

# LA Jews for Peace Policy Statement

Feb.7, 2025, Los Angeles, CA

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## Focus on Ending Genocide and Hamas/Gaza War

The 2½ week old second Trump Administration has saturated the political and civic space with hundreds of executive orders and other actions, many illegal and/or unconstitutional. Their goal is to disable political and civic opposition by creating chaos. But **LA Jews for Peace** remains focused on the most important issue, namely ending the war in Gaza and the ongoing genocide of the Palestinian people.

To that end, we start by recognizing that Israel has lost its war on Hamas and its attempt to ethnically cleanse the people of Gaza. After 16 months of war, Israel failed to destroy Hamas and was unable to force return of the hostages. Trump forced Israel to accept the current ceasefire and hostage-prisoner exchange that included many concessions. Hamas' strength is apparent during its release of hostages who appear physically healthy and, considering their ordeal in captivity, in reasonable mental health.

If Israel is allowed to restart its war on Hamas/Gaza, the outcome will not change. It will simply cause the deaths of thousands of Palestinians and tens of Israeli soldiers and cause more destruction in Gaza. **LA Jews for Peace** calls on President Trump to insist that the ceasefire he brought into existence continue through phase 2 that ends the war calls for a full Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and the return of all Israeli hostages and thousands of more Palestinian prisoners.

Trump is taking a different path. Rather than bolster the ceasefire, Trump used his Feb.4 White House meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu to deeply commit the United States to Gaza's future. But those pronouncements are posturing, they are part of Trump's imperialistic dream. They will never happen. The U.S. will not take ownership of the Gaza Strip. The 2.3 million Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip will not leave—they will not be ethnically cleansed by Israel or the U.S. The U.S. will not clean up nor rebuild the Gaza Strip. Trump will not deploy American troops to Gaza. Neither Jordan nor Egypt will accept a million Palestinian refugees which would almost surely cause the downfall of each government, no matter how large a bribe the U.S. offers.

The way forward is to focus on developing a government for Gaza that is ready to operate when the war finally ends, and the Israeli army fully withdraws from Gaza. New governing arrangements must be developed by Palestinians themselves, assisted by Arab states and the United Nations. **LA Jews for Peace** calls on the United States to stand aside—its long history of being "Israel's partner" negates its usefulness in developing a new government for the Gaza Strip.