

Trump Holds Steady on Israel Amidst Growing Dissent from MAGA Supporters

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President Donald Trump and leading Republicans in Congress are maintaining a cautious stance toward Israel's ongoing military actions in Gaza, even as a vocal segment of the "Make America Great Again" (MAGA) movement urges a shift in U.S. policy. Despite rising criticism from some conservative figures, the administration maintains support for Israel's right to self-defence while acknowledging the worsening humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

The division within conservative ranks has become more pronounced in recent months, with some MAGA-aligned voices accusing Israel of excessive force and even calling its actions “genocide.” This marks a significant departure from the longstanding Republican tradition of near-unconditional support for Israel, often seen as a key strategic ally in the Middle East.

Since hostilities resumed in October 2023 between Israel and Hamas designated a terrorist organisation by the United States, European Union, and others the conflict has reportedly resulted in approximately 60,000 deaths in Gaza. International aid groups have warned of famine-like conditions and the potential starvation of thousands of children. These warnings have intensified calls for a reassessment of America’s approach.

Speaking aboard Air Force One, President Trump expressed reluctance to press Israel for a long-term resolution at this stage. “You could make the case that you’re rewarding Hamas if you do that,” he told reporters, adding, “I don’t think they should be rewarded. I’m not in that camp.” However, he also confirmed U.S. plans to provide food assistance and set up relief centres in Gaza.

On Capitol Hill, Republican leadership continues to echo Israel’s right to self-defence. Senate Majority Leader John Thune said the United States should remain a “helping hand,” while Senator Eric Schmitt (Republican–Missouri) reaffirmed that the October 7 attacks by Hamas justified Israel’s ongoing military campaign.

At the same time, a vocal minority within the GOP is growing impatient. Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene (Republican–Georgia) described Israel’s actions as “genocide” and compared the humanitarian toll in Gaza with Hamas’s October 7 assault. Her comments signal a broader discontent among certain conservative factions who believe the conflict could be politically damaging ahead of the U.S. presidential election.

Outside Congress, prominent MAGA figures such as Matt Gaetz and political strategist Steve Bannon have criticised Israel’s actions and warned that Trump’s continued support could alienate parts of his base.

Public sentiment also appears to be shifting. According to a Gallup poll released this week, an estimated 60 per cent of Americans disapprove of Israel’s military actions in Gaza. However, around 71 per cent of Republican respondents continue to support the offensive, a figure that has remained relatively stable since the conflict began.

Internationally, pressure on Israel is growing. The United Kingdom has announced it will join France in recognising a Palestinian state if Israel does not implement a ceasefire by September. European allies have also hinted at potential diplomatic consequences if conditions in Gaza do not improve.

Israel maintains that Hamas is obstructing the delivery of humanitarian aid and denies accusations of war crimes or genocide. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has denied such allegations, claiming that current aid levels are adequate and attributing civilian suffering to Hamas.

The White House declined to comment directly on the administration's evolving response. However, an unnamed official, speaking on condition of anonymity, stressed that while the president remains supportive of Prime Minister Netanyahu, his broader goals include ending the war, recovering hostages, and securing a sustainable ceasefire.

"President Trump doesn't want to see children starving in the Middle East," the official said, underscoring that support for Israel does not preclude addressing the humanitarian needs in Gaza.

State Department spokesperson Tammy Bruce also rejected genocide allegations, calling them "outrageous." U.S. Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee echoed this sentiment in a televised interview, noting that while the suffering is real, the situation is not as severe as some European governments claim.

The administration appears intent on walking a careful line, backing a key ally while responding to mounting domestic and international concern over the conflict's toll. For now, President Trump remains steadfast, resisting pressure to alter course and reinforcing the message that support for Israel and compassion for innocent civilians are not mutually exclusive.