

Donald Trump says he's committed to buying and owning Gaza

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U.S. President Donald Trump speaks to reporters onboard Air Force One on February 9, 2025
[Ben Curtis/AP]

Washington, February 10 (RHC)-- U.S. President Donald Trump has reiterated his controversial proposal to take control of Gaza, saying he is committed to “buying and owning” the war-ravaged enclave.

Speaking to reporters on board Air Force One on Sunday, Trump said Gaza should be thought of as a “big real estate site” and other countries in the Middle East could be tasked with handling its redevelopment.

“As far as us rebuilding it, we may give it to other states in the Middle East to build sections of it; other people may do it, through our auspices,” Trump said while en route to New Orleans to attend the Super Bowl.

“But we’re committed to owning it, taking it, and making sure that Hamas doesn’t move back. There’s nothing to move back into. The place is a demolition site.”

Trump also claimed that displaced Palestinians would prefer not to return to Gaza despite his proposal prompting backlash from Palestinian representatives and much of the international community.

“If we could give them a home in a safer area -- the only reason they’re talking about returning to Gaza is they don’t have an alternative. When they have an alternative, they don’t want to return to Gaza,” the US president said.

Hamas, the Palestinian group that governs Gaza, reiterated its opposition to Trump’s proposal on Sunday, calling his latest remarks “absurd.” “Gaza is not a property that can be bought and sold, and it is an integral part of our occupied Palestinian land,” Izzat al-Risheq, a member of the Hamas political bureau, said in a statement shared on Telegram.

“Dealing with the Palestinian issue with the mentality of a real estate dealer is a recipe for failure,” al-Risheq added. “Our Palestinian people will thwart all displacement and deportation plans. Gaza belongs to its people.”

Earlier on Sunday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu praised Trump’s proposal as “revolutionary” and “creative” while addressing a cabinet meeting held hours after his return from Washington, DC, where he held talks with the US president.

Trump stunned Palestinians and the international community on Tuesday by proposing that Washington take over Gaza as part of an audacious redevelopment plan that he claimed could transform the enclave into “the Riviera of the Middle East”.

The U.S. president doubled down on his suggestion the following day, after officials from his administration attempted to dampen blowback to the proposal by insisting that any resettlement of Palestinians would be temporary.

Trump, a real estate developer before entering politics, has provided few details about how he would implement his proposal, which would face huge practical hurdles in addition to raising legal and ethical concerns.

After initially saying he was open to the possibility of sending the US military into Gaza, Trump later said that no American soldiers would be needed to carry out the plan.

Neighbouring states such as Egypt and Jordan have roundly rejected calls to take in displaced Palestinians despite Trump’s suggestion that they could be resettled in “other countries of interest with humanitarian hearts”.

On Sunday, Saudi Arabia condemned a suggestion by Netanyahu that the kingdom’s land be used to establish a Palestinian state.

“The kingdom affirms that the Palestinian people have a right to their land, and they are not intruders or immigrants to it who can be expelled whenever the brutal Israeli occupation wishes,” the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement, accusing the Israeli leader of attempting to “divert attention” from Israel’s ongoing “crimes” in Gaza.

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