



Pax Christi International Updated Declaration on the so-called “Board of Peace” *Brussels, February 26th, 2026*

[Pax Christi International in its statement of January 23rd, 2026](#), expressed profound concern regarding the establishment of the Board of Peace (BoP), which we consider disingenuous in its structure and mandate. From the outset, we warned that the Board’s structure, mandate, and underlying assumptions raise serious questions about political legitimacy, respect for international law, and the right of Palestinians to self-determination.

The February 19th, 2026 meeting of the BoP has confirmed and deepened these concerns.

The Board continues to **exclude Palestinians from meaningful participation**, prioritising external control, technocratic authority, and profit-driven reconstruction over human dignity, justice, and community well-being.

The Board announced pledges of \$7 billion from nine countries¹, alongside \$10 billion from the United States², without specifying sources or allocations. Independent assessments from the UN, EU, and World Bank estimate at least \$70 billion is required to rebuild Gaza’s infrastructure and economy³. During the meeting, private actors promoted Gaza’s coastline and urban projects valued at over \$115 billion, prioritising luxury housing, hotels, and commercial ventures. **Without guarantees for Palestinian rights and participation, and a focus on their urgent survival, these initiatives risk serving investors rather than the local population, reinforcing the occupation and patterns of dispossession, by creating conditions that constitute acts of genocide⁴.**

Such reconstruction plans risk **entrenching structural dispossession as a new form of extractivism**, converting land and housing into profit-driven assets for external actors while displacing Palestinians and marginalising their culture and right to self-determination. Rather than advancing justice and recovery, such approaches risk deepening dispossession and causing further environmental harm through speculative, luxury-oriented development that fails to prioritise community and ecological needs⁵.

¹ “Kuwait pledges \$1bn for Gaza”, Kuwait Times, February 21st, 2026, <https://kuwaittimes.com/article/40139/kuwait/other-news/kuwait-pledges-1bn-for-gaza/>

² “Trump heads to Georgia after securing Board of Peace pledges for Gaza relief funds”, edited by Luena Rodriguez-Feo Vileira, Michael Warren, Carley Petesch, Nell Clark and Kiana Doyle, February 20th, 2026, <https://apnews.com/live/trump-board-of-peace-georgia-midterms-2-19-2026>

³ United Nations Press Briefing on the question of Palestine, October 14th, 2025, <https://www.un.org/unispa/document/unog-press-briefing-14oct25/>

⁴ UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, 1948, Article II, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-prevention-and-punishment-crime-genocide>

In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

⁵ World Cities Report 2024, Cities and Climate Action, UN-Habitat, <https://unhabitat.org/wcr/>



The BoP proposes a Stabilisation Force of 20,000 troops, largely composed of foreign soldiers, alongside 12,000 Palestinian police officers, under the oversight of Egypt and Jordan⁶ without consideration of any civic Palestinian led administration. **Such a force risks entrenching external control and militarisation, prioritising security over justice, and failing to address the root causes of the conflict.** True protection of civilians must be grounded in local governance that respects Palestinian authority, ensures accountability, and centres the well-being of the population, rather than relying on imposed foreign military structures.

Meanwhile, violence in the field continues unabated. Israeli airstrikes and shootings continue to wound and kill civilians. Palestinian journalists, doctors and other medical workers are detained and subjected to torture in Israeli prisons, with testimonies describing beatings, starvation, sexual violence, and medical neglect. Israeli settlers continue incursions into occupied Palestinian territories. Upholding human rights, accountability, and civilian protection is essential for any credible path to reconciliation and reconstruction. **Peace cannot be pursued while the most vulnerable remain exposed to violence and deprivation.**

Palestinians on the ground remain deeply sceptical of BoP declarations, as political statements from abroad fail to reflect the realities of attacks, blockade, and deprivation. **Faith leaders and community representatives stress that reconstruction and stabilisation must begin with a ceasefire, respect for Palestinian rights, and adherence to international law.** As the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa has observed, initiatives that decide for Palestinians without their meaningful participation risk replicating colonialist dynamics and undermining local agency⁷.

Just peace cannot be imposed, purchased, or administered from above. Justice, human dignity, and full Palestinian participation remain indispensable.

Pax Christi International calls on:

- **Heads of States to speak out** clearly about the Board's structural deficiencies and the exclusion of Palestinians, insisting that any reconstruction or stabilisation initiative is grounded in human rights, international law, and inclusive governance, and protections against displacement, speculative land grabs, and gentrification-driven dispossession.
- **Head of States considering participation to refrain**, at least until the Board's governance, mandate, and composition fully respect Palestinian rights and multilateral accountability.
- **The Church and Pope Leo XIV to keep raising a clear moral voice** for an unarmed and disarming peace that defends justice, human dignity, and the Palestinian people's right to self-determination

⁶ "Five countries commit troops to Gaza international security force, commander says", February 19th, 2026, <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/five-countries-commit-troops-gaza-international-security-force-commander-says-2026-02-19>

⁷ "US-led Board of Peace a 'colonialist operation,' Cardinal Pizzaballa says", Junno Arocho Esteves, February 17th, 2025, <https://www.ncronline.org/news/us-led-board-peace-colonialist-operation-cardinal-pizzaballa-says>



We stand in solidarity with Palestinians and all who insist that legitimacy, equality, and human rights must form the foundation of peace. **Silence in the face of injustice is complicity.**

Pax Christi International remains steadfast in its commitment to a just and sustainable peace in Palestine and Israel, grounded in international law, human dignity, and the full participation of all affected peoples.