

“We Cease, you fire”

They papered it over with a deal, a handshake, a few staged photos and a headline that promised relief. Call it what you like, a pause or a truce, but the reality on the ground is uglier and simpler... the machinery of destruction hasn't stopped, it's been rebranded. Civilians are still being killed. Humanitarian lifelines are still being weaponised. Institutions that document war crimes now use the word genocide. And through it all there is a strategy, explicit or implicit, that aims to obliterate not only bodies and buildings but the memory and existence of an entire people.

When a ceasefire is announced, we expect the obvious: guns to quiet, aid to flow, injured people to be treated, families to be reunited... and, well, this is exactly what the news is showing us. But away from the cameras and the lies, security forces are shooting at civilians near military positions, innocent people are dying as diplomats celebrate. News feeds record fresh blood while officials talk about “progress.” That isn't a lull, it's a recalibration. The facts are public, but not everyone is searching for the truth.

Aid is supposed to be a lifeline, yet it has become a bargaining chip. The ceasefire's promise of hundreds of truckloads a day was the bare minimum for survival. In practice, the numbers have been slashed, crossings remain tightly controlled, fuel and vital supplies are restricted, and entire populations are left on the wrong side of a political accounting. International agencies and the UN have repeatedly warned that constrained access will cause famine and mass suffering. On paper the truce includes aid, in practice the aid is rationed by untrustworthy conditions and unnecessary delays.

Borders matter. Rafah should be a route out and a route in. Instead it is a contested chess square. The Palestinian Authority has said it is ready to operate crossing points, however, the reality remains that who controls the checkpoints controls survival. The exclusion of local Palestinian governance, the insistence on outside vetoes, and the continued military oversight of borders all point to a larger design... manage and limit Palestinian agency even as international rhetoric talks about reconstruction. That constriction is not neutral, it's a means of controlling who will live to rebuild and who will be pushed beyond return.

Look at the wreckage. UN satellite analyses and joint UN-World Bank assessments show catastrophic damage to homes, schools, hospitals, roads and water systems, not to mention the complete collapse of essential services. When you erase the architecture of daily life, you erase the scaffolding that makes culture possible: markets, mosques, health clinics, schools, farms. The result is not just immediate misery; it is the logistical and psychological removal of a living culture.

Then there are the voices who cannot be dismissed as partisan for simply naming what these policies produce. Leading human-rights organisations, Israeli, international, and UN experts, have documented patterns that amount to collective punishment, mass displacement, and actions that some conclude meet the legal threshold of genocide or crimes against humanity. Those are not rhetorical flourishes; they are the outputs of detailed research and documentation that connect state policy and military practice to outcomes that target an identity group's survival. When credible institutions use these terms, we ignore them at our own peril.

All of this points to a grim logic: if you remove people from their land, level their towns, choke off the means by which they sustain themselves and then prevent them from returning under conditions of autonomy and dignity, you are not merely prosecuting a war, the end result is a profound erasure of place and continuity. Call it ethnic cleansing, demographic transformation, cultural erasure, words change but the mechanics do not.

And yet: there is a counter-truth that the architects of this campaign have failed to account for. Destruction has a peculiar and perverse side effect. Where erasure was intended, exposure has instead followed. After the rubble and the footage, the world cannot pretend Palestine was an abstraction. In trying to remove them from the map of living culture, those who wage this war have done the opposite: they have forced Palestine into the world's gaze in a way mere politics never did.

So, to the men in suits and the generals who thought anonymity would be the outcome, Netanyahu, Trump and the politicians of the world, you will not get what you want. You will not erase the existence and memory of Palestinians. Throughout this horrific campaign, one bitter, undeniable consequence has emerged: you put Palestine on the map. We all know the flag now. We can point to their towns. We know their music, their food, the names of their streets and their dead, more than we were ever allowed to before. For that, you lose.

Rachel Bee – November 2025