



Written by [Angeline Tan](#) on January 5, 2024

## Israel Mulls Plan to Resettle Palestinians in Africa

Officials from Israel are conducting clandestine discussions with the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other African nations over plans for the possible resettlement of thousands of Palestinian migrants from Gaza, Israeli media reported on January 3.

Plans for the “voluntary” resettlement of people from the beleaguered Palestinian enclave to the central African country are “slowly” becoming a hallmark policy of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s coalition, the *Times of Israel* reported, quoting a senior government source. The news outlet added that Israel has held discussions with various African countries to see if they would accept migrants from Gaza.



Oleksii Liskonih/iStoc/Getty Images Plus

“Congo will be willing to take in migrants, and we’re in talks with others,” the news website said, citing the unnamed official.

Last week, Netanyahu revealed in a meeting of his Likud party that he was proceeding with plans for the migration of Gazans but that “our problem is [finding] countries that are willing to absorb Gazans.”

The Democratic Republic of Congo is besieged by high levels of poverty and inequality, as per a report by the World Food Program, along with chronic regional conflict and insecurity. The aid organization elaborated that about 52.5 percent of its 5.5 million population lives below the poverty line.

On January 2, Washington rebuffed remarks from Israeli officials over the proposed resettlement plan as “irresponsible,” including two statements who had urged for the “voluntary migration” of Palestinians.

“The United States rejects recent statements from Israeli Ministers Bezalel Smotrich and Itamar Ben Gvir advocating for the resettlement of Palestinians outside of Gaza,” State Department spokesman Matthew Miller declared in a statement.

He continued, “The rhetoric is inflammatory and irresponsible.”

Israeli Defense Minister Ben Gvir doubled down on his statement later, saying, “With all due respect, we are not another star on the American flag.”

Calls for mass displacement of Palestinians go against official Israeli government policy and the U.S. view, Miller told reporters. “They are in direct contradiction of his own government’s policy, and we believe those statements should stop,” he said, lambasting Gvir’s comments.

Nonetheless, Miller maintained that it was appropriate when the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) ask Gazans to “temporarily” evacuate their homes when they stage “legitimate military operations” in their



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neighborhoods.

Israel's Smotrich dismissed Washington's opposition, alleging that some 70 percent of Israelis back the proposal as "two million people [in Gaza] wake up every morning with the desire to destroy the State of Israel." Netanyahu's office has hitherto published statements to clarify that Smotrich and Ben Gvir do not represent official government policy over the conflict in Gaza.

Such a plan, however, will be necessary owing to the postwar conditions of Gaza when the conflict ends, Israel's intelligence minister, Gila Gamliel, said on January 2 at a conference in the Knesset.

"At the end of the war, Hamas rule will collapse. There are no municipal authorities; the civilian population will be entirely dependent on humanitarian aid."

Moreover, Gamliel contributed to the Hebrew website Zman Israel, stating that she anticipates 60 percent of Gaza's agricultural land to be turned into security buffer zones.

Meanwhile, the Biden administration has disavowed genocide allegations against Israel made by various nations. Washington has maintained that it has no evidence that Israeli forces are perpetuating atrocities as they bomb Gaza in an attempt to eradicate Hamas.

Recently, South Africa's government filed a genocide case against Israel in the International Court of Justice (ICJ), while Türkiye announced its official support for the charge on January 3.

The United States slammed the allegations at a press briefing later on January 3, saying there was no evidence that IDF forces were committing genocide against the Palestinians.

"Genocide is of course a heinous atrocity, one of the most heinous atrocities that any individual can commit," State Department spokesman Miller [said](#).

"Those are allegations that should not be made lightly, and as it pertains to the United States, we are not seeing any acts that constitute genocide."

White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby echoed similar remarks made by Miller, contending that allegations against Israel were "meritless." He added that the ICJ case filed by South Africa was "counterproductive and completely without any basis in fact whatsoever."

Nonetheless, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has compared Israel's military campaign in Gaza to Nazi Germany's Holocaust against the Jewish people. He also has condemned Western nations for backing Israel's tactics, suggesting that Netanyahu was just as genocidal as Germany's Adolf Hitler.

Türkiye's foreign minister, Hakan Fidan, also added that by giving "unconditional support" to Israel, Western nations had forfeited all credibility to talk about "principles, virtue and morality."

The Turkish diplomat elaborated, saying, "I see that all of this is paving the way for a huge geostrategic rupture."

Additionally, policy advisor Tariq Habash, a Palestinian-American and a senior official at the U.S. Department of Education, resigned on January 3 in protest at Biden's public support for Israel, accusing the Biden administration of ignoring "atrocities" against Palestinians since the start of the war in Gaza.

Explaining in a resignation letter that he could not continue to "represent an administration that does not value all human life equally," Habash [wrote](#), "The actions of the Biden-Harris Administration have put millions of innocent lives in danger, most immediately for the 2.3 million Palestinian civilians living in Gaza who remain under continuous assault and ethnic cleansing by the Israeli government."



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Therefore, I must resign.”

“I cannot stay silent as this administration turns a blind eye to the atrocities committed against innocent Palestinian lives, in what leading human rights experts have called a genocidal campaign by the Israeli government,” he continued.

Other senior officials have expressed similar sentiments, with State Department veteran Josh Paul, the longtime director of the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, also resigning in October because of the Biden administration’s “blind support” for Israel.

“I cannot work in support of a set of major policy decisions, including rushing more arms to one side of the conflict, that I believe to be short-sighted, destructive, unjust and contradictory to the very values that we publicly espouse,” Paul penned in a statement explaining his resignation.

Israel has staged prolonged air and ground attacks on the densely-populated Gaza enclave since the October 7 cross-border attacks by the Palestinian terrorist group Hamas. Over 22,000 Palestinians have been killed, health officials say, while the Hamas assault killed close to 1,200 Israelis.

Last month, the UN cautioned that over 500,000 Gazans were starving in wake of Israeli bombings, while 85 percent of the population had been displaced.



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