



## Introduction

The ceasefire reached in connection with the Peace Plan promoted by the Trump administration opened a phase for Gaza that was both promising and fragile. The agreed framework - encompassing the exchange of hostages and prisoners, a partial withdrawal of forces, the entry of humanitarian assistance and the establishment of a transitional administration - has nonetheless failed to unlock the transition to “phase two”. This impasse reflects repeated violations of the cessation of hostilities, deep mutual distrust and political obstacles to progress on demilitarisation and the deployment of an international force<sup>1</sup>.

Within this context, Palestinian positions lie at the core of the process. The viability of any arrangement - whether a technocratic committee, the holding of elections or broader institutional reconstruction - ultimately depends on internal perceptions and acceptance. These are shaped by significant divergences between Gaza and the West Bank, as well as by the profound crisis of legitimacy affecting traditional political actors.

Accordingly, this paper examines three interrelated dimensions. Firstly, Palestinian public opinion, which is essential for understanding levels of support, rejection and internal division surrounding the proposed framework. Secondly, the role of civil society, which mobilises actors, documents developments and projects influential narratives. Thirdly, the positions of the principal factions - Hamas, Islamic Jihad, Fatah/the Palestinian Authority, the PFLP and emerging anti-Hamas clans - whose capacities and strategic interests ultimately condition the prospects for any political transition.

## Palestinian population

This first section of the paper addresses the map of opinions and preferences of the Palestinian population. It summarises the results of the main surveys cited in the text (PCPSR, ISEP, Gallup and recent studies on post-ceasefire attitudes) to show what people know about the Plan, what they support and what they reject, as well as the differences between Gaza and the West Bank and trends over time. The names of the

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<sup>1</sup> GRITTEN, David. "Are Israel and Hamas entering the second phase of the ceasefire?", *BBC*, 8 December 2025. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c0r90gkzkezo> and CORDALL, Simon Speakman. "Are Israel, Hamas entering the second phase of the ceasefire?", *Al Jazeera*, 8 December 2025. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/12/8/are-israel-hamas-entering-the-second-phase-of-the-ceasefire>

institutes are mentioned because their methodologies and questions condition different interpretations of the same reality.

### ***Donald Trump's 2025 Peace Plan for Gaza***

Donald Trump's 2025 Peace Plan for Gaza is widely known among Palestinians<sup>2</sup>, with 75% recognition in the West Bank and 65% in Gaza. The population understands that the Plan ends the war in Gaza, releases hostages and Palestinian prisoners, abandons the forced transfer of Gazans, allows the entry of humanitarian aid, requires the gradual Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, requires the disarmament of Hamas, requires reforming the Palestinian Authority, and calls for the start of a political process toward the establishment of a Palestinian state. Overall, 47% support it, with greater support in Gaza (59%) than in the West Bank (39%) and among those who are familiar with the Plan (50%) compared to those who are not (39%)<sup>3</sup>.

An individual analysis of the elements reveals clear differences. The disarmament of Hamas is rejected by 69%<sup>4</sup> of Palestinians, with greater opposition in the West Bank (78%) than in Gaza (55%), although both percentages have fallen by around 10% in recent months<sup>5</sup>. This resistance does not primarily stem from support for Hamas - nearly half of Gaza's population wanted the group to relinquish power just a few months ago - but rather from the conviction that Israel would not withdraw even if the movement were to disarm, a belief shared by 88% of respondents in the West Bank and 69% in Gaza<sup>6</sup>.

The entry of international troops also generates resistance. Sixty-eight per cent reject an Arab-Muslim force tasked with maintaining security and disarming Hamas, with 78 per cent in the West Bank and 52 per cent in Gaza. However, if the reference to disarmament is removed, rejection drops to 47% in Gaza and the West Bank<sup>7</sup>. Something similar occurs with the proposal to form an independent committee to govern Gaza without ties

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<sup>2</sup>"Public Opinion Poll No (96) (22-25 October 2025)", *PCPSR*, 28 October 2025. Available at: <https://www.pcpsr.org/en/node/1000> and "October Ceasefire Street Pulse (Gaza Strip)", *Institute for Social and Economic Progress*, 9–16 October 2025. Available at: <https://institute4progress.org/form-access-ceasefire> These are the only two institutions that have conducted surveys of the Gazan population since 7 October 2023.

<sup>3</sup> Poll No. (96).

<sup>4</sup> Poll No. (96).

<sup>5</sup> "Public Opinion Poll No. (95) (1-4 May 2025)", *PCPSR*, 7 May 2025. Available at: <https://www.pcpsr.org/en/node/997>

<sup>6</sup> Poll No. (95).

<sup>7</sup> Poll No (96). The results of the previous PCPSR survey (Poll No 95) were not considered in this question, as the issue of support for an international force in Gaza was linked to the resumption of PA administration in the Strip. Thus, in the previous study, only 31% (38% in Gaza and 25% in the West Bank) of Palestinians supported requesting Arab forces to maintain security in Gaza under PA control.

to either Hamas or the Palestinian Authority: 53% oppose it and 45% support it. In Gaza, where there is 51% support, the measure is received more openly than in the West Bank (41%)<sup>8</sup>. If the question omits the clause excluding Hamas and the PA, support increases significantly to 67% in the West Bank and 66% in Gaza. As for the possibility of the Palestinian Authority coordinating this committee, 56% of respondents in the West Bank oppose the idea, while 54% of Gazans support it<sup>9</sup>, reflecting a trend in which opposition to the PA has been declining since 7 October 2023<sup>10</sup>.

Against this backdrop, support for holding elections has increased since the outbreak of the war. Today, 65% of Palestinians support it, with 72% in the West Bank and 54% in Gaza<sup>11</sup>, compared to 50% at the end of 2023<sup>12</sup>. However, 63% reject Mahmoud Abbas's condition that candidates must accept the agreements with Israel. In a presidential scenario with three candidates and a turnout of 68%, Marwan Barghouti would obtain 49%, Khalid Mishal 36% and Abbas 13%. If only Abbas and Mishal were competing, turnout would fall to 53%, with 63% for Mishal and 27% for Abbas. If the candidates were Barghouti and Mishal, turnout would rise to 64% and Barghouti would obtain 58% compared to Mishal's 39%<sup>13</sup>. President Abbas' approval rating has fallen to 23%, with 10% in the West Bank and 30% in Gaza, a far cry from the 64% he enjoyed a decade ago<sup>14</sup>.

In the legislative elections, the PCPSR estimates a turnout of 65%, with Hamas in first place (44%) and Fatah in second (30%). Hamas would win 49% in Gaza and 40% in the West Bank<sup>15</sup>. Before the war, 63% said they did not feel represented by either party, which then obtained 34% and 36% respectively<sup>16</sup>. The ISEP, by including the option of independent candidates, shows a different picture. Independents would garner 22% of

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<sup>8</sup> Poll No. (96) and October Ceasefire Street Pulse (Gaza Strip).

<sup>9</sup> Poll No. (96).

<sup>10</sup> VILLAR VEGAS, David. *La población palestina y la población israelí ante la guerra entre Israel y Hamás*. Documento de Opinión IEEE 20/2024. Available at: [https://www.ieee.es/Galerias/fichero/docs\\_opinion/2024/DIEEEO20\\_2024\\_DAVVIL\\_Palestina.pdf](https://www.ieee.es/Galerias/fichero/docs_opinion/2024/DIEEEO20_2024_DAVVIL_Palestina.pdf) and Poll No. (95).

<sup>11</sup> Poll No. (96).

<sup>12</sup> Poll No. (95).

<sup>13</sup> Poll No. (96).

<sup>14</sup> Poll No. (96), Poll No. (95), "Palestinian Life in the West Bank, East Jerusalem After Oct. 7", *Gallup*, 2 October 2024. Available at: <https://news.gallup.com/poll/651098/palestinian-life-west-bank-east-jerusalem-oct.aspx> and "January War-Time Street Pulse (6)", *Institute for Social and Economic Progress*, 6–15 January 2025. Available at: <https://institute4progress.org/form-access-isep-6>

<sup>15</sup> Poll No. (96).

<sup>16</sup> VILLAR VEGAS, p. 7 and Poll No. (95).

the vote, followed by Fatah with 18.9% and Hamas with 3%, while 27% say they would not vote, suggesting a more open electorate less influenced by factional affiliation<sup>17</sup>.

### **7 October 2023 and the War in Gaza**

Regarding the events of 7 October 2023, support for the Hamas attack currently stands at 53%, with higher levels in the West Bank (59%) than in Gaza (44%)<sup>18</sup>. After peaking in early 2024 – 82% in the West Bank and 57% in Gaza – support fell to 50% in May<sup>19</sup>. Around 90% of Palestinians deny that Hamas committed the atrocities reported internationally, compared to 10% who believe otherwise, with images of crimes in Gaza being seen more frequently (25%) than in the West Bank (7%)<sup>20</sup>. This perception is related to the media hegemony of Al Jazeera, which is watched by 58% of Palestinians, with 74% in the West Bank and 34% in Gaza<sup>21</sup>.

The surveys also reflect high levels of satisfaction with certain regional actors: the Houthis in Yemen reach 74%, Qatar 52%, Hezbollah 50%, Iran 44%, Turkey 42%, Jordan 34% and Saudi Arabia 27%<sup>22</sup>. Although support for Iran has fluctuated between 30% and 45%, 54% consider its role to be detrimental to the Palestinian cause<sup>23</sup>. Among international actors, Spain registers the highest satisfaction with 35%, followed by China (34%), Russia (25%), France (20%), the United Kingdom (14%) and the United States (6%). These

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<sup>17</sup> "October Ceasefire Street Pulse (Gaza Strip)", *Institute for Social and Economic Progress*, 9–16 October 2025. Available at: <https://institute4progress.org/form-access-ceasefire>

"Gaza Aid & Governance (Gaza Strip)", *Institute for Social and Economic Progress*, 13–26 August 2025. Available at: <https://institute4progress.org/form-access-gaza-aid>

"May War-Time Street Pulse (West Bank)", *Institute for Social and Economic Progress*, 3–9 May 2025. Available at: <https://institute4progress.org/form-access-isep-6-1>

"Return of the War Street Pulse (Gaza Strip)", *Institute for Social and Economic Progress*, 15–20 March 2025. Available at: <https://institute4progress.org/form-access-return-of-war>

"Ceasefire Street Pulse (Gaza Strip)", *Institute for Social and Economic Progress*, 22–27 January 2025. Available at: <https://institute4progress.org/form-access-ceasefire>

January War-Time Street Pulse (6), *Institute for Social and Economic Progress*, 6–15 January 2025. Available at: <https://institute4progress.org/form-access-isep-6>

September War-Time Street Pulse (West Bank and Gaza Strip) – 5th edition, *Institute for Social and Economic Progress*, 17–21 September 2024. Available at: <https://institute4progress.org/form-access-isep-5>

"June War-Time Street Pulse (4)", *Institute for Social and Economic Progress*, 1–6 June 2024. Available at: <https://institute4progress.org/form-access-4>

"March War-Time Street Pulse (3)", *Institute for Social and Economic Progress*, 3–10 March 2024. Available at: <https://institute4progress.org/form-access-3-1>

War-Time Perceptions in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, *Institute for Social and Economic Progress*, 3–10 March 2024. Available at: <https://institute4progress.org/form-access-3>

<sup>18</sup> Poll No. (96).

<sup>19</sup> VILLAR VEGAS, p. 6 and Poll No. (95).

<sup>20</sup> VILLAR VEGAS, p. 6.

<sup>21</sup> Poll No. (96).

<sup>22</sup> Poll No. (96).

<sup>23</sup> Poll No. (95).

trends remain stable<sup>24</sup> and are accompanied by the majority perception that the United States has the capacity to influence Israeli policy<sup>25</sup>.

### ***Relations with Israel***

On relations with Israel and the peace process, PCPSR reports that 45% support a two-state solution in the absence of further details<sup>26</sup>, with the increase driven primarily by Gaza (45%) and the West Bank (44%)<sup>27</sup>. Before the war, 64% opposed this solution<sup>28</sup>, and although current support remains far from the 66% of 2012, it has grown since the beginning of 2024, especially among those over 50<sup>29</sup>. Fifty-six per cent believe the creation of a Palestinian state is possible. When it is specified that this would be a state with the 1967 borders, demilitarised and with East Jerusalem as its capital, 53% oppose it and 44% support it, with 61% support in Gaza and 33% in the West Bank<sup>30</sup>.

ISEP surveys, which frame the question within the context of "viable" negotiations, show much higher levels of support: over 80% in Gaza and over 90% in the West Bank<sup>31</sup>. Both institutions agree that the two-state solution based on 1967 clearly outweighs confederation and a single democratic state for Jews and Palestinians<sup>32</sup>. Regarding the most effective method to end the occupation, 41% opt for armed struggle (49% in the West Bank and 30% in Gaza), 36% for negotiations and 19% for peaceful popular resistance<sup>33</sup>. Although armed struggle peaked in December 2023 with 63%, support has declined since then, a trend influenced, according to several studies, by Netanyahu's return to power<sup>34</sup>.

### **Palestinian civil society**

This section shifts the focus from public opinion to civil society, examined here as a central actor in processes of mobilisation and narrative construction. On the basis of academic

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<sup>24</sup> "West Bank and East Jerusalem: Palestinian Life in 7 Charts", *Gallup*, 30 September 2025. Available at: <https://news.gallup.com/poll/695645/west-bank-east-jerusalem-palestinian-life-charts.aspx>

<sup>25</sup> "Palestinians See U.S. Response to Gaza as Failure," *Gallup*, 3 October 2024. Available at: <https://news.gallup.com/poll/651359/palestinians-response-gaza-failure.aspx>

<sup>26</sup> Poll No. (96).

<sup>27</sup> Poll No. (95).

<sup>28</sup> VILLAR VEGAS, p. 8.

<sup>29</sup> "Peace Still a Distant Prospect for Israelis, Palestinians", *Gallup*, 29 September 2025. Available at: <https://news.gallup.com/poll/695582/peace-distant-prospect-israelis-palestinians.aspx>

<sup>30</sup> Poll No. (96).

<sup>31</sup> September War-Time Street Pulse, June War-Time Street Pulse, and March War-Time Street Pulse.

<sup>32</sup> Poll No. (96), Poll No. (95) and September War-Time Street Pulse.

<sup>33</sup> Poll No. (96).

<sup>34</sup> Poll No. (95) and VILLAR VEGAS, p. 8.

scholarship and NGO reporting, it identifies several key organisations - including Al-Haq, Addameer and the Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC) - and assesses their roles in documentation, assistance, litigation and public diplomacy. These organisations are selected on the grounds of their institutional prominence and because they have been the subject of sustained debates and policy measures that have directly affected their operational capacity.

Within this analytical framework, the work of Osuchukwu, Idigo, Udegbunam and Mbanefo is particularly salient. Their research is significant in that it engages with an issue rarely addressed in the literature on Palestine: the structural role of civil society organisations<sup>35</sup>.

These entities have been essential during the war. They have documented alleged violations, provided humanitarian aid and disseminated information to international audiences. Among the most relevant<sup>36</sup> are Al-Haq, which focuses on human rights, and Addameer, which is dedicated to political prisoners<sup>37</sup>. Both, along with DCIP-P, UAWC, Bisan and UPWC, were designated by Israel in 2021 as linked to the PFLP<sup>38</sup>, based on allegations of personal ties and unpublished intelligence assessments. NGO-Monitor supported these accusations<sup>39</sup>, while the affected NGOs deny them<sup>40</sup>. Various international actors, such as Human Rights Watch<sup>41</sup>, UN rapporteurs and European

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<sup>35</sup> OSUCHUKWU, Nkechi Cynthia; IDIGO, Blessing Chugo; UDEGBUNAM, Cyprian Uchenna; MBANEFU, Obioma Davison. "Political Mobilisation and Advocacy Strategies of Palestinian Groups Amid Genocide Allegations in the Gaza Conflict, 2023-2024", *International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews*, Vol. 6, Issue 8, pp. 4601-4624, August 2025. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.55248/gengpi.6.0825.3141> However, as also indicated in the paper itself (p. 4621), the study is limited in that it only examined publicly available materials in English and Arabic and did not examine private communications or internal strategy documents, as these were not available.

<sup>36</sup> For a complete list, see OSUCHUKWU *et al.*, pp. 4606-4607

<sup>37</sup> OSUCHUKWU *et al.*, p. 4605.

<sup>38</sup> SHERWOOD, Harriet *et al.* "Israel labels Palestinian human rights groups as terrorist organisations", *The Guardian*, 22 October 2021. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/oct/22/israel-labels-palestinian-human-rights-groups-terrorist-organisations> and "Israel's decision to designate six Palestinian human-rights NGOs as terrorist organisations", *European Parliament*, 4 November 2021. Available at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2021-004982\\_EN.html](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2021-004982_EN.html)

<sup>39</sup> "Clear and Convincing: The Links between the PFLP and Newly Designated NGOs", *NGO Monitor*, 1 February 2023. Available at: <https://ngo-monitor.org/reports/pflp-ties-six-newly-designated-terror-ngos/>

<sup>40</sup> "Addameer: Backgrounder on Terror Links and Governmental Funding", *NGO Monitor*, June 2025. Available at: <https://addameer.ps/news/5586>

<sup>41</sup> "Israel/Palestine: Designation of Palestinian Rights Groups as Terrorists", *Human Rights Watch*, 22 October 2021. Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/10/22/israel/palestine-designation-palestinian-rights-groups-terrorists> and Human Rights Watch press release: "Israel/Palestine: Designation of Palestinian Rights Groups as Terrorists", 22 October 2021. Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/10/22/israel/palestine-designation-palestinian-rights-groups-terrorists>

governments, questioned the designation due to a lack of verifiable public evidence<sup>42</sup>. The existence of a relationship remains disputed.

Protests became a central tool in the mobilisation effort. In the West Bank, East Jerusalem and even within Israel, marches were organised against military operations. In Gaza, community organisation and support networks were strengthened in response to the humanitarian crisis. Outside Palestine, action focused on political advocacy, BDS and educational and cultural activities.

A characteristic feature of these mobilisations has been their heterogeneity. Traditional parties, NGOs, student groups and solidarity networks have all participated. Digital activism played a crucial role in disseminating information, coordinating campaigns and contesting narratives.

The academic sphere was particularly relevant in these mobilisations. Between 2023 and 2024, US universities experienced the most extensive protests in their history over this conflict, influencing public debate and transcending the boundaries of campuses<sup>43</sup>.

Finally, it should be noted that allegations of genocide have become a central focus of these organisations' work. Their actions combine international litigation, community mobilisation and public campaigns. They have sought to contest control of the narrative by disseminating testimonies, data and analyses that support their accusations, with the aim of putting pressure on the international community and offering an alternative interpretation of the situation in Gaza<sup>44</sup>.

### **Palestinian political-military actors**

Finally, this section examines the main political-military forces – Hamas, Islamic Jihad, PFLP, Fatah/PA, and emerging militias – to connect social dynamics and public opinion with their strategies, capabilities, and legitimacy. Reports on local governance, public statements, and data on social support are used, allowing for the distinction of functional

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<sup>42</sup> SCHER, Isaac. "CIA unable to corroborate Israel's 'terror' label for Palestinian rights groups", *The Guardian*, 22 August 2022. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/aug/22/cia-report-israel-palestinian-rights-groups>

<sup>43</sup> OSUCHUKWU *et al.*, p. 4610.

<sup>44</sup> OSUCHUKWU *et al.*, p. 4610.

differences between government apparatus, military presence, social base, and regional alliances.

### **Hamás**

Following the ceasefire, Hamás has prioritised re-establishing internal control in Gaza through a security campaign led by units such as the Rada'a, targeting collaborators and rival groups. These actions, including executions attributed to fighters from the al-Qassam Brigades (linked to Hamás), have been interpreted by Israeli sources as a sign of the movement's ability to restructure itself, hindering externally designed post-war administration projects<sup>45</sup>.

At the same time, Hamás has promoted a political reorganisation alongside resistance factions. Its meetings with Islamic Jihad, the PFLP and other forces have reinforced its role as a central player in Gaza, while Fatah and the PA have been relegated to the background<sup>46</sup>. Leader Khalil al-Hayya maintains that Israel did not achieve its objectives in the war and affirms that Hamás is willing to cede civil administration to a committee led by a national figure, accept UN forces and move towards elections within a process of national unity.

On the international stage, Hamás has informed mediators that decisions such as disarmament can only be taken in coordination with other factions<sup>47</sup>. Al-Hayya linked the continued possession of weapons to the Israeli occupation and indicated that, once this ended, the weapons would be transferred to the Palestinian State. Pressure from Qatar and Egypt was decisive in getting the organisation to accept the initial phases of the plan, backed by diplomatic incentives offered by the United States<sup>48</sup>.

Despite the damage suffered, Hamás retains significant resources and means to carry out violent actions. Iran contributes around \$100 million annually to Palestinian groups, part of which went to an extensive network of tunnels that, despite being 25-40%

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<sup>45</sup> "Israeli strategy to back anti-Hamas militias in Gaza fails as groups disband: Haaretz", *Roya News*, 21 October 2025. Available at: <https://en.royanews.tv/news/64308/Israeli-strategy-to-back-anti-Hamas-militias-in-Gaza-fails-as-groups-disband%3A-Haaretz>

<sup>46</sup> "Las facciones de la resistencia palestina se reúnen en Egipto para debatir la gobernanza de Gaza", *Diario Socialista*, 23 October 2025. Available at: <https://diariosocialista.net/2025/10/23/las-facciones-de-la-resistencia-palestina-se-reunen-en-egipto-para-debatir-la-gobernanza-de-gaza/>

<sup>47</sup> "Hamás: Unity and Elections Ahead, Arms Depend on End of Occupation", *The Palestine Chronicle*, 26 October 2025. Available at: <https://www.palestinechronicle.com/hamas-unity-and-elections-ahead-arms-depend-on-end-of-occupation/>

<sup>48</sup> PORAT, Atar. "Hamás' Post-Ceasefire Strategy", *The National Interest*, 22 October 2025. Available at: <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/middle-east-watch/hamas-post-ceasefire-strategy>

damaged, remains partially operational. The organisation has adapted to the loss of its leadership by relying on decentralised cells<sup>49</sup>. The debate on disarmament remains open: Hamas refuses to give up light weapons and makes complete disarmament conditional on political guarantees<sup>50</sup>. Although it accepts prolonged truces, it has reservations about security management during the transition<sup>51</sup>.

### ***Fatah and the Palestinian Authority***

Fatah and the Palestinian Authority insist that any transitional government in Gaza must operate under their institutional legitimacy. Their spokesperson, Abdel Fattah Dawla, argued that the presidency of the future administrative committee should fall to a Palestinian minister, in line with the principle of territorial unity and the institutional framework of the PLO and the PA<sup>52</sup>.

Tensions with Hamas were immediate. Reports of a possible agreement to appoint Amjad Shawa as chairman of a technocratic committee remained unconfirmed, and Fatah reacted by accusing Hamas of acting unilaterally and prioritising its political survival<sup>53</sup>. The movement denounced Hamas' use of internal force against collaborators and warned that maintaining control of security would perpetuate a government considered illegitimate<sup>54</sup>. Other PA spokespeople, such as General Anwar Rajab, accused Hamas of exercising violence comparable to that of ISIS<sup>55</sup>.

Fatah and the PA face internal and external pressures related to reforms demanded by international actors, which would imply a reduction in power and risks of fragmentation. President Abbas's advanced age increases uncertainty and complicates institutional

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<sup>49</sup> "Will Hamas really relinquish control in Gaza?", *BBC*, 21 October 2025. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cn51w77vlp9o>

<sup>50</sup> ABU MAHADI, Waseem. "Head of Anti-Hamas Gaza Militia to TML: We Are Working for a New Gaza", *The Media Line*, 19 October 2025. Available at: <https://themedialine.org/top-stories/head-of-anti-hamas-gaza-militia-to-tml-we-are-working-for-a-new-gaza/>

<sup>51</sup> "Hamas, war in Gaza and the lure of Northern Ireland-style disarmament", *POLITICO Europe*, 23 October 2025. Available at: <https://www.politico.eu/article/hamas-war-in-gaza-israel-northern-ireland-disarmament-ira/>

<sup>52</sup> "فتح-تنفي-الموافقة-على-رئاسة-اللجنة"، الجزيرة، 27 أكتوبر 2025. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.net/news/2025/10/27/فتح-تنفي-الموافقة-على-رئاسة-اللجنة>

<sup>53</sup> ABU MAHADI, Waseem. "Head of Anti-Hamas Gaza Militia to TML: We Are Working for a New Gaza", *The Media Line*, 19 October 2025. Available at: <https://themedialine.org/top-stories/head-of-anti-hamas-gaza-militia-to-tml-we-are-working-for-a-new-gaza/>

<sup>54</sup> "Crece la interna en Gaza por el desarme: Fatah acusó a Hamás de darle la espalda a la trágica realidad del pueblo palestino", *Infobae*, 18 October 2025. Available at: <https://www.infobae.com/americas/mundo/2025/10/18/crece-la-interna-en-gaza-por-el-desarme-fatah-acuso-a-hamas-de-darle-la-espalda-a-la-tragica-realidad-del-pueblo-palestino/>

<sup>55</sup> "PA Security Forces Spokesman Anwar Rajab on Hamas crackdown in Gaza: It is exposing its ISIS-like savage behaviour," *MEMRI TV*, 23 October 2025. Available at: <https://www.memri.org/tv/anwar-rajab-hamas-isis-crimes-gaza-crackdown>

continuity<sup>56</sup>. At the same time, the PA has presented a \$67 billion reconstruction plan based on UN assessments and talks with international partners to regain administrative control in Gaza<sup>57</sup>.

The role of external actors is also generating debate. Tony Blair has shown willingness to participate in coordinating the reconstruction, a gesture supported by PA figures but criticised by other members of the government, who question the advisability of delegating oversight to a foreign leader<sup>58</sup>.

### ***Palestinian Islamic Jihad***

Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) is an organisation focused almost exclusively on armed struggle, with much less operational capacity than Hamas and little political presence. Its strength is estimated at between 5,000 and 8,000 fighters, supported financially and militarily by Iran, which gives it significant capabilities but limits its strategic autonomy. Its decentralised structure has allowed the organisation to absorb leadership losses while maintaining its activities, particularly in the West Bank.

In Gaza, the absence of government responsibilities allows the PIJ to take greater risks than Hamas. Its electoral support is minimal, confirming that its relevance derives mainly from organised violence and not from an aspiration to administer the enclave<sup>59</sup>. The al-Quds Brigades, its armed wing, sustain the continuity of the resistance and maintain coordination with the al-Qassam Brigades<sup>60</sup>. The movement's spokespersons describe the war as an attempt at extermination supported by the United States and highlight the solidarity of actors in the region.

About the ceasefire, the PIJ affirms that it is complying with the truce and monitoring Israeli behaviour. Regarding the future of Gaza, it rejects any solution that involves the

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<sup>56</sup> PEARSON, Elizabeth; SHABAN, Hisham. "The Palestinian Authority is facing a legitimacy crisis — can it be reformed to govern a Palestinian state?", *The Conversation*, 27 October 2025. Available at: <https://theconversation.com/the-palestinian-authority-is-facing-a-legitimacy-crisis-can-it-be-reformed-to-govern-a-palestinian-state-263042>

<sup>57</sup> ELMAS, Dean Shmuel. "Palestinian Authority unveils £67b. Gaza reconstruction plan", *The Jerusalem Post*, 20 October 2025. Available at: <https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/article-871006>

<sup>58</sup> WINTOUR, Patrick. "Tony Blair wins nod from Palestinian Authority for role in postwar Gaza", *The Guardian*, 12 October 2025. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/oct/12/tony-blair-wins-nod-from-palestine-authority-for-role-in-postwar-gaza>

<sup>59</sup> VALENTE, Giorgia. "Trump's 20-Point Plan Doesn't Mention Palestinian Islamic Jihad: Why It Should Matter", *The Media Line*, 27 October 2025. Available at: <https://themedialine.org/top-stories/trumps-20-point-plan-doesnt-mention-palestinian-islamic-jihad-why-it-should-matter/>

<sup>60</sup> "New Al-Quds Brigades: Abu Hamza - 'We will never surrender our weapons'", *The Palestine Chronicle*, 9 October 2025. Available at: <https://www.palestinechronicle.com/new-al-quds-brigades-abu-hamza-we-will-never-surrender-our-weapons/>

exile of resistance leaders and maintains that governance must be Palestinian, with a phased Israeli withdrawal and international supervision<sup>61</sup>.

### ***Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)***

The PFLP has regained visibility in the efforts towards Palestinian political reunification. A signatory to the Beijing Agreement, it advocates overcoming internal fragmentation and prioritising a unified front. Although designated a terrorist organisation by the United States and the European Union, it maintains a presence in all Palestinian territories. Its deputy secretary-general, Jameil Saleh Mezher, argues that the priority is not immediate government participation, but a national dialogue that incorporates all forces, including Hamas and the PIJ, with a view to a unity government under the provisional authority of the PLO.

The PFLP proposes creating a transitional body under the PA to administer Gaza if the formation of a unity government proves unfeasible in the short term. At the strategic level, it advocates adapting the resistance to the post-7 October scenario and coordinating the various forms of struggle within a common national strategy, with an emphasis on the West Bank.

Historically independent of the PA, the PFLP has supported initiatives that strengthen national unity, maintaining stable relations with Iran. Regarding summary executions in Gaza, it argues that they are a response to the context of war and that due process should be restored once the aggression ceases<sup>62</sup>.

### ***Anti-Hamas militias in the Gaza Strip***

Israel acknowledged having armed rival groups of Hamas with captured material, with the aim of weakening the movement<sup>63</sup>. Analysts have long observed that the reliance on local actors is not a new feature of Israeli strategy<sup>64</sup>. Similarly, they have indicated that these

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<sup>61</sup> "Islamic Jihad Representative: Resistance weapons will not be surrendered to foreign entities", *Taghrib News Agency (TNA)*, 21 October 2025. Available at: <https://www.taghribnews.com/en/interview/695705/islamic-jihad-representative-resistance-weapons-will-not-be-surrendered-to-foreign-entities>

<sup>62</sup> "The challenge for the resistance now is to act united against the occupation, says Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine", *Brasil de Fato*, 22 October 2025. Available at: <https://www.brasildefato.com.br/2025/10/22/the-challenge-for-the-resistance-now-is-to-act-united-against-the-occupation-says-popular-front-for-the-liberation-of-palestine/>

<sup>63</sup> SHARAWI, Ahmad; TRUZMAN, Joe. "Profiles of anti-Hamas militias in the Gaza Strip", *The Long War Journal*, 19 October 2025. Available at: <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2025/10/profiles-of-anti-hamas-militias-in-the-gaza-strip.php>

<sup>64</sup> "Popular Forces: Israel unleashes its ISIS-linked terrorists on Gaza's civilians", *The Palestine Chronicle*, 19 September 2025. Available at: <https://www.palestinechronicle.com/popular-forces-israel-unleashes-its-isis-linked-terrorists-on-gazas-civilians/>

militias, linked in some cases to the United Arab Emirates or the PA<sup>65</sup>, have hampered Hamas' governance<sup>66</sup>, although they have not managed to constitute a real alternative<sup>67</sup>.

### Popular Forces

Popular Forces, with some 500-700 fighters, emerged in Rafah as an openly anti-Hamas group. Its apparent civilian mission coexists with accusations of looting humanitarian aid, links to criminal networks and contacts with ISIS cells. Its leader, Yasser Abu Shabab, admitted coordination with Israel. His death increased internal uncertainty and his successor, Ghassan al-Dahini, faces the structural fragility of the group, whose reach is limited to certain clans in the south. Several studies have described Popular Forces as a short-term tactical tool with no lasting political viability<sup>68</sup>.

### Counter-Terrorism Strike Force

This militia of about 40 people operates in Khan Yunis and is led by Hossam al-Astal, a former preventive security officer accused by Hamas of participating in an assassination in 2018. It presents itself as a protector of civilians and promoter of a "safe humanitarian zone", recruiting via social media. Its leader claims to be in contact with the Trump administration and supports international administration of Gaza, while the entire group has been involved in clashes with Hamas units<sup>69</sup>.

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<sup>65</sup> "Popular Forces': Who are the Gaza gangsters being armed by Israel?", *Middle East Eye*, 12 June 2025. Available at: <https://www.middleeasteye.net/explainers/popular-forces-who-are-gangsters-being-armed-israel>

<sup>66</sup> "Who are the Gaza clans opposing Hamas?", *JNS*, 19 October 2025. Available at: <https://www.jns.org/who-are-the-gaza-clans-opposing-hamas/>

<sup>67</sup> "Israeli' strategy to back anti-Hamas militias in Gaza fails as groups disband: Haaretz", *Roya News*, 21 October 2025. Available at: <https://en.royanews.tv/news/64308/'Israeli'-strategy-to-back-anti-Hamas-militias-in-Gaza-fails-as-groups-disband%3A-Haaretz>

<sup>68</sup> SHARAWI, Ahmad; TRUZMAN, Joe. "Profiles of anti-Hamas militias in the Gaza Strip", *The Long War Journal*, 19 October 2025. Available at: <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2025/10/profiles-of-anti-hamas-militias-in-the-gaza-strip.php>; "Popular Forces': Israel unleashes its ISIS-linked terrorists on Gaza's civilians", *The Palestine Chronicle*, 19 September 2025. Available at: <https://www.palestinechronicle.com/popular-forces-israel-unleashes-its-isis-linked-terrorists-on-gazas-civilians/>; "Is Israel using Gaza tribal militias to help ethnic cleansing?", *Al Jazeera*, 12 August 2025. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2025/8/12/is-israel-using-gaza-tribal-militias-to-help-ethnic-cleansing>; "Yasser Abu Shabab emerges as potential player in post-war Gaza", *The Arab Weekly*, 7 July 2025. Available at: <https://the arabweekly.com/yasser-abu-shabab-emerges-potential-player-post-war-gaza>; "Popular Forces': Who are the Gaza gangsters being armed by Israel?", *Middle East Eye*, 12 June 2025. Available at: <https://www.middleeasteye.net/explainers/popular-forces-who-are-gangsters-being-armed-israel>; GRITTEN, David. "Prominent anti-Hamas militia leader Yasser Abu Shabab killed in Gaza," *BBC*, 4 December 2025. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cz0nd088e090>; "New Abu Shabab militia head says he's not scared of Hamas, vows to intensify fighting", *The Times of Israel*, 5 December 2025. Available at: [https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog\\_entry/new-abu-shabab-militia-head-says-hes-not-scared-of-hamas-vows-to-intensify-fighting/](https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/new-abu-shabab-militia-head-says-hes-not-scared-of-hamas-vows-to-intensify-fighting/) and "Yasser Abu Shabab emerges as potential player in post-war Gaza", *The Arab Weekly*, 7 July 2025. Available at: <https://the arabweekly.com/yasser-abu-shabab-emerges-potential-player-post-war-gaza>

<sup>69</sup> SHARAWI and TRUZMAN, "Profiles of anti-Hamas militias in the Gaza Strip"; TREW, Bel. "Gaza factions, Hamas, Popular Forces: how Palestinian militias and clans are redrawing Gaza's map", *The Independent*, 21 October 2025.

### Popular Army-Northern Forces

Also made up of around 40 fighters, it operates in Beit Hanoun under the command of Ashraf al-Mansi. Hamas accuses the group of collaborating with the Shin Bet and participating in criminal activities. Its clashes with al-Qassam militiamen and its establishment in an area under Israeli control have fuelled doubts about its autonomy and external links<sup>70</sup>.

### Shujaiya Popular Defence Forces

Composed of members of the Hilles clan, these forces operate in eastern neighbourhoods of Gaza City. The clan has had a tense relationship with Hamas since 2007, and recent arrests and deaths have reignited the conflict. In a statement, the family denied any organic relationship with the militia and described it as a dissident faction unrelated to its decisions<sup>71</sup>.

## **Conclusions**

This analysis, drawing on survey data, social dynamics and political positioning, confirms that any understanding of the post-ceasefire phase in Gaza must be grounded in an appreciation of the internal complexity of the Palestinian context. The studies discussed here are not incidental: they help delineate the real margins for political transition and illustrate how public opinion, civil society and factional actors interact within a setting in which no single actor operates in isolation. At the same time, this interpretation requires caution, given the abundance of contradictory information and strategic narratives produced by governments, armed groups, intelligence services and the media. This underscores the need for systematic cross-checking of sources and restraint in drawing definitive conclusions.

Surveys occupy a central place in this analysis. They not only reveal broad trends, but also demonstrate how question framing shapes expressed support for key issues such as disarmament, the deployment of international forces or the two-state solution. The

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Available at: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/gaza-factions-hamas-popular-forces-palestine-israel-b2848010.html> and ABU MAHADI, Waseem. "Head of Anti-Hamas Gaza Militia to TML: We Are Working for a New Gaza", *The Media Line*, 19 October 2025. Available at: <https://themedialine.org/top-stories/head-of-anti-hamas-gaza-militia-to-tml-we-are-working-for-a-new-gaza/>

<sup>70</sup> SHARAWI and TRUZMAN, "Profiles of anti-Hamas militias in the Gaza Strip" and "Who are the Gaza clans opposing Hamas?", *JNS*, 19 October 2025. Available at: <https://www.jns.org/who-are-the-gaza-clans-opposing-hamas/>

<sup>71</sup> SHARAWI and TRUZMAN, "Profiles of anti-Hamas militias in the Gaza Strip".

contrast between polling institutions such as PCPSR and ISEP illustrates how methodological choices can substantially affect outcomes.

The media constitutes another decisive factor. The influence of Al Jazeera - marked by clear differences between its Arabic and English-language outputs - has contributed to the formation of distinct interpretative frameworks. Prevailing perceptions in Palestine regarding the events of 7 October highlight the extent to which access to information, trust in sources and the conditions of wartime profoundly shape social understandings of political events.

Regional and transnational dynamics further condition the landscape. Iranian support for various factions influences both their military capabilities and strategic orientations. At the same time, international NGO funding networks facilitate documentation, litigation and narrative mobilisation, while also exposing organisations to delegitimation campaigns. Allegations of links to the PFLP underline the importance of distinguishing between substantiated evidence and politically motivated accusations.

The emergence of anti-Hamas clans and militias adds a further layer of complexity. Their origins and sources of support cannot be attributed solely to Israeli intervention; rather, tribal structures, criminal networks and long-standing rivalries also play a role and warrant closer examination.

Ultimately, the contemporary Palestinian situation can only be meaningfully understood through an integrated analytical approach. Public opinion, civil society, political-military actors, funding flows and media ecosystems must be examined as interdependent components. Only on this basis is it possible to assess which political transitions can achieve genuine legitimacy within Palestinian society itself.

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