

SECURITY COUNCIL
**Topic A: Establishing Long-term Peace and
Security in the Israeli-Palestinian Territory**

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Background Information

Creation of Israel

Since 1947 there has been a long-standing territorial dispute between Israelis and Palestinians regarding what is now Israel, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. In 1947 the United Nations General Assembly passed Resolution 181, which split these territories into an Arab state and an Israeli state, making the Israeli state a safe haven for the Jews who had been persecuted in World War II. This resolution granted 52% of the land to Jews and 48% to Palestinians, even when Jews only composed 7% of the population at the time. The city of Jerusalem was given international status. Consequently, the Palestinians and some Arab states did not accept such resolution and riots broke out. Nothing was made of these riots but 200,000 Palestinians were forced to refuge in neighboring countries such as Lebanon, Egypt and Jordan because of the Jewish military advances to secure the promised territory.



On May 14th, 1948 Israel declared independence. The very next day Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq invaded Israel, and although they outnumbered Israeli forces, they were defeated. The Arab states signed an armistice agreement, which established the modern-day borders of Israel with 78% of Palestinian land, Egypt seized the Gaza Strip and Jordan kept East Jerusalem.

Six-Day War

From June 5 to 10, 1967, the Six-Day-War took place when Israel issued a preemptive air strike on grounded Egyptian warplanes. This war consisted of Jordan, Egypt and Syria against Israel, but only lasted six days, hence its name. By its end Israel had captured the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, Syria's Golan Heights, Jordan's East Jerusalem and Egypt's Sinai Peninsula. UN Security Council Resolution 242 called for a cease-fire by both parties and that all land seized by Israel be returned. Israel later gave back the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt after the Egyptian government recognized its legitimacy as a state in the Camp David Accords of 1977. This opened the doors for Israelis to settle in these occupied territories, and the Israeli government has encouraged it ever since. In the following years violence was still present among the Palestinian territories and in Israel

and as one of the methods to solve the problem the Israeli government decided upon the construction of a separation wall as a security barrier to prevent the entry of Palestinian bombers into Israel and as an excuse for territorial annexation. The construction of such wall encompasses settlements, as well as land for their future expansion. The Separation wall is more than twice as long as the 195-mile extent of the 1967 agreement marking the border between Israel and the West Bank.

Gaza Strip

The Gaza Strip borders Egypt and Israel and has a population of 1.7 million the vast majority being Palestinian refugees within a 365 square km area. The Israel-Egypt Armistice Agreement established the current boundaries on 1949. Israel occupied the Gaza Strip in the Six-Day War in 1967. After the Oslo Accord in 1993 the Palestinian Authority became the administrator of the Gaza Strip however Israel still maintained control of its airspace, territorial water and border crossings apart from the land border until 2005.

From December 27, 2008 to January 17, 2009 the Gaza Incursion took place, where 1,300 Palestinians were killed. During this time the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) used tanks, air strikes, white phosphorous, and attacked UN Education Centers as well as mosques. This was all on the pretense that it was in order to cease the rocket firing by Hamas into the Israeli borders. It was highly condemned by most nations and UN organs.

Jerusalem

East Jerusalem is part of Israel's designated capital and is also the proclaimed capital of Palestine where the Palestinian Authority has its administration. The great conflict in this area is the location versus its cultural standpoint. After the 1948 war Jerusalem was divided into east and west. The western portion was populated majorly by Jews and therefore was under Israeli rule while the eastern part was majorly populated by Muslims and went under Jordanian rule forcing all of the Muslim who lived in the western portion to migrate east. After the Six-Day War in 1967 the eastern part of Jerusalem came under Israeli rule. The United Nation Security Council later passed Resolution 242 calling for Israel to withdraw the territories occupied during the conflict. As a response the Israeli government passed the Jerusalem Law, which united both sides and declared the entire Jerusalem its capital defying the Resolution. The union of both Jerusalem as well as the

establishment of it as Israel's capital was declared "null and void" by United Nations Security Council Resolution 478.

Recent News

During November 2012, the Palestinian president stated that Palestine was willing to negotiate the idea of a two-state solution to establish peace in the area. The Israeli government accepted the negotiation and welcomed the idea, however few days later the military conflict started all over again.

In October, a leader of one group that is connected to Al-Qaeda was killed and a month after that, the Hamas leader Jabari was assassinated, which angered Muslim terrorist organizations. Palestinians extremists started rocket fire against Israel around that time, and the Israelis responded with air raids. The Prime Minister of Israel, Netanyahu stated that Israel was ready to launch a bigger attack against Palestine, if necessary.

The American president, Barack Obama, supported Israel in their response. Despite the opposition created by the United States and Israel, the United Nations granted Palestine an observer status in the UN. The entire conflict is in a circle from which it seems to be impossible to end or escape.

Timeline

May 15, 1948: Israel War of Independence (1948 War). Declaration of Israel as the Jewish State; British leave Palestine; Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, Saudi Arabia declared war on Israel

April 3 1949: Israel and Arab states agree to armistice. Israel gained about 50% more territory than was originally allotted to it by the UN Partition Plan.

June 5-10,1967: Six-day war. Israel destroys the Egyptian air force on the ground, conquers and occupies Sinai and Gaza, then conquers the West Bank from Jordan, and Golan Heights from Syria. UN resolution 242 called for Israeli withdrawal, establishment of peace.

1973: Syria and Egypt launch surprise attack on Yom Kippur

1978: Camp David Accords signed by Israel and Egypt

1997: Palestinians take 80% of Hebron in West Bank after Israeli soldiers withdraw. Israelis continue to build settlements.

2002: UN Security Council and USA endorses independent Palestinian state. Israel begins constructing the Separation Wall to protect Israelis and settlements in West Bank, but actually infringes the borders crossing the Green Line.

2004: Sharon announces Israel is to abandon all settlements and outposts in Gaza. IDF kills Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, leader of Hamas, and then kills his replacement. Israel's highest court rules that the Separation Wall violates Palestinian rights, and the World Court in The Hague agrees. In violation of Road Map Israel announces to construction of 500 new homes in the West Bank.

2005: Mahmoud Abbas wins elections in Palestine and becomes head of the Palestinian Authority. Hamas and Islamic Jihad declare a truce. Israel releases 1,400 Palestinian prisoners and agrees to fund the dismantlement of Gaza settlements and Palestinians take over Gaza.

2009: Gaza Incursion, in January strikes continue, 1,300 Palestinians and 13 Israelis dead.

2010: Israel announces the construction of new settlements in East Jerusalem and the West Bank.

2011: Israel states it will remove some settlements from West Bank.

March 2012: Israeli strike on Gaza City kill 25, 14 of them fighters. More than 250 rockets are fired at Israel.

May 2012: Israeli military invade several West Bank villages.

June 2012: An air strike kills two Islamic Jihad fighters, sparking five days of fighting in which Israel kills 15 Gazans, mostly fighters. Five Israelis are also wounded as 152 rockets from Gaza hit the south.

October 2012: Around 15 Palestinians are killed, while more than 120 rockets are fired at Israel.

November 2012: Operation Pillar of Defence is launched with a missile strike that kills top Hamas commander Ahmed Jaabari in Gaza City. Hundreds of Israeli raids and fighter rocket attacks over the next eight days kill 177 Palestinians and six Israelis. Most are civilians. An Egypt-brokered truce takes effect on 21 November.

2013: A Palestinian child is killed and six Palestinians injured in Israeli raids after an Israeli citizen is killed in an attack at the border.

January 2014: Israeli raids kill four Palestinians as more rockets are fired on Israel.

March 2014: Israeli strike kills three Islamic Jihad fighters after they fire a mortar round at troops.

June 2014: Israeli air strike kills two Palestinians, including one child.

June/July 2014: Israel steps up raids on Gaza after the abduction and murder of three Israeli teens in the West Bank.

July 2014: Israel launched Operation Protective Edge, calls up 40,000 reservists and says it is thinking about a full on ground invasion. The campaign follows violence that erupted over the grisly murder of a Palestinian teen by Israeli settlers. Initial reports say 13 Palestinians are killed in air raids. The violence is quickly described as the worst since 2012.

August 2014: The United Nations general assembly's decision to grant Palestine observer-state status means the ICC has jurisdiction to investigate allegations of crimes.

Key Terms

Binyamin Netanyahu: Current prime minister of Israel. Has been very reluctant to pursue peace talks and has expressed his interest in continuing settle developments in East Jerusalem and the West Bank. Has no intention of engaging in direct talks with Hamas and opposes any idea of a unilateral agreement with the UN for a Palestinian state.

Mahmoud Abbas: Chairman of Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) since 2004 and became President of Palestinian National Authority (PNA) in 2005 with Fatah. He Has been able to reach several cease-fires with Hamas and Islamic Jihad over the years but lost control of Gaza Strip after Hamas took over. Has been engaged with several peace talks with Israeli authorities and renounced the use of violence on behalf of Fatah.

Gaza Blockade: Since Hamas took over the Gaza Strip Israel has imposed a blockade, which regulates and denies access of certain products into the Palestinian territory. According the UN relief agency for refugees (UNRWA) 1.5 million people have relied on less than one fourth of the supplies they received in 2005. Some products that aren't allowed in are light bulbs, candles, matches, books, musical instruments, crayons, clothing, shoes, mattresses, sheets, blankets, pasta, tea, coffee, chocolate, nuts, shampoo and conditioner.

Gaza Incursion: From December 27, 2008 to January 17, 2009 the Gaza Incursion took place, where 1,300 Palestinians were killed while only 13 Israelis were killed. During this time the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) used tanks, air strikes, white phosphorous, and attacked UN Education Centers as well as mosques. This was all on the pretense that it was in order to cease the rocket firing by Hamas into the Israeli borders. Unfortunately this time Palestinians were unable to flee because Israel had blocked all possible borders. In the Goldstone Report Israel is accused of committing war crimes and crimes against humanity during the incursion. It was highly condemned by most nations and UN organs.

Hamas: The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, is a Palestinian Sunni Islamic political party that is currently in control of the Gaza Strip after winning parliamentary elections in 2006. Because of its winnings of the elections Israel initiated the Gaza Blockade. On the other hand it has a military wing, the Izz ad- Din al-Qassam Brigades. Hamas is considered a terrorist organization by the USA, EU, Israel, Canada and Japan but the UN and other nations like Russia and Turkey disagree. It has been the main clashing force against the IDF in past years, shooting thousands of rockets across the border and into Israeli territories, it is also responsible for most suicide bombings that occur within the Palestinian- Israeli region. Hamas and Fatah have also had a strained relationship after Hamas executed various Fatah leaders when ousting them from the Gaza Strip in 2007, but in 2011 has reconciled with Fatah and has planned a joint statehood proposal to the UN in September.

Resolution 181: The partition plan by the UN General Assembly in 1947 which granted 48% of the territory to the Arabs and 52% of the territory to the Jews who were persecuted in WWII. Most Arab states present rejected the resolution.

UN Resolution 194: End of Arab-Israeli War in 1948 resolution called for free access and protection of Jerusalem (demilitarization and UN control over Jerusalem) and holy places and the right of return for refugees.

UN Security Council Resolution 242: November 22, 1967 the security council passed resolution 242 to end all acts of violence from all parties in the six-day-war and asked Israel to withdraw forces from any territory occupied. Israeli officials did not implement this resolution and to this day some territories seized in 1967 are still under Israeli control.

Separation Wall: The Israeli West Bank barrier is a concrete barrier enclosing Israel from the West Bank, it also used 12% of the West Bank in its territory. It was a preemptive method used by the Israeli Government to decrease terrorist attacks in Israel. The Israeli Court said it violated the Palestinian's rights by closing off cities and resources as well as being constructed on private Arab owned land. The International World Court in the Hague agreed that it violates Palestinian rights. Later the Israeli court took back their statement and said it caused no harm at all. In Palestine the wall is regarded as the "Apartheid Wall".

Six-Day-War: War that lasted six days in June of 1967. Israel seized the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt, the Golan Heights from Syria, East Jerusalem from Jordan and until this day still occupies the West Bank and parts of the Gaza Strip.

West Bank: Since 1967 this 5,640 km² (including East Jerusalem) and 220 km² water area has been occupied by Israel, with a population of about 2.5 million people. Currently the Separation Wall takes 12% of its land area and about 500,000 Israelis live in the West Bank settlements, which are strongly encouraged by the Israeli government and a large issue regarding peace talks and establishment of borders for a future Palestinian state.

Guiding Questions

- What is the impact of Palestine's bid for UN membership and declaration as a state?
- How can a stable Palestinian state can be formed?
- How does the separation wall impact Palestinian daily life? What has it done to the neighboring towns?
- What is to be done regarding the Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem?
- What is to be done about the Gaza blockade?
- Should Palestine and/or Israel be punished for the deaths of innocent civilians?
- To what extent has the United Nations played a role in creating and/or deescalating the Palestinian - Israeli conflict?
- Is Israel's intervention justified?

Further Research

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