



### Trump Meets with Arab and Muslim Heads of State

U.S. President Donald Trump took part in a multilateral meeting with Arab and Muslim leaders on the sidelines of the current 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). The gathering – attended by top officials from Egypt, Jordan, Qatar, Turkiye, Saudi Arabia, and others – was focused on ending the longstanding war in Gaza, with Trump presenting a plan aimed at doing so. The group of heads of state relayed support for the proposal, but while emphasizing several key conditions for their help in implementing the post-war plan such as a guarantee that Israel will not annex parts of the West Bank or Gaza and that humanitarian aid to the latter will immediately increase. Trump is reported to have pledged to the Arab and Muslim leaders that he would not allow Israel to annex parts of the occupied West Bank. For the leaders and those seeking to put an end to Israeli hostilities across the region, concern regarding the threat of potential Israeli annexation of the West Bank has grown in recent weeks. In light of the wave of new Palestinian statehood recognitions from a plethora of countries around the world, including several high-profile ones like France, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia, calls by Israeli officials for West Bank annexation in retaliation have intensified. This has prompted regional governments to issue warnings that Israel doing so would garner major negative repercussions, and thus they have sought to secure assurances from Trump against such a widely opposed move.

There appears to be a clear understanding regarding the universal objection to the prospect of Israeli annexation of the already illegally occupied West Bank. This is evidenced by the components of the Trump administration's plan for ending the Gaza War, which was recently presented to the group of Arab and Muslim leaders at their gathering with the American president this week. Among the elements of the plan was a firm promise against Israeli annexation of the West Bank, in addition to other key aspects such as calls for a permanent ceasefire in Gaza, the release of remaining hostages, the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza, the deployment of an international stabilization force, a proposal for post-war governance, global funding for reconstruction efforts, and an increase in the delivery of humanitarian aid. The group of heads of state also received guarantees from Trump that there would be no new Israeli settlements or occupation of Gaza, and against the forcible displacement of Gazans from the Palestinian territory. Strong opposition to the prospect of Israeli annexation has not only come from regional leaders, but from many European countries as well. Following Israel's indication that it might annex parts of the occupied West Bank in response to new Palestinian statehood recognitions, several European countries and the European Union have condemned this and warned of possible consequences including economic sanctions if annexation proceeds.

Earlier this month, officials from the United Arab Emirates warned their Israeli counterparts that the annexation of the West Bank would be a "red line," and that the move could be met with a downgrading of diplomatic ties. The United Arab Emirates was one of the countries which normalized relations with Israel as a part of the frequently criticized Abraham Accords back in 2020 – with the nature of the agreements often being dismissed by analysts and experts for failing to secure fair and needed concessions to advance the Palestinian struggle for social justice. Nevertheless, with some viewing the Abraham Accords as a diplomatic "achievement," the United Arab Emirates' warnings to Israel are noteworthy given that it was the most notable Arab nation to normalize relations with Israel and thus a deterioration of ties would be a significant development. If this was to transpire, it would also only add

to Israel's growing global diplomatic isolation – which has undeniably intensified due to its array of continuous violations in both Gaza and the West Bank.

Above all, on top of the sought guarantee that Israel will not be allowed to annex the West Bank, the group of Arab and Muslim leaders who recently met with Trump have urged the United States to use its leverage and influence over Israel to first and most importantly secure an end to the war in Gaza. They have outlined how this is needed in order to then address specific commitments and the implementation of post-war rebuilding and security efforts. For his part, Trump appears confident in the aftermath of this week's gathering with Arab and Muslim leaders on the sidelines of the UNGA that the U.S. is close to getting, as he called it, "some kind of deal done" in Gaza. The American president later added that he would "have to meet with Israel" – in a reference to his planned meeting with Netanyahu at the White House next week.