

Committee: Special Political and Decolonization Committee

Issue: The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict through the lens of reconciliation, lasting peace, and decolonization

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Position: Deputy President

INTRODUCTION

My name is Natalie Kostara and I will have the honour to serve as your Deputy President of the Disarmament and International Security Committee in this year's ATS MUN. I just graduated from Arsakeio Lyceum in Psychiko and I am going to study law in Thessaloniki. Should any questions concerning the topic or you believe that something needs to be clarified, feel free to contact me via my personal email; natalie222000@gmail.com

The Israeli-Palestinian dispute is an issue that has affected many generations and is still affecting the lives of everyone involved in a major way. It is crucial to keep in mind that this dispute at its foundation is not a religious war and that it does not concern the theological differences between Islam and Judaism. Depicting the conflict as eternal or religious makes it seem intractable and impossible to solve. Our aim is to try to understand both sides of the conflict and propose viable, inspired and progressive solutions.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Gaza Strip

Gaza or Gaza Strip is a territorial term that refers to a strip of land along the Mediterranean coast between Israel (east and north border) and Egypt (southwest border). The United Nations, the International human rights organizations and most of governments consider the territory to be occupied by Israel.



West Bank

West Bank is an area between Israel and Jordan on the western shore of Jordan river. The West Bank territory has been under Israeli military occupation since the Six-Day War in 1967.

Green Line

Green Line¹ also known as the 1949 Armistice Line, it was the boundary set between Israel and Jordan after the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. The name came from the green pencil line drawn during cease fire negotiations between the two countries.

Intifada

Intifada² is a term that means to literally "shake off" in Arabic. The first intifada was a revolt that began in December 1987 by Palestinian Arabs to protest Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. A second intifada began in September 2000.

Al-Nakba

"The Catastrophe", the 1948 dispossession of the Palestinians caused by the creation of the State of Israel.

Decolonization

Decolonization³ is the process by which colonies become independent of the colonizing country. The United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization has stated that in the process of decolonization there is no alternative to the colonizer than allowing a process of self-determination. Yet, in practice decolonization may be gradual and peaceful or it may involve native rebellions energized by nationalism.

Occupied Territories

The Palestinian territories outside the original borders of Israel declared in 1948, which Israel occupied during the 1967 war, and which it continues to occupy in contravention of international law and UN resolution 242. These comprise East-Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

¹ <https://www.infoplease.com/world/countries-world/glossary-israeli-palestinian-conflict-related-terms>

² <https://www.infoplease.com/world/countries-world/glossary-israeli-palestinian-conflict-related-terms>

³ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/decolonization>, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decolonization>

In the late 19th century the Ottoman Empire ruled over what is now known as Palestine. The population according to ottoman records from 1878, was 87% Muslim, 10% Christian and 3% Jewish, the language that was spoken in the everyday life was Arabic and in Jerusalem the religious populations were roughly equal. In brief, the ottoman Palestine was a place where people of different religious faiths coexisted peacefully. However, if the ottoman Palestine was, as presented, such a cosmopolitan, multicultural and multireligious society then a rather simple but crucial question emerges: What is the cause of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and how did Israel become a country/state in the first place?

The British involvement



The British involvement in the Palestinian affairs around 1920 complicated the situation in the area and ignited conflicts. The first sign of this involvement was the formation of Mandatory Palestine. This geopolitical entity resulted from the McMahon–Hussein Correspondence (1915-1916) between the United Kingdom and the ruler of Mecca, Sharif Hussein during World War one. In these letters British officials agreed to recognize/honour the Arab independence and satisfy the ambition of Hussein: ruling over an Arab state including Palestine *quid pro quo* (in exchange for) him launching/leading an Arab revolt against Ottoman rule, which Hussein promptly did.

However, simultaneously the British secretly signed the Asia Minor Agreement unofficially known as the Sykes–Picot Agreement (16 May 1916) between the United Kingdom and France. The Agreement determined the control that the two parties would have over Southwestern Asia by dividing the Arab territories in such a way that the British officials could maintain their sphere of influence over Palestine. The basis and the main condition of the agreement was that the Ottoman Empire would be defeated during the first World War.

The issue was further complicated by the Balfour Declaration (1917), a public statement by the British government promising, quote: “The establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people”. This was deemed a bold promise considering that Palestine had not escaped the Ottoman occupation as they hadn’t yet lost WW 1.

When the war came to an end the British government established a colony in Palestine stating that they would rule until the Palestinians were ready to govern themselves

or, as quoted: “until such time as they are able to stand alone.” The British legitimated their actions through the British Mandate for Palestine from the League of Nations in June 1922.

Competing nationalisms

In the meanwhile, two competing nationalist movements, Jewish nationalism and Arab-Palestinian nationalism, started forming and gradually gaining the support of the public.

The late 19th century is characterized by many as the Golden Age of nationalism in Europe and especially in the Habsburg Austro-Hungarian Empire in which at least ten different nations wanted their own state. In that hyper nationalistic empire, a secular Austrian-Jewish journalist, Theodor Herzl was the one who formed Jewish nationalism into an international movement around 1896. Herzl, having witnessed brutal anti-Semitism had hoped that Jews could assimilate into European nations but soon came to the realization that his people could never survive on their own and thus became convinced that they needed to leave Europe and settle in/create their own state. The concept of Jewish nationalism came to be known as Zionism. It is important to note that most Zionists, like Theodor Herzl himself, were secular⁴ Jews and as a result, imagined Israel as a state for Jews rather than a Jewish state.



As part of the 19th-century Zionist movement, Jews had begun settling in Palestine as early as 1820. During the 1930s, Jews persecuted by the Hitler regime immigrated to Palestine. The post-World War II acknowledgment of the Holocaust—Hitler's genocide of 6 million Jews—increased international interest in and sympathy for the cause of Zionism.

Along the way Palestinian Arabs formed a national identity and begun to consider themselves as the Palestinian nation. This stance was the result of the general opposition and hostile attitude that the Palestinian people maintained towards Zionism.

Concurrently, the British established separate institutions for Christians, Jews and Muslims, thus making the cooperation between them more difficult. Also, to honour the Balfour Declaration the British promised to, quote: “facilitate Jewish immigration under suitable conditions”. As a result, the Jewish population of Palestine increased by more than

⁴ Jewish secularism comprises the non-religious Jewish people and the body of work produced by them. Among secular Jews, traditional Jewish holidays may be celebrated as historical and nature festivals, while life-cycle events such as births, marriages, and deaths, may be marked in a secular manner. For further information visit: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jewish_secularism

320.000 people during the period 1920 - 1939. By 1938 Jews were just under 30% of the population of Palestine.

Until 1929 Jews and Arabs lived side-by-side, tolerating each other with minor disputes interrupting their symbiosis but in August 1929 their relations collapsed. The heightened tension resulted from the large Jewish population and the tactics they used to establish their presence. The growing Jewish population focused on purchasing land from absentee non-Palestinian Arab landowners and the evicting Palestinian farmers who were living and working there. By controlling both land and labour they hoped to find a more secure community.

The Great Revolt

The growing sense of nationalism erupted in 1936 with “The Great Revolt” when the Palestinians revolted against the British seeking their independence and the end of the Jewish immigration. The British military with the aid of Jewish militias brutally suppressed the revolt. It is estimated that 19,792 Arabs lost their lives, over 10% of the male Palestinian population between 20 and 60 was killed and thousand Arab-Palestinian houses and fields



were destroyed. On the contrary, the impact on the Jewish community was far less grave. Approximately 300 Jews had lost their lives but the Jewish settlements remained untouched. However,

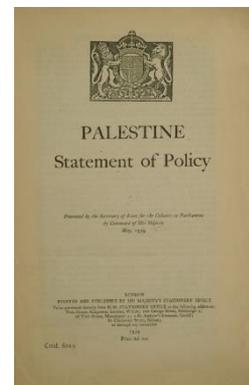
the British realised that in order to have the momentum to confront Germany, as the second world war was seemingly inevitable, they needed to secure the support of the Arab governments and the Arab populations. For the British the support of the Jews was guaranteed because frankly they had no alternative.

The White Paper of 1939

Consequently, the British government called the London Conference (February 1939) with the intention to negotiate an agreement between Jews and Arabs. However, the British were obliged to hold two different conferences since Arab representatives did not want to, in any way, legitimize the Jewish claims in Palestine. Unfortunately, the conference failed, and no agreement or settlement was made.

Yet, after its approval from the House of Commons on the 23 of May the British issued the White Paper of 1939⁵. This paper was essentially a policy paper that imposed certain obligations on the Mandatory and regulated the governing policy of the British until their departure in 1948. The White Paper secured the establishment of a “national home for the Jewish people” in an independent Palestinian state within a decade but it also limited the Jewish immigration and declared that after the passing of 5 years further immigration would be regulated by the Arab majority (section II). Furthermore, Jews faced certain restrictions on their right to purchase land from the Arabs (section III). These measures assured the civil and religious rights of the Palestinian inhabitants. The League of Nations did not endorse/advocate the Paper.

At first the Arab representatives found the White Paper to be insufficient and inadequate, outraged with the prospect of waiting 10 years for a state. However, in July 1940 after a series of meetings with British representatives they acknowledged it and signed a copy. On the contrary, Jews never really recognised the Paper. The Zionist groups in Palestine instantly renounced it and proceeded in a general strike, a bombing campaign regulated by Irgun⁶, revolts and plans for armed conflict endorsed by Irgun, Zionist leaders and the Polish government. Their rage was mainly the product of their indignation against the limit on Jewish immigration at a time when Jews particularly needed to leave Europe.



The end of Mandatory Palestine

In the aftermath of WW II, a series of events persuaded Britain that colonies like Palestine were far more trouble than they were worth: In 1946, the Irgun bombed the British headquarters in Jerusalem which resulted in 92 deaths. Shortly after, in April the United States of America and Britain announced that they had agreed on a common policy regarding the Jewish immigration in Palestine. However, the U.S. President Harry S. Truman delivered a statement that supported the immigration of the 100,000 Jewish refugees but did not recognise any of the other decisions that had been made during the U.S.A.-British

⁵ For a more extensive look on the White Paper of 1939 visit: http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/brwh1939.asp

⁶ A right-wing Zionist organization founded in 1931. During the period when it was active (1937–48) it carried out violent attacks on Arabs and Britons in its campaign to establish a Jewish state; it was disbanded after the creation of Israel in 1948. (<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/irgun>)

negotiations. Two years later the Lehi⁷ proceeded in an assassination of the UN mediator in Jerusalem. The anti-British hostility among the Jews advanced rapidly. After the Acre Prison Break and the execution of British Sergeants by Irgun the British finally decided that they would withdraw their troops and depart from the Mandate handing the issue of Palestine over to the newly created United Nations. The UN voted to partition Palestine into separate Palestinian and Jewish states and the city of Jerusalem, but this plan did not work⁸.

The establishment of the state of Israel

The Partition Plan was received with enthusiasm by the Jewish community but



generated the outrage of the Arab one leading to disputes that evolved into a civil war. The endless warfare and the climate of uncertainty and insecurity led 100,000 Arabs to flee their homes and settle in east Arab centers or abroad. Contrarily, the Jewish communities were obligated to remain at and protect

their territories no matter what / despite everything. Due to the withdrawal of the United States from the Partition Plan the Arab League assumed that this was the time to end the Plan once and for all. However, Jews managed to sign certain ammunition contracts with the East that gave them great advantage.

Neither Jews nor Arab-Palestinians acted in accordance with the Partition Plan, which meant that they did not accept Jerusalem as an independent/ autonomous territory that would not be under Jewish nor Arab jurisdiction. At the same time Irgun and Lehi members and small groups butchered a large number of Arabs. These actions contributed heavily in the exodus of the Arab population from Palestine. On the 14th of May Israel was established as a state signifying the beginning of the Arab- Israeli war of 1948.

The Arab - Israeli War of 1948

On the eve of May 14th Palestinian Arabs with aid from the joint forces of Egypt, Transjordan (Jordan), Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and later a formation from Saudi Arabia under Egyptian command attacked the former Palestinian Mandate, the areas that had not been distributed to Jews by the UN.



⁷ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lehi_\(militant_group\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lehi_(militant_group))

⁸ For more information about the UN involvement refer to the section: UN INVOLVEMENT: RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS of the Study Guide.

Eventually, British forces from Transjordan took part in the conflict and Israelis won the battle under a united front. The war continued during 1949 until February when Israel and the bordering nations of Egypt, Transjordan (Jordan), Syria and Lebanon reached formal armistice agreements. The armistice lines that were determined by these agreements were known eventually as the “Green Line”.

Israelis had won the war and now occupied a third more land than they would have had under the former UN proposal. Meanwhile, Jordan controlled, and latter annexed the West Bank and the old city of Jerusalem whereas Egypt had control over the Gaza strip. Up to 750.000 Palestinians fled their homes and sought refuge in the neighboring Arab countries. To Israelis this was the beginning of a new era, the beginning of their nation. To Palestinians it was the "al-Nakba"⁹, the catastrophe, as they became stateless.

The Six-Days War

In the course of the next 18 years tensions between some Arab states, mainly Egypt from one hand and France and Britain from the other arose, yet nothing changed territorially until 1967 when the Six – Days war erupted (between 5 and 10 June 1967). This



war resulted from the years of increasing tension and fights regarding the borders between Arabs and Israelis and was fought by Israel and Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. On June 10 after an order for ceasefire by the UN the war ended. Israelis had once again

won and now controlled the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip from Egypt, the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan, and the Golan Heights from Syria. 20,000 Arabs and 800 Israelis had lost their lives in just six days of warfare. After the war the Israel-Arab conflict morphed into a more specific Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The First Intifada

After the Six-Days War ended the frustration of Palestinians grew as they were now living under Israeli occupation. The hostile Israeli policies did not make the situation any better. It was almost impossible for the Palestinians to secure a stable job or to work under

⁹ Nakba: Arabic word for catastrophe, used by Arabs to refer to what is called the War of Independence by the Jews (<https://www.infoplease.com/world/countries-world/glossary-israeli-palestinian-conflict-related-terms>).

decent conditions, since the Israeli labor market offered them positions for unskilled or semi-skilled labor jobs that Israelis did not want, and degree related positions were unattainable. In addition, the “Iron Fist” policy of Israel intended to exterminate Palestinian nationalism made matters worse. Approximately 50 deportations of Palestinian families took place accompanied by nearly 130,000 Jewish settlements especially in the West Bank. Palestinians lived in a constant state of fear, humiliation, violence and repression. The only thing needed was a motive, a cause to start a systematic resistance against Israeli authorities.

On the 9th of December 1987 Palestinians launched the first Intifada with boycotts of Israeli products and services, refusal to pay taxes, general strikes, demonstrations, graffiti, stone-throwing and Molotov cocktails. When Israel responded sending armed forces to restrain the protesters violence ensued. The first Intifada saw the founding of Hamas which launched the first suicide bombing against Israel in 1993.



The Intifada lasted from 1987 until 1993. During these six years almost all the Palestinian population in the territories occupied by Israel and the refugee camps took part in the uprising. To suppress the uprising Israeli authorities used tear gas, rubber and plastic bullets and in some cases, they deployed live ammunition. During the first two months over 50 Arabs were killed and hundreds wounded. In the first year 142 Palestinians were killed, in the Gaza strip alone, with no Israeli casualties. During the whole six-year intifada, the Israeli army killed 1,204 Palestinians, from whom 241 to 332 were children. According to B'Tselem 179 Israelis were killed. 3,100 Israelis, 1,700 of them soldiers, and 1,400 civilians suffered injuries.

The Oslo Accords

The most important legacy of the First Intifada was the united front that Palestinians presented while acting independently of their leadership and the other Arab states and the emergence of peace talks between Palestinians and Israelis. This led to the Oslo Accords and the peace process based on UN Security Council Resolution 242. In the following months Israel and the PLO engaged in active negotiations for an Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

The Oslo Accords served as a framework for the peace process and a basis for Israeli-Arab cooperation. The form of self-government authorized at Oslo and the withdrawal plans provided a basis for eventual Palestinian statehood. However, the Palestinian Arabs were encouraged by more radical groups to oppose a two-state solution. Israeli extremists were also set to sabotage the Oslo Accords. In addition, the question of Jewish settlements and the right of Palestinian refugees and their descendants to return to Palestine remained.

Al-Aqsa Intifada (Second Intifada)

Various attempts for fruitful negotiation and co-operation had been made. However, the peace process was constantly being undermined by intransigent attitudes on both sides. On September 28 2000 Ariel



Sharon, Israel's hardline leader visited a Jerusalem shrine known as Temple Mount, sacred to both Jews and Muslims. His visit angered Palestinian Jerusalemites who later proceeded in angry demonstrations that erupted into rioting where dozens of police and several Palestinians were injured.

Subsequently, clashes erupted in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. A general strike and demonstrations across northern Israel began. Quickly the demonstrations morphed into clashes with the Israeli police. Palestinian demonstrators used rock-throwing, firebombing, and live-fire. Policemen used tear-gas and opened fire with rubber-coated bullets and later live ammunition in some instances, contrary to police protocol. After the death of nineteen people as a result of a day of heavy fighting, Israeli Arabs protested in solidarity with



Palestinians, and Israelis were banned from travelling in Palestinian territories. Hatred and violence characterized both sides. Eventually, on October 6th Israel sealed the West Bank and Gaza Strip causing demonstrators to storm into Joseph's Tomb in Nablus. On 12 October two Israeli reservists who had accidentally entered Ramallah were lynched by an angry Palestinian

mob. The brutality of the killings shocked the general public and especially the Israeli citizens. In response, Israeli authorities launched a series of punitive air-strikes against Palestinian Authority targets in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

According to B'Tselem it is estimated that during the second Intifada 1,053 Israelis were killed by Palestinian attacks. The Palestinian casualties amount to 4,745 Palestinians killed by Israeli security forces, and 44 Palestinians killed by Israeli civilians. In addition, B'Tselem reports 577 Palestinians killed by Palestinians.

The exact date that marked the end of the Second Intifada is questioned with some considering the Intifada to have ended in late 2004 due to the death of the Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, some in August 2005 along with the Israeli disengagement from the Gaza Strip and others in 8 February 2005 when the Palestinian President and the Israeli Prime Minister promised to end attacks on each other.

The Separation Fence

The attacks on the World Trade Centre towers and the Pentagon changed the view of the Western World towards Arab nations and the Muslim religion. As a result in the dispute between Israel and Palestine Israel was now perceived as a “victim” state dealing with terrorism which gave Israeli authorities the ethical leverage to proceed in violent sieges intended to exterminate “terrorism hot spots”. The most significant was the siege in the Jenin refugee camp.



By May 2002 the Israelis had withdrawn, or been redeployed, but made further incursions in June, at which point the building of the Separation Fence commenced. The Israelis claiming to act in defense of civilians begun construction of a wall around the West Bank but instead of following the borders established in the 1967 War, the barrier was built to include many Israeli settlements on the Israeli side.

To Israelis this wall was about self-defense. To Palestinians it was an illegal land-grab that increased the power and the alleged legitimacy of the Israeli occupation.

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict has been going on for decades and as a result it has a major impact not only on the two rival states but also on the whole region. Most of the neighboring Arab states have fought multiple wars with Israel as they support the Palestinian national cause. Even states that are not Israel's immediate neighbors have taken part in the conflict. Here is a list with the major countries and organizations involved in the conflict:

Countries

Egypt

After a long period of continuing disputes Egypt was the first Arab state to sign a peace treaty with Israel, in 1978. However, this treaty was heavily endorsed by the United States. One of the most significant parameters of the treaty is that Egypt is forbidden from having any military presence in the bordering Sinai Peninsula, due to the fact that it has helped militant and criminal groups flourish there in the past.

Iran

Iran is Israel's greatest adversary in the region. For the Iranian government the creation of a Jewish state does not have any legitimate or moral foundation and for that it does not shy away from supporting the most radical anti-Israeli Arab factions. Iran faces Israel as an imminent and pragmatic threat and has provided Hamas, Hezbollah and Syria with financial and military aid.



Syria

Syria is a close ally of Iran and is hostile against the State of Israel. The main goal of the Syrian state is to regain control over the Golan Heights, a land that Israel annexed during their 1967 war.

Lebanon

Lebanon has a long history of conflicts with Israel. It is also considered the home of Hezbollah, which plays a major role in Lebanese politics. For these reasons Lebanon is most likely not to get involved in any negotiations between the Israel and Palestine.

Jordan

Jordan's role in the conflict is ambiguous. On one hand it has signed a peace treaty Israel and on the other it hosts one of the largest Palestinian refugee camps and it also provides full citizenship to the Palestinian people. However, Palestinians have become increasingly skeptical about whether Jordan truly supports Palestine or not, on account of the poor treatment and the hardships Palestinian refugees face.

Turkey

Turkey has been on good terms with the state of Israel for a really long time. Nevertheless, with the election of its Islamist Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan it has become increasingly pro-Palestinian. The Turkish leader finds himself an advocate of the ideological, domestic, and geopolitical interests of Palestine. The diplomatic relations between Israel and Turkey have been greatly severed by a conflict over an Israeli raid on a Turkish aid mission to Gaza. In 2016 their relations improved but are still delicate.

Saudi Arabia

The kingdom of Saudi Arabia hasn't yet recognized Israel as a state, donates really large amounts of money to the Palestinian authorities and is behind the Arab League peace plan of 2002 which serves as a substitute to traditional Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. Yet, its hostility towards Iran has led to a bizarre cooperation between Israeli and Saudi Arabian governments.

United States of America (U.S.A.)

The United States of America are one of the biggest if not the biggest supporter of Israel. It is estimated that the USA has donated \$118 billion on aid for Israel and continues to give about \$3 billion per year. This strong alliance has its foundation in the Cold War. During that period Israel served as a safeguard against Soviet influence in the Middle East supporting simultaneously the US interests. Since the Cold War the relations between the two states have become increasingly stronger due to a common interest in fighting jihadism and the sympathy that the American public has for Israel. However, this does not mean that the two states did not experience any tensions. During the presidencies of Barack Obama and the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu the two leaders disagreed on issues like the Israeli settlements and the relations



with Iran. Nevertheless, with the election of Donald Trump and his decision to formally recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital, the diplomatic relations have been restored.

Organizations

Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya (Hamas)

The word “Hamas” itself means “zeal”, “enthusiasm”. Hamas bases its ideology on that of the Muslim Brotherhood which originated in Egypt in the 1920s. It was founded as an organisation in the late 1970s and draws its main support from Gaza .



Fatah

Reverse mnemonic for *Hizb al-Tahrir al-Filistini* – Palestinian Liberation Party – founded by Palestinian students, including Yasser Arafat, in Kuwait in 1958.

Haganah

Underground military organisation of the yishuv in Palestine. It succeeded Ha-Shomer in 1920 and operated until 1948 when members joined the Israeli army.

Hovevei Zion (lovers of Zion)

International Zionist movement. It grew up in the 1880s and served as the focus of early Zionist aspirations.

Likud

Right-wing political party in Israel made up of a group of smaller parties. It was established in 1973, and in 1977 became the largest party in Knesset (the parliament of Israel).

Hezbollah

Hezbollah is based in Lebanon a virulently anti-Israel Shia Islamist militant group funded by Iran and based in Lebanon. The group is considered a terrorist organization by the United States, Israel, Canada, the Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation. The United Kingdom, Australia and the European Union consider only its military wing as a terrorist organisation.

Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO)

Founded in Jerusalem in May 1964 under the aegis of the Arab League. The PLO later became a federation of organisations, of which Fatah was the largest. Arafat, as the leader of Fatah, became chairman of the PLO.

Palestinian National Authority (PNA)

The Palestinian Government in waiting, formed in 1994 it has limited autonomy in parts of the Occupied Territories and jurisdiction over internal affairs.

Arab League

The League of Arab States, or Arab League, is a voluntary association of countries with mainly Arabic speaking citizens or where Arabic is an official language. Its established goals are to strengthen ties among member states, coordinate their policies and direct them towards a common good. It has 22 members including Palestine, which the League regards as an independent state¹⁰. The Arab League has backed Egypt's efforts to establish a truce between Israel and Hamas. The leader of the Arab League has also condemned "Israel's aggression" against Palestinians.

United Nations Security Council

Under the Charter, the Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. The Security Council takes the lead in determining the existence of a threat to the peace or act of aggression. It calls upon the



parties to a dispute to settle it by peaceful means and recommends methods of adjustment or terms of settlement. In some cases, the Security Council can resort to imposing sanctions or even authorize the use of force to maintain or restore international peace and security¹¹. Under the Charter, all Member States

are obligated to comply with Council decisions. The UN Security Council has called for a halt to violence between Hamas and Israel but has taken no action to date. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has issued statements expressing concern about "the worrisome escalation of violence in southern Israel and Gaza and the need to prevent any further deterioration."

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

¹⁰ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-15747941>

¹¹ <http://www.un.org/en/sc/>

Date	Description of Event
1891	Arab protests against Zionist settlers in Palestine.
1896	Publication of <i>The Jewish State</i> by Theodor Herzl.
1897	First international Congress of Zionists.
1908-1909	Arab opposition to Zionist settlements intensifies.
1914-1918	First World War.
1915-1916	Sykes-Picot agreement.
1917	Balfour Declaration.
1919	Chaim Weizmann leads Zionist delegation at Paris Peace Conference.
1920-1921	Arab anti-Jewish riots in Palestine.
1930	Passfield White Paper seeks British disengagement from the Jewish National Home aspects of the Balfour Declaration and the Palestine Mandate.
1939	White Paper repudiates partition and favours an independent Palestinian State.
1939-1942	Co-operation between British forces and Jews in Palestine.
1943	Anglo-American Conference at Bermuda on refugees.
1945	President Truman supports the demand of a large number of immigrants to Palestine.
1946	<p>Truman supports demand of admission of 100,000 refugees to Palestine. This is refused by the British.</p> <p>Jewish sabotage operations throughout Palestine.</p> <p>Irgun blows up King David Hotel in Jerusalem.</p> <p>Truman endorses partition of Palestine and creation of a Jewish state.</p>
1947	British Foreign Secretary, Ernst Bevin, declares intention to refer the Palestine Mandate back to the UN. General Assembly votes for partition of Palestine into a Palestinian and a Jewish state.

1948	<p>Irgun massacre villagers at Deir Yassin. Palestinian civilians flee <i>en masse</i> fearing a similar fate.</p> <p>Ben-Gurion declares the State of Israel.</p> <p>Termination of the British Mandate.</p> <p>Arab armies enter areas assigned to the Palestinian State under the partition plan to support Palestinian resistance.</p> <p>Fighting between Israel and Egypt.</p> <p>United Nations resolution 194 states that Palestinian refugees wishing to return to their homes should be permitted to do so and the compensation for loss or damage to property should be paid.</p>
1949	<p>Israel concludes armistice agreements with Egypt, Lebanon and Syria.</p> <p>UN votes in favour of internationalising Jerusalem.</p> <p>Ben-Gurion declares Jerusalem the capital of Israel.</p>
1950	<p>Beginning of immigration to Israel of Jews from Arab countries.</p> <p>King Abdullah of Jordan formally annexes the West-Bank.</p> <p>The Law of Return gives the right to settle in Israel to every Jew worldwide.</p>
1958	<p>Relations between Israel and United States strengthened.</p>
1964	<p>Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) founded.</p>
1967	<p>Six-Day War.</p> <p>United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 issued.</p>
1968	<p>Yasser Arafat elected chairman of the executive committee of the PLO.</p>
1973	<p>Egypt and Syria launch a full-scale war against Israeli forces occupying the Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights.</p>
1974	<p>Summit meeting of Arab leaders in Rabat declares the PLO the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.</p>
1978	<p>Israel invades south Lebanon and attacks Palestinian guerrilla bases.</p>

	Camp David accords signed by Egypt, Israel and USA.
1979	Egypt and Israel sign peace treaty.
1982	Israel invades Lebanon in an offensive against the PLO. Following the siege, the PLO Lebanon, establishes headquarters in Tunis and scatters its fighters throughout the Arab countries. Massacre of Palestinian refugees in Sabra and Shatila camps in Lebanon. Lebanon-Israeli truce.
1985	Palestinian Intifada begins in the Israeli-occupied Gaza-Strip and the West Bank. Jordanian disengagement from the West Bank. Palestinian National Council declares an independent Palestinian State. Arafat recognises Israel and renounces terrorism before the UN at Geneva. USA agrees to open dialogue. Mass immigration of Soviet Jews to Israel begins.
1991	Gulf War: Allied bombing campaign against Iraq.
1994	Jewish settler Baruch Goldstein murders Palestinian Muslims worshipping at Hebron Mosque. Cairo Agreement between Israel and PLO. Israeli forces commence withdrawal from Jericho and the Gaza Strip.
2000	Palestinian uprising. Temple Mount triggers Al-Aqsa Intifada (Second Intifada).
2001	Terror attacks on the World Trade Centre. PFLP assassinates Israeli tourism minister Rehav'am Ze'evi.
2002	Israel mounts operation "Defensive Wall" in retaliation for suicide bombings. Invasion of Jenin refugee camp and West Bank towns.

	<p>Chairman Arafat signs the 2002: PNA Basic Law.</p> <p>Israel commences building of the “Separation Fence”.</p> <p>President Bush calls for Israeli withdrawal and a Palestinian State but insists that PNA be reformed and current leaders replaced.</p>
2005	<p>Israeli disengagement from the Gaza Strip.</p>
2006	<p>Hamas wins a majority of seats in the Palestinian legislature.</p> <p>Israel-Lebanon War.</p>
2007	<p>The armed wing of Hamas announces that the truce with Israel has ended.</p>
2009	<p>Barack Obama elected president of the United States of America.</p> <p>US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton goes to Israel.</p> <p>White House announces negotiations to take place between Israel and the Palestinians.</p> <p>Israel imposes construction freeze on settlements in the West Bank.</p>
2010	<p>Israel carries out Gaza flotilla raid.</p> <p>Negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians take place.</p>
2011	<p>Fatah and Hamas sign a unity agreement.</p> <p>Mahmoud Abbas appeals to the UN General Assembly to recognise Palestine as a nation state.</p>
2014	<p>On 8 July Israel launches Operation Protective Edge in the Gaza Strip; its aim is to stop rocket attacks from Gaza.</p> <p>Mahmoud Abbas appears before the UN General Assembly demanding an end to Israeli occupation and recognition of the Palestinian state.</p>
2015	<p>Israeli couple is shot dead in their car in occupied West Bank; this marks the beginning of a wave of violent attacks by Palestinians or Israeli Arabs.</p> <p>Due to the decision of the European Union to label goods from Jewish settlements in the West Bank as coming from settlements,</p>

	Israel suspends contact with EU officials.
2016	<p>Israel and Turkey reach agreement over 2010 Gaza flotilla raid.</p> <p>Israel suspends working ties with 12 countries that voted for a Security Council resolution condemning settlement building.</p> <p>First US abstention from the vote rather than using its veto.</p>
2017	<p>The Parliament legalises a large number of Jewish settlements build on private Palestinian land.</p> <p>Work begins on the new Jewish settlement in the West Bank.</p> <p>US President Donald Trump recognizes Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, a move that upsets the Arab world and some Western allies.</p>
2018	<p>Prosecutors investigate allegations that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu pressed regulators to help the Bezeq telecoms company in return for favourable news coverage from one of its websites. Mr Netanyahu denies all the allegations.</p> <p>UN and Egypt attempt to arrange a long-term ceasefire between Israel and Hamas amid an upsurge in violence on the Gaza border from March.</p>

UN INVOLVEMENT: RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

- **A/RES/181(II) (1947)**

Adopted by the Security Council on 29 November 1947 resolution 181 endorsed the partition plan for Palestine at the end of the British Mandate. The resolution suggested the creation of one Arab and one Jewish independent state and a Special International Regime for the city of Jerusalem. The Partition Plan, a four-part document attached to the resolution arranged the progressive withdrawal of British armed forces and the drawing of boundaries between the two States and Jerusalem.

- **A/RES/3379 (XXX) (1975)**

Adopted by the General Assembly at its 2400th meeting by the Security Council on 10 November 1975 this resolution dealt with the question of the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination. Among others the resolution stated that Zionism was a form of racism and racial discrimination. This topic has remained highly controversial, and when it resurged at the UN 2001 anti-racism summit in South Africa both Israel and the US walked out of the conference.

- **S/RES/242 (1967)**

Adopted by the Security Council at its 1382nd meeting on 22 November 1967 in the aftermath of the Six-Days War, resolution 242 is the most important of its resolutions. It calls for the withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from Egypt, the Golan



Heights from Syria and the West Bank from Jordan and for "just settlement of the refugee problem". Resolution 242 is one of the most widely affirmed resolutions on the Arab–Israeli conflict and formed the basis for later negotiations between the parties and essentially proposes the "Two State

Solution". However, it does not set out what a "just" solution for the Palestinian refugees would entail. Resolution 242 remains the basis for most peace plans and led to Peace Treaties between Israel and Egypt (1979) and Jordan (1994), as well as the 1993 and 1995 agreements with the Palestinians. It also speaks of the necessity for "sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every state in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognised boundaries."

- **S/RES/425 (1978)**

Adopted by the Security Council during its 2074th meeting on 19 March 1978 after the Israeli Invasion of Lebanon took place, this resolution called on Israel to cease military action and to immediately withdraw its forces from Lebanon and also established the United Nations Interim Force In Lebanon (UNIFIL). Israel eventually withdrew from Lebanon in 2000 yet, it maintains the Shebaa Farms area.

- **S/RES/1322 (2000)**

Adopted by the Security Council at its 4205th meeting on 7 October 2000 resolution 1322 expressed concern over the horrific events that had taken place since September 28 of that year, when Ariel Sharon provoked Palestinian Jerusalemites with a visit to the site of the al-Aqsa mosque (Temple Mount), in Jerusalem. The

Council called for the immediate cessation of hostilities and a return to negotiations. It also demanded that Israel abides by its responsibilities under the Fourth Geneva Convention and protects all civilians of war.

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

The Armistice Agreements of 1949 signed between Israel and the states of Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan and Syria ended the hostilities of the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, and established armistice lines between Israel and the Green Line, until the 1967 Six-Day War.

The Camp David Accords of 1978 were signed by Egyptian President Anwar El Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin, and they were a result of twelve days of secret negotiations at Camp David¹². The two agreements were signed at the White House and the United States President Jimmy Carter served as a witness. The Accords led directly to the 1979 Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty.

The Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty of 1979 was signed in Washington DC on March 26, 1979, by Egyptian president Anwar Sadat and Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin, and witnessed by United States president Jimmy Carter. The main characteristics of the treaty were the mutual recognition of each country by the other, the ending of the conflict that had existed since the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, and the complete departure of the Israeli armed forces and civilians from the rest of the Sinai Peninsula which Israel had captured during the 1967 Six-Day War. The agreement also authorised the free passage of Israeli ships through the Suez Canal.



The Madrid Conference of 1991 was hosted by the government of Spain and co-sponsored by the USA and the USSR. It convened on October 30, 1991 and lasted for three days until 1 November 1991. It was an early attempt by the international community to start a peace process between Israel and the Arab countries including Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and the Palestinians. Subsequent mutual meetings took place in Washington from 9 December

¹² Camp David is the country retreat for the President of the United States.

1991 where George H.W. Bush together with the Soviet Union offered a letter of invitation to Israel, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and the Palestinians.

The Oslo Accords of 1993 were the first direct, agreement between Israel and political representatives of Palestinians and it was the first time that some Palestinian publicly acknowledged the existence of the State of Israel and in general its right to exist. It was intended to serve as a foundation for the future relations between Israel and the anticipated State of Palestine.

The Israel-Jordan Treaty of Peace of 1994 is peace treaty that institutionalised relations between the two countries and resolved territorial disputes between them. It is linked with the efforts to create peace between Israel and the PLO representing the Palestinian Authority. It was signed on October 26, 1994, at the southern border crossing of Arabah and made Jordan only the second Arab country (after Egypt) to sign a for of a peace treaty with Israel.

The Camp David Summit of 2000 was signed between the United States President Bill Clinton, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, and Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat. Eventually it proved to be an unsuccessful pursuit for a “final status settlement” to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The Road map for peace of 2002 is a plan to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict proposed by: The United States, the European Union, Russia, and the United Nations. The principles of the plan were first outlined by U.S. President George W. Bush in a speech on June 24, 2002, in which he called for an independent Palestinian state living side by side with Israel in peace.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

In order to propose realistic and viable solutions to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict delegates should base their efforts on three premises: Firstly, to strive for an Israeli-Arab agreement as opposed to an Israeli-Palestinian agreement. Secondly, to understand that the two-state solution is unrealistic in the near future but does not cease to be the main objective and thirdly to aim at interim and provisional arrangements to set the foundation for a final agreement.

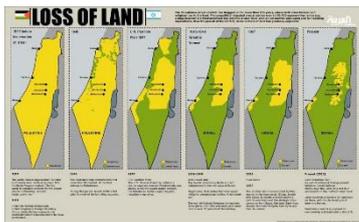
Joint effort

This arrangement does not concern only Israel and Palestine. The other Arab states such as Jordan, Egypt and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)¹³ must also be partners to the agreement. The Palestinian National Authority (PNA), Jordan, Egypt and the GCC should create a team, that its members possess the formal authorization to negotiate with Israel on all aspects of arrangements, as well as the final agreement.

Balance in the Gaza Strip

For any negotiations, agreements and arrangements to be made delegates should try to first resolve the issues concerning the Gaza Strip. Once stability is obtained in the Gaza Strip, negotiations regarding the final Israeli-Arab agreement should begin. PNA should restore its control over the Gaza Strip, GCC military forces should redistribute, station troops in the Gaza Strip together with PNA forces and the formal PNA force should merge Hamas' military force. In addition, all rockets should be destroyed, tunnel digging shall cease, and the Rafah crossing¹⁴ shall be opened.

In order to achieve fruitful negotiations all relevant issues should be addressed,



even the most delicate ones such as borders, refugees, Jerusalem, settlements, land and natural resources use, etc. It is crucial to remember that the conflict *can* end especially when this end is of strategic importance and serves the interests of the GCC, Egypt and Jordan organisations and countries that have the keys needed for the success of the negotiations.

Security and Trust

Extremist organisations from both sides have a major negative impact on the efforts for peaceful negotiations. Hamas' extreme ideology holds all sides hostage. It is due to the increasing threat to Israeli civilians posed by Hamas and other militant Islamist Palestinian groups that Israelis do not trust Palestinians and are thus unwilling to make any concessions. But, if Israel with the involvement of Arab states as reliable counterparts will be able to secure the security of its citizens, that will in turn strengthen Israeli willingness to compromise. Additionally, Hamas and Fatah create ideological and political gaps within Palestine making it impossible for Palestinians to make any kind of compromise. Guerrilla

¹³ a regional intergovernmental political and economic union consisting of all Arab states of the Persian Gulf except Iraq. Its member states are Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gulf_Cooperation_Council)

¹⁴ the sole crossing point between Egypt and Gaza Strip

groups and terrorism in general should be dealt with extreme care and inter-state cooperation is essential for any measures to be successful.

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