europe trade corridor.

Ankara’s policy of complicity has strong support within Turkey’s bourgeois political establishment. This includes the Kurdish nationalist Peoples’ Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party), which announced that it “welcomed” the

agreement. The criticism voiced is tactical in nature and no more realistic or powerful than Erdoğan's criticism of Israel.

Under increasing political pressure from the government through the judiciary, Republican People's Party (CHP) leader Özgür Özel said on Tuesday, "What was signed is not a peace agreement but a ceasefire memorandum. The document Erdoğan posed with is a declaration of will. It does not include an independent Palestinian state. There is no two-state solution. There is no mention that Gaza is Palestinian territory. There is no mention of the will for Gaza to be governed by Palestinians. There is no reminder of international law against crimes against humanity."

However, like Erdoğan, Özel had previously expressed his "critical" support for Trump's "peace agreement." On October 9, Özel commented, "We said that, ultimately, a fair peace process had not been pursued. But I also said that the worst peace is better than war. We welcome the fact that an agreement has been reached. If there is a ceasefire, we are there, because if there is a ceasefire, there are no child deaths, no women's deaths, no deaths of innocent civilians. We are pleased that there will be no more loss of life from now on."

The rottenness of Özel's criticism of the US and Israel is laid bare by his party's commitment to NATO. This is most clearly demonstrated in the report titled, "Iran's Threat to Regional and Euro-Atlantic Security" presented last month by CHP MP Utku Çakırözer to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. The report makes recommendations to strengthen the US policy against Iran, Russia, and China and advocates for NATO's expansion into Middle Eastern countries.

As the main representatives of the Turkish ruling class, Erdoğan and Özel are trying to conceal their deep allegiance to imperialism and support for the new colonialist project in Gaza by claiming that the deaths of innocent civilians will stop.

This claim is a fraud. As stated in the perspective published by the *World Socialist Web Site* following the agreement, "Each one of myriad 'peace' agreements over the course of decades, sanctified by Arab governments and hailed by Palestinian nationalist movements, has only created the basis for further Israeli mass killing and repression."

A critical milestone to recall in this regard is the agreement made in 1988. The Political Committee of the Workers' League, the predecessor of the Socialist Equality Party in the US, made the following powerful prediction in its statement on the agreement between Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat and the US and Israel:

Far from being the road to "peace" proclaimed by the capitalist media and the imperialist politicians, this acceptance by Yasser Arafat and the bourgeois nationalist leadership of the PLO of the conditions dictated by Washington will only open the door to an intensified assault on the oppressed masses of Palestine

and throughout the Middle East.

In the same statement, the Trotskyist perspective, which remains valid today, was summarized as follows:

Marxists implacably reject such accords and combat every pacifist illusion generated by the petty-bourgeois agencies of imperialism that "peace talks" can put an end to war and oppression. Marxists advance instead the program of class war to put an end to imperialism. Apologists for such deals only reveal their own uncritical acceptance of the whole imperialist world order.

The tragedy experienced by the Palestinian people should serve as a warning to other peoples. The long-suffering oppressed masses in the Middle East, including Palestinians and Kurds, will not achieve their desire for peace and welfare through bourgeois nationalist leaderships compromising with imperialists. The only way forward is outlined in the Statement of Principles of the Sosyalist E'tlik Partisi, the Turkish section of the International Committee of the Fourth International:

... the Sosyalist E'tlik Partisi insists that the only way to the lasting peace and democratic rights that the working people long for is the unification of workers of all nationalities in the Middle East and in the imperialist countries in the fight for global socialism and against war and neo-colonial oppression. It means fighting for the Socialist Federation of the Middle East, which will be part of a world socialist federation.



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