

Trump's Israel-Palestine Peace Plan: What it is & What its Future Holds



The Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the Middle East has stood to be one of the most infamous and complex struggles of the past 50 years, generating widespread violence over borders, security, cultural recognition, and much more. Now, President Trump has unveiled the final portion of his plan to broker an agreement between the two groups and restore peace to the region.

With the release of this plan, Trump and his administration continue to float ideas of a “win-win solution for both sides” and “a path to peace”. But how could such a complex and longstanding historical battle simply be solved just like that?

In reality, this plan and its components are much more complicated than what meets the eye. In this article, we will offer a holistic and simple understanding of this plan by giving context to the situation, explaining the contents of the package, and discussing its current and future effects on the world.

Leading Up to the Plan

Since the Cold War, the United States has generally maintained allegiance to Israel by showing both financial and symbolic support, now providing about [\\$3 billion in aid](#) each year to Israel. This long standing support for Israel stems from many strategic and ideological purposes. A main reason is that Israel has helped to [suppress radical nationalist movements and the growth of jihadist terrorism](#), but additionally Israel supplies the United States with surveillance services, military personnel, and a connection for stronger U.S. presence in the Middle East. In sum, this alliance is based on U.S. national security interests.

Now with Donald Trump in office, U.S. support for Israel has grown through his pro-Israel agenda. In 2017, Trump [moved the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem](#) in an official U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and later [cut off all funding to Palestinian refugee programs](#). These and other pro-Israel policies have strengthened the U.S.-Israel allyship but infuriated Palestinian officials, leading to all communication ties being cut.

During Trump's presidential campaign, he promised to broker a peace agreement between Israel and Palestine during his first four years in office and after his election, development of the plan began in 2017. This process included the insight of Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, and other officials but [no Arab representatives were invited](#) to overlook the proposal before its public release. Now that the 80 page plan has officially been released as of January 28, 2020, we are able to take an in depth look at what it offers.

Unpacking the Contents

The following outline highlights the major points and conditions presented in Trump's proposal. The entire peace plan can be viewed on the White House website by clicking [here](#).

Jerusalem and Holy Sites

- Jerusalem will be officially recognized as the capital of Israel and remain under Israeli control
- Palestine will control some outer portions of Eastern Jerusalem
- A Palestinian capital will be created in Eastern Jerusalem
- Israel is given to right to safeguard holy sites and is guaranteed freedom of worship

Refugees

- There will be "no right to return" for the Palestinian refugees who have been displaced throughout the history of the conflict.

Borders

- Israel will maintain control and sovereignty of the Jordan Valley
- Palestine will control Gaza, under the conditions that there is a ceasefire with Israel, complete demilitarization of the area, and the implementation of a governing system that ensures the funding will be used for its intended purposes
- Israel will hold control and sovereignty of all territorial waters
- There is a possibility for redrawing of borders where the "Triangle Communities" (which largely identify as Palestinian) become part of the Palestine state
- There will be construction of two access roads, under Israeli military jurisdiction, for Palestinians to cross the Jordan Valley

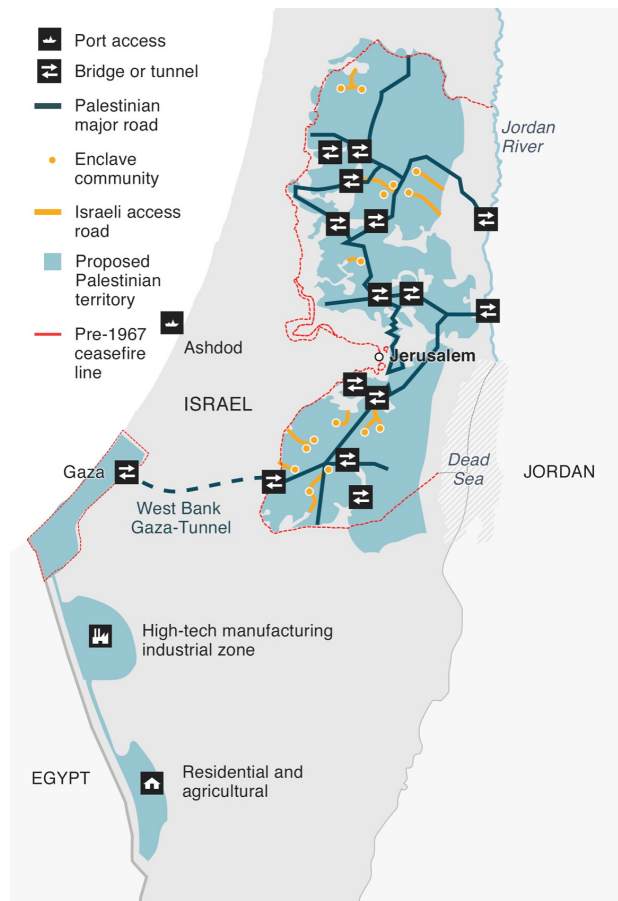
Economics

- There will be a \$50 billion investment fund for infrastructure and business projects in Palestine, mainly funded by Arab states and private investors
- Projects include infrastructure improvements, power plant upgrades, upgrading cargo terminals, and expansion of border crossings

Conceptual Map

To the right is a [conceptual map](#) of the Israel-Palestine region, created and presented by the Trump Administration.

It includes borders, access roads, ports, and other major locations of infrastructure.



Reactions to the Plan

Once the plan was officially released, the [Palestinian government immediately rejected it](#) for its bias and failure to address their strongest demands and thousands of Palestinians protested, burning pictures of Trump and Netanyahu. Despite this plan's inclusion of a detailed investment plan for improving Palestinian infrastructure, the disputes at the core of this conflict are settled strongly in favor of Israel and it excludes a solution to return Palestinian refugees back to their homeland.



In the United States, the plan has been [widely condemned by the Democrats](#), some calling it the “anti-peace plan”. They mainly criticize it for not involving any Palestinian input in its creation and therefore it would automatically fail to garner any support from Palestine. It has also been noted that the timing of this peace plan’s release suspiciously takes place in the middle of [Trump’s impeachment](#) process and on the same day as [Netanyahu’s official indictment](#) on charges of bribery and fraud. Many have speculated that this peace plan was released to divert media attention and distract from the charges placed against each of these leaders. Headlines of “Israel-Palestine Peace Plan” read much better than discussions of their respective corruption charges.

The Future of Israel and Palestine

Based on overall reactions to the peace plan and analysis of its components, it is safe to say that this package will ultimately not lead to an agreement of peace between the two countries. That being said, the presentation of a peace plan does take the situation a step closer towards resolution by showing an active effort to end the conflict and being the first ever to offer a conceptual map of the region. The new global attention to Israel and Palestine brought about by this plan could lead to further discussions and potentials for the future.



Unfortunately, this plan makes little effort in representing the demands of both sides which is objectively necessary to the production of a viable two-state solution. In sum, this proposal is less of a “peace plan” and “vision to improve the lives of the Palestinian and Israeli People” than it is a presentation of Israeli demands and an image-booster for Trump and Netanyahu.

If there were true intentions of moving towards a resolution, the first step would be to create an open dialogue between Israel and Palestine where both sides are considered. From this point, interests can be debated and compromises made. Unfortunately, this plan fails in this regard and will not result in any significant or immediate progress to the conflict.