

The Gaza Withdrawal

What's Really Happening?

For anyone who wants to see an end to Israel's occupation of Gaza and the West Bank, the removal of Israeli troops and settlements from Gaza is a step in the right direction. But unfortunately, when you look carefully at Israel's current plans and actions in the Occupied Territories, it's clear that a just and lasting peace remains a distant prospect.

The Gaza disengagement is a cover for expansion of settlements in the West Bank

- ▶ Sharon's government is solidifying Israel's presence in the West Bank.
- ▶ The Wall continues to be built on a route that expands Israel's border beyond the 1967 line. The land being appropriated by Israel has far greater economic value than the Gaza territory being relinquished.

The planned withdrawal will not end the occupation of Gaza

- ▶ Israeli forces will keep control over Gaza's borders, coastline and airspace as well as the movement of people and goods across the border.
- ▶ Israel will continue to control Gaza's telecommunications, water, electricity and sewage.
- ▶ Gaza will continue to be completely encased by concrete and barbed wire and surrounded by Israeli troops.

The real reason for the withdrawal

A top aide to Sharon, Dov Weisglass, explained the motivation for the Gaza withdrawal this way: "The significance is the freezing of the political process. And when you freeze that process you prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state and you prevent a discussion about the refugees, the borders and Jerusalem. Effectively, this whole package that is called the Palestinian state, with all that it entails, has been removed from our agenda indefinitely."

--Ha'aretz, October 8, 2004

This conflict cannot be resolved through unilateral action

The only way to achieve a just and lasting peace in Israel and Palestine is through a negotiated settlement agreed to by both parties. Israel must stop creating "facts on the ground" by continuing to construct settlements and the Wall in the West Bank. Instead, Israel must come to the table and work with the Palestinians toward a fair resolution which ends the occupation of Gaza and the West Bank and creates the framework for safety, self-determination, and a decent life for all people in the region.

A simple way you can take action

Go to our website at www.JewishVoiceForPeace.org. Under the "Take Action" column find the Israel out of Gaza photo and click on the Take Action button. There, you can contact your congressional representatives, the President and Secretary of State. Send them a message that "Gaza First" must not be "Gaza Last". Tell them that withdrawal of settlements must continue on the West bank and that the Wall being built must not stand in the way of ending the Israeli occupation of the West Bank.



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