by Sacha Wigdorovits

Around four weeks ago, US President Donald Trump presented his 20-point peace plan for Gaza. Less than two weeks later, Israel and the terrorist organization Hamas announced in writing their agreement to the implementation of the first phase.

Israel then withdrew to an agreed position in Gaza and released 2,000 captured Palestinians, including 250 convicted terrorists. Hamas, for its part, released all 20 hostages still alive from the massacre of October 7, 2023. The bodies of 18 other hostages held in Gaza have since also been gradually handed over to Israel.

So far, so good, one would think. However, the media only report one thing: why the rest of the peace plan will not be implemented.

It is true that the next stages of the plan to end the conflict between the Palestinians and Israel have a few sticking points. The biggest one is disarming Hamas and removing it from power in Gaza.

But is this really as impossible and unlikely as it is claimed to be? After all, in addition to Saudi Arabia and Egypt, Turkey and Qatar have also formally signed the US peace plan. This means that the two biggest supporters of Hamas have given their consent to its disarmament.

In addition, the people of Gaza are longing for peace. However, this can only be achieved in the long term with the implementation of the Trump plan.

After two years of war, the terrorist group also has its back to the wall in military terms. Especially as US President Trump has stated unequivocally that if Hamas does not agree to disarm “voluntarily”, it will be forced to do so.

This means that Israel would have the full backing of the US government if it were to strike again militarily if Hamas were to oppose the remaining points of the peace plan – and thus also its disarmament.

The external and internal pressure on Hamas is therefore great. This makes the paradox that their only allies are in Israel all the more incomprehensible: the far-right national-religious and ultra-nationalists. These two political groups, like the Palestinian terrorist organization, are trying by all means to prevent the further implementation of the Gaza peace plan.

The bill for the annexation of the West Bank launched a few days ago from these circles is aimed at precisely this. The bill was passed in the Israeli parliament, the Knesset, in the first reading by 25:24 votes.

It was therefore approved by less than a quarter of all MPs. The center and left-wing parties voted against and the representatives of Likud, the party of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, abstained from voting with one exception. Netanyahu himself had previously tried unsuccessfully to prevent the vote.

It is therefore clear that the annexation law will never be passed in the end. But the ultra-religious and right-wing extremists are still harming their own country with their confrontational behavior. This is because they are jeopardizing Israel's good relationship with its closest ally, the USA.

US Vice President JD Vance angrily described the Knesset's decision as "stupidity". And his boss, President Trump, made it crystal clear: if Israel annexes the West Bank, it will lose all support from the USA.

In order to implement the US peace plan against this resistance from Hamas on the one hand and from Israel's right-wing radicals on the other, three things are therefore crucial:

1. The fine words must now be followed by action on the part of Turkey and the Arab states as well as France, Italy and Germany.

   This means that these countries must, as they have promised, contribute soldiers to the security force in Gaza provided for in the peace plan. And first and foremost, this security force must then ensure that Hamas is disarmed and Gaza is demilitarized.

2. Israel needs a new coalition government in which the ultra-nationalists and national-religious parties are no longer represented. Whether this government will be able to do without

the support of Prime Minister Netanyahu's Likud is questionable, even in the event of new elections.

"Dealmaker" Donald Trump therefore outlined a way in which the two conflicting camps could agree to work together a few months ago and again recently in his speech in the Knesset: The center-left agrees to drop the corruption case against Netanyahu. In return, he undertakes not to run for a (full) further term in office.

In terms of the rule of law, such a "deal" would be unattractive, but it would be in the interests of the country. This must take priority, especially in the current situation.

3. The USA must maintain its massive pressure on both sides. In other words: to the Arab states and Turkey on the one hand and to Israel on the other. True to the motto of Goethe's Erlkönig: "And if you are not willing, I need violence."

   The world's largest economic and military power has shown in recent weeks and months that it has the necessary means and is willing to use them.

So is the further implementation of the Trump peace plan a "done deal"? No, it is not! But it is also not as impossible as it is often made out to be.

Above all, however, it is one thing: there is no alternative. Because none of the apologists who describe the 20-point concept for peace in Gaza – and therefore for

peace between the Palestinians and Israel – as unrealistic have so far proposed a better and more realistic solution.

Instead of joining in the swan song for the Trump peace plan, we would therefore be better off singing “Give peace a chance” with John Lennon.

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