

**Forum:** Security Council  
**Issue:** Israel-Palestine Issue  
**Student Officer:** Bill Michalis  
**Position:** President

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## PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

Esteemed delegates,

My name is Bill Michalis. I am 15 years old, a student of Costeas-Geitonas School in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. I will be serving as this year's President of the Security Council. This is going to be my 12<sup>th</sup> MUN conference. I have attended multiple times the Security Council both as a chair and as a delegate. The Security Council is the most powerful organ of the United Nations. Its responsibilities are numerous and its capabilities limitless.

This year's Security Council agenda is based on issues that have a lot of material available and are also crucial to the International Community. The issues are challenging. It is my duty to provide you with sufficient assistance during your preparation. Part of this assistance is the Study Guide. The Study Guide is based on reliable and objective sources and provides an overview of the issue. However, because in the Security Council there are countries with contradicting policies, your preparation should be based on your own research also. As I previously mentioned, the Security Council is a very demanding committee due to its responsibilities and its capabilities, thus if you need any clarifications or generally any assistance with your preparation do not hesitate to contact me at [vassilis.michalis@gmail.com](mailto:vassilis.michalis@gmail.com) which is my e-mail address.

It is my pleasure and honor to serve as your President in this year's PSMUN Security Council.

Best of luck with your preparation,

The President,

Bill Michalis

## TOPIC INTRODUCTION

The issue between Israel and Palestine concerns mostly land. The common demand of both sides is that they want their own land. The issue is that they want the same land. This issue is the result of the rise of Zionism, a form of Jewish Nationalism, and the rise of Anti-Semitism in the pre-WW2 Europe. This led to the creation of what we know today as Israel in 1947. The establishment of a Jewish state led to conflict between Israel and the Arab world.

These conflicts, which were started by the Arab world, led Israel to overstepping some boundaries set by the United Nations, annexing Palestinian land and also occupying Syrian and Egyptian land. Israel also responded by subsidizing housing in the West Bank, territory which was designated to the Palestinians. Both sides claim to respond to the provocations of the other side, yet both of the sides seem to provoke each other.

Palestinians, are an ethnicity comprised of mostly Muslim-Arabs and have demanded that they make Palestine their home. They have been residing in the region of Palestine when the Jews were absent and have made the region of Palestine their home. They have not been very co-operative and have rejected many proposed solutions which would divide the land of Palestine into two states. They haven't been officially aggressive in terms of military actions but their backers, other Arab states, as well as extremist group Hamas, who has won the majority of votes in elections, have both been very aggressive towards Israel.

Israelis are an ethnicity comprised of Jews. They became Israelis when they got their own state in 1947, before that they were Jews from various European countries. They have been co-operative. They haven't started a war but they have indirectly set basis for new wars because they continuously seek to be dominant. A recent example is the fact that they declared Jerusalem as their capital.

## DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

### **Zionism**

Jewish nationalist movement that has had as its goal the creation and support of a Jewish national state in Palestine, the ancient homeland of the Jews. Though Zionism originated in eastern and central Europe in the latter part of the 19th century, it is in many ways a continuation of the ancient attachment of the Jews and of the Jewish religion to the historical region of Palestine, where one of the hills of ancient Jerusalem was called Zion. <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica. "Zionism." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 18 July 2016, [www.britannica.com/topic/Zionism](http://www.britannica.com/topic/Zionism).

### **Two-state solution**

The two-state solution is a solution proposed to the conflict between Palestinians and Israel. This solution calls for the creation of two different states in the region of Palestine. The one for the Jewish people and the other for the people who already resided in the region of Palestine, what we call Palestinians.

### **Intifada**

Protest, sometimes armed, of Palestinians against the occupation of the Gaza strip and the West Bank by Israel. The first intifada took place in 1987 and a second followed up in 2000.

## HISTORICAL INFORMATION

### **Situation prior to the conflict**

The situation started in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century when the prosecution of the Jewish people first began. The Jews developed a form of nationalism and started demanding their own state. The British Empire promised them a home in the region of Palestine, then Ottoman occupied. The roots of the conflict are the promises made by Britain. Britain had promised to the Arabs the region of Palestine if they helped fight the Ottoman Empire. Britain had also promised to France that they will split the Ottoman territory and Britain would keep the region of Palestine.

Moving on, after the holocaust and WW2, in May 1948, Israel was created as an Independent State and admitted to the United Nations in 1949 following the plan proposed by the United Nations through the Special Committee on Palestine which proposed to replace the British rule with an independent Arab state, an independent Jewish state and the City of Jerusalem. This was rejected by the Arabs. In 1949, Israel and neighboring Arab states agreed on an Armistice which established borders close to today's borders.

### **The conflict**

There also is the Six Day War which took place and ended up in a massive Israeli victory. Israel occupied even more of the West Bank, the Sinai Peninsula, the Golan heights and also marginalized Palestinians to the Gaza strip. This was a massive victory for the Israelis. After the Six Day War, Israel opened itself to peace talks, the only nation interested was Egypt. Egypt took place in the Camp David Accords of 1978 and signed the 1979 Egypt-Israel peace treaty which gave the Sinai Peninsula back to Egypt and set the basis for the recognition of Palestine. These negotiations were not accepted from the Arab world and the President of Egypt, who signed peace with Israel, was assassinated a few years later with his successor not full endorsing the treaty. Also

many Arab states loosened their ties with Egypt and several of them joined forces with each other and the PLO to suspend Egypt from the Arab League. The Palestinians of course didn't accept this and the plans discussed in Camp David were dismissed.

In the later phase of the conflict, PLO started to settle in the fellow Arab state of Lebanon and Israel ordered the bombing of their positions in the summer of 1982. The Palestinians responded with a barrage of rockets in the northern towns of Israel which were close to the borders. Israel responded with invading southern Lebanon and destroying Syrian anti-aircraft missiles located in Lebanon. The Israelis marched towards Beirut and overstepped the boundary of 40km from the border, that they had set prior to the invasion. Israel launched a barrage of shells towards Beirut where PLO high ranking officials and the leader Yasser Arafat were sheltered by Lebanon. The U.S. under Ronald Reagan managed to conduct a peacekeeping operation and the PLO high command managed to avoid the final Israeli attack by evacuating. The conflict was put to an end with the help of Ronald Reagan and the U.S. and Israel began their withdrawal from Lebanon.

The Palestinians started a revolt, named Intifada, which caught the Israeli army off guard and Israel's image was suffering from the extreme violence towards the Palestinians, because they were caught off guard, and also the recognition of PLO from the United States. The U.S. recognized PLO after Yasser Arafat stated in a UN meeting in Geneva that he will recognize Israel and stop terrorist operations in Israel if the Palestinians finally got their own state. The Gulf War followed where Iraq, the biggest threat to Israel, was diminished and PLO received noticeably less funding from Arab states due to their involvement in the war.

In 1992, the Labor party took advantage of the poor handling of the Government and with Yitzhak Rabin as their candidate succeeded in winning the June 1992 elections. However, the negotiations started with Syria came to a stalemate. However, Rabin's administration, through Shimon Peres, managed to reach an agreement with PLO in Oslo after both sides gambled on an agreement that would give peace to the Israelis and strengthen the financially isolated Palestinians. This led to the Palestinians getting rid of Israeli military rule and gaining autonomy towards the road of statehood as well as get subsidized by foreign powers.

However, Hamas, a terrorist group strongly disagreed with Arafat's plan and Arafat cooperated with them rather than denouncing them, leading Israel to resume their war on terrorism and succeed in assassinating two Hamas leaders and murder Arab prayers in Hebron's Tomb of the Patriarchs. The Palestinians and the Israelis signed Oslo II in Washington with the help of U.S. President Bill Clinton but it was much more in favor of Palestinians and Rabin lost support over the "Knesset" which was a legislative body in Israel. Rabin aiming to regain support decided to rally around Israel but was assassinated in the first rally in Tel-Aviv.

After many failed peace talks and a second Intifada, Hamas won the Palestinian elections. Israel didn't recognize the victory and saw Palestine as a hostile force, instead they recognized Fatah, another Palestinian organization as the legitimate government. Since then, the only thing going on is anything but peace talks.

## COUNTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED

### **Israel**

Israel is the main state involved in the conflict.

### **Palestine**

Palestine is an autonomous "organization" which seeks to achieve full statehood

### **United States of America**

The United States is the moderator of the peace talks; it has taken many initiatives to achieve peace but most of them have failed. It has had a more pro-Israel policy which depends on the administration, currently it is pro-Israel and the administration fully supports Israel. It has also been very pro-Israel in the past, even threatening the U.N. if it admitted Palestine as a member.

### **Russian Federation**

Russia has been neutral with the tendency to support Palestine and have also recognized Palestine. However, the current administration has a very good relationship with Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu, who is said to have family roots in Russia, and generally Russia seems more pro-Israel to this day. However, Russia has been unpredictable and its stance on the issue is also unpredictable because they refrain from getting involved.

### **Arab League**

The Arab League has been the strongest supporter of Palestine and was financing for decades the PLO and still is financing Palestinian groups.

### **Hamas**

Terrorist group who is based on Gaza and is fueled by the inability of both sides to find a solution. It has gained much public support after peace talks were abandoned.

## TIMELINE

Time	Event
<b>1967</b>	Six Day War takes place and Israel takes over a portion of Palestinian territory, Sinai Peninsula and Golan Heights
<b>1978</b>	Camp David Accords are signed
<b>1979</b>	Israel and Egypt sign peace which gives back Sinai Peninsula
<b>1981</b>	Egyptian President is assassinated following the discussions with Israel
<b>1987</b>	The first Intifada takes place leading to U.S. recognition of PLO
<b>1993</b>	Oslo I is signed but Hamas manages to destroy the peace process alongside the PLO
<b>2006</b>	Hamas wins the support of the Palestinians through elections

## POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

There have been many attempts to recognize Palestine as a state, which is something the majority of the member states agree, but they have all been blocked by the U.S. and its threats to stop financing the U.N. and sanction the U.N. This is something which should be defined and the members should discuss whether something like this is in order. However, the U.S. are a P5 member and have veto rights, so the approach should be very careful so that a veto can be avoided.

Another issue is that there haven't been any meaningful discussions in the past decade. The council should propose and help with the discussions, possibly acting as moderator. However, the council should choose if they wish to assist Israelis and Palestinians to solve the issue between them, something which has never happened practically, or take the matter on its own hands and decide as the Security Council what should happen. Technically, the second option would lead to a solution but there are some issues with it. The council doesn't necessarily represent the interests of the states and the states should approve the decisions, which is unlikely since they didn't take these decisions themselves. A great alternative would be for the Security Council to host both states and solve the issue with them in the future.

Also, the issue of Hamas should be addressed, and Hamas should be restricted and suppressed, it is a terrorist group who is backed up by the fact that there aren't any solutions found and thus gains support from the Palestinians who find themselves without a home and see Hamas as the only solution. Hamas gained support after peace talks stopped and thus the council should stop Hamas and start negotiations to show the Palestinian people that terrorism and Hamas are not the solutions. Hamas is a

group very dangerous and should be in the same category as ISIS, a terrorist group who doesn't negotiate.

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