

Far-right Israeli minister insists Trump's plan to displace Gazans to begin within weeks

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Far-right Israeli minister Bezalel Smotrich

Tel Aviv, February 19 (RHC)-- A far-right Israeli minister says the controversial scheme by U.S. President Donald Trump to displace residents of the war-torn Gaza Strip after taking over the war-wracked Palestinian territory will start within weeks.

In an interview with Israel's Channel 12 News, Israeli finance minister Bezalel Smotrich, who has a history of racist statements against Palestinians, said that he hoped to see the relocation of the Palestinian population out of Gaza to kick off within weeks, the Middle East Eye reported on Monday.

"Preparations have started amongst our teams, alongside teams of Trump," Smotrich told reporters, according to N12's Meet the Press on Saturday evening, hours before US Secretary of State Marco Rubio landed in the occupying entity ahead of his meetings with Israeli leaders.

Trump, speaking at the White House alongside Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, said earlier this month that the United States would take over the Gaza Strip and own it after displacing its 2.4 million residents to countries like Jordan and Egypt.

The controversial proposal faced fierce opposition globally, with Cairo and Amman strongly rejecting the blatant scheme. In return, the Trump administration has warned of repercussions for Egypt and Jordan if they do not allow in the more than two million Gazans.

"One is to find countries that can receive people, and two, it's a huge logistical operation to take such a large number of people out of here," Smotrich added, expressing confidence that the process would begin soon and claimed that Palestinians would want to leave their homeland for good.

"I think most of them will want to. It is a process that is going to start in the coming weeks, even if it starts at a slower pace, bit by bit it will gather speed and intensify," the Israeli minister further claimed. "The people of Gaza have nothing to look for in Gaza in the next 10-15 years," Smotrich added.

Last week, the Arab Group at the United Nations, along with group of UN ambassadors, strongly rejected any plans to "displace" Palestinians in Gaza, deeming it as a violation of the international law.

"The displacement of Palestinians in Gaza must be unequivocally rejected. The Arab Group categorically rejects such displacement, which constitutes a clear violation of Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949," Kuwait's UN envoy Tareq Al Banai said as the chairperson of the Arab Group at a news conference in UN headquarters in New York on Friday.

Trump's provocative proposal came after the Israeli regime failed to realize its objectives in the war on the coastal sliver for over 15 months, during which the regime killed way upwards of 48,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children.

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