Analysis of the Board of Peace's Ability to Achieve Negative Peace in the Palestine-Israel Conflict

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JISI JURNAL ILMU SOSIAL INDONESIA

p-ISSN: 2808-9529 (Printed)
e-ISSN: 2808-8816 (Online)

Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Indonesia (JISI)
http://journal.uinjkt.ac.id/index.php/jisi
VOL. 7, NO. 2 (2026)

Page: 253-261

Recommended Citation (APA Style):
Analysis of the Board of Peace's Ability to Achieve Negative Peace in the Palestine-Israel Conflict. (2026). Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Indonesia (JISI), 7(2), 253-261.
https://doi.org/10.15408/jisi.v7i2.53406

Available at:
https://journal.uinjkt.ac.id/index.php/jisi/article/view/53406

Article History:
Received: 2026-08-03
Accepted 2026-11-09
Available online: 2026-11-18

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Abstract. One of the objectives of establishing BoP was to bring about a ceasefire, facilitate post-conflict reconstruction in the Gaza Strip, and promote peace. However, the situation in the Gaza Strip following the formation of BoP reveals a paradox. Restrictions on access to humanitarian aid persist, and violence continues, resulting in ongoing civilian casualties. Therefore, this study will draw on Johan Galtung's theories in peace studies to examine why the establishment of BoP does not automatically mitigate or end conflict. BoP's success in achieving peace must be grounded in the factual conditions within the conflict zone, such as the cessation of direct violence, including shootings, torture, and military attacks. The research method employed is document analysis based on a case study, supported by descriptive quantitative data regarding the current situation in Gaza from January to September 2026. The concept of negative peace is used to assess the effectiveness of the BoP in achieving peace, supported by data on the intensity of violence, including the number of casualties, ceasefire violations, the blockade of humanitarian aid, and obstacles to the implementation of BoP's mandate in the Gaza Strip. This study found, based on the concept of negative peace, BoP, which comprises many member states has been largely ineffective in mitigating conflict. Violence by Israel in Gaza continues to recur, resulting in civilian deaths from January through September. It is hoped that this study will offer a new perspective on understanding the patterns of conflict and violence in Gaza following the formation of BoP.

Keywords: Board of Peace, Negative Peace, Conflict Resolution, Peacebuilding, Palestine, Gaza

Abstrak. *Salah satu tujuan dibentuknya BoP adalah untuk mewujudkan gencatan senjata, rekonstruksi pasca konflik di wilayah gaza dan mempromosikan perdamaian. Namun situasi di wilayah gaza pasca terbentuknya BoP menunjukkan sebuah paradoks. Akses pembatasan bantuan kemanusiaan masih terjadi dan kekerasan masih terus berlangsung yang mengakibatkan warga sipil tewas masih terus berlangsung. Untuk itu penelitian ini akan memakai pemikiran Johan Galtung dalam studi perdamaian untuk mencoba memahami bahwa pembentukan BoP tidak serta merta dapat meredam konflik dan menghentikan konflik. Keberhasilan BoP dalam mewujudkan perdamaian harus berlandas pada kondisi factual di wilayah konflik seperti penghentian kekerasan langsung berupa penembakan, penyiksaan, dan serangan militer. Adapun metode penelitian yang dipakai adalah document analysis berdasarkan studi kasus yang didukungan dengan data kuantitatif deskriptif mengenai situasi terkini yang terjadi di Gaza dalam kurun waktu Januari hingga September 2026. Konsep negative peace dipakai untuk menilai keefektifan BoP dalam mewujudkan perdamaian yang diidukung dengan data intensitas kekerasan yang terjadi, berupa jumlah korban, pelanggaran gencatan senjata, blokade bantuan kemanusiaan, dan hambatan implementasi mandat BoP di wilayah Gaza. Dalam penelitian ini ditemukan berdasarkan konsep negative peace bahwa keberadaan BoP yang memiliki banyak negara anggota didalamnya, kurang mampu meredakan konflik. Kekerasan oleh Israel di Gaza masih terjadi berulang, dan yang menyebabkan tewasnya masyarakat sipil di sepanjang bulan Januari hingga September. Penelitian ini diharapkan mampu menjadi salah satu sudut pandang baru dalam memahami pola konflik dan kekerasan yang terjadi di Gaza pasca terbentuknya BoP.*

Kata Kunci: *Dewan Perdamaian, Perdamaian Negatif, Resolusi Konflik, Pembangunan Perdamaian, Palestina, Gaza*

1. INTRODUCTION

Many international peace mechanisms have been established to stop violence in Gaza Strip, Palestine, yet the violence continues. Recently, Board of Peace (BoP) was formed at the initiative of the United States, automatically appointing U.S. President Donald Trump as Chairman without going through the standard process of chairman selection involving member states. Sharp criticism has arisen regarding the existence of BoP, as there are concerns that it will create a dual structure with the United Nations (UN) in resolving the conflict between Palestine and Israel. Moreover, there are also allegations that BoP was formed solely to fulfill the U.S.'s ambition for total control in the Middle East.

BoP, officially launched on January 22, 2026, in Davos, Switzerland, aims to make peace in the Middle East, particularly by mediating conflict between Palestine and Israel. Its top priorities are demilitarization, reconstruction, and humanitarian coordination in Gaza Strip. (Board of Peace, 2026c) Many countries are skeptical of BoP's objectives, particularly given that Palestine was not involved in the organization's formation and is not a member of the BoP. (Andriansyah, 2026) Meanwhile, one of its goals is to improve conditions in the Gaza Strip, Palestine, so that it becomes a safe zone for the people. On the other hand, countries in Europe, East Asia, Canada, and Australia do not support BoP. They have reservations about the structure of an organization entirely shaped by the U.S president, Donald Trump.

The appointment of Donald Trump is viewed as a personalization of political power. (Kuehn et al., 2026) There are also concerns that the existence of BoP will hinder the UN's ability to promote security and peace and create a dualistic structure that complicates humanitarian intervention in Palestine. (Samer, 2026) For this reason, it is interesting to examine the concept of peace, whether its meaning is universal, subjective, or objective, when implemented in Gaza. If it is refer to global moral values, peace must certainly be universal and prioritize humanitarian values. However, if it is intervened in with the aim of legitimizing the dominance of a power in that region, its meaning becomes subjective, calculated according to national interests, the strengthening of influence, and even the as a strategy for resources and social legitimacy at the global level. So far, BoP has carried a subjective meaning of peace, as it was shaped by a single actor, the United States. Therefore, peace must be understood in a universal sense, recognizing that it must be just and that efforts must be made to achieve and sustain it.

However, Gaza's existence under BoP mission is also considered fragile. The peace enshrined in the BoP's objectives has less benefit and more than peace rhetoric. Referring to the concept by Johan Galtung and Charles Webel, that related to BoP mission, to achieve peace in Gaza, need to establish negative peace. That is, the absence of violence between conflicting parties, ranging from physical attacks and armed conflict to war. (Webel & Galtung, 2007) But after BoP was established, conflicts and war continued, resulting in Gazan deaths due to Israeli attacks from January to September. Civilians continue to account for the majority of casualties, even though they are not the targets of military attacks. .(United Nations, 2026b) These actions also indicate Israel continues to violate international humanitarian law. Under international humanitarian law, the distinction between military and civilian targets is very clear and explicit. These rules exist to prevent atrocities against humanity, ranging from intentional acts such as abuse and violence to murder. Attacks on civilian targets are the most obvious and blatant form of atrocity. Often, attacks on civilians are carried out to instill terror in the population. Furthermore, Article 8 of customary international humanitarian law stipulates that civilian targets must not be the object of attack or retaliation. (ICC, 2021) Scholars have discussed the BoP in the context of the Israeli Palestinian conflict, but the presence of BoP still requires further research to resolve contemporary conflicts. In this study, the concept of negative peace is used as an indicator to assess the sustainability of the reconstruction process in the Gaza Strip and other affected areas and to determine whether it aligns with the mission of establishing BoP. This study will also track the violence that occurred from January to September 2026 by examining the relationship between the objectives of establishing BoP and the findings derived from factual field data collected in Gaza.

2. METHOD

Qualitative research methods will be employed in this study to explore the role of BoP in interpreting peace in the protracted conflict between Palestine and Israel, with reference to the process of BoP's formation and its objectives. (Hennink et al., 2010) The findings will then be analyzed using the negative peace approach and aligned with the mission of BoP. Data collection will involve an in-depth analysis of reports from international organizations such as OCHA, OHCHR, and UN, regarding conflicts or violence that occurred following the establishment of BoP in January 2026 to September 2026. This time frame was selected to analyze BoP's ability to achieve negative peace. Data sources include internationally and nationally reputable journals and books related to global conflict and peace, as well as data from BoP documents and statements by member states, to obtain the most current information regarding conflicts or violence that occurred after the BoP was formed. These data sources were selected based on their publication dates, specifically, those published after the BoP's formation, as well as their credibility and relevance to this study. The data collection technique used in this study focuses on the role of BoP in Gaza, with the aim of understanding BoP's capabilities from the perspective of negative peace. The sources of data for this documentary study include the BoP, the government or state, international organizations, academic sources, and credible news outlets. (Taylor et al., 2015) Negative peace is used as an indicator to describe ongoing violence, attacks on civilians, and ceasefire violations. The data analysis technique employs process tracing to explain the violence occurring in Gaza as it relates to the peace mechanisms offered by the BoP based on the concept of negative peace.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Establishment of the Board of Peace

The inaugural meeting of the BoP was held on February 16 in Washington, D.C., United States, with the aim of rebuilding the Gaza Strip, Palestine, post-conflict by supporting peace, stabilization, and reconstruction involving many countries. (Board of Peace, 2026b) It is important to first identify which countries are members and non-members of BoP, countries declined the invitation to join, and countries withdrew their membership, while the European Union, as a regional organization, chose to serve as an observer. Here are the details. (Hussain, 2026)

Table 1: Countries classification in Board of peace

No.	Country	Participation Status	Remarks
1	United States	Member	Founding of BoP
2	Albania	Member	Joined as a member
3	Argentina	Member	Joined as a member
4	Armenia	Member	Joined as a member
5	Azerbaijan	Member	Joined as a member
6	Bahrain	Member	Joined as a member
7	Belarus	Member	Joined as a member
8	Bulgaria	Member	Joined as a member
9	Cambodia	Member	Joined as a member
10	El Salvador	Member	Joined as a member
11	Egypt	Member	Joined as a member
12	Hungary	Member	Joined as a member
13	Indonesia	Member	Joined as a member
14	Israel	Member	Joined as a member
15	Jordan	Member	Joined as a member
16	Kazakhstan	Member	Joined as a member
17	Kosovo	Member	Joined as a member
18	Kuwait	Member	Joined as a member
19	Mongolia	Member	Joined as a member
20	Morocco	Member	Joined as a member
21	Pakistan	Member	Joined as a member
22	Paraguay	Member	Joined as a member
23	Qatar	Member	Joined as a member
24	Saudi Arabia	Member	Joined as a member

25	Türkiye	Member	Joined as a member
26	United Arab Emirates	Member	Joined as a member
27	Uzbekistan	Member	Joined as a member
28	Vietnam	Member	Joined as a member
29	France	Declined the invitation	Not a member
30	Ireland	Declined the invitation	Not a member
31	New Zealand	Declined the invitation	Not a member
32	Slovenia	Declined the invitation	Not a member
33	Spain	Declined the invitation	Not a member
34	Sweden	Declined the invitation	Not a member
35	Vatican City	Declined the invitation	Not a member
36	Ukraine	Declined the invitation	Not a member
37	Germany	Declined the invitation	Not a member
38	United Kingdom	Declined the invitation	Not a member
39	Norway	Declined the invitation	Not a member
40	Poland	Declined the invitation	Not a member
41	Greece	Declined the invitation	Not a member
42	Singapore	Declined the invitation	Not a member
43	Russia	Declined the invitation	Not a member
44	Portugal	Declined the invitation	Not a member
45	Philippines	Declined the invitation	Not a member
46	China	Declined the invitation	Not a member
47	Brazil	Declined the invitation	Not a member
48	Australia	Declined the invitation	Not a member
49	Italy	Declined the invitation	Not a member
50	Austria	Observer	Attended as an observer
51	Croatia	Observer	Attended as an observer
52	Cyprus	Observer	Attended as an observer
53	Czech Republic	Observer	Attended as an observer
54	Finland	Observer	Attended as an observer
55	India	Observer	Attended as an observer
56	Japan	Observer	Attended as an observer
57	Mexico	Observer	Attended as an observer
58	Netherlands	Observer	Attended as an observer
59	Oman	Observer	Attended as an observer
60	Romania	Observer	Attended as an observer
61	Slovakia	Observer	Attended as an observer
62	South Korea	Observer	Attended as an observer
63	Switzerland	Observer	Attended as an observer
64	European Union	Observer	Attended as an observer
65	Canada	Observer	Not a member /withdrawn following issues regarding the membership contribution.

Source : Board of Peace and Aljazeera

The U.S., as the initiating, has invited many countries to join, but more have declined than joined, as they believe it would create a dual structure with the United Nations (UN), particularly in resolving the conflict between Palestine and Israel. (United Nations, 2025) For instance, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), which plays a role in providing basic humanitarian services, such as education and health care throughout the Palestinian territories that are under occupation, has become less significant.(United Nations, 2024) Consequently, U.S. President Donald Trump's decision to establish the BOP has created a political phenomenon whose future trajectory is impossible to predict. The existence of BoP is not about whether this organization is right or wrong, which is why many countries, particularly those in Europe, have chosen to refuse membership rather than join. However, it points to the global social hierarchy, the maintenance of superpower status, and the arena of power currently being contested, including the diplomacy and image-building efforts aimed at convincing the global community through BoP that peace and security will soon be realized in Gaza based on the Gaza Peace Plan.

The Gaza Peace Plan states, BoP will urge Israel to suspend military operations, secure the release and exchange of hostages, and disarm Hamas. Interfaith dialogue will also be established to shift the mindset and narrative of Palestinians and Israelis based on the values of tolerance and peaceful coexistence. (Board of Peace, 2025) Given the many challenges facing modern society today, which can be categorized into three areas: sustainable development, security, and the protection of human rights threats are no longer limited to the state but also extend to individuals. (Newman, 2010) The protracted conflict between Palestine and Israel requires a new approach to defuse the conflict, all of which is outlined in the Charter of the Board of Peace. This is because the people and individuals in Gaza are particularly vulnerable to inhumane treatment that violates human rights. (Shalbak, 2023)

An actor decision to join or not join BoP stems from the international system of anarchy, That is, the absence of a supreme authority above states, which leads countries to act rationally when deciding whether to join BoP. The U.S., with its economic, military, and technological capabilities, holds a strong position in shaping the international agenda. (Crossley, 2021) BoP, established by the U.S. and viewed as capable of ensuring global peace and security, is considered a beneficial ally. Consequently, there is confidence BoP will uphold its Foundational Principles, particularly Article 1, which states that it seeks to promote security and stability, end hostilities between conflicting parties, reconstruct the Gaza Strip and other war-affected areas, and improve governance during the transition toward sustainable peace. (Board of Peace, 2026a).

On the other hand, each actor's foreign policy is expected to navigate various roles in order to advance BoP agenda. BoP is believed to open avenues for dialogue, diplomacy, and mediation in addressing situations in conflict zones. However, the presence of Donald Trump as Chairman, who seeks to be the sole rule-shaper within the BoP under Article 3.2 means he will be subject only to U.S. law. This has led many countries in Europe, along with the European Union, as explained in Table 1, the decision not to join is highly rational, given that Donald Trump's position as lifelong chairman has sparked legal and political controversy, compounded by its incompatibility with the UN Charter and international law. (European Parliament, 2026) Another example is China, which, as evidenced by the rise of China currently possesses the same level of power as the U.S. as a rule-shaper, since it was not involved in the formation of BoP, will not be willing to become part of it. (Chaudhry, 2025) It is also stated in Article 3.2 that the Chairman has the authority to amend, establish, and dissolve UN subsidiary bodies, this is considered too exclusive.

The establishment of BoP can be seen as an attempt at hegemony to shape regional peace and security, yet it is largely unacceptable, given its unclear funding mechanism, which involves collecting USD $1,000,000,000 from each member, as stipulated in Article 2.2(c). This is also why European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen declined to attend the BoP summit, which was specifically dedicated to discussing fundraising. (Roth & Borger, 2026) The U.S. isn't too concerned if many core countries refuse to join, the U.S. chooses to reach out to Muslim-majority countries that have not yet recognized Israel's existence, in aims soon establishing diplomatic relations. Similarly, while European countries are indeed not interested in joining BoP, they have long recognized Israel's existence. (Aprillianza & Uang, 2026)

Middle Power in The Board of Peace

Middle-power membership in BoP can be understood as a process of negotiation between a country's interests and the moral expectations of its people. (Süsler & Alden, 2026) Membership in BoP requires diplomatic flexibility to interact with global powers, but at the same time must maintain domestic legitimacy, which is built on consistent support for Palestine. Table 1 shows that many middle-power countries have chosen to join. This decision also constitutes legitimation work, a state's effort to ensure that its foreign policy can influence BoP to make a peace. For example, Pakistan has stated that its participation in BoP is aimed at supporting a ceasefire, the disarmament of Hamas, and the reconstruction of Gaza and Palestinian self-determination. (MoFA of Pakistan, 2026a) From the perspective of negative peace, Pakistan's position serves as a diplomatic facilitator, mediator, and negotiator . (Coote, 2026) Decision to become a member can be interpreted as granting significant access to advocate for Palestinian interests in achieving negative peace. Moreover, Article 3.1 (d) states that each member state has one vote on BoP, so there is an opportunity to counter Israel's aggressive stance in Gaza through discourse, discussion, and reactions

that can influence the global community's response. (A'yun et al., 2024) For example, issuing a condemnation of Israel's plan to expel Gaza residents from the territory and its unilateral imposition of the death penalty on prisoners. (MoFA of Pakistan, 2026b)

Negative Peace in The Board Of Peace

Peace can only be achieved if negative peace is first successfully established, as conceptualized by Johan Galtung, rather than relying solely on the formation of international organizations. Trust in international organizations, including its governance and sustainability, also hinges on the three key roles that the BoP must fulfil, acting as an actor, a forum, and an instrument. (Archer, 2001) As a forum, BoP must serve as a venue for negotiations, communication, and decision-making that yields optimal outcomes for member states. As an actor, BoP must possess a distinct identity, capabilities, and the capacity to take specific actions at the global level. As an instrument, BoP should serve as a tool for member states to achieve specific, mutually beneficial goals and interests through cooperation. The reality today is that, despite BoP's establishment, with a total of 28 member states, 14 observer states, and the European Union as a regional organization with observer status, it has not yet been able to stop the violence throughout the Palestinian territories.

The following are details of the conflicts and acts of violence recorded each month from January through September 2026. On January 31, at least 30 Gazans were killed in airstrikes. (Christou, 2026) On February 4, approximately 24 civilians were killed in Israeli tank and airstrikes. On March 15, Israeli airstrikes killed at least 13 Gazans, including 9 police officers, a pregnant woman, and two children. (Ali, 2026) On April 24, an airstrike killed at least 8 civilians. (United Nations, 2026a) Between May 12 and 18, attacks took place that killed five people. (OCHA, 2026a) Between June 3 and 10, 39 civilians were killed in Israeli airstrikes, bombings, and gunfire. (OCHA, 2026a) Pada kurun waktu 22 hingga 29 Juli terdapat 30 orang tewas. (OCHA, 2026b). Between August 13 and 19, approximately 22 civilians were killed in military attacks. (United Nations, 2026c) On September 1, a military attack left about four civilians dead. (United Nations, 2026d) In addition, between September 2 and 9, approximately 35 residents were killed . (OCHA, 2026c). According to United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs OCHA report, the types of violence committed by Israel follow the same, recurring patterns: airstrikes, shootings, and the use of artillery. In several conflicts and incidents of violence, Hamas and Israel have also accused each other of violating the ceasefire, causing the conflict and violence to continue, even though one of the hallmarks of negative peace is the establishment of a ceasefire.

In achieving a negative peace, there is the category of the absence of direct violence that is, direct violence such as physical violence that causes injury, death, and destruction which must be stopped.(Brenner & Ben-Shmuel, 2026) BoP, in its capacity to foster peace as outlined in Article 3.1, must address the ongoing deaths of civilians, children, security personnel, and pregnant women, as these constitute one of the empirical indicators for evaluating security conditions following the establishment of the BoP. Moreover, violations of international humanitarian law continue to occur, including ongoing attacks targeting civilians, as well as attacks that are indiscriminate or disproportionate. Such attacks are categorized as war crimes. (Verdeja, 2025)

Negative peace does not allow this situation to continue, BoP, as a forum, has not yet been able to play a role in facilitating negotiations and communication between the disputing parties, which has led to loss of life from January through September. According to a report by OCHA, attacks on refugee camps and the deployment of tanks in residential areas continue to occur, compounded by the use of heavy machinery to demolish residents' homes, which has led to civilian insecurity. (OHCHR, 2026) As an institution, BoP should be able to coordinate collective action by member states to stop the violence, and be better equipped to deliver humanitarian aid and support reconstruction in accordance with BoP's mission as outlined in Article 1. However, according to the OHCHR report, Israel continues to block humanitarian aid. As an actor, BoP must be able to encourage Israel's compliance with international humanitarian law and the protection of civilians, so that BoP's commitment to improving conditions and making Gaza a safe zone for the population can be upheld through ongoing assessments of the continuing violence and conflict in the Gaza Strip. Therefore, if peace within BoP is linked to reconstruction, development, investment, and economic development, then the BoP outlined in the Gaza peace plan must first be grounded in

negative peace, preventing conflict through the establishment of a new social order. Reconstruction must not only improve material conditions but also transform the structures that perpetuate injustice against the people of Gaza. The role of BoP remains too vague to be considered an effort to achieve negative peace, as it oversimplifies the decades-long conflict between Palestine and Israel. However, it is also inaccurate to view the decision to join BoP as direct proof of success in advocating for Gaza.

4. CONCLUSION

Board of Peace was established as a tool to end the conflict and make peace in Gaza Strip. It has 28 member states and 15 observer states, including the European Union. BoP's mission, as outlined in Article 1, aligns with the concept of negative peace. However, following the establishment of BoP, violence has continued in the same pattern, namely, the use of military force resulting in civilian casualties. The mechanisms of BoP remain insufficient to prioritize diplomacy in mediating the ongoing conflict. This is compounded by a statement from the European Parliament asserting that the appointment of U.S. President, Donald Trump as chairman falls under the category of personalization of political power, which hinders the peace process.

Concrete actions by BoP to achieve negative peace and halt direct violence have also not yet been evident. The direct violence resulting in fatalities from January to September 2026 serves as an indicator BoP's peace mechanisms have not yet been effectively implemented. This study still has limitations in determining the operational standardization of BoP as an international organization in achieving peace based on negative peace, because BoP's operational mechanisms have not been well-structured, especially since BoP is often viewed as a manifestation of U.S. soft power in the Middle East. This research is expected to develop and analyze the existence of the BoP, in line with improvements to its mechanisms and performance as an international organization, in accordance with Article 1.

5. ETHICS STATEMENT

This study underwent a retrospective ethical review conducted by the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University Jakarta, on September 28, 2026 (Reference No. B-16/F.11/TL.00/9/2026). The study was classified as low-risk research because it employed document analysis and publicly available statements without directly involving human participants. The Ethics Committee emphasized the importance of maintaining objectivity, ensuring source accuracy, and avoiding unsupported allegations or conclusions, particularly those concerning personal interests and political motives. Following a review of the submitted research documents, the Committee concluded that no ethical concerns were identified. The authors are committed to upholding academic integrity, objectivity, and responsible interpretation throughout the research and publication process.

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