

Israel and US are at odds over conflicting visions for postwar Gaza

By Josef Federman and Samy Magdy / Dec. 7, 2023

JERUSALEM (AP) — The United States has offered strong support to Israel in its war against the Hamas militant group that rules the Gaza Strip. But the allies are increasingly at odds over what will happen to Gaza once the war winds down.

[...]

“It’s important for them that Israel achieve the military goals because this is the starting point for any changes that can happen the day after,” said **Eldad Shavit**, a former high-ranking Israeli intelligence official.

He said U.S. pressure in the short term will be on immediate issues — such as pressure to minimize civilian casualties and to allow more deliveries of humanitarian aid.

The U.S. has indicated that it will show some patience after the fighting subsides.

State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said the U.S. understands “there will have to be some kind of transition period after the end of major combat operations.” He declined to say how long that would take.

But as the death toll in Gaza continues to rise, conditions deteriorate, and Biden enters an election year with significant portions of his Democratic base pushing for an end to Israel’s offensive, these differences are likely to grow in the absence of a clear endgame.

Shavit said that tensions could rise if the U.S. at some point concludes that Israel is dragging its feet or ignoring American demands. But for now, “the Americans want Israel to succeed,” he said.

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