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The Gaza ceasefire agreement at the one-year mark

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Brief

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Summary

One year after it was agreed on 9 October 2025, the US-brokered ceasefire in Gaza is still holding, but it has brought Gazans little relief. Near-daily violations have killed more than 1,500 people. Some 1.4 million face Crisis or worse levels of food insecurity, and more than 60 percent of the population has lost their homes. Recovery and reconstruction are estimated to cost USD 71.4 billion. Since the ceasefire, an international framework has been put in place: President Trump's Comprehensive Plan, UN Security Council Resolution 2803, the Board of Peace and, most recently, the Gaza Roadmap. Implementation has nevertheless stalled. Hamas has not disarmed. Israel has rejected the Roadmap and conditions any withdrawal or reconstruction on full demilitarization. The National Committee for the Administration of Gaza (NCAG) has not been able to enter the Strip, and the International Stabilization Force has barely begun to deploy. Much of the framework also remains unclear, including how verification will work, what the Palestinian Authority's future role will be, and how pledged funds will be released. Unless there is a sustained political and financial push from the international community, Gaza risks remaining in limbo indefinitely. Sweden, working through the EU, can help break the deadlock by:

- pressing for an end to military operations and a scale-up of humanitarian assistance;
- empowering Palestinian governance;
- seeking clarity on how reconstruction is tied to disarmament;
- reconsidering the EU's no-contact policy with Hamas.



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The US-brokered ceasefire between Israel and Hamas continued to hold as it reached its one-year mark last month. Yet since the ceasefire was agreed on 9 October 2025, almost daily violations have left over 1,500 Gazans killed and thousands more injured, according to the Gaza Health Ministry, while living conditions for civilians have continued to deteriorate. Aid deliveries improved after the ceasefire, but these gains are being eroded by funding cuts: in October, the World Food Programme cut its food assistance in Gaza by around one-third. According to the UN-backed Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), 1.4 million people (67 percent) are projected to face Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3+) levels of acute food insecurity through December 2026, with 212,000 people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4). Many Gazans reside close to the so-called Yellow Line, which divides Gaza into an Israeli military-controlled area and a Hamas-controlled area, where access to humanitarian assistance remains particularly challenging. More than 60 percent of Gazans have lost their homes, around 1.9 million people have been displaced, often multiple times, and the cost of recovery and reconstruction is estimated at a staggering USD 71.4 billion.

In late July, it appeared as if a significant breakthrough had been achieved, with Hamas reportedly agreeing to a phased disarmament plan and the full relinquishment of control over the civil administration of Gaza. Israel, however, rejected the plan: on 9 August, Netanyahu told his cabinet that "Israel rejects the 15-point document", insisting that no reconstruction or redeployment of Israeli forces would take place before Hamas is fully disarmed and Gaza demilitarized.

Following Jared Kushner's meeting with Prime Minister Netanyahu on 17 August, the Board of Peace (BoP) stated that the parties shared the objective of a "fully demilitarized and deradicalized Gaza that poses no threat to Israel, where the people of Gaza can pursue prosperity and dignity through peaceful means." The meeting was an attempt to salvage the so-called Gaza Roadmap, published on 30 July and rejected by Israel on 9 August, but it produced no firm Israeli commitment. The Roadmap, which builds on President Trump's 20-Point Plan and UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 2803, outlines the conditions under which Israeli forces would redeploy from Gaza and reconstruction commence.

During the UN General Assembly (UNGA) meetings in September, further announcements were made by the BoP, including a USD 2.45 billion, six-month recovery plan comprising 66 targeted infrastructure and humanitarian projects focusing on repairing homes, hospitals, schools, roads, and ports, the restoration of fuel deliveries, Internet connectivity, and waste removal, and implementation of a digital payment system.

Despite the seeming progress, Palestinians in Gaza have yet to reap any benefits as their living conditions remain unchanged: Hamas retains de facto control of governance in the areas west of the Yellow Line, the disarmament process has yet to begin, Israel continues its airstrikes and targeted assassinations, and members of the Palestinian National Committee for the Administration of Gaza (NCAG) set to take over governance remain in Cairo, without a timeline for when they can enter. The training of vetted Gazan

police recruits has stalled, and the deployment of the International Stabilization Force (ISF) has barely begun.

Without a sustained and coordinated political and financial push by the international community to break the deadlock and commence the processes outlined in UNSC Resolution 2803, the 20-Point Plan, and the Gaza Roadmap, Gaza will remain in limbo while civilians continue to pay the price.

Overview of the international framework to end the Gaza conflict

After more than two years of war, the US-brokered Gaza ceasefire was reached on 9 October 2025. The ceasefire agreement (officially, the Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict) outlines 20 points on the immediate end of the war, the withdrawal of Israeli forces, the release of hostages and prisoners, and a path towards redevelopment, economic growth, and eventually Palestinian self-determination.

On 17 November 2025, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 2803, endorsing the Comprehensive Plan and welcoming the establishment of the Board of Peace as a transitional administration. The Board would set the framework and coordinate funding for the redevelopment of Gaza pursuant to the Comprehensive Plan, until the Palestinian Authority (PA) has satisfactorily completed its reform programme and can securely and effectively assume control of Gaza.

While Resolution 2803 and the Comprehensive Plan both acknowledge a future role for the PA in Gaza, they authorize the establishment of a temporary, technocratic and apolitical committee, later constituted as the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza (NCAG), under the supervision of the Board of Peace and the Office of the High Representative, led by Nickolay Mladenov. In this role, the NCAG would serve as a governing body overseeing recovery and development, coordinating public services, and maintaining the rule of law and security.

Resolution 2803 also authorized Member States working with the Board of Peace to establish a temporary International Stabilization Force (ISF), to be deployed under a unified command in close consultation and cooperation with Israel and Egypt, and to use "all necessary measures to carry out its mandate consistent with international law, including international humanitarian law". Under the resolution, the ISF is also tasked with demilitarizing Gaza, including the decommissioning of weapons. The Gaza Roadmap further specifies that it will monitor the ceasefire, train a new Palestinian police force, secure and protect delivery of humanitarian assistance, and support the NCAG in non-policing missions. Importantly, the Roadmap also states that the ISF does not have a mandate to carry out policing missions vis-à-vis Palestinian society

The Board of Peace (BoP)

On 22 January 2026, the Board of Peace was formally established, with US President Trump as Chair. To date, some two dozen states have joined the Board as members (26 according to a January 2026 tally of official announcements), including those of Israel and Egypt, while Palestinian representation was not included. Below the Board of Peace sits its Executive Board, consisting of US officials, businessmen

and international figures, including Secretary of State Marco Rubio, US Special Envoy for Peace Missions Steve Witkoff, Jared Kushner, Tony Blair and World Bank President Ajay Banga. The Executive Board advises the Board of Peace as does the Gaza Executive Board. Acting as the BoP's direct link with Gaza sits the Office of the High Representative (OHR), which is in charge of supporting and supervising the establishment of the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza (NCAG). The multilayered structure is meant to coordinate the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and UNSC Resolution 2803, in accordance with the 15-point Gaza Roadmap, announced on 30 July 2026 and accepted by Hamas but rejected by Israel.

Board of Peace Structure

Board of Peace
(consisting of Heads of State)
↓
Executive Board
(consisting mostly of senior US officials and businessmen)
↓
Gaza Executive Board
(consisting of a mixture of businessmen, and US and foreign officials)
↓
Office of the High Representative
(chaired by Nikolay Mladenov)
↓
National Committee for the Administration of Gaza (NCAG)
(chaired by Dr. Ali Shaat and 12 commissioners)

A Roadmap for implementing the international framework

On 30 July 2026, the Board of Peace announced the Gaza Roadmap. The Roadmap outlines 15 points to guide the continued implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and UNSC Resolution 2803. The full implementation of the Roadmap will, according to the Board of Peace, "deliver an Israeli withdrawal, a Gaza governed free from Hamas control and rule by the gun, and the reconstruction of Gaza under Palestinian administration".

The implementation of the Roadmap hinges on three overarching commitments:

1) The full acceptance of the international framework. Hamas and all Palestinian factions must agree to the Comprehensive Plan and Resolution 2803 as the guiding framework.

2) A full monopoly on weapons and the complete relinquishment of any governmental involvement of Hamas or any other factions in Gaza under the principle "One Authority, One Law, One Weapon", with the view that only the NCAG will hold, store, or control any weapons in Gaza.

3) A verified process. Progress or movement between each phase is not automatic. Every transition from one phase to the next will be conditioned

on verified completion of the previous phases. This will be supervised by an International Verification Committee.

Looking ahead

The international framework has been in the making since the ceasefire came into effect, and while the Board of Peace, through numerous briefings and the publication of the Gaza Roadmap, has brought some clarity to the process, important obstacles and questions remain.

1) The risk of deadlock and continued suffering:

Palestinians in Gaza have been living in a perpetual state of war and humanitarian catastrophe for over three years. While some improvements have been achieved, they are far from enough and most Gazans remain homeless, food insecure, and without access to adequate medical care. Tying relief efforts to the successful disarmament of Hamas and the demilitarization of Gaza risks keeping two million Palestinians hostage to a process that has yet to begin and could easily be derailed.

2) The NCAG and Gaza governance:

Governance sits at the heart of any long-term solution for Gaza. The international framework explicitly calls for the removal of Hamas (and other armed groups) while paving the way for a temporary, technocratic solution through the creation of the NCAG. The framework furthermore provides a path for the PA to eventually take over this role. This approach reflects a long-standing Israeli policy of division between Gaza and the West Bank, preventing the PA from governing both territories, while offering the carrot that it might in the future. Establishing a technocratic body to oversee governance is not new. In June 2014, Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah headed a technocratic "national consensus government" after a brief rapprochement between Fatah and Hamas.

Establishing the NCAG follows the same logic. While as an initial solution it might be appealing, the NCAG would need to be empowered through funding, staffing, and international political support. However, as of October 2026, the NCAG chair and commissioners have not even been able to enter the Gaza Strip, and a robust international effort has yet to materialize. Furthermore, while it is clear from the mission statement that the NCAG is meant to be temporary, temporary solutions have historically tended to become permanent. Indeed, both the PA and the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) were originally created as interim solutions.

3) The verification mechanism:

The implementation of the Roadmap hinges on the efficiency of a new verification mechanism. Moving between phases is directly linked to the successful completion of the preceding phase. The Roadmap even describes this as the document's foundational structural principle. Yet the Roadmap describes the International Verification Committee only in general terms, as "comprising representatives from the guarantors, BoP and the International Stabilization Force (ISF)", and says little about its procedures or the consequences of violations. According to a source cited by AP in August, Israel has asked that Qatar and Turkey, both mediators and widely understood to be among the guarantors, not be

involved in verification. Verification mechanisms also have a history in Gaza and previous attempts have been criticized for being biased, lacking in transparency, and offering little or no recourse for complaints.[1]

4) Safety and security:

Deploying a newly trained police force and an International Stabilization Force (ISF) to maintain law and order and ensure safety and security across the Gaza Strip is critical for recovery and reconstruction. Yet this process is filled with potential pitfalls. Who will be policing Gaza? Will they be able to perform their duties when the Strip is still filled with small arms and weapons? Whom will they serve? Will Hamas agree not only to disarm but also to submit to law enforcement?

5) Funding:

Pledges for the reconstruction of Gaza have been forthcoming but are nowhere close to the estimated USD 71.4 billion required. The U.S. pledged USD 10 billion to the Board of Peace at its first meeting on 19 February 2026, subject to congressional approval. Other countries collectively pledged USD 7 billion towards reconstruction, with the United Arab Emirates expected to contribute USD 1.2 billion and Kuwait USD 1 billion. The European Union and its partners mobilized EUR 883.6 million (roughly USD 1 billion) for Gaza's early recovery at the Palestine Donor Group meeting in Brussels in July. While these are significant numbers, donors will want some reassurances before deploying the funds. Providing humanitarian assistance is one thing, but rebuilding homes and infrastructure in the event of renewed conflict will be a harder sell for most governments.

6) Political will:

Above all, we must ask whether Israel and Hamas have the political will required to end the conflict. With the inconclusive Israeli elections of 27 October and pressure mounting on Hamas to disarm, there is still little evidence that either side is willing to follow through on any of its commitments. There needs to be tangible progress in the disarmament process, an actual cessation of hostilities, and a significant increase in humanitarian assistance. Moreover, the NCAG must be allowed to take over governance functions in Gaza. Otherwise, reconstruction will remain beyond reach.

Policy options for the Swedish Government

To support scaled-up efforts on the ground, the Swedish Government, including government agencies, could consider the following policy options in the immediate term:

1) **Demand** the full cessation of all military operations: no further expansion of Israeli-controlled territory (which already covers around 64 percent of the Strip, up from roughly 53 percent within the original Yellow Line), an end to the demolition and destruction of homes and infrastructure in the Israeli-controlled areas, and a full commitment by Israel to redeploy all of its troops. This should be coupled with renewed pressure on Hamas and other armed groups to commence the disarmament process.

1 After the 2014 war, the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism (GRM) was established to oversee the entry of reconstruction materials into Gaza. The GRM has been heavily criticized by Palestinians, human rights organizations, and the international community for being inefficient and unaccountable, and for giving the appearance of legitimizing Israel's blockade of Gaza.

2) **Support** the scaling-up of humanitarian assistance and recovery efforts beyond life-saving measures. This includes increased capacity at the Kerem Shalom crossing and the opening of additional crossings for cargo (e.g., Rafah), the rehabilitation of water, electricity, and sewage infrastructure, the restoration of hospitals and bakeries, and the entry of rubble-clearing equipment.

3) **Demand** safe uninterrupted passage of humanitarian convoys and workers at all times.

4) **Request** a plan for the return of Gazans to their homes, including the provision of means to rehabilitate or rebuild them.

5) **Provide support** to scaled-up efforts of the private sector to help the local economy get back on its feet. This would create opportunities for Gazans able and willing to work to earn a livelihood.

6) **Empower the NCAG, the PA, and Gazan civilians**, through political and financial support, to rebuild. The reconstruction of Gaza must be in the hands of Palestinians themselves, not foreign investors or Israeli officials. The Board of Peace must also clarify what reforms the PA would need to undergo to take over control of Gaza. Setting a clear target for the return of the PA to Gaza would also provide additional reassurance that the NCAG is a temporary solution with a time-limited mandate. This should facilitate international financial support to the NCAG without undermining the future role of the PA in Gaza. Continued reiteration that Hamas must fully relinquish its control of governance would also facilitate the transition.

7) **Request further clarity** from the Board of Peace with regard to the disarmament process and the linking of reconstruction to demilitarization. It is unclear whether reconstruction is tied only to the disarmament process or whether full demilitarization is also a precondition. According to High Representative Mladenov, destroying the tunnel network under Gaza would take "more than a decade" at the current pace, though he argued it could be done much faster. Israel regards destroying the tunnels as a critical part of demilitarizing the Strip. If reconstruction were to wait for this, it could be delayed for many years, which should not be accepted.

8) **Consider revisiting the "no-contact policy" concerning political-level contacts with Hamas.** By welcoming the adoption of UNSC Resolution 2803, Sweden reaffirmed its stance on any future role of Hamas (and other armed groups) in the governance of Gaza. Nevertheless, this policy, in place since 2005, has undermined the EU's and its Member States' ability to effectively engage in the region. While the argument has always been that revoking the policy would grant unwarranted legitimacy to Hamas, it has left direct

dialogue largely in hands of regional actors and the UN. This has cemented the view of the EU as mainly serving as a “cash cow” without a political role in resolving the conflict. Sweden should consider advocating for the revocation, or at least the reinterpretation, of the no-contact policy to allow for a direct EU role in Gaza going forward. Precedent has been set by US envoys Kushner and Witkoff, who have engaged directly with Hamas on several occasions. Most recently, Kushner, together with Blair and Mladenov, met Hamas leader Khalil al-Hayya in Egypt on 16 August.

9) **Emphasize the urgency of acting now.** Unless significant improvements are achieved on the ground in Gaza in the immediate term, the crisis risks becoming a permanent humanitarian disaster. The international community should not accept any further delays.

Gaza is not an issue to be solved in isolation. The increase in settler violence and settlement expansion in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, continues to threaten a peaceful solution in Gaza and beyond. It is therefore critical that Sweden, through the EU, continue to hold Israel accountable for its actions in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Furthermore, linking the international framework to end the Gaza conflict with broader peace process efforts already underway, such as the New York Declaration and the Global Alliance for the implementation of the two-state solution, must be a priority for Sweden and the EU.

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