



The Board of Peace: Trump's plan to replace the UN and rule world politics?

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Summary

At this year's World Economic Forum in Davos, US president [Donald Trump praised](#) the inauguration of his Board of Peace as "one of the most consequential bodies ever created". Originally, the Board had emerged as an oversight mechanism for world leaders to oversee the implementation of the Gaza ceasefire plan, authorized by the [UN Security Council Resolution 2803](#) last November. However, by the time of Trump's Davos remarks, the Board had already transformed into something far beyond the ambitions mandated by the Security Council. Indeed, [recent statements by Trump](#) that the Board's "unlimited potential" extends "far beyond Gaza" has magnified concerns that its scope and structure are meant to rival the UN. Therefore, as delegates convene in Washington on February 19 for the Board's first official meeting, observers should heed [warnings](#) that the initiative is less of a genuine attempt at peace in Gaza than it is a part of Trump's plan to abandon the order of the UN for a new era of Trumpian world politics.

Trump's erosion of multilateralism

Since his return to office, Trump has wrought [turmoil to the global stage](#) through his continuous disregard for longstanding international laws, norms, and alliances. At Davos, the [Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney described](#) a deepening "rupture" between states still committed to "genuine cooperation" and those reverting to might-is-right great power politics. Trump himself has made no secret of how he views most multilateral agreements as mere hindrances to American dominance. Consequently, he

has [withdrawn the US](#) from dozens of international treaties like the UNFCCC and UNHRC over the past year on the basis that they "no longer serve American interests".

This is part of [Trump's wider grievance narrative](#), through which he portrays the US as a victim of international organizations and foreign nations that criticise his handling of issues like Gaza, Ukraine, Greenland and Venezuela. [The UN is a central target](#) in Trump's campaigns against such "anti-American" forces, as he views it to be as ineffective in building global peace as it is antagonistic towards his vision of US hegemony. It is notable, therefore, that the



[Board's charter echoes his criticisms](#) by promising to "depart from" those "institutions that have often failed" at "effective international peacebuilding". Whether or not the Board develops into little more than a Trumpian pipedream, [the president's claim that it "might" replace the UN](#) should be treated as a serious threat to the rule-based order.

Weaponizing peace: The purpose and structure of Trump's Board

More directly, the international community must consider the Board's potential impact on the pursuit of peace according to international law, especially in Gaza. The Trump administration [maintains](#) that the Board is intended to deliver "lasting peace, stability, and opportunity" for Gaza by overseeing efforts of "governance capacity-building, regional relations, reconstruction, investment attraction, large-scale funding, and capital mobilization". Yet [criticisms](#) that it may in fact be antithetical to this aim have been swift and widespread. During the UNSC vote on Resolution 2803, representatives from China, France, Pakistan, Somalia and Sierra Leone [expressed particular concern](#) with the exclusion of Palestinians from the Board and Gaza Plan, which contain minimal consideration of the Palestinian Authority and the two-State solution.

[Criticisms](#) have also been raised over the transactional and hierarchical structure of the Board. [Its charter](#) grants indefinite chairmanship to Donald Trump personally (not the office of the US presidency), with membership being extended by invitation of the chair. A [lifelong membership can be](#)

[secured](#) with a contribution of a minimum "\$1,000,000,000 in cash funds" to the Board within its first year. The exact end to which this money will be used, while perhaps assumed to be for covering reconstructive costs in Gaza, is left unspecified. If directed towards efforts in Gaza, funds may contribute to [the \\$30bn Trump Development Plan](#) presented by the president's son-in-law Jared Kushner in Davos. The plan includes a "coastal tourism" zone housing up to 180 skyscrapers and two urban developments named "New Gaza" and "New Rafah", visions that resemble [the controversial "Trump Gaza" AI video](#) circulated by the administration in February 2025. Kushner also [features as a Board member](#) alongside special envoy Steve Witkoff and Secretary of State Marco Rubio, as well as former British Prime Minister Tony Blair and President of the World Bank Ajay Banga.

As of February 2026, governments remain split on whether to join the Board, where invitations have been extended. Most European countries have declined their invitations or are still considering, while Turkey, Belarus, Hungary and Bulgaria [have reportedly accepted](#). Amidst threats to occupy the sovereign territory of allied states, Trump pointedly [chose not to invite](#) Denmark and [rescinded](#) their invitation for Canada to join the Board. Invitations have been extended to [Israel](#) and [Russia](#), each engaged in military campaigns accused of war crimes in Palestine and Ukraine respectively. From the roughly 60 invitations extended worldwide, [current members are said to include](#) representatives from the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Argentina and Pakistan.



To join or not to join?

Ahead of the first official Board meeting in Washington, [the European Commission has reportedly decided](#) to send a representative to attend, not as a member, but to avoid being sidelined from the implementation of the Gaza peace plan. The EU continues to cite concerns around the Board's scope and governance, emphasizing the need to clarify its purpose as a *complementary* rather than a *competitive* organization to the UN. Even so, a joint strategy by the EU and other allied parties remains elusive, with [conflicting signals from governments like Greece and Italy](#) on their membership status signalling a fractured counterforce to the US. The position of the EU and its allies is further weakened by [their catastrophic failure](#) to act for peace and uphold human rights in Gaza since October 2023.

To join or not to join Trump's Board of Peace may, [as some analysts have noted](#), be a question about the true "cost of being inside the room". Despite assurances of the Board's peaceful intent by Trump and his administration, the risks are clear. For Gaza, the Board could displace the role of Palestinians in rebuilding their land and ensuring peace even further. For defenders of the UN, the Board could seriously weaken the legitimacy of longstanding multilateral agreements around peace, justice and cooperation. If the Board truly is Trump's attempt at establishing a new world order, one based in transactional relations and uninhibited American dominance, defenders of multilateralism face a major challenge. At stake is not only the pursuit of peace in Gaza – which remains existential – but the future of the rules-based international order.

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