

Israel will create agency to oversee so-called voluntary departure of Palestinians from Gaza

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Under the proposal, the displacement of Palestinians from Gaza will be under the control of the

Defense Ministry

Displaced Palestinians flee an Israeli air raid in Gaza City on March 23, 2025 [Mohammed Saber/EPA]

Tel Aviv, March 25 (RHC)-- Israel is set to establish a government agency that would oversee the “voluntary departure” of Palestinians from the Gaza Strip. A spokeswoman for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu confirmed on Monday that the agency is being built following the Israeli security cabinet’s approval of the plan over the weekend.

The move follows suggestions from U.S. President Donald Trump that residents of Gaza should be moved to other countries, which rights groups and critics worldwide have said is ethnic cleansing, the forced removal of a population from its home.

The security cabinet reportedly approved the proposal by Defence Minister Israel Katz to set up the agency on Saturday.

The spokeswoman confirmed that an authority tasked with “preparing the voluntary departure of residents of the Gaza Strip to third countries in a safe and controlled manner” was being established.

This will see the administration of emigration placed under the control of the Defence Ministry, she said.

People willing to leave the sealed-off Gaza Strip should be allowed to do so “in compliance with Israeli and international law and in line with US President Donald Trump’s vision”, Netanyahu’s spokeswoman continued.

Middle East ‘Riviera’

Israeli nationalists have long sought the expulsion of Palestinians from Gaza and the occupied West Bank. They have pushed harder on the idea amid the war with Hamas, while the Israeli government has been accused by civil organisations of obstructing humanitarian aid into the enclave in a bid to encourage people to leave.

Trump outlined his plan for a U.S. “takeover” of Gaza and the resettlement of more than two million Palestinians in other countries – Egypt and Jordan – last month. He said he wanted to convert the war-torn Palestinian territory into a Middle East “Riviera”.

The suggestion triggered widespread international outrage, incurring vehement objections from Palestinians, Arab negotiators, and many other nations across the globe.

Netanyahu’s spokeswoman did not specify which third countries might be willing to cooperate with Israel in implementing the plan. Netanyahu has previously said he was “committed” to Trump’s plan “for the creation of a different Gaza” while promising that, after the war, “there will be neither Hamas nor the Palestinian Authority” ruling the territory.

Katz had instructed the military in February to draw up plans to implement Trump’s proposal for the resettlement of Palestinians from Gaza. The Israeli peace movement Peace Now condemned the move, labelling it “an indelible stain on Israel” in a post on X in English.

“When life in a certain place is made impossible by bombing and siege, there is nothing ‘voluntary’ about people leaving,” the organisation wrote.

There were no immediate reactions from Egypt and other Arab countries to the confirmation of the plan. However, they have repeatedly insisted on a “two-state solution” to the conflict, and “the necessity of

establishing an independent Palestinian state.”

[SOURCE: AL JAZEERA]

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