

Neutralizing the Gaza Powder Keg

by [Michael Herzog \(/experts/michael-herzog\)](/experts/michael-herzog), [Ghaith al-Omari \(/experts/ghaith-al-omari\)](/experts/ghaith-al-omari)

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Since the end of March 2018, the Gaza-Israel border has witnessed repeated violent eruptions initiated by Hamas, including challenging the border and causing massive fires in Israel. With ongoing friction for months and scores of Palestinian fatalities, clashes have grown progressively more violent, risking deterioration into yet another Israel-Hamas war.

In this Policy Note, Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Michael Herzog, IDF, and former Palestinian Authority negotiator Ghaith al-Omari offer a new paradigm for addressing this explosive situation. The components include regarding Hamas, with all its flaws, as the responsible governing entity in Gaza and establishing an enduring ceasefire that encompasses fast, effective improvements to the territory's desperate infrastructure. While working through the PA is preferable, this process should potentially bypass it if the PA continues to refuse to shoulder responsibility for the Strip.

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MICHAEL HERZOG, a retired brigadier general in the Israel Defense Forces, is the Israel-based Milton Fine International Fellow of The Washington Institute. He is a former head of the Strategic Planning Division in the IDF, a former chief of staff to four former ministers of defense, and in 2009-10 served as special envoy on the peace process.

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