

# Partners' reaction to Trump's Peace Plan

New York, January 30, 2020

## **By Endorsing Trump Plan, Netanyahu Becomes World's Most Dangerous Anti-Zionist**

Standing beside U.S. President Donald Trump in Washington yesterday, caretaker Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu arguably became the world's most dangerous anti-Zionist.

We'll explain. The aim of the Zionist movement, from its humble beginnings in 1897, has been the creation of a homeland for the Jewish people within the area known as Eretz Yisrael, the Land of Israel. After the Holocaust, in 1947, Zionism secured its greatest diplomatic victory to date, gaining the support of the United Nations for such a homeland, with the General Assembly approving the partition of British-Mandatory Palestine between Jewish and Arab states.

But Zionism's achievements were incomplete, as the Palestinian people, who, like the Jewish people, had legitimate, though competing, claims to the Land and comparable aspirations to statehood, initially rejected the partition idea. Four decades later, though, in November 1988, Zionism seemed on the verge of consolidating its historic achievement when the Palestinian National Council accepted (if somewhat equivocally) Israel's existence and affirmed its support for a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine based on UN Security Council Resolution 242. Less than five years later, the Oslo Process, designed to lead to an end-of-conflict, final-status agreement by 1999, was launched.

A peace treaty based on the pre-Six Day War "Green Line" – which remains the official Palestinian goal – would mean not only Palestinian recognition of the principle of partition, but of the territorial gains made by Israel during the War of Independence in 1948-49.

The plan announced in Washington threatens to deliver a fatal blow to this approach, and to the ultimate realization of the Zionist idea. In endorsing unilateral annexation by Israel of large portions of the West Bank and the creation of a series of disjointed Palestinian cantons, dominated inside and out by Israel, the Trump plan – if implemented – would make a just and viable two-state solution completely impossible.

Once Israel declares sovereignty over the Jordan Valley and every single one of the scattered 121 West Bank settlements, the Palestinian people, already chafing over having to accept only 22 percent of historic Palestine as part of a two-state deal, are more than likely to conclude that their two-state strategy is dead. And their most reasonable next step will not be to accede

to Trump and Netanyahu's dictates, but to scrap their call for a two-state future altogether and return to their pre-1988 support for a single democratic state – a state in which the Jewish people will soon be the minority.

Israel, at such point, will be forced to choose between acceding to the Palestinian demand, offering full enfranchisement, and pulling the plug on the Zionist idea of a state in which Jews constitute the majority; or rejecting the Palestinian demand, and maintaining Jewish supremacy at the expense of democracy.

Either way, the current plan will bring Israel/Palestine into uncharted waters, with the nature and legitimacy of the State of Israel called into doubt, and with its remarkable accomplishments threatened. The U.S. may not be willing at that point to run political interference, and the entire matter could be thrown back to the Security Council. The Zionist idea will return to being an open question.

It is with this existential situation in mind that we call on Israeli opposition leader Benny Gantz to realize the danger to Israel and to announce his opposition to any plan not based on Israeli-Palestinian agreement. And, along with our friends in the World Union of Meretz, we call on the Jewish people, in the U.S. and around the world, to stand up to this anti-Zionist plan that could “destroy the principle of a Jewish-democratic state underlying the Zionist idea, and even drag us into a nightmare: the creation of an apartheid state.”



Paul Scham  
President, Partners for Progressive Israel