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European Languages

زبانهای اروپایی

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07.02.2025

Trump's plan to annex Gaza and the return of colonialism

US President Donald Trump outlined Tuesday a plan for the ethnic cleansing, depopulation and annexation of the Gaza Strip by American imperialism.

Under Trump's plan, Gaza's remaining population would be removed from their ancestral homeland and scattered in camps in the desert or in remote countries and islands, to live in misery and die. The tens of thousands of unburied corpses in the rubble, most of them women, children and elderly people, would be plowed over under the shattered pieces of their homes.

On top of the rotting corpses, Trump and his vassal Benjamin Netanyahu would build hotels and casinos, where the fortunes of their cronies would be made. We're going to "take over that place and we're going to develop it," Trump proclaimed.

Trump's plans are in clear and direct violation of international law and its prohibitions against aggressive war, territorial annexation, genocide and mass murder. They are the type of crimes for which the Nazis were prosecuted after the Second World War.

Trump's foreign policy is a return to the type of naked imperialist aggression last practiced in the Reich's Chancellery of Nazi Germany. Canada, Greenland, Panama and Gaza are to be seized as the new crown jewels of the American empire. The models of this new world order are not just Adolf Hitler and his Gauleiters, but also Leopold II of Belgium, who tortured, maimed and massacred millions of Congolese to get his rubber.

In 1991, the International Committee of the Fourth International explained that the invasion of Iraq that year "signals the start of a new division of the world by the imperialists." The ICFI statement continued:

The colonies of yesterday are again to be subjugated. The conquests and annexations, which, according to the opportunist apologists of imperialism, belonged to a bygone era are once again on the order of the day.

The dissolution of the Soviet Union, completed at the end of 1991, has been followed by more than three decades of unending and expanding war. The imperialist powers, led by the United States, have sought to create the world as they thought it would be if there were no 1917 October Revolution and no mass anti-colonial uprisings in the 20th century. The first and second Gulf wars, the dissolution of Yugoslavia, the invasion of Afghanistan, the regime-change operations in Syria and Libya, and the war against Russia in Ukraine are all part of this process.

With the coming to power of Trump, American imperialism is abandoning any pretense that its foreign policy is governed by international law. It is to be replaced with the law of the jungle, in which the strong do what they will and the weak suffer what they must.

The policy of imperialist regime change and territorial annexation that followed the dissolution of the USSR was accompanied by the embrace of criminality. After the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, Vice President Dick Cheney declared, “We have to work the dark side... We’re going to spend time in the shadows.”

What Cheney meant was that American foreign policy would embrace crime and the violation of international law. Torture, murder, kidnapping and illegal surveillance would be legitimized, first against foreigners, then against Americans.

A quarter century later, “the dark side” has “worked” in America. Criminal actions, justified as a state of exception in response to extraordinary circumstances, have become the norm. The criminal operations of the state have grown so vast that they have crowded out the “legitimate” democratic and legal functions. Trump, as he embraces ethnic cleansing in Gaza, is seeking to erect the framework of a dictatorship within the United States.

The “liberal” apologists of American imperialism claim that Trump’s plan represents some kind of aberration from previous US foreign policy, or, in the words of Elizabeth Warren, is “inconsistent with American values.”

What America has Senator Warren has been living in for the past three-quarters of a century? Barack Obama, whom she endorsed, turned murder into a sort of bureaucratic ritual known as “Terror Tuesday.” Biden, whom she also endorsed, funded, armed and defended the massacre of at least 70,000 men, women and children in Gaza.

Trump’s plan is not a deviation from American foreign policy. Rather, Trump, in the words of Netanyahu, “cuts to the chase.” The American president has dispensed with the endless

sacred lies used by imperialism to justify its actions, which everybody is supposed to repeat but nobody believes.

Trump has said what the real aims of the US-Israeli war have been: to kill the Palestinians and steal their land as part of a broader global imperialist war, in the Middle East and beyond. Netanyahu made clear to Biden, in no uncertain terms, that his goal was to use October 7 as a pretext to level every structure in Gaza and kill as many civilians as possible. Emerging from his meetings with Netanyahu, Biden would mumble prepared speeches about a “two-state solution” and a “ceasefire,” while emptying America’s arsenals of its largest, 2,000-pound bombs, whose only use is to demolish city blocks and kill children by the dozen.

The servile American press, staffed with CIA operatives and former Israel Defense Forces soldiers, would crank out headlines about how “furious” and “frustrated” Biden was with Netanyahu, all the while covering up the president’s total approval and complicity in the genocide that was being carried out with American weapons.

Now, Trump, two weeks after being placed in the White House by America’s ultra-billionaires, has dispensed with Biden’s humanitarian pretexts and stated things by their true names. He is saying, in effect: “The Palestinians have land, but they don’t have an army, so we’re going to drive them out and take what we want.”

Over the past 15 months, millions of people have taken part in mass protests against the Gaza genocide. These protests have failed, not for lack of effort, but for lack of perspective. Those who organized them appealed to the imperialist powers to see their wrongs and to “arrest Netanyahu.” But why should the imperialists “arrest” their vassal?

The underlying assumption of the protest organizers was that the Gaza genocide marked some sort of aberration, that it was a mistake in policy. No, it was not a mistake. It expresses the most essential characteristics of the capitalist social order under conditions of extreme crisis.

“Monopolies, oligarchy, the striving for domination and not for freedom, the exploitation of an increasing number of small or weak nations by a handful of the richest or most powerful nations” are, as Lenin explained, essential characteristics of “imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism.”

The working class must take a lesson from Trump’s Gaza plans. Imperialist violence abroad has its corollary in capitalist barbarism at home. The oligarchy is turning to fascism and dictatorship to defend its wealth and repress all opposition.

For this reason, the fate of the Palestinian people is inevitably tied to the workers of America and the world. The Palestinians have no salvation but the global working class. American

workers must raise the banner of anti-imperialism and opposition to the Gaza genocide alongside their struggle to defend their democratic rights and their right to jobs, a living wage and a secure retirement.

American imperialism, as the WSWS explained ahead of the launch of the Iraq war, has a “rendezvous with disaster.” Trump and the ruling class he represents will meet with mass opposition from the workers of America and the world. But the only way to end war, dictatorship, and inequality is to abolish the capitalist system that creates these scourges and replace it with socialism.

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