

Committee: Security Council

Issue: Israel and Palestine conflict after 2021: Navigating the uncharted waters of a post two-state solution

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Position: President

INTRODUCTION

Dear Delegates,

It is a great honor to collaborate with you all in our 7th Ats MUN. Together we will have the chance to discuss about issues of utmost importance for the future stability and prosperity of the cosmos. Before we proceed with the analysis of the agenda let's mention some peculiarities of our Committee. As many of you already know in the Security Council, we do not expect from the delegates to submit resolutions discussed on their alliances, but to prepare clauses that will be submitted individually by each delegation. The clauses supported by the majority will be part of our final resolution. So be ready to negotiate with all delegations to ensure that the final measures to be taken are in accordance with your country's policy regarding the issue. Me and Andreas expect from you to be prepared and passionate, but most of all to keep your minds open for an amazing dialogue and exchange of opinions.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Green Line: the name given to the 1949 Armistice lines¹ that constituted the *de facto* borders of pre-1967 Israel.² The demarcation line was set out in the 1949 Armistice Agreements between the armies of Israel and those of Egypt – Jordan – Lebanon and Syria, as an outcome of the 1948 Arab – Israel War.

¹ Custodians and Redeemers: Israeli Leaders' Perceptions of Peace, 1967–79. Amnon Sella, 1986

² "Glossary: Israel", *Library of Congress Country Studies*

East Jerusalem: East Jerusalem was a sector of the city of Jerusalem occupied by Jordan during the 1948 Arab – Israel War. “Following the war between Israel and the Palestinian and Arab states in 1948, Jerusalem was divided into an Israeli-held western sector and a Jordanian-held eastern sector”.³ “Both states treated the respective sectors of Jerusalem under their effective control as forming an integral part of their state territory between 1948 and 1967, and each recognized the other's *de facto* control in their respective sectors by the signature of the 1949 Jordan-Israel General Armistice Agreement.”⁴ “Israeli and Palestinian sources differ in their definition of East Jerusalem.”⁵

West Jerusalem: The western sector of Jerusalem captured by Israelian forces during the 1948 Arab – Israel War, as opposed to the Eastern sector controlled by the Jordanians. (Find more details above).

PLO: “Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), Arabic Munazzamat al-Taḥrīr Filasṭīniyyah, umbrella political organization claiming to represent the world’s Palestinians—those Arabs, and their descendants, who lived in mandate Palestine before the creation there of the State of Israel in 1948. It was formed in 1964 to centralize the leadership of various Palestinian groups that previously had operated as clandestine resistance movements. It came into prominence only after the Six Day War of June 1967, however, and engaged in a protracted guerrilla war against Israel during the 1960s, ’70s, and ’80s before entering into peace negotiations with that country in the 1990s “[...]”⁶

Oslo Accords: [...] “The first document in a set of Israel-PLO agreements—generally termed the Oslo Accords—was signed on September 13, 1993, by Arafat and the leaders of the Israeli government. The agreements called for mutual recognition between the two sides

³ Dumper, Michael (2002). *The Politics of Sacred Space: The Old City of Jerusalem in the Middle East Conflict*. Lynne Rienner Publishers. ISBN 978-1-588-26226-4. Archived from the original on 12 May 2021 p. 42.

⁴ Korman, Sharon (1996). *The Right of Conquest: The Acquisition of Territory by Force in International Law and Practice*. Oxford University Press. ISBN 9780191583803. Archived from the original on 12 May 2021 p. 251

⁵ Farsakh, Leila (2005). *Palestinian Labour Migration to Israel: Labour, Land and Occupation*. Routledge. ISBN 978-1-134-32847-5. Archived from the original on 12 May 2021 p. 9

⁶ Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Palestine Liberation Organization". *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 15 Jul. 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Palestine-Liberation-Organization>. Accessed 9 July 2021.

and set out conditions under which the West Bank and Gaza would be gradually handed over to the newly formed Palestinian Authority (PA)" [...]⁷

West Bank: "West Bank, Arabic *Al-Ḍaffah al-Gharbiyyah*, Hebrew *Ha-Gadah Ha-Ma'aravit*, area of the former British-mandated (1920–47) territory of Palestine west of the Jordan River, claimed from 1949 to 1988 as part of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan but occupied from 1967 by Israel. The territory, excluding East Jerusalem, is also known within Israel by its biblical names, Judaea, and Samaria. Within its present boundaries, the West Bank represents the portion of the former mandate retained in 1948 by the Arab forces that entered Palestine after the departure of the British. The borders and status of the area were established by the Jordanian-Israeli armistice of April 3, 1949. In the decades that followed the armistice, Jordan, Israel, and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) each laid claim to the approximately 2,180-square-mile (5,650-square-km) area. Pop. (2017) 2,881,957.⁸"

Gaza Strip: "Gaza Strip, Arabic *Qīṭā' Ghazzah*, Hebrew *Reẓu'at 'Azza*, territory occupying 140 square miles (363 square km) along the Mediterranean Sea just northeast of the Sinai Peninsula. The Gaza Strip is unusual in being a densely settled area not recognized as a **de jure** part of any extant country. The first accurate census, conducted in September 1967, showed a population smaller than had previously been estimated by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) or by Egypt, with nearly half of the people living in refugee camps. Pop. (2006 est.) 1,444,000.⁹"

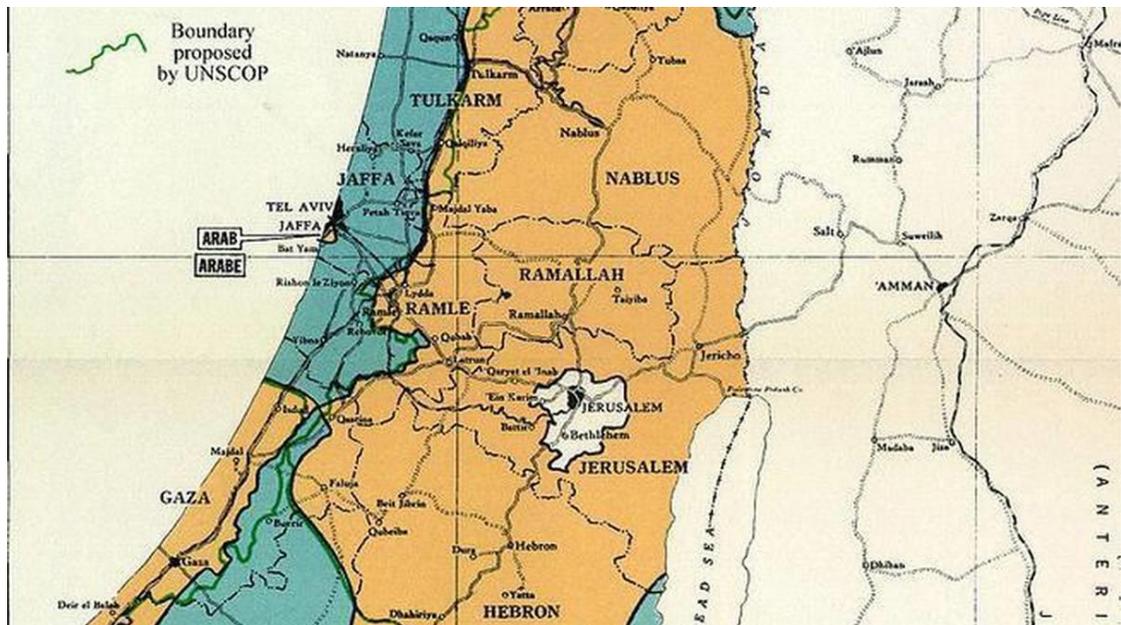
the Two-State solution: Two-state solution, proposed framework for resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by establishing two states for two peoples: Israel for the Jewish people and Palestine for the Palestinian people. In 1993 the Israeli government and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) agreed on a plan to implement a two-state

⁷ Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Palestine Liberation Organization". *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 15 Jul. 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Palestine-Liberation-Organization>. Accessed 9 July 2021.

⁸ Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "West Bank". *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 14 May. 2021, <https://www.britannica.com/place/West-Bank>. Accessed 9 July 2021.

⁹ Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Gaza Strip". *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 12 May. 2021, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Gaza-Strip>. Accessed 9 July 2021.

solution as part of the Oslo Accords, leading to the establishment of the Palestinian Authority (PA).¹⁰



¹⁰ Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Two-state solution". *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 20 May. 2021, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/two-state-solution>. Accessed 9 July 2021.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The complexity and importance of the Israel - Palestine Conflict could only be understood by the examination of the historical background.

The Early Roots

From the late 19th and the early 20th century a burst of nationalistic movements led by Jews and Arabs shocked the Middle East. Both groups tried to gain sovereignty for their people in the region. The **Balfour Declaration** was an attempt of Great Britain to diplomatically achieve the segmentation of the Ottoman Empire and to facilitate the growth British imperialism by creating competitive pole against the rising powers emerged from the Arab revolt. The Declaration **announced the support of Britain for the establishment of a “national home for the Jewish people”**.¹¹ An ongoing climax of violence since the Franco-Syrian War concluded in an armed struggle between the **Palestinian** Arabs and the **Yishuv** Jews with the main ideological motivations of the Jewish side to be the “right for land” and the non-recognition of the Palestinian Arab national entity, while the Palestinians in accordance with a larger coalitions of the Arabic powers of the region based their requests on the British promises during the World War I for self determination in the purely Arab areas. The tension resulted into the Arab Palestine Revolt and to a full-scale armed conflict with thousands of casualties until the beginning of the World War II.

By the end of the World War II the crisis over the relocation of surviving communities in Israel led to renew the tensions between the Yishuv Jews and the Palestinians followed by a huge growth of immigration to the region supported by the British. On 29 November 1947 the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the Resolution 181(II) supporting the plan to partition Palestine into an Arab state, a Jewish state, and the City of Jerusalem. The Resolution created tension almost immediately, and as a result a full-scale war was again conducted, and this time the Israeli side achieved an almost complete victory contributed to major changes in the region.

¹¹ Gelvin James (2014). *The Israel Palestine Conflict: One Hundred Years of War*. Cambridge University Press.



1947 United Nations Proposal
Palestinian borders in green



Actual Jewish owned regions in
1947 showed in blue



The Modern crisis: 1948 – 2012

The **Deceleration of the Establishment of the State of Israel** on 14/5/1948 was followed by the marching of the Arab league forces into former British Palestine which led to an overall fighting of 15.000 casualties. After a cease-fire in 1949 Israel had great control of the region, the West Bank was occupied by Jordan and the Gaza Strip by Egypt, where the **All-Palestine Government** was declared on 22/9/1948.

The All-Palestine Government faced exile after the occupation of Gaza Strip during the **Suez Canal Crisis**, which was later restored by the withdrawal of the Israeli forces and the collapse of the British control over the Canal. After tensions between the All-Palestine Government and Nasser's Egypt a new organization arose, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) under the emblematic Palestinian leader

Yasser Arafat, who soon gained trust of the Arab league governments and was granted a seat in the Arab League.

The Modern crisis: Six-Day War and aftermath

A rare example of an emphatic show of military readiness and power in modern history is the Israeli **Six-Day War**, a strategical triumph that gave to Israel the control of the West Bank from Jordan and the Gaza Strip from Egypt. As the **PLO** was unable to establish any control to the region moved its headquarters to Jordan home to hundreds of thousand Palestinians. However, the unfortunate Jordanian-Palestinian civil War and the defeat of the PLO caused to a massive relocation to South Lebanon where soon the Palestinians took over large territories.



In light green the Jordan occupation of the West Bank
In dark green the Egyptian occupation in Gaza Strip



During the Six-Day War Israel captured the West Bank and the Gaza Strip

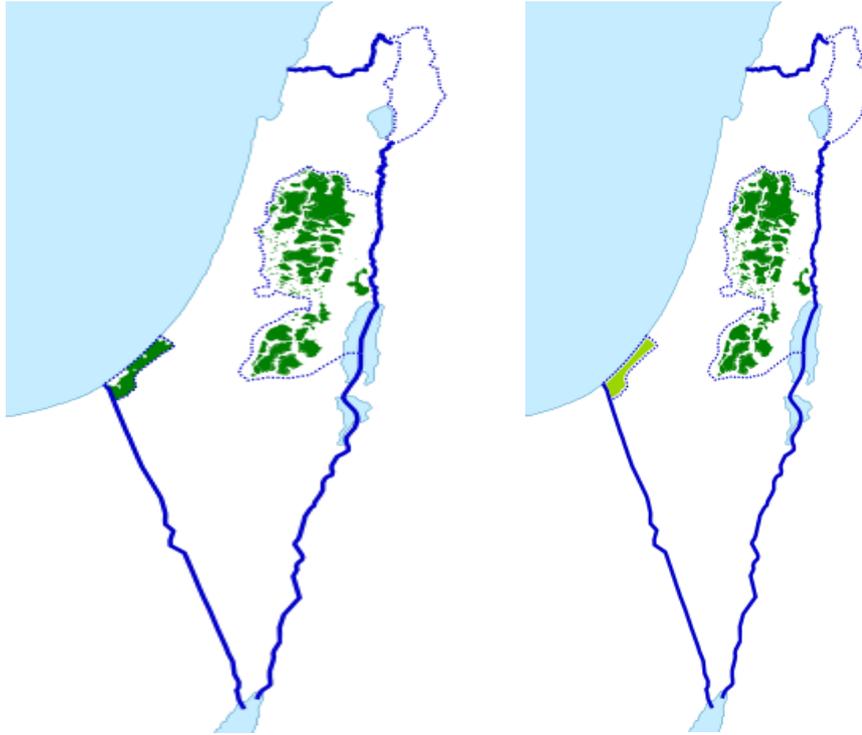
The Palestinians for almost a decade launched attacks on northern Israel and supported a world wide airplane hijacking campaign. An important incident widely known as the “**Coastal Road massacre**” resulted into a full-scale Israeli invasion. However Israeli forces withdrew quickly and the attacks against Israel continued. Soon an excuse was found in the attempt of the assassination of an Israeli official and Israel successfully involved in the **Lebanese Civil War**. Palestinian militants were defeated, and the PLO headquarters were captured. Although successful, the Israeli involvement deteriorated relationships with Syria

and Shia militants. Those groups later created Hizbullah and Amal movement which later allied with the Palestinians.

The Modern crisis: 1982-2012

An Egyptian Israel Peace Treaty in 1982 and the first Palestinian uprising in 1987 after exhausting violence and occupation led to the **Oslo Accords** of 1993 allowing the PLO to take into control in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. However, failures to reach a peace agreement and the fiasco of the **2000 Camp David Summit** resulted to the Second Intifada, a Palestinian uprising against Israel started in September 2000. Violence between the two sides lasted until 2005 when the Israeli Prime Minister Sharon ordered the withdrawal of military forces from Gaza Strip and formally declared the end of the occupation. However, the United Nations and many other bodies and NGOs still consider the Israeli occupation of Gaza ongoing.

The following years were characterized by a growing **popularity of Hamas** that won **plurality** in the **Palestinian Parliament**. Internal conflicts between Hamas and Fatah concluded to a Hamas domination of the area and an Israeli naval blockaded on the Strip of Gaza. The tensions escalated until late 2008 when “**the Cast Lead operation**” was launched resulting thousand casualties and enormous financial losses. **Finally, the Palestinian Authority attempt to gain UN membership failed in 2011**, and the nation was upgraded to an observer state only on November 2012.



Strip of Gaza and the 167 "islands" after Oslo Accords / After the Israeli disengagement from Gaza two separate governments took control the Palestinian enclaves of the West Bank and Gaza

Israel Palestine Crisis 2021:

An outbreak of violence on the ongoing conflict burst on 10 May 2021 and continued until the 21 May cease fire. The conflict was marked by protests and police brutality, rocket attacks from Hamas against Israel and massive airstrikes targeting Gaza. 12 Israeli civilians and one soldier killed, 256 Palestinians killed in Gaza and 27 in the West Bank. Hamas casualties are estimated to 80-225 militants. Over 72.000 Palestinians were displaced. The growth of tension followed a period of political disbelief and displeasure towards the Netanyahu Israeli government. The conflict was marked by a widespread awareness raised via the Social Media and scandalous dormancy from the progressive powers of the Western World to successfully support and protect the civilians by the Israeli aggression and secure coverage of the issue from International Media. Turkey's attempts to take control of the Arabic league and put pressure on the Israeli side, so as Russia's ambiguous position perplexed the situation even more.

The 2021 crisis showed conclusively to the world the uneven measures of powers with the Israeli military machine to be unmatched and ready to climax the aggression. Moreover, the total support of the USA and the Western block empowered Israeli status in an

International level and the State is likely to play a more important role in the future developments in the Middle East. However, the unrepresented awareness caused by the brutality of the conflict revealed the desire from a massive majority to reach a conclusive agreement. Latest statistics show that a great percent of Palestinians and Israelis wish an agreement based on **the Two-State solution**.

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

USA

One of the major factors that define the course of the Israel-Palestine conflict and the possibility of reaching a viable solution is the position of the United States of America. While the USA are Israel's most committed ally the American Foreign Office strategy seems to constantly change and adapt. A confident support of most Israeli claims in the international fora and a strong military collaboration sheals the reliability of the American pro-Israeli exterior policies dogma. The ties between the two were only strengthened during the Obama administration when the USA seemed eager to ensure a strong position in the Middle east. The 2015-2020 era for the USA, although characterized from rhetoric extravaganza and expressed suspicion towards Palestinian intentions for peace did not capitalized to any determined interference in the region. Trump administration did not follow the long-lasting attempt of the States claiming undisputed dominance in the Middle East and emphasized more in internal affairs.

President Biden is more likely to follow the path designed during his vice presidency and attempt a more ambitious role in the post-Syrian War Middle East. For such ambitions of course, the geostrategic advantage and the unmatched military power of Israel is key. However, taking into consideration the raised anti-imperialistic voices in his own party that much criticized America's apathy during the 2021 Israeli-Palestinian crisis, and a vast change in public opinion, USA administration is likely to employ a different approach. For sure, President Biden has not yet ensured the dominant position needed in the Security Council, in order to promote drastic dissensions in accordance with the American interest. By recognizing Israel's "legitimate right to defend itself" the USA clearly stated its position regarding the recent crisis.

RUSSIA FEDERATION – CHINA

Russia did well over the years, in mastering the art of keeping equal distances when is needed. In the exterior politics such a position often is the key. In this -sometimes tensed- neutrality Russia and more recently China seems to support the U.N as the organization responsible of ensuring peace in the region and for the moment both refrain from interferences except a constant call for a peaceful solution. By this diplomatic maneuver both powers are opposing to the USA primacy in controlling the course of events in Middle East, a region of Major importance to Russia. When promoting the U.N as the party responsible to reach an agreement the two countries are trying to make the most from their upper hand in influencing the Security Council and thus overcoming America's efforts to employ its own plans. In this way the good relationships between Moscow and Netanyahu are not disrupted and the interests of other allying powers such us Turkey are not harmed.

TURKEY – ARAB LEAGUE

The Arab league has always been the most passionate supporter of the Palestinian claims to land and self-determination. The long antagonization with the Israelis and the importance of the Israel-Palestine conflict has made the reach of an agreement favorable to the Arab interest as priority. However, historically there are evidence of an internal antagonism among the PLO and other Palestinian groups with powers of the region that either trying to claim strategic positions like Egypt's struggle over the years to put under control the Gaza Strip, or resisting to the claims of Palestinian minorities for a "state within a state" in the case of Jordan or Lebanon. That is why the Arab League does not always achieve to hold a stable and unified position.

Turkey's recent attempt to influence the movements of the Arab League with a constant development of its military positions all over the Arabic world (especially northern Africa and Syria) has found much success. President's Erdogan's open support of Palestine during the recent crisis brought to the sidelights a new powerful ally for Arabs, maybe the only power in the region capable of competing with the Israelian military.

PALESTINE – FATAH-HAMAS

Palestinian claims are based on the fundamental right of self-determination widely accepted by the most constitutional democracies of the Western World and the U.N. For the last decades Palestine promotes its claim for the creation of an independent Palestinian State consisted of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank bringing the status quo as it was before 1968. Moreover, Palestine's call for compensation for the catastrophic missile assaults in Gaza, the withdrawal of all Israeli forces from the occupied regions and the terminalization of annexation in the West Bank are also steady demands.

Israeli indifference and a growing climax of violence pushed the Palestinian political parties to the edge of fundamentalism. Hamas that recently took the power unexpectedly from its political rival Fatah is considered a terrorist organization by the EU, Canada, Israel, Japan, and the USA. However, an American attempt of recognizing Hamas as a terrorist organization in the U.N failed. Hamas has gained the support of the Palestinian people via its humanitarian work and extreme rhetoric. Hamas declared the Jihadi basis of "the Palestinian Liberation War" and calls for the destruction of Israel. The juxtaposition with the former major power in Palestine "Fatah" costed many Palestinian lives and pushed both organizations constantly to a more extreme position in order to satisfy the public opinion.

ISRAEL

Although Israel has committed since 2008 to withdrawal its military power from the occupied lands and work towards the reach of an agreement, not much has changed, and in every crisis of the conflict Netanyahu administration becomes more and more aggressive. The illegal annexation of the West Bank and the colonization of the region with Israeli's creates an unresolved chaos of poverty, violence, and despair. Israel continues to consider the Palestinians and Arabs as number one national threat, and with its unmatched military power is pushing for a total victory that could get the portions of a modern genocide. While the many countries condemn Palestinian anti-violence most of the Western World including the EU are putting up with Israel's out of proportion responses and constant hostility. It is although more evident than ever, that Israeli public opinion has turned towards a more peaceful management of the crisis, and a great percentage of the people actually support the two-state solution.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Date	Description of Event
1917	The Balfour Declaration
1920	Franco-Syrian War
1936-1939	Arab Revolt in Palestine
29 November 1947	G.A of the United Nations adopted Resolution 181 (II)
14 May 1948- 1949	Arab – Israeli War
22 September 1948	All- Palestine Government Declared by the Arab League
1956	The Suez Crisis
1964	Establishment of the PLO by Y. Arafat
1967	Six-Day War
1970	Jordanian Palestine Civil War
1978	Coastal Road Massacre
1982	Lebanon War
1993	Oslo Accords
September 2000- 2005	Second Intifada
2005	Israel announces withdrawal from Gaza Strip
2006	Hamas won a plurality of 44% in Palestinian parliamentary election
2008	Cast Lead
November 2012	Palestine becomes an observer state
6 of May 2021	Protest in East Jerusalem
7 of May 2021	Al-Aqsua Mosque incident
21 of May 2021	Cease-fire comes to effect

UN INVOLVEMENT: RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

Since 1947 the UN Security Council has adopted 187 resolutions (approximately 131 resolutions from 1967 to 1988) directly addressing the Arab- Israeli conflict. It is of course of no need to go through all of them. Let's list some of the most important ones that will help you out with your preparation.

- **Resolution 181:** Recommending partition of the Mandatory Palestine into Arab and Jewish states, and international status for the City of Jerusalem. November 29, 1947
- **Resolution 237** (Security Council): Six-Day War June 14, 1967) "... 'urges' Israel to allow return of new 1967 Palestinian refugees". and called on Israel to ensure the safety and welfare of inhabitants of areas where fighting had taken place.
- **Resolution 1397** (12 Mar 2002) the first resolution to explicitly call for a two-state solution.¹²

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

As far as I evaluate the present situation and the possible development of the crisis in the future, I reach the conclusion that despite the recent crisis, the **two-state solution** is still considered as the only long sustainable solution for most of the parties involved. It is evident that public opinion, the U.N and the Palestinian-Arabic side support it. The implications of such a position may be:

1. The definition of the borders. It is unlikely that the Israel will easily agree on bringing the borders back to the 1968 status quo, and it seems impossible for Palestine to settle with anything else.

¹²https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_United_Nations_resolutions_concerning_Palestine#External_links

2. The two state does not guarantee that the hostilities between the two nations will be over. Nothing seems so far to reduce Israeli aggression nor the fanaticism widespread to the Arabic population.

Another major step for the two-state solution to be successful is at first the reassurance of the autonomy of Palestine in finance, energy, and resources. Moreover, maintaining peace will also require an efficient Palestinian mechanism in the department of defense. The sovereignty of Palestine in such a scenario could only be reassured by monitoring-allied forces.

However, we have the responsibility to address the fact, that the recent crisis undermined the effectiveness and the plausibility of the implementation of **the two-state solution**. Key factors of international diplomacy have already raised their voices keeping a reluctant position and exercising harsh criticism towards this -often characterized- “**diplomatic dogma**”. So, it is expected from all of us to open our minds in new ideas and think innovatively. Is it may be time to consider that beyond the right of determination, separation, and independence, it is also equally important to discuss the possibility of people living together in harmony, putting aside the conflicts of the past and marching as one towards the challenges of posterity. Please find some “out of the box” ideas in a different direction away the **two-state solution** to the sources above:

- <https://www.usip.org/publications/2020/01/israeli-palestinian-conflict-2020-what-are-possible-paths-ahead>
- <https://www.csis.org/analysis/israel-and-palestinians-two-state-solution-five-failed-states>
- <https://www.eurozine.com/beyond-the-two-state-solution/>

Another important factor that should be seriously taken into consideration in your preparation is the recent changed in public opinion. It is not an exaggeration to state that for the very first time a progressive sift in the Israeli society massively is standing opposite the cruelty that often characterizes the position of the Israelian government regarding the matter. It is many times the case throughout the history of our cosmos, that the people raised above issues previously regarded as impossible to resolve, by bravely stepping ahead, liberated from prejudices, and thus leaving the political institutions behind. It is an important quality for the future

leaders to learn adopting to the evolution of the conscience and hearing demands of the public.

A viable solution to the crisis cannot be reached without a total change of picture in Middle East. The vast exploitation of resources by the West and a tradition of political interference in the region from the European and American powers developed a perplex situation. The Syrian Civil War only contributed to the extended political crisis in Middle East that threatens world peace. It is possible that the role of the West as a regulatory factor has not been successful and played an important role in the collapse of the stability in Middle East. It goes without saying that if instability in Middle East continues, the anti-Western and extreme Islamic voices will gain more and more strength leading Palestine and the Arab League away from a realistic agreement.

Other problems that could be addressed is the compensation for the damage and destruction caused by both sides, the status of Hamas and Fatah, the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza, and the Arab League-Israeli relations.

The absence of an agreement despite the previous efforts, calls for a new discussion with the parties involved. UN's Security Council, in the light of the recent events is in position to decide the future of the conflict. With the votes of non-permanent states to be equally divided in the pro-Israeli and pro-Palestinian side a debate with great tension and big challenges is expected. Submitting proposals that will avoid being vetoed from the P5 would be key in reaching some consensus in our Council.

For more information and ideas:

- <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/05/1092902>
- <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/readersblog/marginalia/palestinian-issue-is-solution-possible-32543/>

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https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_United_Nations_resolutions_concerning_Palestine#External_links

The New York Times "*After Years of Quiet, Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Exploded. Why Now?*" <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/15/world/middleeast/israel-palestinian-gaza-war.html>

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/readersblog/marginalia/palestinian-issue-is-solution->

United States Institute of Peace "*The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in 2020: What are the Possible Paths Ahead?*" <https://www.usip.org/publications/2020/01/israeli-palestinian-conflict-2020-what-are-possible-paths-ahead>

U.N News "*Israel-Palestine: Political solution only way to end 'senseless' cycles of violence*" <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/05/1092902ble-32543/>

BBC NEWS 21st June 2021 "*Israel-Gaza violence: The conflict explained*"

<https://www.bbc.com/news/newsbeat-44124396>

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