

A day of shame!

What next for the occupied Palestinian territories?

by Karin Leukefeld*



Karin Leukefeld
(Picture ma)

(CH-S) There are few independent journalists like Karin Leukefeld who have been closely following the complex situation in the Middle East with its multi-layered international interdependencies for decades.

Can the "Trump peace plan", which contradicts the UN Charter and previous UN resolutions, be a chance for a peaceful solution to the Gaza conflict? Judge for yourself. Karin Leukefeld provides a preliminary assessment.

On 17 November 2025, the UN Security Council approved the "Trump peace plan" for Gaza and the Middle East as UN Security Council Resolution 2803 by a majority vote.¹ Only the two veto powers, China and Russia, abstained, explaining their decision in separate statements. Nevertheless, by abstaining, both states enabled the resolution text presented by the US to be approved. When presenting the text, the US Ambassador to the United Nations, Mike Waltz, threatened: "Every vote against this resolution is a vote for the return of war." The Palestinians were not asked.

Criticism of the resolution came promptly from two of the most vocal advocates for Palestinian rights at the United Nations. *Craig Mokhiber*, a human rights lawyer for more than 30 years and long-time director of the New York



Gaza City, 15 December 2025.
(Picture Keystone/AP Photo/Jehad Alshrafi)

office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights,² spoke on "X" (formerly *Twitter*) of a "terrible US resolution" that had been adopted with 13 votes in favour and two abstentions. "Not a single member of the Council had the courage, principles or respect for international law to vote against this US-Israeli colonial monstrosity," Mokhiber said. The draft resolution had been rejected by Palestinian civil society, factions, defenders of human rights and international law everywhere. 17 November 2025 was "a day of shame for the United Nations and for governments around the world that have bowed down to the US empire and its violent Israeli client state." The struggle for Palestinian freedom would continue unabated, "with them or without them."

Francesca Albanese, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), welcomed in her press statement on 19 November 2025 that the UN Security Council had addressed the situation of the people in the Gaza Strip.³ Nevertheless, she was "deeply irritated. Despite the horrors of the last two years and the clear jurisprudence of the *International Court of Justice*", the Council had "failed to rely on the very legal provisions it is obliged to uphold: international human rights law, including the right to self-determination, laws on the use of force, international humanitarian law and the *Charter of the United Nations*." Instead of showing a "path to ending the occupation" and

* Karin Leukefeld studied ethnology as well as Islamic and political sciences and is a trained bookseller. She has done organisational and public relations work for, among others, the Federal Association of Citizens' Initiatives for Environmental Protection (BBU), the Green Party (federal party) and the El Salvador Information Centre. She was also a personal assistant to a PDS member of parliament in Germany (foreign policy and humanitarian aid). Since 2000, she has worked as a freelance correspondent in the Middle East for various German and Swiss media. She is also the author of several books on her experiences from the war zones in the Middle East.

guaranteeing the protection of Palestinians, the resolution risks consolidating external control over the governance, borders, security and reconstruction of the Gaza Strip. The resolution betrays the people it purports to protect.”

Perspective: The division of the Gaza Strip

Only a few weeks have passed since the adoption of the neo-colonial UN *Security Council Resolution 2803*, and more is becoming known about how the “Peace Council” chaired by US President *Donald Trump* envisions the future of Gaza. According to reports, a plan for the division of the Gaza Strip is being drawn up in the US.⁴ The dividing line is to be the “yellow line” that already divides the Gaza Strip into an area for the Palestinians and an area for the Israeli army. Beyond this “yellow line”, a fortified “green zone” is to be created under “joint Israeli-international control”. On the other side of the “yellow line”, a “red zone” is to be created for the Palestinians, who are to live there among the ruins and without any significant reconstruction, as reported by the British newspaper *The Guardian*.⁵

According to the report, the US plans to establish “*alternative safe communities*” (ASC) in the areas under Israeli-international control. This is the “most effective way to ensure that people can be housed in safe buildings as quickly as possible,” an unnamed spokesperson for the US State Department told the Qatari news channel *Al Jazeera*.

Beyond the circles that are involved in the project for political and economic reasons, there is also criticism precisely because the construction of new housing is only planned in the part of the Gaza Strip controlled by Israel, but not in the areas where the approximately two million inhabitants of the Gaza Strip who have been expelled by Israel are enduring devastating conditions. Critics in Arab and European circles argue that the “Alternative Safe Communities” project will lead to a “permanent division” of the coastal strip.

The US team believes the plan is right because it will provide security, adequate food supplies and medical assistance. The argument is that this will encourage the Palestinian population to leave the areas of the coastal strip controlled by Hamas. And that will lead to Hamas being weakened and isolated.

The concept is also known as the “Jakarta method” in the US counterinsurgency strategy.⁶ It refers to an “anti-communist programme” for



the destruction of left-wing, nationalist and anti-US movements and parties, which was used in Indonesia and various Latin American countries against left-wing, socialist and communist movements. As *Mao Tse Tung* described, these movements are dependent on the civilian population, from which they essentially recruit their members, as fish depend on water. To destroy such a movement, one must deprive it of the water in which it lives, the population. This counter-insurgency strategy, practised repeatedly by the US and its allies, has always been and continues to be directed against the civilian population. Israel is one of the US partners that uses precisely this method against the armed organisations of the “axis of resistance” – Hamas, Hezbollah, the Houthi movement – or in countries such as Iraq, Syria and Iran. According to the Israeli military, the “Dahiye doctrine” was already applied in Lebanon during the 2006 war.⁷ At that time, the Israeli Air Force carried out massive attacks on the southern suburbs of Beirut, known as Dahiye, which lie “outside” the city limits of Beirut and are mainly inhabited by supporters and relatives of Hezbollah. Israel repeated the same concept in the 2014 war against Gaza and again in 2024 against Lebanon and Hezbollah. Residential buildings were primarily targeted to drive out the civilian population. This was a kind of punishment for supporting the resistance, Hezbollah.

War against the population, as in the Gaza Strip, is the declared strategy of the Israeli army,

as Israeli Defence Minister *Israel Katz* has repeatedly stated. As recently as early October 2025, Katz threatened the population of Gaza City with destruction. If they did not leave the city immediately, they would be classified as terrorists and supporters of terror – and attacked.

Division like Germany after the Second World War

The construction measures for the Israeli-controlled areas of the Gaza Strip are being driven primarily by *Jared Kushner*, the son-in-law of the US President. Kushner is a real estate developer and had already publicly considered tourist plans for the Gaza Strip in early 2025. The at least ten residential complexes designed by his team are intended to “temporarily” accommodate 250,000 Palestinians. The selection of Palestinian families is subject to strict controls to prevent employees of the Hamas government or their relatives from benefitting from such housing.

The project is being promoted with the promise of education, work and functioning medical care. It is likely that the Israeli army will not withdraw from the area until Hamas – in the “red zone” – has been disarmed. According to reports, companies involved have already begun clean-up and levelling work in the Israeli-controlled area of the Gaza Strip.

So far, only Azerbaijan and Indonesia have signed up for a planned international protection force. However, they only want to take on the task of securing “humanitarian corridors”, clearing mines and, if necessary, protecting the “alternative safe communities” in the part of the Gaza Strip controlled by the Israeli army. Egypt and Jordan have trained around 5,000 Palestinian police officers with EU assistance. However, Israel rejects their deployment because it fears that this could create a link between the Gaza Strip and the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

The Kushner plan for reconstruction only in the Israeli-controlled area of the Gaza Strip is rejected, especially in Arab countries. According to a report, Western diplomats are also warning against a division of the Gaza Strip, recalling the division of the German capital Berlin after the Second World War. They warn of a “Berlinification” of Gaza, according to a report by the *Soufan Centre*.⁸

If the expansion drags on and the Israeli army does not withdraw, it will become increasingly

difficult over time to enforce the withdrawal of Israeli forces and reunite the Gaza Strip.

The livelihoods of Palestinians remain permanently destroyed

According to the Palestinian Ministry of Health (Gaza), 347 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli attacks since the beginning of the “cease-fire” between Hamas and Israel, according to report No. 199 of the *UN Agency for the Relief and Works for Palestinian Refugees*, UNRWA.

The report compiles data for the period from 24 to 30 November 2025.⁹ UN organisations regularly compile these reports on the Gaza Strip, the occupied West Bank and occupied East Jerusalem. 889 Palestinians were injured by Israeli army attacks. 596 bodies were recovered from the rubble of the devastated coastal strip. On 24 November 2025, an UNRWA school in the Jabalia refugee camp was also damaged in an attack by an Israeli army quadcopter. The school had become an emergency camp for refugees; no one was injured.

The *UN Organisation for Women* reported that the situation for women was extremely difficult, especially as more than 57,000 women had lost their husbands and sons and were now solely responsible for providing for their families. Prices were high, the women had no income and were struggling with hunger, fear, repeated displacement and the cold, stormy and wet winter weather. The emergency shelters offer little protection for the people. Most people in Gaza live in completely inadequate accommodation, according to UNRWA report No. 199. They live in tents, self-built tents, under tarpaulins and, in some cases, in the ruins of severely damaged buildings.

UNRWA is helping to supply the 32 emergency shelters in former UNRWA schools in Khan Younis and in the centre of the Gaza Strip. Water must be pumped out, and blocked drains must be cleaned. Tents must be repaired and tarpaulins distributed to families. Despite the great need, UNRWA’s activities continue to be hampered, the report says. Israel is blocking the border crossings, preventing sufficient quantities of essential relief supplies from reaching the people.

Nevertheless, the people are not giving up. More than 50,000 children in the Gaza Strip are participating in educational classes. Health services are being provided, with five medical facil-

ities operating in Gaza City. These can treat up to 1,800 patients a day. Vaccination campaigns to immunise children reached 15,895 children in November. UNRWA, alongside UNICEF and WHO, has 32 teams (out of a total of 141) in operation and was able to vaccinate 4,624 children in the last week of November. That is around 28 per cent of all children in the vaccination programme.

Systematic torture of Palestinian prisoners

In a comprehensive report for the UN *High Commissioner for Human Rights* on the situation of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons, UN experts from the Anti-Torture Committee have made serious allegations against the Israeli prison system.¹⁰ The report finds that there is “systematic torture of Palestinian prisoners”. This is an accusation that has already been made by hundreds of released Palestinian children, young people, women and men.

The *Palestinian Centre for Human Rights* (PCHR) has compiled shocking witness statements following the recent release of hundreds of Palestinian prisoners from Israeli prisons and detention camps.¹¹ On 10 November 2025, the PCHR published a selection of statements from one woman and three men who were subjected to sexual torture during their imprisonment. They were raped, forcibly stripped naked, and filmed and photographed while being tortured. Bottles and batons were used for the torture, and dogs that had apparently been trained for this purpose were set upon the men. The woman reported several instances of rape by Israeli soldiers over a period of two days, during which she was stripped naked, forced to lie on her stomach and had her arms tied to a bed frame.

The aim of sexual torture in Israeli prisons is the deliberate psychological humiliation of the victims’ human dignity, with the intention of destroying their personal identity. The individuals concerned had been arrested in the Gaza Strip without being charged with any offence. The woman was arrested when she passed through an

Israeli police checkpoint, while a man was arrested at *Al Shifa* Hospital, where he was with his sons.

The perpetrators are soldiers of the Israeli armed forces. PCHR emphasises that these are not isolated incidents, but rather that hundreds of witness statements have revealed that there is a policy of systematic torture in Israeli prisons and detention centres. According to PCHR, this is directly linked to the genocide of more than two million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. Thousands of prisoners from the Gaza Strip have been held and tortured in prisons and military camps for months. The facilities are not accessible to international investigation committees, including the *International Committee of the Red Cross* (ICRC).

Source: <https://globalbridge.ch/ein-tag-der-schande/>, 6 December 2025

(Translation “Swiss Standpoint”)

¹ [https://docs.un.org/en/S/RES/2803\(2025\)](https://docs.un.org/en/S/RES/2803(2025))

² <https://x.com/CraigMokhiber> oder <https://www.activism.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/UN-Resolution-zu-Gaza-%E2%80%93-%E2%80%93-Graveultat-warnt-Ex-UN-Menschenrechtschef-Craig-Mokhiber.docx.pdf>

³ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/11/un-security-council-resolution-violation-palestinian-right-self>

⁴ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/11/27/us-appears-to-back-plan-to-divide-gaza-rebuild-israeli-controlled-side>

⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/nov/14/us-military-plan-divided-gaza-green-zone>

⁶ <https://www.woz.ch/2320/die-jakarta-methode/dem-fisch-das-wasser-entziehen/!NSD5EY9YX9AN>

⁷ <https://imeu.org/resources/resources/explainer-the-dahiya-doctrine-israels-use-of-disproportionate-force/175>

⁸ <https://thesoufancenter.org/intelbrief-2025-december-1/>

⁹ <https://www.unrwa.org/resources/reports/unrwa-situation-report-199-situation-gaza-strip-and-west-bank-including-east-jerusalem>

¹⁰ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/meeting-summaries/2025/11/experts-committee-against-torture-commend-israels-initiative-frontline>

¹¹ <https://pchrgaza.org/pchr-documents-testimonies-of-systematic-rape-and-sexual-torture-in-israeli-detention-against-released-palestinian-detainees/>