



Israel's defense minister tells the army to prepare to relocate Palestinians from Gaza

UPDATED FEBRUARY 6, 2025 · 12:53 PM ET ⓘ

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Aman walks past a house that remains partly standing, but with sheets serving as makeshift walls and solar panels partly working, in an area largely destroyed by the Israeli army's air and ground offensive in Gaza City on Wednesday.

Abdel Kareem Hana/AP

Israel's defense minister is telling the military to prepare to implement President Trump's plan to relocate Palestinians from Gaza.

Defense Minister Israel Katz says the military should prepare exit options by land, sea and air so that anyone who wishes to can leave for "any country willing to accept them."

Katz, however, is already getting pushback from countries he called on to accept refugees. He says Spain, Norway, Ireland and other countries that have [criticized Israel's actions](#) during its war against Hamas should take in the Palestinians from Gaza.



Middle East crisis — explained

"Their hypocrisy will be exposed if they refuse to do so," Katz said in a statement.

Spain's foreign minister, José Manuel Albares, responded on Spanish national radio. "Spain makes its own decisions ... no third party should tell it what to do," he said, adding that Gaza must be part of a future Palestinian state.

And Ireland's Foreign Ministry called the Israeli defense minister's suggestion "unhelpful and a source of distraction."



MIDDLE EAST CRISIS — EXPLAINED

Trump says the U.S. will 'take over' Gaza and relocate its people. What does it mean?

Trump [floated the idea](#) for the U.S. to "take over" the Gaza Strip during a press conference with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Tuesday, calling for Gaza's entire population to be relocated to other countries and for the land to be redeveloped.

"We'll own it ... We have an opportunity to do something that could be phenomenal ... the Riviera of the Middle East," he said. "We should go to other countries of interest with humanitarian hearts, and there are many of them that want to do this, and build various domains that will ultimately be occupied by the 1.8 million Palestinians living in Gaza, ending the death and destruction and, frankly, bad luck."



POLITICS

Trump's call for U.S. to 'take over' Gaza spurs anger and frustration in Dearborn

On Thursday, Trump doubled down on the plan, [saying on social media](#), "The Gaza Strip would be turned over to the United States by Israel at the conclusion of fighting," and adding that no U.S. soldiers would be needed.

In an interview Wednesday on Fox News, [Netanyahu called](#) President Trump's

proposal for a U.S. takeover of Gaza a "remarkable idea" that should be "pursued."

"I think it will create a different future for everyone," Netanyahu said.

Trump's proposal has been met with resistance from Arab and Palestinian leaders, who hope Gaza and the West Bank can be part of a future Palestinian state.

Hamas, the Islamist group that governs Gaza and is considered a terrorist group by Israel and most Western countries, called on Trump to retract his "irresponsible statements" Wednesday, saying they "pour oil on the fire."

Lauren Frayer contributed reporting from London.

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