

Forum: Security Council

Issue #SC-02: The Conflict Between Israel and Palestine

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Introduction

The conflict between the state of Israel and Palestine has been a recurring issue in the global agenda for the last couple of years. The issue started when a Jewish movement called the Zionist movement stated that Judaism was more of a nationality than a religion, and claimed the need to have a land of their own. Due to the anti-semitic movements throughout Europe, Zionism became more popular as Jews increasingly felt the need for a safe space. Zionists felt that their historic home in the Middle East, which they called Zion, was the place to establish this land, but this land has been occupied by the philistines (from whom the Palestinians descend) for thousands of years. Since the movement started to gain popularity, a significant number of Jewish people who lived in Europe moved there. That migration of Jews is known as the first Aliyah (1882-1903). Around 1904, the 2nd Aliyah took place and more Jews decided to inhabit Zion.

When the Ottoman Empire disappeared as a consequence of WWI, the United Kingdom took control of its territory, as stated in the treaty of Versailles. Part of that land was labeled “Palestine” with the understanding that the place would have both, Jews and Arabs, as inhabitants. The British government allowed Jewish immigration to Palestine at the beginning. When the Arabs and the Jews committed acts of violence the United Kingdom, which at the time was led by Winston Churchill, decided to limit and restrict Jewish immigration to the land of Palestine. The Jews answered the restriction by forming military groups which opposed British restrictions and rules.

When the holocaust started (WW2) a mass of Jewish population migrated from Europe, due to the persecution they faced by the Nazi movement mainly led by Adolf Hitler, to the land of Palestine.

When the United Nations saw the increasing violence between the Arab residents and the Jewish people they decided to separate then-British Palestine into 2 different states, the Jewish state of Israel and the Arab state of Palestine. The city of Jerusalem stayed as an international land independent of any form of government.

Definition of key terms

Zionism

Zionism is a nationalist movement that believed in the creation of a Jewish state placed in the land of Israel, which was occupied by Palestine at the time the movement started.

Sykes-picot agreement (1916)

Agreement made between France and the United Kingdom which declared the division of Turkish-held areas into 2 different areas, one administered by the government of the United Kingdom and the other one administered by the French government.

Balfour declaration(1917)

Letter signed by Arthur Balfour, foreign secretary of the United Kingdom, directed to Lionel Rothschild where Balfour expressed his support for the occupation of the land of Palestine by the Jews.

Aliyah

Word used to refer to the immigration of Jewish people into the land of Israel.

Anti-Semitism

Term used to describe discrimination, violence and oppression of a single or a group of Jewish people.

Haganah (1920-1948)

Military group mainly composed of Jews in Palestine.

Holocaust

Ideological persecution of millions of Jews in Europe by the Nazi government.

Hamas

Islamic resistance movement in the West Bank.

Palestine Liberation Organization

The Palestine Liberation Organization (later referred as PLO) is a Palestinian political organization which claims to represent Palestinian and Arab people around the globe.

Gaza Strip

Territory along the Mediterranean Sea controlled by the Palestinian government .

The West Bank

The West Bank is a territory which borders Jordan at the West of Israel. This territory was once a part of Palestine but is currently military occupied by the state of Israel.

Terrorist group/ terrorist organization

A group that is either directly or indirectly involved in a massive public act of violence.

Issue overview

When the Jews accepted the proposal made by the United Nations, meaning that the British government left, the bordering countries didn't agree with how things turned which did

turn to create the Arab-Israeli war (further mentioned in past actions), being this the first war in which Israel, as well as its recently independent neighbors, was involved. The state of Israel won the war and took half of the city of Jerusalem and part of the land of Palestine leaving only Gaza, which was controlled by Egypt, and the West Bank, which was controlled by the country of Jordan.

The PLO and the 6-day war

In 1960 the PLO was founded seeking the independence of Palestine and taking the whole territory which was once British Palestine which meant the disappearance of Israel as a whole. Not much time after this, in 1967, Israel fought its second war, again with its bordering countries. This war is known as the 6-day war (later explained in past actions). When Israel won this war they took territories from Syria but most importantly took the West Bank from Jordan, Gaza from Egypt, the city of Jerusalem, and Sinai, from Egypt.

Israel gives back Sinai again to Egypt when they sign the Camp David Accords, along with the USA, where they give the territory in exchange for the recognition of the state of Egypt to the state of Israel, being Egypt the first Arab country to sign its recognition to Israel. Israel also gives back territories they occupied to their neighboring countries.

After the war and the 1st intifada

The state of Israel and Palestine kept tension between each other due to actions that Israel took to slowly take territory from the Palestinians or to threaten them. Some of these actions include creating different Jewish ethnic groups throughout the West Bank and the murder of Palestinian citizens in a refugee camp by a military truck, which belonged to Israel. This last produced the first intifada which produced the creation of Hamas and the PLO as political parties. In 1988, the PLO signed the Palestinian independence declaration but didn't get as much international recognition as they thought. Later on, the leader of the PLO Yasser Arafat signed his recognition to Israel which made Israel recognize the PLO as the representative of the Palestinians. Later on, the Palestinian National Authority (later referred to as PNA) was created which stated that the Palestinians should govern themselves around the territories of Gaza and the West Bank.

The second intifada and current situation

At the beginning of the XXI century the second intifada took place where the Palestinians and the State of Israel faced themselves. With this Hamas took control and became more popular among the Palestinian community. Since then there have been multiple encounters between the Palestinians and the people of Israel and multiple members of the United Nations have accused different Palestinian national groups/organizations of terrorism and organized crime.

Latest events

Second intifada

At the end of the year 2000, in Jerusalem, the West Bank, and in the Gaza Strip, a group of Palestinians decided to use violence as a way of protest and at the same time they targeted the state of Israel around their streets and their land. Lots of both, Israeli and Palestinian, civilians were hurt throughout the second intifada.

Major Parties Involved

Israel

The state of Israel has been one of the 2 main countries involved in this war. The state of Israel claims the whole territory which was once British Palestine stating that their historical home, Zion, is located there and it is their right to inhabit the whole territory. Throughout this issue, the Israeli government has violated different laws like, for example, when they placed different Jewish communities in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip so the people would later claim they belong to Israel producing a type of modern colonization.

Palestine

The state of Palestine is the other main country involved in this issue. They claim that the land of Palestine is theirs since their ancestors, the philistines, had inhabited that land for

around 3 millenniums. Since the end of the 20th century, the Palestinians had an agreement with different member states, mainly Israel and Jordan, where they agreed that Palestine could govern the territory they agreed on. The Palestinians had been accused of terrorism and organized crime since different violent events threatening the Israeli citizens and their life had occurred throughout this conflict.

PLO

The PLO is a Palestinian political party which has as an objective to establish the country of Palestine in the land which was once the mandatory Palestine, in this way opposing the Israeli government. When the Oslo accord was signed the PLO seeked to establish their state in the Palestinian territories which were occupied by Israel. The PLO has diplomatic relations with around 100 countries throughout the globe.

Jordan

Israel and Jordan have had a peace treaty since 1994 and since then, Jordan has tried to mediate between both countries promoting peace between both states.

Egypt

Israel took control of different territories which were once controlled by Egypt in both the Arab-Israeli war and the 6 day war, which were later returned when the Camp David accord was signed. Nowadays Egypt tries to mediate between Hamas and the Israeli government. Still the Egyptian government has made an alliance with the Israeli government to seal off the Gaza Strip.

United States of America

According to the department of state, the US has provided assistance to Palestine providing around 7.6 billion dollars for promoting their economic development and security. This 7.6 billion dollars. However the United States has provided around a billion dollars for the Israeli stock of missile interceptors for the Iron dome and has had joint military exercises and weapon development with the state of Israel .

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of Event
1917	The UK controlled the territory of British Palestine
1882-1903	First Aliyah (massive Jewish migration to Palestinian territory).
1904	Second Aliyah
June 28th, 1919	The Versailles treaty was signed
September 1st, 1939-September 2nd, 1945	Massive Jewish migration due to the holocaust and persecution from the nazi government
March 15th, 1948- March 10th, 1949	Arab Israeli war
June 5th-10th, 1967	Six-day war (Israeli victory)
September 17th, 1978	Camp David accords
1988	First intifada
2000	Second intifada

Relevant UN Treaties and Events

United Nations general assembly adopted resolution 181

The resolution states that the territory of Palestine should be separated into 2 states. One of the states for the Arabs and the other state for the Jews.

Past Action

Arab-Israeli war

In the year 1948 the states of Israel, Palestine, and Egypt fought in a war. This war lasted almost a year. This war happened just when Israel got its independence, nevertheless, the Israelis won the war.

Six-day war

The six-day war was a war between Israel, Palestine, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia. This war got its name due to its duration. Israel won the war and expanded its territory.

Camp David accord

In 1978, supervised by the US government, the state of Israel and Egypt signed the camp David accord. Here Israel gave back territory to Israel in exchange for recognition.

First intifada (1987-1993)

The first intifada is known as the first time of popular manifestation in Palestinian territories after Israel's military occupation. This manifestation brought with it several resistances and strikes around the time it took place.

Oslo treaty

Agreement made in 1993 that sought to release Palestinian detainees and give limited independence to territories like the Gaza Strip.

Possible solutions

In the conflict there are 2 main sides from which delegates could find a spot in the “spectrum” between both to locate their delegation's thoughts about the issue. For doing a solution is crucial delegates know if their delegation supports either Israel or Palestine.

Delegations that could define themselves as strictly “Pro-Israel” could make a resolution in which they motivate different delegations to provide help and supplies but in a military way to disappear the state of Palestine. This resolution will be polemic, discussed and would leave the floor open to lots of speeches either in favor or completely against. This resolution could also include using the UN peacekeeping force.

If delegates when doing their research find out that their delegations could identify themselves as in between, neutral, or against war in general, the delegations could ask for an agreement between both states. This agreement could stop any military intervention in the state of Palestine by Israel. This resolution would also probably be quite more peaceful than any other one so, at the same time, the floor would be a bit less polemic and aggressive but, the resolution as it is, could easily pass through the committee.

On the other side delegations who find themselves as completely “Pro-Palestine” could handle a resolution where either they ask for a division of the land and a peace agreement (quite similar to the resolution stated before) or a resolution in which they give the state of Palestine the full territory with military supplies and help. Depending on which of these sides the delegate decides their delegations could fit and how the delegate would write the resolution, the debate on the resolution will go either faster or slower.

It's important to remember the chances of your resolution being signed, passed, or debated ultimately depend on how the delegate writes it or convinces other delegates about why to vote for them so creativity is highly encouraged for all delegates for their resolutions.

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