

# EXPAND GAZA, EXPAND ISRAEL

Kermit Zarley, February 2, 2026

Experts say the traditional two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been dead for years. For decades, I've been proposing an alternative: EXPAND GAZA, EXPAND ISRAEL.

I believe the traditional solution has always been a non-starter since it is based on demographics. It is indeed the most comfortable, easiest thing to do for Palestinians; but it is illogical because it is unworkable! Why? *You can change demographics, but you can't change history and religion.*

The traditional two-state solution represents two separated territories—the West Bank and Gaza Strip—joined by a 20-mile corridor (30 km). My alternative is two elongated states of equal size that *truly* lie side-by-side with no non-contiguous lands and the most minimal border conceivable between them. Borders of these two states would approximate those of antiquity in which Israel existed mostly in the hill country and Philistia existed only in the coastal plain. This would result in an expanded Gaza Strip as the sole Palestinian state, with Israel annexing all the West Bank.

Yes, this alternative requires an equal land swap and transfer of peoples. And it would be more costly than the traditional proposal. But it would provide greater security and economic viability for both parties. Plus, it would fulfill the demand of West Bank Jewish settlers and Israel's Proclamation of Independence to possess all Eretz Yisrael, which never included all the coastal plain. See my book, *Palestine Is Coming*, for free reading and updates to it at [kermitzarley.com](http://kermitzarley.com).

This alternative solution could be executed in 3 phases with 7 consecutive steps each as follows:

**Phase A:** The Gaza Strip becomes the State of Palestine and Israel annexes W. Bank settlements.

1. Israel implements a ceasefire in its present war with Hamas in the Gaza Strip.
2. The Israel Defense Forces vacate the Gaza Strip, perhaps in a series of steps.
3. Hamas releases hostages and relinquishes its weapons to the Palestinian Authority.
4. The Gaza Strip is declared the State of Palestine with a view toward its future expansion.
5. Israel annexes West Bank Jewish settlements with a moratorium on creation of others.
6. Training of Palestinians (& others?) to secure and govern the Gaza Strip is implemented.
7. Egypt's plan, the U.S. plan, or both for reconstructing the Gaza Strip is implemented.

**Phase B:** Israel forfeits all its coastal plain south of Tel Aviv to Palestine, and Israel annexes the remaining West Bank north of a line extending from Jerusalem to the north end of the Dead Sea.

1. These two parcels to be exchanged between the two parties would be about equal in size.
2. The so-called Palestinian right-of-return would be restricted only to the State of Palestine.
3. The final northern border of this expanded State of Palestine would be the Nahal Sorek.
4. The northeast corner of Palestine would be where the Nahal Sorek and Shephelah meet.
5. The eastern border of Palestine would be the Shephelah to Beersheba and Kadesh Barnea.
6. The southern border of this phase of Palestine would be from Rafah to Kadesh Barnea.
7. The entire western border of all the State of Palestine would be the Mediterranean Sea.

**Phase C:** Egypt relinquishes to Palestine the northwestern Sinai Peninsula between Rafah and El Arish. Israel annexes the remaining West Bank south of the line from Jerusalem to the Dead Sea.

1. These two, final parcels to be gained by the two parties would be about equal in size.
2. Palestine's final, southern border would be along the Wadi el Arish to Kadesh Barnea.
3. TBD, Israel would compensate Egypt for relinquishing the northwest Sinai to Palestine.
4. Israel would retain all water rights in its land including the West Bank Mountain Aquifer.
5. Egypt (and others) would provide Nile water to Palestine through Al Salam Canal East.
6. Palestine could pay for Nile water with some of its offshore gas (and oil?) reserves.
7. How to govern this State of Palestine would be agreed upon by all the parties involved.