



# IMMEDIATE PRIORITIES FOR GAZA'S FRAGILE CEASEFIRE

Frank Lowenstein, J Street Policy Fellow and  
Liam Hamama, J Street Policy Analyst  
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**Executive Summary:** Given the fragility of the Gaza ceasefire, the immediate priority for the United States should be ensuring full implementation of Phase 1 of the ceasefire, which both parties have agreed to, including the release of the bodies of remaining hostages and a surge of humanitarian assistance. The United States should also immediately begin working intensively on addressing the challenges of implementing the elements of Phase 2 that have been broadly accepted by the parties, including establishing an interim technocratic government, deploying trained and vetted Palestinian police forces, and forming the International Stabilization Force as soon as possible. Demonstrable progress on these fronts will lay the groundwork for progress on the most difficult issues that remain to be resolved between the parties, including disarming Hamas and further IDF withdrawals.

## I. Immediate Priority: Implementation of Phase 1

1. **Ensure compliance with both the letter and spirit of Phase 1 of the ceasefire.** The delay in releasing deceased hostages and the Rafah attack by a rogue Hamas cell that killed two IDF soldiers underscore the agreement's fragility and the need for close US engagement. In both cases, firm intervention by the US helped keep the deal on track.

President Trump and senior officials from the other mediating countries must remain personally invested in continuing to hold both sides to their commitments and defusing the challenges that will inevitably arise. This is especially important as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu faces growing pressure from the far-right ministers to resume fighting. Netanyahu [publicly insists](#) the war will not end until Hamas disarms, and National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir [called](#) on Netanyahu to "order the IDF to renew full-scale fighting in the Strip at full strength." With the hostages released and an election coming, the political incentive for Netanyahu to restart the war will likely increase.

2. **Ensure the surge of humanitarian aid, clearing of rubble, construction of temporary housing, and restoration of critical infrastructure proceed immediately.** A key element of the ceasefire's success will be its ability to facilitate the recovery of Gaza. The rehabilitation of key infrastructure and the construction of housing so that Gaza's 2.1 million residents can leave refugee camps and return to their homes will signal a transition away from frozen battle lines and toward post-war recovery.

## II. Implementing Agreed-Upon Principles of Phase 2

The US and the international community must work quickly to fill the security and governance void before Hamas further reentrenches itself. This means immediately working with the mediators and key regional and international stakeholders on resolving the challenges and

modalities of implementing the principles of Phase 2 that both parties have broadly accepted. These include:

1. **Establishing an apolitical, technocratic Palestinian government and identifying qualified personnel to staff key ministries and agencies.** Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty already [indicated](#) that Israel, Hamas, and Egypt agreed on a 15-member Palestinian technocratic committee, and the US must work with the other mediators to ensure Hamas allows the committee to take over key administrative responsibilities as soon as possible. Substantial work remains to identify the professionals needed to staff the agencies and provide public services.
2. **Deploying a Palestinian police force – with Hamas’ consent – to restore basic law and order.** No security force will deploy in Gaza without Hamas’ consent. While it will likely take several months to establish the ISF, it may be possible to mobilize a Palestinian police force sooner. Approximately [5,000](#) Palestinian officers are currently being trained in Egypt and Jordan, and they should be deployed as soon as possible, wherever conditions allow, to maintain order and fill the security vacuum.

Key to getting Hamas to consent to the police force will be a combination of legitimacy and pressure. Hamas has indicated a willingness to accept a security force operating under Palestinian auspices. Israel continues to object to any PA involvement in post-war Gaza, so the Trump administration may have to find a way to obtain PA imprimatur for the force without direct control over it.

The second lever – pressure – must come from Hamas’ primary sponsors, Turkey and Qatar, who should use their influence to convince Hamas to permit the police force to be deployed in areas where it has already reasserted its control. It will also be important for Gazans to be incentivized to push Hamas to step back.

3. **Working to deploy the International Stabilization Force as soon as possible.** While some countries, including Egypt, Turkey, and Indonesia, have already offered to provide troops, the process of establishing the ISF has proven challenging. Countries are [hesitant](#) to participate in a force that does not yet have a defined mandate, and Israel remains unclear on which forces it will accept.
4. **In order to provide legitimacy to key elements of Phase 2, the United States should consider passing a UNSC resolution.** The resolution should include a clear mandate for the ISF, including support for the Palestinian police force, monitoring compliance with the ceasefire, securing humanitarian operations, and playing a facilitating role in the disarmament of Hamas and the demilitarization of Gaza. UNSC

authorization would provide states with the confidence they need to commit troops, allowing for real progress toward deployment.

It would also increase diplomatic pressure on Hamas to consent to the ISF's presence by demonstrating broad international support for its mission. Once it is operational, the US should press Israel to begin transferring territory under its control to the ISF to enable reconstruction and allow displaced Palestinians to return to their homes.

Deploying a Palestinian technocratic government, Palestinian police force, and the ISF would significantly reduce Hamas' influence, make a return to war less likely, and lay the groundwork for progress on the most difficult issues.

### **III. Phase 2 Negotiations: Hamas Disarmament and Israeli Withdrawal**

The Phase 2 issues that are much farther from being resolved – Hamas' disarmament and Israel's withdrawal – will require significant further negotiation. Hamas leaders have [reportedly](#) privately expressed a willingness to turn over part of their arsenal – likely offensive weapons such as rockets and missiles. However, Hamas has not agreed to fully disarm, and its position falls short of Israel's insistence on full disarmament as a precondition for withdrawal.

By first implementing the aforementioned elements on which there is broad agreement, governance and security would be out of Hamas' hands. Over time, this will decrease Hamas' leverage in disarmament negotiations and increase Israel's confidence that Hamas will not take over territory from which it withdraws. Combined with coordinated pressure from the mediators on both sides, this could bring Hamas to accept a wider scope of disarmament and, at a minimum, get Israel to gradually hand over non-essential territory to the ISF.