In the greater scheme of things

written by David M. Weinberg | 05.10.2025

In the greater scheme of things, the plan outlined in Washington earlier this week for hostage release and an end to the current round of war against Hamas is a *necessary* and *good* deal for Israel.

It frontloads Israel's gains (hostage release) and backloads Israel's gives (mainly military withdrawals) and makes withdrawal dependent on Arab good behavior – or else Israel returns to clobbering Hamas with promised backing from the US.

Using a wider lens, the deal provides military space for tackling broader regional challenges that are coming, including probable confrontations with Iran, Turkey, and Syria, and at least theoretically it gives Israel some diplomatic breathing space at a moment of a tightening global noose around Israel's neck.

IN THE GREATER SCHEME of things, Israel should not be apologizing to Qatar for striking at Hamas leaders in Doha, of course. Israel should not be allowing Hamas leaders to escape Gaza for safe refuge elsewhere in the Mideast, nor freeing thousands of Hamas terrorists held in Israeli prisons, of course. Israel should not be relying on any Arab security force to ensure the demilitarization of Gaza, of course. (No Emirati, Indonesian, Palestinian, or American force will truly do so.)

Israel should not be allowing "reconstruction" materials into Gaza any time before Hamas is completely eradicated, of course. Otherwise, any bulldozer brought into Gaza will spend three hours a day clearing away rubble for reconstruction and six hours a day digging bunkers and tunnels for Hamas. (Worse still is that the Trump plan demands reconstruction efforts even if Hamas rejects the deal. This is perhaps the greatest hole, or error, in the plan.)

In the greater scheme of things, Israel should not allow the rotten Palestinian Authority any role in administering Gaza, and certainly no role in running the schools there. (PA textbooks are just as hostile to Israel and antisemitic as Hamas materials.)

And after all the evils committed by Palestinians over the past 30 years in violation of the Oslo Accords, Israel should not be formally re-acknowledging

Palestinian “aspirations” for full statehood, of course, never mind holding out a “horizon” for such dangerous aspirations.

In the greater scheme of things, going back to the beginning of the war two years ago, Gazans should have had the possibility of voluntary mass emigration to safe refuge so that the IDF could more resolutely eradicate Hamas and destroy Gaza military infrastructure, of course – and that still should be a policy priority now. (Unfortunately, it isn’t.)

And in the greater scheme of things, Israel should have grabbed the post October 7 opportunity to declare its sovereignty over most of Judea and Samaria, with US backing – and that still should be a policy priority now. (Unfortunately, it isn’t.)

DESPITE THESE deficiencies and missed opportunities, I say again that in the greater scheme of things the plan outlined in Washington earlier this week (and essentially crafted together with Israel) is a necessary and good deal. And I hope (but doubt) that Hamas will bend and accept the deal.

It is a *necessary* deal, first and foremost because the IDF is exhausted after two years of fighting (although nobody wants to admit this publicly) and it needs time to recoup and refortify. It is a necessary deal because the Israeli public wants a maximum number of hostages home (alive and deceased), soon, once and for all. It is a necessary deal because US President Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu want to put this stage of the Gaza war behind them, each for their own diplomatic and political reasons.

It is a necessary deal, as mentioned above, because Israel and the US have even bigger fish to fry in the coming year. This ranges from a likely, necessary, renewed assault on Iran’s nuclear and missile infrastructures; to renewed confrontation with Hezbollah; possible confrontation with Turkish forces in Syria and in the Mediterranean; a need to push back against Egypt’s threatening military advances in Sinai; the crushing of radical Islamist unrest in Judea and Samaria spawned by Iran; and more.

This also includes seizing diplomatic opportunities that indeed obtain now, right now with Trump in the lead, for additional regional partnerships on the Abraham Accords model.

And it is a necessary deal, well, because Israel needs to hold an election and

hopefully craft a broad coalition government with a solid mandate from the public for the gargantuan diplomatic moves ahead – like sovereignty assertion in Judea and Samaria and decisive denial of jaundiced European efforts to ram Palestinian statehood down Israel's throat.

ON PAPER, at least, Washington's plan is not just a necessary but a *good* deal for Israel because it enshrines several important Israeli security and political principles – that according to Trump have been accepted by influential regional parties like Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

This includes full demilitarization of Gaza with no Hamas administration whatsoever; a long-term residual Israeli security perimeter inside Gaza; freedom of action for the IDF against emerging threats in Gaza (similar to the way that the IDF continues to operate against enemies in Lebanon, Syria, and the West Bank); and in the end, an express Israeli "right" to scale-up hellish combat against Hamas if the terror group rejects or reneges on the Trump plan.

You might say that the consecration of these principles is the most important achievement for Israel in the Trump plan. This is especially so if you assume (as I do) that the plan will not be implemented in full; that Hamas will never release all Israeli hostages and not be knocked out of Gaza by any Palestinian administration or Arab security force.

In the end, the IDF will most likely have to complete the crushing of Hamas in Gaza City and the so-called "central refugee camps" of Gaza. The Trump plan may delay this for a while, for good reasons, but it also provides political cover and diplomatic legitimacy for doing so decisively in due course.

So, disregard President Trump's hallucinatory ramblings about regional and global harmony and the mega-deals in business and tourism that will emerge from his Gaza "Board of Peace." We know, Israelis know, that the set of rules by which the bad actors in the Middle East operate are ideological, attritional, and genocidal – not accommodational or transactional – and therefore long struggle is ahead.

But for the moment, in the greater scheme of things, the pause in warfare imagined by Trump – if it truly brings about freedom for all Israeli hostages and pushes Hamas out of Gaza – is a worthy path forward.

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