

Trump Administration “Peace to Prosperity” Plan for Palestine-Israel: A Gift to Israel

The plan for resolving the Palestine-Israel conflict issued in January 2020 by the Trump Administration, although intended as a blueprint for peace, is rather a diktat imposed on behalf of Israel to facilitate its illegal consolidation of control over all the territory of Palestine-Israel from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River.¹ The plan was conceived and issued without consultation with the Palestinians, and it would deny them real peace, any freedom, and especially any kind of justice. The plan violates international law, violates Palestinian political and human rights, and in the long term cannot bring peace to either Israelis or Palestinians.

This plan is of paramount interest to the Episcopal Church, for the Church has lent ardent support to the parish, healthcare, and hospitality ministries of the Diocese of Jerusalem for many years. The many Palestinian Christians, as well as Muslims, who are served by these ministries will be severely and adversely affected by this plan. Any Church support for the plan would inevitably be seen by Palestinians as—and would in fact be—a dismissal of our baptismal covenant to seek justice for all peoples and respect the dignity of every human being.

Although the plan calls for establishment of a Palestinian state, this would not be a viable state. Limited to an archipelago of disconnected land segments, each surrounded by Israeli-controlled territory, the “state” would include no more than 15 percent of the territory of Palestine-Israel, would be demilitarized, and would have no true sovereignty. Palestinian refugees are treated in the plan not as a population deserving any rights or any recompense, but as a security problem for Israel; no refugees would be allowed to return to Israeli territory.

The Trump proposal is effectively a de jure apartheid plan. It officially separates the intertwined Jewish and Palestinian populations—each numbering seven million—along ethnic/religious lines. Far from connecting geographic areas and populations, the plan’s envisioned roads, tunnels, and bridges facilitate separation rather than unite. Significantly, the plan puts a physical seal on Israel’s mid-2018 “nation state” law, which formally designated it an exclusive Jewish state in which only Jews have the right to self-determination.

This plan is a classic example of colonialist domination, designed with the participation only of parties that have the power to implement it. Israel now has free rein to annex and continue building in the occupied territories. Neither Palestinians nor anyone else who objects has the power to stop any of this. Although the plan is being broadly condemned, only those with no power to undo it are objecting.

¹ See *Peace to Prosperity: A Vision to Improve the Lives of the Palestinian and Israeli People*, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Peace-to-Prosperity-0120.pdf> (January 2020).