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All they will find is sand

Eyal Weizman on the demolition of Gaza

THE UN Genocide Convention of 1948 lists five acts that constitute genocide when committed with the intent to destroy a group in whole or in part. The first two concern mass killing and serious bodily or mental harm. The fourth and fifth are concerned with interrupting the biological continuity of a group. The third prohibition, framed in Article II(c), forbids 'deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction'. This refers to indirect forms of killing, those that don't target human bodies but the environment that sustains them. Sufficient 'conditions of life' require buildings, hospitals, social infrastructure, sewage and water systems, power grids, agriculture. The intentional destruction or degradation of such structures undermines a people's ability to survive, leading to a slower and more tortuous form of annihilation.

The idea that the built environment determines a group's conditions of life recalls the modernist conception of architecture, prevalent when the word 'genocide' was first conceived and defined by the Polish Jewish jurist Raphael Lemkin in his 1944 book, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*. Modern architecture offered to calculate and improve the conditions of life. Cities were to be laid out in accordance with public health principles, and homes, in Le Corbusier's famous definition, were to be 'machines for living in', calibrated to maximise the supply of biological necessities – heat, hygiene, air circulation, food and even sexual reproduction.

Architects' Data (1936) by the German modernist architect Ernst Neufert is still used by architects looking for the most efficient dimensions for kitchens, bedrooms or even park benches. In the 1920s Neufert was an assistant to Walter Gropius, director of the Bauhaus. Later, on behalf of the Nazi Party, he oversaw the standardisation of Germany's building industry, which was largely powered by enslaved labour. Several Bauhaus graduates designed concentration camps. The deliberate degradation of living conditions inverted the task of modern architecture from the enhancement of life to the production of death.

Lemkin defined genocide as being aimed at 'the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups'. He was thinking about the way the Nazis saw the Jewish ghettos and enslaved labour camps as means of slow, indirect extermination. But he was also aware of the colonial origins of this mode of destruction. Though direct acts of massacre took place in colonised territories everywhere, slow, indirect killings have more often been the means of annihilating Indigenous peoples. Dispossessed of their ancestral habitats, separated from the

land on which they depended for sustenance and ritual, forced into reservations, Indigenous populations were destroyed to free up the best land for European settlement.

Two and a half years after 7 October 2023, most of the Gaza Strip – cities, refugee camps, schools, universities, mosques, the health infrastructure, agriculture, wells and the soil itself – has been destroyed and made toxic by bombs, artillery, tank shells and sappers. The most systematic destruction was caused by D9 bulldozers made by the US company Caterpillar. These giant armoured machines stabbed their blades into the ground, churning up fields, felling orchards, flattening homes, tearing through roads and ploughing through cemeteries. The tide of destruction flowed inwards from Gaza's perimeter fences, pushing Palestinians into enclaves referred to by the Israeli army as 'safe areas' and 'humanitarian zones', though they were never safe or humane. These overcrowded coastal sites, such as al-Mawasi, with its barren sand dunes, were without housing, healthcare or other services, and were continuously bombed from the air and attacked on the ground. The bulldozers turned the agriculturally rich land of eastern Gaza into a monochrome desert of crushed grey cement mixed with the area's yellowish soil. Entire cities such as Rafah, towns such as Beit Hanoun and refugee camps such as Jabalia were erased. When buildings are bombed or bulldozed, their remains – plastics, wiring, solvents, insulation, asbestos – release toxic chemicals into the soil. Some bombs penetrate the ground before exploding and release heavy metals or metalloids – such as uranium, lead and arsenic – deep underground. Many of these substances are slow to decay and will affect the composition of the soil for decades. A lived-in landscape has been turned into what a former Israeli general, Giora Eiland, described as a place 'where no human being can exist'.

Lemkin understood conditions of life to include not only the infrastructure that enables biological existence but social and cultural continuity too: religious buildings, schools, libraries, heritage sites. In Gaza most of these have also been systematically demolished. The Genocide Convention ratified in 1948 did not mention the 'cultural genocide' that Lemkin argued should be included. Entire sections were left out of the convention. Imperial powers such as Britain, France, Belgium and the Netherlands, which were then attempting to suppress anti-colonial uprisings, wanted genocide to be defined in a way that would not restrict their activities. Settler-colonial states – Australia, the United States and Canada – that had destroyed the physical heritage, culture and language of Indigenous peoples also objected. But cultural and biological life are not separate domains when it comes to national survival. In Gaza the systematic devastation of the environment – fields, water sources and the fishing industry – destroyed the ability of the society to feed itself. Attacks on schools and mosques reduced its capacity to organise and offer mutual care to mitigate the worst effects of scarcity, thus aggravating famine. The simultaneous destruction of one domain amplifies the harm caused by the other.

On 13 October 2023, six days after the Hamas attack on Israeli settlements and bases around Gaza, Israel ordered the evacuation of Gaza City, sending Palestinians in northern Gaza towards the southern border with Egypt. A document prepared by the Israeli Ministry of Intelligence and leaked to the online journal +972 explained the reason for this: it recommended the full-scale expulsion of Palestinians from the Gaza Strip into the Egyptian Sinai, arguing that this would 'yield positive, long-term strategic outcomes for Israel'. The destruction of conditions of life was intended to hasten the Gazans' departure. The biggest campaign in the history of aerial bombardment rolled like a carpet of fire from north to south.

The mass expulsion of Palestinians from Gaza to Egypt has been an aim of Israeli governments since December 1948, when the army first tried and failed to cleanse this last remaining enclave along Palestine's Mediterranean coast. It tried again during the 1950s and intensified its effort after the 1967 War, when Israel occupied both the Gaza Strip and the Sinai desert. Hamas's attack on 7 October 2023 gave Israel another opportunity. Expulsion plans were trumpeted by Israeli politicians and media spokespeople. Benjamin Netanyahu confirmed that he was actively seeking to transfer Palestinians out of Gaza. Israeli and some US officials started lobbying Egypt to accept large numbers of refugees. For eight months the Israeli army refrained from occupying the border area near Rafah, leaving the exit to Egypt open.

Many Palestinians, remembering the consequences of the mass displacement of 1948, refused to leave their homes. They remained in the ruins of Gaza City despite the bombing, and despite the denial of aid. Egypt policed the border closely and refused to let in Palestinians en masse, allowing entry only to those who could pay extortionate sums. Unable to achieve its goal, Israel sought instead to concentrate Palestinians into an ever smaller area of the Strip until the next opportunity for displacement arrived. Outside these zones, total destruction was meant to prevent their return to the areas from which they had been expelled.

The destruction was most complete close to Gaza's fences. The IDF calls the area bordering Israel a 'buffer zone'. It is a no-go area for Palestinians, a *shetah hashmada*, Hebrew for 'annihilation zone': any Palestinian entering it, or sometimes even approaching it, is shot on sight. The victims included Palestinians, many of them children, who wanted to see what could be salvaged from the ruins of their homes, to retrieve food aid that had been parachuted in, or who simply lost their way in a newly unfamiliar landscape. The flattening of all structures in the buffer zone was intended, among other things, to remove any hiding places and expose Palestinians to snipers. Before October the zone was between 300 and 500 metres wide. Two weeks into the war it was extended to a kilometre. By the spring of 2025 it was two kilometres wide; soon after it was three kilometres, with everything inside systematically bulldozed. Because the buffer zone now covered such a large area, snipers couldn't be used everywhere and Palestinians were murdered instead by quadcopter drones equipped with grenade launchers. During the day people were easy to see against the monochrome backdrop; at night the drones' thermal sensors registered their body heat.

Throughout military history, buffer zones – the Rhineland after the Treaty of Versailles of 1919, the strip between Kuwait and Iraq following the 1991 Gulf War, the DMZ between North and South Korea, or the land between Turkish and Greek Cyprus – have been means of maintaining ceasefires by keeping armies apart. In the eight decades since the establishment of Israel, buffer zones have instead been used as a means of occupation, displacement and erasure. Under the terms of the armistice agreement between Egypt and Israel that ended the 1948 war, Israeli forward positions were drawn roughly three kilometres east of where the present border of Gaza now lies, as the Palestinian historian and cartographer Salman Abu Sitta has shown. The line crosses al-Ma'in, the village where he was born and from which he was expelled with the rest of his family on 14 May 1948. Al-Ma'in and other Palestinian villages were soon cleared and replaced by the agrarian kibbutz settlements that were attacked on 7 October 2023. The settlers expanded Israeli territory through cultivation, removing the remnants of Palestinian homes, roads and fields. They ploughed over cemeteries because these were often places Palestinians returned to. Soldiers and settlers were instructed to shoot

anyone, armed or unarmed, who crossed into the zone.

Before the 1967 War King Hussein of Jordan secretly offered to keep the West Bank as a buffer area if Israel promised not to invade. Israel occupied the territory nevertheless. After the war, a security masterplan drawn up by the former military commander Yigal Allon called for a strip of the Jordan Valley ten to fifteen kilometres wide (covering roughly a third of the West Bank) to be annexed and settled to become Israel's eastern buffer zone. Ethnic cleansing of Palestinian farming communities in the area started shortly after this, and has continued on and off ever since. Expulsions have accelerated radically since October 2023, and have increased even more since the start of the US and Israel's attack on Iran, with the Israeli army promoting and participating in settlers' pogroms throughout the remaining Palestinian communities. Bezalel Smotrich, a West Bank settler and the Israeli minister of finance, had already promised early in 2025 that Palestinian villages and cities in the West Bank would come to 'resemble Rafah and Khan Younis. They will also be turned into uninhabitable ruins, and their residents will be forced to migrate and seek a new life in other countries.'

A similar process took place in the north of the country. During the 1967 War Israel occupied the Golan Heights with the explicit aim of creating a buffer zone between the Syrian army and Israel's agrarian settlements in the upper Jordan Valley. Further settlements were built across the occupied area and in 1981 Israel formally annexed it. In December 2024, after the fall of Bashar al-Assad, the IDF extended a 'sterile defence zone' further into Syrian territory, expelling Syrian residents, destroying military and civilian buildings including the al-Golan hospital and the al-Andalus cinema in Quneitra, and bulldozing orchards, forests and fields, piling the soil to construct military outposts, trenches and earth berms.

Israel's latest invasion of Lebanon has involved the expulsion of 600,000 Lebanese from a new buffer zone. Israel has bombed all the bridges across the Litani River, thirty kilometres away from the border, in order to cut off the area from the rest of Lebanon and has started systematically demolishing the villages closest to the border. The return of Lebanese inhabitants to these villages will be prohibited, Israel Katz, Israel's minister of defence, said, 'until the safety and security of the residents of the north [of Israel] is ensured' – an impossible demand. An Israeli settler organisation has published plans for the 'settlement of southern Lebanon', producing maps that give Lebanese villages Hebrew names and provocatively advertising plots of land for sale.

This exemplifies the circular logic of Zionist settler-colonialism: settlements are built to mark and protect the state's border, but that makes them vulnerable to attack and so a buffer zone is established to protect them. Afterwards, this buffer zone is itself settled to mark and protect the newly expanded borders, at which point another buffer zone becomes necessary. In this manner vulnerability is produced and then mobilised in a feedback loop that the genocide scholar A. Dirk Moses has called 'permanent security'.

THROUGHOUT the past two and a half years, Gaza has not only been a demolition zone but a construction site, reshaped according to Israel's blueprint. The bulldozed remains of buildings were piled into a landscape of earth berms, which were then shaped into barriers, detention facilities and military outposts from which Israeli tanks and snipers commanded the area where survivors were concentrated. The scale of the earthworks was so great that Israel's two hundred bulldozers were not nearly enough – many were damaged by the Palestinian resistance – and Israel urgently needed two hundred more. In late 2024 the Biden administration delayed their export and they weren't sent until Trump took office. In the meantime the IDF hired private bulldozer operators, many of them West Bank settlers.

If Palestinians ever tried to return to the demolished zones, an Israeli bulldozer operator called Abraham Zarbiv said, they 'will be returning to nowhere. Tens of thousands of families are left without papers, without childhood photos, without ID cards, they remain with nothing. If they return, they will not know where their home is. All they will find is sand.' The erasure of the built environment was mirrored by the destruction of records of it. Municipal plans, historical maps and property deeds were destroyed when Israel bombed Gaza City's Central Archives in November 2023.

The army 'changed the Strip's topography beyond recognition', the Palestinian poet Omar Moussa wrote that month. 'If we survive this war,' he quoted a friend as asking, 'what would be our meeting point?' After the First World War the unprecedented facial injuries caused by high-explosive shells destroyed soldiers' sense of identity. The territorial equivalent of this is the disorientation that Palestinians feel when exposed to the places that used to be their homes. A new form of psychological torture emerged. Blindfolded Palestinian captives were taken back to their old neighbourhoods, now a sea of rubble. 'When we took the cloth off their eyes,' Zarbiv reported, 'they were completely disoriented, they did not understand where they were.' Zarbiv, who is also a rabbinical court judge, has been chosen to light a torch at Israel's Independence Day celebrations.

On the night of 23 March 2025 Israeli troops murdered fifteen first responders and buried their bodies under high earthworks near Rafah. Asaad al-Nasasra, a medic with the Palestinian Red Crescent, one of two survivors of the attack, was interrogated and tortured inside a hole dug nearby by bulldozers. He described his ordeal to researchers from Forensic Architecture, who were using his descriptions to try to model the changes to the landscape. When his blindfold was removed, he realised that 'they had changed the place completely. When I saw the place, it made me feel hysterical. I couldn't understand anything.' In order to reconstruct the incident, the researchers worked with Earshot, an open-source audio investigative unit, which analysed the sound of gunfire recorded on the phone of one of the murdered medics. Lawrence Abu Hamdan, who founded Earshot, told me that the demolition had also radically transformed the acoustic landscape. Usually, he said, audio recordings of gunshots in urban areas reveal sound echoing from many different directions. Here all that remained were three walls that had somehow survived the demolition. The new landscape enabled clear echoes, making it possible to reconstruct incidents from their sound signatures.

In the weeks that followed the massacre, earth and rubble in this area were piled up in a series of structures next to the site. They surrounded an open space, which soon became one of the compounds operated by the newly conceived Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, an organisation

funded by US and Israeli entrepreneurs that supposedly took on the role of distributing food aid, bypassing the UN. Its feeding stations concentrated starving Palestinians in four specific locations, all near Israeli military sites, three of them close to the border with Egypt. Hundreds were massacred by Israeli soldiers and US mercenaries when they were forced to compete for rations.

THE PRESENT 'CEASEFIRE' came into effect on 10 October 2025. Under its terms Gaza was divided into two zones by a Yellow Line that ran roughly along the edge of the buffer zone, leaving the Israeli army in control of 54 per cent of Gaza. By December, Israel had unilaterally shifted the line west, bringing the area under its control up to 58 per cent. Eyal Zamir, Israel's chief of staff, described the Yellow Line as Israel's 'new border' with Gaza.

The line was drawn along a sandstone ridge that runs parallel to the coast, around three kilometres inland. At about seventy metres above sea level, it offers Israeli forces control of the Palestinians forced into the area near the sea. The ridge has organised life in the region since antiquity. Every year millions of cubic metres of granite from the Ethiopian plateau erode into sand that is carried down the Nile into the Mediterranean. Tides deposit large quantities of this sand along the Palestinian shoreline. Millennia ago one of these ancient dunes petrified into the sandstone ridge – a formidable barrier that dams the eastward drift of other sand dunes along the coast. West of the ridge the area is primarily sand; east of it, the soil is fertile. For many generations most of Palestine's wheat and barley fields were cultivated by Bedouin tribes in the fertile plains of the Beersheba region. These farmers were among the two hundred thousand Palestinians expelled from their land and incarcerated in a beachside enclave between the towns of Rafah and Gaza in the final months of 1948. A sliver of this soil between three and four kilometres wide remained within the borders of Gaza. In recent decades this fertile land was Gaza's bread basket. Now all of it is on the Israeli-controlled side of the Yellow Line.

At Forensic Architecture we identified a new earth berm that has been built along much of the path of the Yellow Line, as well as seven new military outposts. One of them was constructed on the site of a cemetery. Altogether there are 48 outposts east of the Yellow Line. Zamir has said they are the bases from which further incursions into the coastal area will be launched if necessary. At first the new outposts were no more than piles of earth and rubble, organised into variously shaped enclosures. But in recent months the enclosed areas and the roads leading to them have been asphalted. Electricity poles have been erected and the roads lit. Closely packed prefabricated buildings have been erected inside the bases, and tall towers on the perimeter carry communications and surveillance equipment. The bases no longer appear to be the provisional arrangements that Trump's ceasefire plan claims them to be, but permanent instruments of occupation. The newly paved roads connect the bases to a matrix of control that is linked to Israel's road network and communications grid.

West of the Yellow Line, Hamas is the governing body. Survivors live in and between the ruins or in massive tent encampments. The winter cold – the temperature can drop as low as five degrees – has led to deaths from hypothermia, particularly among infants. The summer, bringing heat of more than forty degrees, is fast approaching. In past summers children have suffocated in enclosures made from plastic sheeting or with improvised tin roofs: permanent structures are not allowed. Puddles are breeding grounds for mosquitoes; rubbish dumps are

piled high; wastewater runs free and there are rodents everywhere. Israel does not allow the chemicals and pesticides that could help treat these problems into Gaza. While some medical services have been partially restored thanks to the effort of Palestinian medics and international NGOs, the health system barely functions. The scarcity of medicines and degraded hygiene mean that even minor injuries lead to infection. More than 40 per cent of dialysis patients in Gaza have died due to lack of treatment. The surviving population of Gaza has been reduced to a condition of bare existence, subject to unrelenting hunger and thirst under the ever present hum of killer drones and bomber jets. By keeping control of how much aid can enter – it was temporarily shut off in March after the US-Israeli attack on Iran began – Israel can continue to calibrate the conditions of life. It wants Palestinians to leave or to die slowly. Still, videos recording Gazan life under genocide show people cooking over communal fires, running open-air schools and submitting theses to universities whose buildings no longer exist.

THE SETTLER MOVEMENT is lobbying hard for the Israeli government to start constructing settlements within the vastly expanded buffer zone. In December Katz said that Israel ‘will never leave Gaza’, and will turn the military outposts into what are known as ‘Nahal outposts’, which are designed to evolve into civilian settlements. Some of the settlements around Gaza began as Nahal outposts in the early 1950s, as did many of the settlements in the West Bank.

Since even Donald Trump officially opposes the building of Jewish settlements in Gaza, Netanyahu forced Katz to retract his statement. The Israeli government decided to adopt a position of ambiguity and buy time by delaying the army’s withdrawal and building up its positions and infrastructure east of the Yellow Line. The transformation of these military outposts into civilian settlements will have to wait for the world’s attention to shift elsewhere.

In the meantime, fanciful development plans are being floated to cover up the reality of the ongoing destruction of Palestinian life in Gaza, which has become a feeding ground for real-estate sharks cum politicians. On 4 February 2025, during the two-month ceasefire that followed Trump’s second inauguration, the president unexpectedly announced that the US would ‘take over the Gaza Strip’. Gaza, Trump said, had ‘a phenomenal location ... on the sea, the best weather’ and would be a ‘Riviera of the Middle East’. While the US had previously downplayed the destruction, Trump’s administration started to talk it up. This was not born of humanitarian concern. Referring to Gaza as a ‘demolition zone’, the administration said that development would require complete evacuation. Palestinians in the beachfront concentration zone would be encouraged to move to a ‘nice place’ elsewhere. Development would bring about the population displacement that the Israeli army had failed to achieve during the war.

To pre-empt Trump’s Riviera plan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and the UAE proposed their own masterplan. This was not born of humanitarian concern either, but designed to ensure Palestinians remained in the Strip rather than being expelled into their territories. ‘A green and smart city powered by renewable energy’ was proposed. It was evidently designed to please the Israelis. The buffer zone was integrated into the plan, represented as an ‘open green area’ where no structures were to be built.

In the summer of 2025, a group of Israeli entrepreneurs presented another initiative, the Gaza Reconstitution, Economic Acceleration and Transformation Trust, or GREAT. The people behind it – the venture capitalist Michael Eisenberg, the tech entrepreneur Liran Tancman et al – also proposed and oversaw the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation which established militarised feeding stations in southern Gaza. GREAT continued where Trump's Riviera vision left off. It proposed a 'world-class' beachside resort, with a series of 'AI-powered' cities further inland. An 'MBZ Central Highway' named after the president of the UAE, an 'MBS Ring' named after the Saudi crown prince and an 'Elon Musk smart manufacturing zone' were meant to induce those individuals to foot some of the bill. Some Palestinians could remain; others would receive meagre financial assistance towards moving elsewhere.

The ceasefire of October 2025 created an opportunity for this plan to be updated. The Board of Peace is a who's who of populist authoritarianism: Trump as chairman for life was joined by Benjamin Netanyahu, Argentina's Javier Milei, Hungary's Viktor Orbán, Jordan's King Abdullah II and Turkey's Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Marco Rubio, Jared Kushner, Tony Blair and others were put in charge of forming a committee to oversee the Palestinian technocrats who would manage day-to-day affairs in Gaza. A new military body known as the International Stabilisation Force would take over security control. As Shawan Jabarin, director of the Palestinian human rights organisation Al-Haq, said to me, the proposal involved only a semantic change in the logic of occupation: the ISF would simply replace the IDF as an occupying power.

Kushner presented the Board of Peace's architectural vision at the World Economic Forum in Davos. Project Sunrise added detail to the hallucinatory vision of a riviera with renderings of 180 luxury high-rises, behind which seven clusters of urban and industrial developments were separated by wide roads that traced the route of the military roads constructed by Israel since October 2023 to slice Gaza into controllable sections. East of them was the buffer zone camouflaged as an agricultural area. The proposed architecture of control reached into cyberspace. Tancman, a graduate of Israel's elite cyber-intelligence Unit 8200, was brought in by Trump to draft a Digital Overhaul Plan. This included the declaration that by July this year a free high-speed internet service would push all social interaction and financial exchange online. The aim was not to help the Palestinian economy but rather to make all financial and bureaucratic transactions subject to Israeli surveillance.

For the Israeli government, reconstruction provides leverage. Large-scale development takes years to complete. With its full control of checkpoints and terminals and every truck of cement and building material crossing into Gaza, Israel can ensure that reconstruction remains a perpetual 'project'. The image of luxury towers constructed above mass graves, with tens of thousands presumably buried under the earthworks, embodies the logic of 21st-century genocide. The Israeli government now hopes, in the words of the former minister Ron Dermer, that what 'two years of war did not accomplish will be done by market forces'. The erasure of Palestinian life in Gaza could, counterintuitively, be achieved by architectural means.

In January, Forensic Architecture researchers identified site-work taking place in an area of one square kilometre, surrounded by several military outposts, on the Israeli-controlled side of the Yellow Line, just east of the ruins of Rafah. A leaked US military document revealed that this was a pilot for a programme called Alternative Safe Communities, which will offer

accommodation to tens of thousands of Palestinians, vetted for their willingness to renounce Hamas, in communities of modular homes supplied with water, sanitation and electricity; mosques and schools will promote normalisation with Israel in line with the curriculum used by the UAE. An indicative illustration of what is referred to as the Emirati Compound shows the layout of a new type of refugee camp. In the plan, two-storey prefabricated units – not tall enough to ‘threaten’ Israeli forces – are laid out along wide streets that allow Israeli armour to patrol. At the centre is a large park surrounding a single-storey mosque. This, rather than luxury housing and a riviera, is the most that Palestinians can hope for from the reconstruction plans. Residents would enter and exit the fenced-in camp through checkpoints equipped with biometric sensors. The plan also offers help to ‘residents wishing to travel abroad’.

All these initiatives ignored Palestinian planners and architects, although several Palestinian reconstruction plans have been proposed. One of them, the Phoenix Gaza Initiative, was prepared by the Union of Gaza Strip Municipalities, working with Palestinian architects in Palestine and the diaspora, and is grounded in the ‘social and spatial relationships that persist in Gaza’. Erased neighbourhoods and refugee camps – some of which, like Rafah and the Jabalia, are historic centres of Palestinian national identity – are to be replaced, home by home, after carefully re-establishing the land ownership of the erased surface. During the process of reconstruction, each family would be housed near the site of their demolished home, and communities would be involved in the reconstruction.

Reconstruction plans imposed on Palestinians with the implicit aim of destroying Palestinian life in Gaza demonstrate the reason Lemkin reserved a place for architecture in his conception of the crime of genocide. He knew that the way a people organises its space is a manifestation of its history and social structure. ‘Genocide has two phases,’ Lemkin wrote in *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*. The first involves the ‘destruction of the national pattern of the oppressed group’ – this was achieved in Gaza by Israel’s devastating bombing. The second involves the imposition of a design by the oppressor, like these reconstruction plans for Gaza. ‘This imposition, in turn,’ he wrote, ‘may be made upon the oppressed population which is allowed to remain, or upon the territory alone, after removal of the population and the colonisation of the area by the oppressor’s own nationals.’
