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# Gaza's Future: Reconstruction between Just Solutions and the Forced Displacement Plan



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## Introduction:

The reconstruction process in Gaza following the devastation of the recent conflict with Israel presents a complex political and humanitarian challenge. Recent statements by US President Donald Trump regarding potential scenarios for rebuilding Gaza have raised concerns that these efforts might be linked to attempts to displace the population—a prospect met with firm rejection from Arab nations, including Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia.

Reconstruction involves more than simply rebuilding destroyed infrastructure; it is a political and humanitarian issue that touches upon the core of the Palestinian cause. Instead of pursuing solutions that infringe upon the historical rights of the Palestinian people, the focus should be on plans that ensure reconstruction within the Gaza Strip, while preserving the rights of its residents

to their land. Although some statements from the United States suggest coercive solutions, historical precedents demonstrate that reconstruction can be achieved without resorting to displacement, as evidenced by post-war recovery in many countries.

Gaza has suffered repeated cycles of destruction, yet the territory has been successfully rebuilt without the displacement of its population. A prime example is the aftermath of the 2014 war, which culminated in the Cairo Conference for Reconstruction. Today, the international community is engaged in intensive diplomatic efforts to identify practical solutions for rebuilding Gaza without compromising the rights of its residents. This requires strong Arab and international coordination to counter any plans that could lead to forced demographic change in the region.

# First: Implications of Trump's Statements on Rebuilding Gaza and Proposed Displacement Plans

In recent statements regarding the future of the Gaza Strip, US President Donald Trump outlined plans to rebuild Gaza, but these remarks also alluded to potential US efforts to displace the residents of the Gaza Strip, with a proposal that Egypt and Jordan receive them. This proposal was met with rejection from both Egypt and Jordan. According to Trump, Palestinians would not be able to return to the Strip, as they would be offered better permanent living arrangements elsewhere. As Trump stated, "In other words, I am talking about building a permanent place for them."

During a meeting with Jordan's King Abdullah II, Trump also mentioned the possibility of relocating Gaza residents outside the Strip, stating, "The Palestinians will live safely in a place other than Gaza, and I realize that we are able to reach a solution." He also presented his vision of his displacement plan, saying, "I believe that there will be pieces of land in Jordan and Egypt where the Palestinians can live." These statements were met with rejection by several countries, including Egypt and Jordan.

Trump's statements regarding the future of the Gaza Strip could have several negative conse-

quences, most notably the potential for regional destabilization. The displacement of Gazans, as suggested by Trump, could lead to political and social tensions in receiving countries. The plan could also strain regional relations in the Middle East and hinder Israel's efforts to normalize relations with countries in the region. Saudi Arabia, for instance, views these statements as a threat to the stability of the Middle East and a violation of all existing peace initiatives..

The Saudi Foreign Ministry issued two statements rejecting plans to displace the residents of Gaza, asserting that "the Kingdom's position on the establishment of a Palestinian state is a firm and unwavering position, and this firm position is not subject to negotiations or outbidding," and that "the Kingdom will not establish diplomatic relations with Israel without that."

These statements could lead to further unrest in the Middle East, as Israel's efforts to normalize relations with countries in the region would be jeopardized, as reflected in Saudi Arabia's stance. A consensus among Arab nations is emerging to reject these proposals and to focus on rebuilding Gaza without displacement.

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2 Sky News Arabia, Trump: Palestinians can live on lands in Egypt and Jordan, publication date 2/11/2025, access date 2/14/2025.  
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## Second: Reconstructing Gaza as a More Sustainable Economic Solution Than Displacement

Implementing a displacement plan would likely trigger a new wave of asylum seekers heading to Europe, increasing pressure on already strained asylum systems. Europe has previously faced economic, political, and social challenges due to waves of asylum seekers resulting from crises and conflicts, such as the Syrian crisis. With rising anti-immigration sentiment in several European countries, it is unlikely that the continent is prepared to accommodate a new influx of refugees.

The OECD report on refugee waves highlights the economic costs associated with hosting refugees, which vary by country. For example, in 2017, Germany's cost of hosting 900,000 refugees was estimated at \$17.3 billion, approximately \$19,200 per person annually. These annual costs also vary from one country to another. The United States' cost of hosting one refugee annually is \$22,300, while the cost is \$39,800 annually. These figures are from 2017, so the current costs are expected to be higher,

estimated to exceed \$30,000 per person annually.

In contrast, a report issued by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres, estimates that “the amounts necessary for the recovery and reconstruction in the short, medium and long term in the Gaza Strip are approximately \$53.142 billion, of which the necessary funding for the first three years is approximately \$20.568 billion.”

Comparing the cost of reconstruction with that of implementing a displacement plan, the annual expense of hosting one million refugees at \$30,000 per person would amount to \$30 billion annually. Over several years, the cost of displacement would surpass the estimated \$53 billion required for reconstruction, according to the United Nations Secretary-General's report. This makes reconstruction a more sustainable and economically viable solution than displacement, which is not only unjust but also undermines the rights of the Palestinian people.

## Third: Gaza Reconstruction Scenario 2025

Despite US President Trump's assertion that rebuilding the Gaza Strip necessitates the displacement of its residents, history demonstrates that reconstruction can be successfully undertaken without displacement. Numerous countries around the world have recovered from devastation on a scale similar to that currently seen in Gaza.

Europe provides a compelling example. After World War II, many European countries suffered widespread destruction and devastation. Germany, for instance, faced near-total destruction, with its infrastructure shattered and many cities reduced to rubble from Allied bombing. In Cologne, 66% of homes were destroyed, and in Dusseldorf, 93% were uninhabitable. Despite this widespread destruction, Germany was able to rebuild and emerge as one of the world's strongest economies in the twentieth century, all without resorting to displacement plans. .

Even within Gaza's own history, the territory has been destroyed in multiple conflicts and successfully reconstructed without displacing its population. In 2014, the Gaza Strip sustained significant damage during a 50-day war with Israel, resulting in severe damage to infrastructure and the destruction of entire neighbourhoods. Following a ceasefire agreement in August 2014, the Cairo Conference for the Reconstruction of Gaza was held, where participating countries pledged \$5.4 billion, with half of the funds earmarked for rebuilding Gaza and mitigating the war's devastat-

ing effects.

Recent efforts have focused on developing a comprehensive plan to rebuild Gaza in a manner that respects the rights of the Palestinian people and supports their remaining in their land. Consultations are ongoing among Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia to finalize the reconstruction plan. A five-party Arab meeting is expected to be held in Riyadh, followed by an emergency Arab summit in late February 2025 to discuss the future of the Gaza Strip, particularly in light of Washington's statements and plans regarding potential displacement.

This reconstruction plan is likely to prioritize keeping the Gaza population in place by dividing the Strip into three humanitarian zones, each with a large camp serving as temporary residence, alongside the provision of thousands of mobile homes and tents for six months while rubble is removed. Trucks loaded with mobile homes have been seen lining up on the Egyptian side of the Rafah crossing, preparing to enter the Strip and begin the reconstruction process. .

The presence of the Gaza population within the Strip should not be viewed as an obstacle to reconstruction. Attempting to displace them represents an unjust liquidation of the Palestinian cause in favor of Israel, and a denial of the rights of a people who have suffered decades of discrimination and displacement. Addressing the root causes of the conflict and seeking just solutions is more likely to foster lasting peace in the region.

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## Conclusion:

**T**he reconstruction of Gaza is not merely a project to rebuild what has been destroyed by wars; it is a humanitarian and political imperative that demands comprehensive solutions that address the needs of the population and guarantee them a decent life in their own land. Given the recurring destruction in Gaza, any reconstruction efforts must prioritize achieving stability and improving infrastructure and basic services, free from arrangements that impose unacceptable solutions on the Palestinians.

Despite the significant challenges facing reconstruction, past experiences demonstrate that political will and Arab and international cooperation can overcome obstacles, as evidenced by international initiatives launched after the 2014 war. Today, a clear plan is needed to ensure fair and just reconstruction, guaranteeing the Palestinians' right to remain on their land, while enhancing their access to decent living conditions, including housing, health, education, and infrastructure.

Ultimately, the responsibility for reconstruction is a collective one. All actors, whether at the regional or international level, must support this process in a way that enhances stability and preserves the rights of the Palestinians, rejecting any attempts to alter the demographic reality through displacement, whether permanent or temporary.