**The Situation Between Israel and the State of Palestine**

***Context and Brief Overview of Current Day***

The origins of this conflict begin in 1922, when Palestine was given as a mandate to the United Kingdom[[1]](#footnote-1). Mandates at the time were former nations from the Ottoman Empire or Germany which were given to members of the League of Nations to oversee[[2]](#footnote-2). Britain later established the Balfour Declaration, which promised “the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people”[[3]](#footnote-3). This would lay the foundation of Zionism, the view that Palestine is a Jewish homeland[[4]](#footnote-4). Meanwhile, all other mandates eventually became independent states[[5]](#footnote-5).

Later, at the end World War II and as the entire world began to open their eyes to the atrocities committed by the Nazis in concentration camps, Zionist sympathy grew among American lawmakers. “In August 1945 U.S. President Harry S. Truman requested that British Prime Minister Clement Attlee [facilitate](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/facilitate) the immediate admission of 100,000 Jewish Holocaust survivors into Palestine, and in December the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives asked for unrestricted Jewish immigration to the limit of the economic absorptive capacity of Palestine.” Simultaneously, Arab states near Palestine, such as Egypt, also began to pay more attention the state at the time[[6]](#footnote-6).

These rising tensions led to the 1947 proposal by the United Nations which is now commonly known as the two-state solution. It was passed in Resolution 181 and declared Israel and Palestine two independent states with clearly defined borders[[7]](#footnote-7). It passed with a two thirds majority although most Arab Asian states voted against it. It also suggested the foundation of UN Palestine Commission which would oversee the governments of both states and set a date to end the British mandate[[8]](#footnote-8).

However, backlash soon followed the resolution. “Zionists mobilized their forces and redoubled their efforts to bring in immigrants” and the Arab League voiced their support for Palestine, effectively starting a civil war. This led to the United States suggesting the enforcement of a partition, something which both sides soon began to oppose. Zionist forces quickly launched campaigns in the spring of that year which left Palestine divided and significantly weaker. “On May 14 the last British high commissioner, General Sir Alan Cunningham, left Palestine. This war also became a significant day for Palestinians, marking Al Nakba. At least 750,000 Palestinians were displaced due to the Civil War. On the same day the State of Israel was declared and within a few hours won de facto recognition from the United States and de jure recognition from the Soviet Union.” By the summer of 1949, Israel now had sovereignty of over 21,000 square kilometres which were originally designated to Palestine[[9]](#footnote-9). However, soon after, between 1949 and 1953, hundreds of Israelis were killed by attacks from Arabs. This thus fuelled them to annex the Gaza Strip[[10]](#footnote-10).

Over time, Israel has gradually expanded their territory, leading to its composition of 22,145km squared. In May of 2023, Israel launched airstrikes to Gaza, killing at least 10 civilians and 3 Islamic Jihad group leaders. Similar attacks have been seen in the past few years. Some prominent examples include the murder of Palestinian-American journalist Shireen Abu Akleh ss well as Israel’s offensive in August 2022 resulting in the destruction of 1,700 Palestinian homes and 49 Palestinian deaths. In the West Bank, Israeli forces killed 151 and injured another 9,875[[11]](#footnote-11). Additionally, Israeli settlements in Palestine have been increasing over the years[[12]](#footnote-12). Most recently, however, the UN requested an investigation on the behalf of the International Court of Justice on the legality of Israel’s occupation of Palestinian land[[13]](#footnote-13).

Palestine has also attacked Israel on several occasions, most of them coming from the militant movement called Hamas. It is the other most prominent party alongside the Palestinian Liberation Organization. Some nations refer to it as a terrorist nation. It was started in 1960s and in 1988 published its charter which calls for “the destruction of Israel and the establishment of an Islamic society in historic Palestine.” It is important to note that they have ever since published another document accepting a Palestinian state alongside that of an Israeli one as well. Hamas’ first most prominent activity in the international world is the suicide bombing in April of 1933. Other notable actions include “firing rockets and mortars into Israel” and flying balloons with incendiary devices towards Israel. The most notable aggression from Hamas, however, is their abduction of former Israeli soldier, Gilad Shalit in 2006. They continued to hold him captive for 5 years. He was only released after Israel released over a thousand Palestinian prisoners. In 2014, Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, accused Hamas of kidnapping three Israeli teenagers[[14]](#footnote-14).

Overall, the situation between Israel and the State of Palestine is a conflict marked by its complexities and long history. It is an issue that calls for the need of diplomacy and communication as it revolves around borders and violence.

**General Overview of Parties**

Israel is recognized by 165 UN member states as of 2023[[15]](#footnote-15), a drastic increase from the 138 that recognize Palestine[[16]](#footnote-16). The United States does not recognize Palestine and primarily supports Israel, supplying with the funds for military weapons. Besides the US, Israel is also allies with most European nations. On the other hand, Palestine’s largest ally is Iran, who also supplies Hamas with weapons and trained them[[17]](#footnote-17). Many Arab states such as Jordan and Egypt also recognize and support Palestine. Palestine is also legally recognized by both Russia and China.

**Previous Resolutions**

As previously mentioned, Resolution 181 was passed in 1947 which outlined the design for a two-state solution. The two-state solution is arguably the most well-known possibility and the result most nations wish to see. This was reiterated by Palestine’s President, Mahmoud Abbas in the United Nations General Assembly in 2023[[18]](#footnote-18). Other important resolutions include Resolution 3226 which reaffirmed Palestinians’ right to self-determination[[19]](#footnote-19).

There have been multiple previous attempts at resolving this conflict outside of the UN, however, namely being the Oslo Accords and Camp David. The Oslo Accords were “a set of agreements between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (one of the most prominent political parties which attempted to unite Palestinians in the 20th century[[20]](#footnote-20)) that established a peace process for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through a mutually negotiated two-state solution.” They were supposed to solve the issue by May 1999, but there were further unresolved issues[[21]](#footnote-21).

Camp David, which took place in 2000, saw former President Bill Clinton bring together the leaders of the PLO and Israel again in an attempt to form peace, but this turned out to be unsuccessful and so there was no concrete result[[22]](#footnote-22).

**Focus of Debate**

Naturally, delegates should turn their attention to resolving this crisis with a permanent solution. This is a matter of pressing urgency, with President Abbas saying that this year’s General Assembly may have been “the last opportunity to salvage the two-state solution and to prevent the situation from deteriorating more seriously and threatening the security and stability of our region and the entire world”[[23]](#footnote-23). And so, delegates should engage with the debate in a similar fashion.

The two-state solution is highly suggested as a guidance towards a resolution. However, delegates are also free to turn to humanitarian aid and a truce to allow for further diplomatic negotiations. It is important to highlight both the harm that is being done to civilians as well as the political state of the crisis. The resolution should be focused on maintaining peace and attempting to create a plan which will be effectively put into place unlike previous attempts on this same issue. After all, the debate is put into place in hopes of finding diplomatic solutions to the political issue at hand. As a result, the political issues should lay at the forefront of the debate, and not the humanitarian crisis, although mentions of it are also welcome in debate.

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