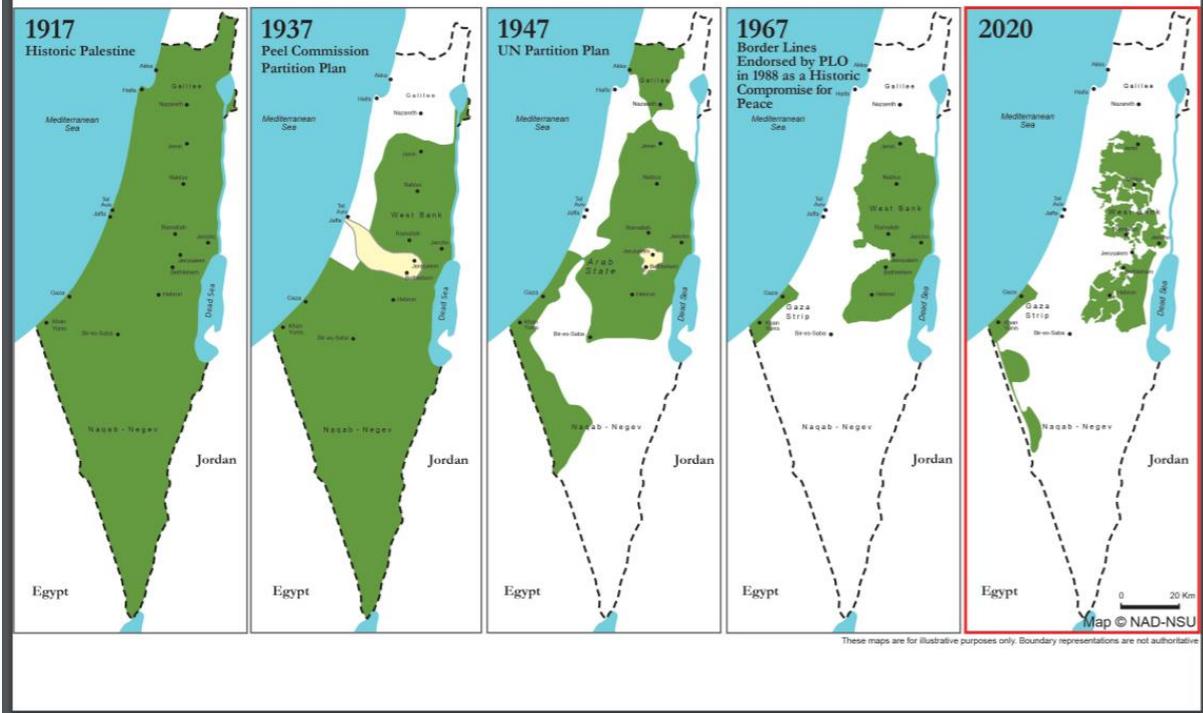


# The Palestinians Historic Compromise Trump's Plan



Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence

Senators and Deputies,

I would like to extend my profound appreciation to you all for inviting me before the committee and into this Parliament which reflects the meaning of democracy and respects freedom of speech. It is my hope that we witness this soon in the State of Palestine.

It is a pleasure to be with you to share a reflection of the Palestinian struggle against injustice.

I will be talking about the longest belligerent occupation in modern history.

- Not in a way to count how many Palestinians were killed (however this means a lot to us)
- or how many were jailed or detained just because they resist occupation; a right that is protected by international law
- or about the suffering of our children, their basic rights to education and the right to play and grow in a safe environment without the anxiety that one night they might be burned alive in their sleep or attacked by soldiers or settlers in the middle of the night.
- or the apartheid wall that was built in 2004 and expands over 9% beyond the green line into the west bank and create a “fait accompli”, forcing thousands of Palestinians to suffer.
- or the 13 years of inhumane blockade and repeated military assault against Gaza,

- I could go on and on with many more examples.

Oppression by the Israeli occupation has been reflected in every single aspect of our daily lives for the past 53 years. It has been 72 years since the partition plan that brought Historic Palestine and its indigenous people into a new reality of accepting the compromise of existing on only 22% of our land, as being adopted by the UN in 1967.

Now, the Palestinians are struggling to keep even **this** reduced area. The Trump plan for the Middle East showed a fragmented and much reduced Palestine. That plan was rejected not only by the Palestinians but by the international community.

The topic that I have particularly chosen to highlight is currently under international attention. I will focus on Annexation, which brings forward the issue of international law

*How does annexation affect the Palestinians? What impacts does it have on their lives? What would be the consequences if Israel goes ahead with the de jure annexation? What would be the Palestinians alternative to combat this?*

The British mandate over historical Palestine from 1918 until May 1948 encouraged Jewish immigration. Britain kept the promise made in 1917 by its foreign secretary, Arthur James Balfour, in the Declaration that bears his name, "to favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people".

In 1947, Britain handed the 'Palestine problem' to the United Nations, which voted for partition of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states

Since its creation in 1948, Israel planned a long-term strategy of land acquisition of historical Palestine and ensuring that the majority of Israel's population there remains Jewish. The latest and most obvious example of this could be found in the overtly racist and sectarian Jewish Nation State Law.

**With no defined border**, Israel worked on bringing in as many Jewish immigrants and keeping as little of the Palestinian population as possible in historical Palestine. This is widely documented and is clearly laid out in historian Ilan Pappé's "The Biggest Prison on Earth". To maintain its population's majority, Israel embraced several strategies and tactics and adopted several laws. Among other regulations, orders or measures, Israel adopted the law of return, the absentee law, the national law and many other governmental decrees to legalize its policies to evict, expel and possess Palestinian land.

While destroying and erasing more than 500 villages and towns during the NAKBA, more than 750,000 Palestinians were forcibly displaced.

For many years Israel, the occupying power, used different policies to evict more Palestinians. Demolition, expulsion, acquisition, dispossession, and displacement in the past decade enabled Israel to expand beyond 1967 borders to create a de-facto situation in flagrant violation of international law.

Many Settlements have been built. The pact increased in the last decade.

There are 600,000 settlers living in 250 settlements and outposts in occupied Palestinian territories that have been built on lands expropriated from the Palestinians. Settlements cover almost 10% of the West Bank but have a direct control over 40% of the West Bank. Each settlement diverts natural resources such as water away from Palestinians, causing untold hardship for the farmers and citizens who rely on water for survival and end up having to buy it back at a premium from an Israeli company. Each settlement has infrastructure that Palestinians are not allowed to use such as roads, leisure facilities, and parks. The settlements profit from and exploit our resources with some of Israel's largest industrial parks placed in occupied territories in order to bypass their own environmental laws and to exploit cheap Palestinian labour.

This colonization project more than doubled during the four-year tenure of outgoing US President Donald Trump.

**Settlements are illegal according to international law. The UNSC adopted resolution 2334 in 2016 which “Reaffirms** that the establishment by Israel of settlements in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, has no legal validity and constitutes a flagrant violation under international law...”

Trade with Israeli settlements also illegal.

The EU issued a guideline in 2014 outlining that settlement-made products advise must be labelled correctly.

**The UN also created a database of companies operating in Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank & East Jerusalem,** but economic sanctions have yet to be applied meaning that the settlement enterprise continues with impunity, grinding Palestinians underfoot as it does so.

As occupation persist without holding Israel accountable, the occupying power will continue to oppress the Palestinian people and move from strategy to another to keep its colonization project alive and flourish. This would not be possible without the support of US.

Israel's recent announcement of a de jure “annexation” plan follows the announcement by US President Donald Trump's peace plan for the middle east in January 2020, which proposed that areas of the occupied West Bank be annexed by Israel.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, before the third round of elections in March this year, said that he is planning to effectively annex 30% of the west bank, and doubled down on this stating later on that “we're here to stay, for ever”.

In practice, Israeli laws already apply to settlers, though not to Palestinians, who are subject only to Israeli military orders and Palestinian laws, so there would be little noticeable change in that respect.

The de facto annexation of Palestinian territory has been going on for decades.

Dozens of UN experts have voiced concerns that the proposed annexation plan would create a “21st century apartheid”.

Annexation, which is an extension of occupation, recently brought the whole world into agreement in respect of international law.

Annexation is the term applied when a state unilaterally proclaims its sovereignty over another territory.

Israel annexed and applied its laws over East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights in 1967. In 1981, Israel adopted the law that declared Jerusalem as complete, unified and the capital of Israel. These unilateral moves were rejected by the UN, but as of yet, Israel has not faced any consequences for these acts.

Annexation can have serious implications. For example, the residency and citizenship status of Palestinians in the proposed annexed territory is not yet clear. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said publicly that Palestinian residents in the areas to be “annexed” would not be given Israeli citizenship.

“Annexation” would also likely result in the mass expropriation of privately-owned Palestinian land and expropriation of other private property. The “annexation” of Israeli settlements will most likely include the expropriation of agricultural lands owned by Palestinians in the OPT.

The “annexation” of large parts of the West Bank would also further limit Palestinians’ freedom of movement. Many of the existing restrictions are directly linked to the settlements, including restrictions aimed at protecting the settlements and maintaining “buffer zones.”

The ongoing blockade on Gaza entrenches the fragmentation of the Palestinian Territories and remains a major factor in facilitating the “annexation” of parts of the West Bank.

### **Gaza defiantly part of the occupied Palestinian territories and the state of Palestine.**

The situation in Gaza has become hell on earth. My parents still live there and can give a first-hand account of the cruelty of the blockade, particularly on low income families who are highly affected and suffer daily from lack of food, water, medication and hope.

It becomes unbearable to live. A UN report said that Gaza will not be liveable by 2020. We are in 2020 and we have almost 2 million resilient Palestinian living in dire conditions and always expecting a crushing attack from the occupying powers. Gaza is bombarded regularly by Israeli military and those living near the border routinely have their crops sprayed with insecticide or

sewage flooded over their farmlands. Fishermen are shot at daily and weekly as they try to make a meagre living in a punitively reduced maritime border.

The problem in Gaza is political. People fight to breathe freely, and Gaza calls the world to end the siege.

The status quo has, for most Israelis, become relatively peaceful and bearable. Many see little incentive for adopting a risky and uncertain two-state solution,

For the Palestinians, the only thing that really matter for them is to keep up and maintain their roots deep in their land and resist the occupation for their freedom and to stay standing and defending their right of self-determination. We remain steadfast on our home and we will bring peace from the cradle of civilization to the whole world.

We deeply remain rooted to our land and our heritage. We also remain committed to a just peace that fulfils our aspirations of freedom and independence in a sovereign state of palestine with east Jerusalem as its capital.

Europe has international responsibilities. Not because of its commitments to the human rights but also because Europe is the largest trade partner for Israel.

Consequences for human rights violations can be introduced through European foreign policy, by effectively using Europe's considerable leverage.

Recognition of the state of Palestine is essential. We call on the Irish government to enact the motion passed in 2014 to recognize the state of Palestine. The time is now.

The role of Ireland in the UNSC is vital for promoting peace and human rights issues. It would be highly recommended that Senators and TDs consider write to the UN representative of Ireland to continue promoting for peace. Great work can be achieved on this issue during Ireland's tenure.

We must stand up for the universal values enshrined in law following the Second World War. Protect the rights of Palestinians. The time is now.