# Arriving in US, Netanyahu pledges to "redraw" map of Middle East

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Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu arrived Sunday in Washington D.C. ahead of an extensive series of meetings with US President Donald Trump this week aimed at planning the ethnic cleansing of Gaza and an expansion of the US-Israeli war of aggression throughout the Middle East.

Netanyahu will be the first foreign leader welcomed to the White House by Trump. He will be staying at Washington's Blair House, the guest lodging of foreign dignitaries, for the 14th time, more than any other leader. There is currently a warrant for Netanyahu's arrest for war crimes and crimes against humanity, issued by International Criminal Court (ICC), which the United States does not recognize.

Ahead of his departure for the US, Netanyahu issued a statement Sunday on X pledging to "redraw" the map of the Middle East, in a reference to his government's plan to create a "greater Israel" encompassing the entirety of the Palestinian territories and significant portions of adjoining states.

In his statement, Netanyahu declared, "The decisions we made in the war have already changed the face of the Middle East. Our decisions and the courage of our soldiers have redrawn the map. But I believe that working closely with President Trump, we can redraw it even further."

The actions that have "redrawn the map" of the Middle East have led to wartime casualties in Gaza that "probably exceeded 70,000," according to a study published in *The Lancet* last month and may be as high as 186,000 or more, according to an earlier study. Israel has attacked nearly all of its neighbors, including Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Iran.

The genocide launched by Israel in Gaza has, according to a UN report, killed far more women, children and older people than men. The overwhelming death toll among women and children makes clear that Israel's aim is the massacre of the people of Gaza and the turning of the region into a wasteland in preparation for its ethnic cleansing.

Now, enabled by the full support of the Trump administration, Netanyahu is pledging to unleash an even greater tidal wave of war throughout the region.

On September 22, 2023, just two weeks before the October 7 attacks, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu displayed a map at the United Nations General Assembly of the "new Middle East," showing Israel encompassing all of the Palestinian territories, as part of a geopolitical framework with the US-aligned Middle Eastern states of Egypt, Sudan, Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

When Netanyahu spoke again at the United Nations on September 27, 2024, near the one-year anniversary of the beginning of the genocide, he again referenced "the map I presented here last year," declaring, "With American support and leadership, I believe this vision can materialize much sooner than people think."

Last month, Trump called for Israel to "clean" Gaza of its Arab inhabitants, openly calling for ethnic cleansing. "You're talking about probably a million and a half people, and we just clean out that whole thing," Trump said.

Trump's statement was a public embrace on the part of the American state of the actual policy of the Netanyahu government, which is the systematic extermination and removal of the Palestinian population from Gaza, as part of the effort to annex all of the Palestinian territories.

Last week, Trump's Mideast envoy Steve Witkoff met with Netanyahu to discuss, in the words of the *Times of Israel*, "Trump's ... idea of sending Gaza's population to Jordan and Egypt." The newspaper

reported that Witkoff and Israeli officials "discussed possible outlines for the transfer of Gaza's population, in line with the US president's repeated suggestion that millions of Gazans should relocate to Egypt and Jordan."

Responding to Trump's calls for the ethnic cleansing of Gaza, far-right Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich said in a statement, "I am working with the prime minister and the cabinet to prepare an operational plan and ensure that this vision of President Trump is realized."

Ahead of Netanyahu's trip to the US, Smotrich called for the annexation of the West Bank, declaring, "We must strengthen our grip and sovereignty over the homeland in Judea and Samaria [the West Bank]."

In his statement ahead of his departure for Washington, Netanyahu threatened further escalation against Iran, declaring, "In this meeting we'll deal with important issues, critical issues facing Israel and our region: victory over Hamas, achieving the release of all our hostages, and dealing with the Iranian terror axis in all its components."

In December, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that the Trump transition team had discussed potential airstrikes against Iran's nuclear program. In remarks on foreign policy just days after assuming the presidency, Trump refused to rule out military strikes on Iran.

His calls for the ethnic cleansing of Gaza reflect the actual position of the Netanyahu government. In a report on the discussions scheduled for this week, the *Financial Times* wrote:

> A person familiar with the Israeli government's thinking claimed Trump's comments "did not come as a surprise." "This isn't an idea that just came to Trump," the person said. "Israel was aware he was going to say it. They [the US and Israel] are aligned and coordinated."

Despite a nominal "ceasefire," Israel continues to carry out daily military operations throughout Palestine, including an ongoing attack on the city of Jenin that has seen the widespread destruction of civilian infrastructure. On Wednesday, Israeli troops carried out a strike at the Nuseirat camp in the central part of the Gaza Strip that wounded four people.

Israel is continuing to consolidate its territorial annexations throughout the region. On Sunday, the *Washington Post* reported that Israel is building military outposts in territory it seized in Syria's Golan Heights, which it captured two months ago following the collapse of the Assad government in Syria.

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