

Israeli Think Tank Lays Out a Blueprint for the Complete Ethnic Cleansing of Gaza

An Israeli think tank with ties to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu issued a report on October 17 promoting the "unique and rare opportunity" for the "relocation and final settlement of the entire Gaza population."

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Update on October 24, 2023

After this article was originally published, the Israeli outlet Calcalist [reported](#) on a separate plan for the ethnic cleansing of Gaza that is being circulated by the Israeli Intelligence Ministry headed by Gila Gamliel. The leaked document was reportedly created for an organization called "The Unit for Settlement - Gaza Strip" and was not meant for the public.

In the plan being proposed by the Intelligence Ministry, Palestinians in Gaza would be displaced from Gaza to the northern Egyptian Sinai peninsula. In the report, the ministry described different options for what comes after an invasion of Gaza and the option deemed as "liable to provide positive and long-lasting strategic results" was the transfer of Gaza residents to Sinai. The move entails three steps: the creation of tent cities southwest of the Gaza Strip; the construction of a humanitarian corridor to "assist the residents"; and finally, the building of cities in northern Sinai. In parallel, a "sterile zone", several kilometers wide, would be established within Egypt, south of the Israeli border, "so that the evacuated residents would not be able to return".

In addition, similar to the plan described in the original story below, the document calls for cooperation with other countries, in fact "as many as possible" so that they may "absorb" the Palestinians who have been uprooted from Gaza. Among the countries mentioned as possible sites for Palestinians from Gaza are Canada, European countries such as Greece and Spain, and North African countries.

Original article

The Hamas attack on Israeli towns surrounding Gaza on October 7 has provided a pretext for an unprecedented, genocidal revenge campaign by Israel involving the massacre of now nearly 5,000 Palestinians, including over 2,000 children – and that may only be the beginning. Now, an Israeli think tank with ties to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is promoting plans for the complete ethnic cleansing of Gaza.

On October 17, the [Misgav Institute for National Security & Zionist Strategy](#) published a [position paper](#) advocating for the “relocation and final settlement of the entire Gaza population.” The report advocates exploiting the current moment to accomplish a long-held Zionist goal of moving Palestinians off the land of historic Palestine. The report’s subtitle makes it clear: “There is at the moment a unique and rare opportunity to evacuate the whole Gaza Strip in coordination with the Egyptian government.”

The Misgav Institute is headed by former Netanyahu National Security Advisor [Meir Ben Shabbat](#), who remains influential in Israeli security circles. The Institute’s former chairpersons and founding associates include [Yoaz Hendel](#) (chair 2012-19), a right-centrist who was Minister of Communications intermittently in the years 2020-22; [Moshe Yaalon](#), former Defense Minister (note that both Hendel and Yaalon have become opposed to Netanyahu in the recent years); Moshe Arens, also former Defense Minister — and other top political personas.

The main arguments of the report, which the Institute highlighted on social media upon the report’s release, are translated as follows:

- There is a need for an immediate, viable plan for the resettlement and economic rehabilitation of the entire Arab population in the Gaza Strip, which sits well with the geopolitical interests of Israel, Egypt, U.S.A. and Saudi Arabia.
- In 2017 it was reported that in Egypt there were 10 million available apartment units, of which half were built and half under construction. For example, in two of the biggest Cairo satellite cities, “October 6” and “Ramadan 10” there is an immense number of built and empty apartments under governmental and private ownership as well as empty lots for building that would in total suffice the housing of about 6 million residents.
- The average cost of a three-room apartment of 95 square meters for an average Gaza family of 5.14 people in one of the two mentioned cities stands at \$19,000. In calculating the total population that resides in the Gaza Strip, which stands between 1.4-2.2 million people, it is possible to assess that the amount that would need to be transferred to Egypt in order to finance would be around \$5 to 8 billion.
- An encouraging injection to the Egyptian economy at this magnitude would provide an enormous and immediate advantage to [Egyptian President] El-Sisi’s regime. Such money sums, compared to the Israeli economy, are miniscule. The investment of a mere few billions of dollars (even if it is \$20 or 30 billion) in order to solve this difficult issue is an innovative, cheap and viable solution.
- There is no doubt that in order for this plan to be enacted, many conditions need to exist in parallel. At the moment, these conditions exist, and it is unclear when such an opportunity will arise again, if at all.

It appears that this ethnic-cleansing plan is based on a similar logic to that of the “Abraham Accords,” involving the infusion of massive sums towards despotic regimes to write off the

Palestinian issue. But this time, it is not just about slow annexation and bantustanization through “economic peace” — but advocating for the complete population transfer of Palestinians from Gaza.

Previous Calls for Ethnic Cleansing

It is not the first time that suggestions for a full ethnic cleansing have appeared from Israeli analysts or even politicians. In the midst of the 2014 Gaza onslaught, Moshe Feiglin, who was then part of Likud and deputy chair of the Knesset, sent Netanyahu a public, 7-point proposal for the ethnic cleansing of Gaza. He repeated the genocidal advocacy in 2018. Feiglin is now a libertarian politician. In a recent interview on Channel 14, Feiglin called for a “Dresden” on Gaza (referring to the WW2 firebombing of Dresden in February 1945, killing some 25,000 people) — “a storm of fire on all of Gaza!” he proclaimed, demanding to “not leave stone on stone” and emphasizing “total fire!” and “the end of ends!”

The Misgav Institute’s thinking has also been reflected in the Israeli intelligentsia. In 2004, respected Israeli historian [Benny Morris](#), who is a self-proclaimed leftist, shocked many by bemoaning the fact that Ben Gurion did not “finish the job” and carry out the full ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians, saying it would have led to less conflict in the ensuing decades. But he also said that a “transfer and expulsion” policy is only a question of time, and timing. Morris argued that in “normal” times, such policies may be immoral — but in “apocalyptic circumstances,” they may be both moral, “reasonable,” and “even essential.” From his interview in *Haaretz*:

“If you are asking me whether I support the transfer and expulsion of the Arabs from the West Bank, Gaza and perhaps even from Galilee and the Triangle, I say not at this moment. I am not willing to be a partner to that act. In the present circumstances it is neither moral nor realistic. The world would not allow it, the Arab world would not allow it, it would destroy the Jewish society from within. But I am ready to tell you that in other circumstances, apocalyptic ones, which are liable to be realized in five or ten years, I can see expulsions.”

Thus, the Misgav report would seem not only to be arguing that to forcibly displace the Palestinian population from Gaza but that, similar to the conditions that Morris laid out, this is a historic opportunity to do it.

Israeli Support

Since October 7, calls for flattening Gaza have been rampant among the Israeli leadership and widely espoused across the population. On October 12, Israeli Channel 12 published a [report](#) about how the desire to ethnically cleanse Gaza has taken hold in Israeli popular culture:

“People from the political left and center have called for the flattening of Gaza this week. A very short post fantasizing about a nature party that would take place on what was Gaza land received 100 thousand likes and 60 thousand shares”. The young Tel-Aviv woman who posted on Instagram had only 700 followers, but then the post “exploded”. She claims to be a centrist who “has always sanctified human rights, compassion is the first emotion that is activated in me”, she says. “I do not want to kill Gazan babies, I never hated Arabs and it’s not like I started hating them this week. But after what happened, I say to the Gaza residents - your babies are your problem”.

This sentiment seems to match quite well with broad [calls from Israeli politicians for collective punishment](#), which have been coming from across the political spectrum, including those considered centrist or liberal.

Meanwhile, while the world's eyes are on Gaza, ethnic cleansing is also being realized in the West Bank by Israeli settlers and soldiers. The terrorizing of mostly rural Palestinian communities in the West Bank had resulted in the uprooting of several communities before October 7 but has accelerated greatly since, with some 545 Palestinians forcibly displaced from at least 13 communities since October 7, according to information from the West Bank Protection Consortium (WBPC) and Israeli human rights organization Yesh Din ([cited by Al Jazeera](#)). The murderous settler attacks against Palestinians in the West Bank have gotten relatively little attention, like the murder of four Palestinians in Qusra on October 11 and then the [murder of a Palestinian father and his son](#) at the funeral. The number of killed Palestinians in the West Bank since October 7 is nearing 100 — in two weeks — an unfathomable pace.

Thus, these times are exceptionally dangerous for Palestinians. The Hamas attack seems to have reignited long-standing Zionist wishes, and now some want to exploit this public mood in support of a massive ethnic cleansing campaign. It doesn't mean that it will happen all at once, but as mentioned, in some places, it has already begun.

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