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Letter From Secretary General

Letter From President Chair

Dear distinguished participants,

First and foremost we are more than grateful to have you with us at the Bodrum Marmara College Model United Nations Conference 2024. So, with most heartfelt greetings,

We shall continue moving forward with our letter as fast as possible to bring you one step closer to our study guide which will hopefully, be the leading key to make this year's conference, as well as the committee, succeed in making a marvelous memory for each and one of you.

My name is Zehra Güneş and I have been responsible for the Special committee you all are most likely familiar with, UNSC. Throughout the year, full of sweat and tears, we as the academic team has worked like ants, as one may claim, not to only come up with a twist with our unusual and interesting agenda items regarding immortality, but also to make a useful source of knowledge to keep the debate revolve around each one of our diligent delegates.

Furthermore, I would like for all of you to enjoy your precious time here; learning, meeting new people and making many more unforgettable memories together. We will be there to support you before and during the committee so, please do not be hesitant in communicating with us! Hope to see you all soon...

Best Regards,

Zehra Güneş

Introduction to the committee

The Security Council, the United Nations' principal crisis-management body, is empowered to impose binding obligations on the 193 UN member states to maintain peace. The Security Council's five permanent and ten elected members meet regularly to assess threats to international security, including civil wars, natural disasters, arms proliferation, and terrorism.

Structurally, the Security Council remains largely unchanged since its founding in 1946, stirring debate among members about the need for reforms. In recent years, members' competing interests have often stymied the Security Council's ability to respond to major conflicts and crises, including Syria's civil war, the COVID-19 pandemic, and Russia's annexation of Crimea and subsequent invasion of Ukraine.

The Security Council has five permanent members—the United States, China, France, Russia, and the United Kingdom—collectively known as the P5. Any one of them can veto a resolution. The Security Council’s ten elected members, which serve two-year, nonconsecutive terms, are not afforded veto power. The P5’s privileged status has its roots in the United Nations’ founding in the aftermath of World War II. The United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) were the outright victors of the war, and, along with the United Kingdom, they shaped the postwar political order. As their plans for what would become the United Nations took shape, U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt insisted on the inclusion of the Republic of China (Taiwan), envisioning international security presided over by “four global policemen.” British Prime Minister Winston Churchill saw in France a European buffer against potential German or Soviet aggression and so sponsored its bid for restored great-power status.

The members of the P5 have exercised the veto power to varying degrees. Counting the years when the Soviet Union held its seat, Russia has been the most frequent user of the veto, blocking 152 resolutions since the Security Council’s founding, as of February 2023. The United States has used the veto eighty-seven times; it last vetoed a resolution in 2020 that called for the prosecution, rehabilitation, and reintegration of those engaged in terrorism-related activities. The country objected to the resolution’s not calling for the repatriation of fighters from the self-proclaimed Islamic State and their family members. China has used the veto more frequently in recent years, though it has historically been more sparing than the United States or Russia; Beijing has now blocked nineteen resolutions, including sixteen since 1997. In contrast, France and the United

Kingdom have not exercised their veto power since 1989 and have advocated for other P5 members to use it less.

What is the Security Council's structure?

The Security Council's presidency rotates on a monthly basis, ensuring some agenda-setting influence for its ten nonpermanent members, which are elected by a two-thirds vote of the UN General Assembly. The main criterion for eligibility is contribution "to the maintenance of international peace and security," often defined by financial or troop contributions to peacekeeping operations or leadership on matters of regional security likely to appear before the Security Council.

A secondary consideration, "equitable geographical distribution," gave rise to the regional groups used since 1965 in elections: the African Group has three seats; the Asia-Pacific Group, two; the Eastern European Group, one; the Latin American and Caribbean Group, two; and the Western European and Others Groups (WEOG), two. Each has its own electoral norms. An Arab seat alternates between the African and Asian blocs by informal agreement. Turkey and Israel, which has never served on the Security Council, caucus with WEOG.

Subsidiary organs that support the Security Council's mission include ad hoc committees on sanctions, counterterrorism, and nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons, as well as the international criminal tribunals for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia. Within the UN Secretariat, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Operational Support manage field operations. The Peacebuilding Commission, established in 2005 as a repository of institutional memory and best practices, serves an advisory role.

What role does it play in authorizing military force?

Under the UN charter, members can only use force in self-defense or when they have obtained authorization from the Security Council. However, members and coalitions of countries have often used military force outside of these contexts.

NATO's seventy-eight-day air war in Kosovo is the most-cited case in arguing for the legitimacy of humanitarian interventions that lack Security Council authorization. After Russia indicated it would block authorization in the Security Council, NATO forces undertook a bombing campaign to protect Kosovar Albanians from ethnic cleansing by Serbs in rump Yugoslavia. An independent commission of scholars later deemed the intervention "illegal but legitimate."

The emergence of the responsibility to protect (R2P) in the early 2000s appeared to justify the use of force outside Security Council authorization by qualifying the principle of noninterference in sovereign affairs. The doctrine, as adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2005, stipulates that states have a responsibility to protect their populations from crimes against humanity; the "international community" has a responsibility to use peaceful means to protect threatened populations; and when a state "manifestly fails" to uphold its responsibilities, coercive measures should be collectively taken.

Successive U.S. administrations have argued that humanitarian intervention can be legitimate with the backing of regional organizations or "coalitions of the willing." But Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon rejected this position in 2008, saying, "The responsibility to protect does not alter, indeed it reinforces, the

legal obligations of Member States to refrain from the use of force except in conformity with the Charter.” This debate has been revived at various times in recent years, including in the run-up to the 2011 NATO-led Libya intervention, and during the ongoing Syrian civil war. While Russian officials have at times cited humanitarian intervention as grounds for the invasion of Ukraine, Western analysts say the war is a clear violation of international law.

What are the prospects for reform?

The odds of substantial reform are seen as remote because amending the UN Charter requires an affirmative vote and domestic ratification by two-thirds of UN member states. This includes all of the Security Council’s permanent members, which are unlikely to take measures that would curb their own influence. While there is broad agreement among UN members that the Security Council’s makeup is outdated, each of the various proposals for reform inevitably leaves some aspirants alienated. Some proposals call for additional permanent members and others for a new class of elected seats that have the possibility of renewal. In the absence of charter reform, smaller states have advocated for procedural changes, including greater transparency and closer consultations with troop-contributing countries.

What are its tools for conflict management?

The Security Council aims to peacefully resolve international disputes in accordance with Chapter VI of the UN Charter, which authorizes the Security Council to call on parties to seek solutions via negotiation, arbitration, or other peaceful means. Failing that, Chapter VII empowers the Security Council to take more assertive actions, such as imposing sanctions or authorizing the use of force “to maintain or restore international peace and security.” Peacekeeping missions are the most visible face of the United Nations’ conflict-management work; as of early 2023, the Security Council

oversees twelve operations across three continents, involving a total of nearly eighty-eight thousand uniformed personnel.

History of the committee

During the cold war disagreement between the United States and the Soviet Union made the Security Council an ineffective institution. Perhaps the most notable exception to that occurred in June 1950, when the Soviets were boycotting the Security Council over the issue of China's UN membership. The absence of a Soviet veto allowed the U.S. to steer through a series of resolutions that authorized the use of military force to support South Korea in the Korean War. Troops from South Korea, the United States, and 15 other countries would swell the ranks of United Nations Command to nearly 1 million by the war's end. When an armistice was signed at P'anmunjŏm in July 1953, more than 250,000 troops—the overwhelming majority of whom were Korean—had died while fighting under the banner of United Nations Command in Korea.

Between the late 1980s and the early 21st century, the council's power and prestige grew. Beginning in the late 1980s, there was a surge in the number of peacekeeping operations (including observer missions) authorized by the Security Council: between 1948 and 1978 only 13 missions had been authorized, but between 1987 and 2000 some three dozen operations were approved, including those in the Balkans, Angola, Haiti, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Somalia.

While these operations experienced a measure of success—as evidenced by the awarding of the 1988 Nobel Prize for Peace to UN Peacekeeping Forces—failures in Rwanda and Bosnia led many to question the effectiveness of the UN as a keeper of peace and of the Security Council as a deliberative body. In April 1994, 10 Belgian troops guarding Rwandan Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana were killed by Hutu extremists, and the Security Council responded by voting to reduce the size of the UN Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), an already understrength force of some 2,500 lightly armed troops, by 90 percent. By the time the UN voted to bolster its peacekeeping mission the following month, the Rwandan genocide was well under way, and

UNAMIR commander Roméo Dallaire was struggling to save what civilians he could with the meager force that he had. In July 1995 Dutch peacekeepers tasked with securing the “safe area” of Srebrenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina, failed to protect hundreds of Bosniak (Bosnian Muslim) men and boys in the face of advancing Bosnian Serb paramilitary troops. More than 8,000 Bosniak men and boys were killed in the subsequent Srebrenica massacre, and in 2014 a Dutch court ruled that the government of the Netherlands was partially liable for the deaths of 300 of the victims.

In the conflicts of the 21st century, the Security Council was a much less effective body. Beginning in 2003, Arab militias backed by the Sudanese government carried out a terror campaign in the region of Darfur. In spite of the presence of an African Union peacekeeping force, hundreds of thousands were killed and millions were displaced in what was called the first genocide of the 21st century. In August 2006 the Security Council authorized the creation and deployment of a peacekeeping force to Darfur, but the Sudanese government rejected the measure. In the entire

history of the UN, no peacekeeping mission had ever failed to deploy once authorized by the Security Council. A compromise was found in a joint peacekeeping force known as the hybrid United Nations/African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID), authorized by the Security Council in July 2007. Large-scale UNAMID troop deployment did not begin until 2008, some five years after the violence began, and obstruction by the government of Sudanese Pres. Omar al-Bashir limited the mission’s effectiveness.

The United States traditionally vetoed measures that were seen as critical of Israel, and it did so more than three dozen times in the decades following the Six-Day War. Russia used its veto to protect its interests in what it termed “the near abroad”—the territories of the former Soviet Union—and to support the regime of Syrian Pres. Bashar al-Assad. In 2008 Russia vetoed a measure condemning its occupation of the Georgian republics of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. After the outbreak of the Syrian Civil War in 2011, Russia and China vetoed numerous attempts to stem the bloodshed in that conflict. Some half a million people were killed in the fighting in Syria, and millions more were displaced. The only significant action taken by the Security Council—the creation of the Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM), a body to investigate the use of chemical weapons by the Assad government and other combatants—was ultimately halted by Russia when it vetoed the extension of the JIM’s mandate. After Russia illegally annexed the Ukrainian republic of Crimea in March 2014, it vetoed a Security Council resolution condemning the act, and, when Russian-backed militants

shot down Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 over eastern Ukraine, Russia vetoed a resolution that would have created an international tribunal to investigate and prosecute those responsible for the loss of 298 lives.

Partition plan approved by the UN General Assembly on Nov. 29, 1947

Jewish state
 Arab state
 Jerusalem district



[United Nations Resolution 242](#), resolution of the United Nations (UN) Security Council adopted on November 22, 1967, in an effort to secure a just and lasting peace in the wake of the Six-Day (June) War, fought primarily between Israel and Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. The Israelis supported the resolution because it called on the Arab states to accept Israel’s right “to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force.” Each of the Arab states eventually accepted it (Egypt and Jordan accepted the resolution from the outset) because of its clause calling for Israel to withdraw from “territories occupied in the recent conflict.” The Palestine Liberation Organization rejected it until 1988 because it lacked explicit references to Palestinians. Though never fully implemented, it was the basis of diplomatic efforts to end Arab-Israeli conflicts until the Camp David Accords and remains an important touchstone in any negotiated resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Nations Resolution 181, resolution passed by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in 1947 that called for the partition of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states, with the city of Jerusalem As a *corpus separatum* (“separate entity”) to be governed by a special international regime. The resolution—which was considered by the Jewish community in Palestine to be a legal basis for the -

establishment of Israel, and which was rejected by the Arab community—was succeeded almost immediately by violence.

Palestine had been governed by Great Britain since 1922. Since that time, Jewish immigration to the region had increased, and tensions between Arabs and Jews had grown. In April 1947, exhausted by World War II and increasingly intent upon withdrawing from the Middle East region, Britain referred the issue of Palestine to the UN. To investigate a suitable course of action, the UN formed the UN Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP), an inquiry committee made up of members from 11 countries. Ultimately, UNSCOP delivered two proposals: that of the majority, which recommended two separate states joined economically, and that of the minority, which supported the formation of a single binational state made up of autonomous Jewish and Palestinian areas. The Jewish community approved of the first of these proposals, while the Arabs opposed them both. A counterproposal—including a provision that only those Jews who had arrived before the Balfour Declaration (and their descendents) would be citizens of the state—did not win Jewish favor.

The proposal to partition Palestine, based on a modified version of the UNSCOP majority report, was put to a General Assembly vote on November 29, 1947. The fate of the proposal was initially uncertain, but, after a period of intense lobbying by pro-Jewish groups and individuals, the resolution was passed with 33 votes in favor, 13 against, and 10 abstentions.

Key Terms and Vocabulary

Six-Day War: *The conflict that occurred from June 5 to June 10, 1967, involving Israel against Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. It resulted in a swift Israeli victory and had far-reaching consequences for the geopolitical landscape of the region.*

Preemptive Strike: *Israel launched a preemptive strike against the Egyptian Air Force on June 5, 1967, aiming to neutralize the perceived threat posed by the concentration of Arab military forces along its borders.*

West Bank: *A territory on the west bank of the Jordan River that was under Jordanian control before the war. Israel captured the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, during the conflict.*

Golan Heights: *A region in southwestern Syria that was captured by Israel during the Six-Day War. The strategic high ground of the Golan Heights has been a point of contention between Israel and Syria.*

Land for Peace: *The principle, outlined in UNSCR 242, that calls for the exchange of territory for lasting peace. It has been a basis for subsequent negotiations between Israel and its Arab neighbors.*

Occupied Territories: *The areas, including the Sinai Peninsula, Gaza Strip, West Bank, and Golan Heights, that were captured and held by Israel during the Six-Day War.*

Nationalism: *A political ideology emphasizing the interests and identity of a particular nation, often associated with a desire for self-determination.*

International Law: *The body of rules and principles recognized as binding in relations between states, often invoked in discussions about the legality of actions taken during the Six-Day War.*

Ceasefire: *An agreement to stop fighting temporarily, typically to allow for negotiations or the delivery of humanitarian aid.*

Agenda Item: Isreal - Palestine Conflict

On January 7, Israel announced it had successfully destroyed the fighting force of Hamas in northern Gaza and is shifting its focus to the central and southern parts of the territory.

Almost two million Gazans, more than 85 percent of the population, have fled their homes since Israel began its military operation. Attacks on medical infrastructure and a lack of basic supplies have reduced the number of functioning hospitals to only nine, all of which are in the south, and the World Health Organization has warned of disease spread in addition to mounting civilian casualties. Meanwhile, the United States is conducting shuttle diplomacy amid simmering regional tensions. Israel has killed Hezbollah fighters in Lebanon, and increased its air strikes against alleged Iran-linked targets in Syria. Iran-backed groups have launched dozens of attacks on U.S. military positions in Iraq and Syria, and Yemen's Houthi rebels have targeted missiles at Israel and commercial ships in the Red Sea.

Background

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict dates back to the end of the nineteenth century. In 1947, the United Nations adopted Resolution 181, known as the Partition Plan, which sought to divide the British Mandate of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states. On May 14, 1948, the State of Israel was created,

sparkling the first Arab-Israeli War. The war ended in 1949 with Israel's victory, but 750,000 Palestinians were displaced, and the territory was divided into 3 parts: the State of Israel, the West Bank (of the Jordan River), and the Gaza Strip.

1956

Over the following years, tensions rose in the region, particularly between Israel and Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. Following the 1956 Suez Crisis and Israel's invasion of the Sinai Peninsula, Egypt, Jordan, and Syria signed mutual defense pacts in anticipation of a possible mobilization of Israeli troops. In June 1967, following a series of maneuvers by Egyptian President Abdel Gamal Nasser, Israel preemptively attacked Egyptian and Syrian air forces, starting the Six-Day War. After the war, Israel gained territorial control over the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip from Egypt; the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan; and the Golan Heights from Syria.

1979 - 2002

Six years later, in what is referred to as the Yom Kippur War or the October War, Egypt and Syria launched a surprise two-front attack on Israel to regain their lost territory; the conflict did not result in significant gains for Egypt, Israel, or Syria, but Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat declared the war a victory for Egypt as it allowed Egypt and Syria to negotiate over previously ceded territory. Finally, in 1979, following a series of cease-fires and peace negotiations, representatives from Egypt and Israel signed the Camp David Accords, a peace treaty that ended the thirty-year conflict between Egypt and Israel.

Even though the Camp David Accords improved relations between Israel and its neighbors, the question of Palestinian self-determination and self-governance remained unresolved. In 1987, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip rose up against the Israeli government in what is known as the first intifada. The 1993 Oslo I Accords mediated the conflict, setting up a framework for the Palestinians to govern themselves in the West Bank and Gaza, and enabled mutual recognition between the newly established Palestinian Authority and Israel's government. In 1995, the Oslo II Accords expanded on the first agreement, adding provisions that mandated the complete withdrawal of Israel from 6 cities and 450 towns in the West Bank.

In 2000, sparked in part by Palestinian grievances over Israel's control over the West Bank, a stagnating peace process, and former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's visit to the al-Aqsa

mosque—the third holiest site in Islam—in September 2000, Palestinians launched the second intifada, which would last until 2005. In response, the Israeli government approved the construction of a barrier wall around the West Bank in 2002, despite opposition from the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court.

2006 -

Factionalism among the Palestinians flared up when Hamas won the Palestinian Authority's parliamentary elections in 2006, deposing longtime majority party Fatah. This gave Hamas, a political and militant movement inspired by the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood, control of the Gaza Strip. Gaza is a small piece of land on the Mediterranean Sea that borders Egypt to the south and has been under the rule of the semi-autonomous Palestinian Authority since 1993. The United States and European Union, among others, did not acknowledge Hamas' electoral victory, as the group has been considered a terrorist organization by western governments since the late 1990s. Following Hamas' seizure of control, violence broke out between Hamas and Fatah. Between 2006 and 2011, a series of failed peace talks and deadly confrontations culminated in an agreement to reconcile. Fatah entered into a unity government with Hamas in 2014.

In the summer of 2014, clashes in the Palestinian territories precipitated a military confrontation between the Israeli military and Hamas in which Hamas fired nearly three thousand rockets at Israel, and Israel retaliated with a major offensive in Gaza. The skirmish ended in late August 2014 with a cease-fire deal brokered by Egypt, but only after 73 Israelis and 2,251 Palestinians were killed. After a wave of violence between Israelis and Palestinians in 2015, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah announced that Palestinians would no longer be bound by the territorial divisions created by the Oslo Accords.

In March of 2018, Israeli troops killed 183 Palestinians and wounded 6,000 others after some Palestinians stormed the perimeter fence between the Gaza Strip and Israel and threw rocks during an otherwise peaceful demonstration. Just months later, Hamas militants fired over one hundred rockets into Israel, and Israel responded with strikes on more than fifty targets in Gaza during a twenty-four-hour flare-up. The tense political atmosphere resulted in a return to disunity between Fatah and Hamas, with Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah party controlling the Palestinian Authority from the West Bank and Hamas *de facto* ruling the Gaza Strip.

The Donald J. Trump administration reversed longstanding U.S. policy by canceling funding for the UN Relief and Works Agency, which provides aid to Palestinian refugees, and relocating the U.S.

embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The Trump administration also helped broker the Abraham Accords, under which Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates normalized relations with Israel, becoming only the third and fourth countries in the region—following Egypt in 1979 and Jordan in 1994—to do so. Similar deals followed with Morocco and Sudan. Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah rejected the accords, as did Hamas.

2021

In early May 2021, after a court ruled in favor of the eviction of several Palestinian families from East Jerusalem properties, protests erupted, with Israeli police employing force against demonstrators. After several consecutive days of violence, Hamas, the militant group which governs Gaza, and other Palestinian militant groups launched hundreds of rockets into Israel territory. Israel responded with artillery bombardments and airstrikes, killing more than twenty Palestinians and hitting both military non-military infrastructure, including residential buildings, media headquarters, and refugee and healthcare facilities. After eleven days, Israel and Hamas agreed to a cease-fire, with both sides claiming victory. The fighting killed more than 250 Palestinians and at least 13 Israelis, wounded nearly 2,000 others, and displaced 72,000 Palestinians.

The most far-right and religious government in Israel's history, led by Benjamin 'Bibi' Netanyahu and his Likud party and comprising two ultra-Orthodox parties and three far-right parties, was inaugurated in late December 2022. The coalition government prioritized the expansion and development of Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank, endorsed discrimination against LGBTQ+ people on religious grounds, and voted to limit judicial oversight of the government in May 2023 after a delay due to nationwide protests in March.

Concerns

Following the outbreak of war between Israel and Hamas on October 7, 2023, President Joe Biden made a strong statement of support for Israel. On the same day that Israel declared war against Hamas, the United States announced that it would send renewed shipments of arms and move its Mediterranean Sea warships closer to Israel. While the UN Security Council called an emergency meeting to discuss the renewed violence, the members failed to come to a consensus statement. Given the history of brutality when Israel and Palestinian extremist groups have fought in the past, international groups quickly expressed concern for the safety of civilians in Israel and the Palestinian territories as well as those being held hostage by militants in Gaza. In the first month of fighting,

approximately 1,300 Israelis and 10,000 Palestinians were killed. Increasing loss of life is of primary concern in the conflict.

While the United States said there was “no direct evidence” that Iranian intelligence and security forces directly helped Hamas plan its October 7 attack, Iran has a well-established patronage relationship with Hamas and other extremist groups across the Middle East. Israel has exchanged artillery fire with Iran-backed Hezbollah almost daily and struck Syrian military targets and airports, prompting concern that the war could expand north. To the south, Yemen’s Houthi rebels have launched multiple rounds of missiles at Israel as well. Meanwhile, the Islamic Resistance of Iraq, a coalition of Iranian-backed militias, has claimed responsibility for dozens of attacks on U.S. military targets in Iraq and Syria since the war began.

A 2023 effort by the United States to help broker a normalization accord between Israel and Saudi Arabia was thrown into chaos by the October conflict. Saudi Arabia has long advocated for the rights and safety of Palestinian Arab populations in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza. Especially in Gaza, those populations are now in the path of IDF operations, jeopardizing the progress the Israelis and Saudis made toward a common understanding. However, the United States says the Saudis have indicated they are still interested in the deal.



In early October 2023, war broke out between Israel and Hamas, the militant Islamist group that has controlled Gaza since 2006, in the most significant escalation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in several decades. Hamas fighters fired rockets into Israel and stormed southern Israeli cities and towns across the border of the Gaza Strip, killing more than 1,300 Israelis, injuring 3,300, and taking hundreds of hostages. The attack took Israel by surprise, though the state quickly mounted a deadly

retaliatory operation. One day after the October 7 attack, the Israeli cabinet formally declared

war against Hamas, followed by a directive from the defense minister to the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) to carry out a “complete siege” of Gaza.

Since then, the two sides have traded daily rocket fire, and Israel ordered more than one million Palestinian civilians in northern Gaza to evacuate ahead of a ground invasion that began on October 28. Israeli forces have encircled Gaza City, cutting it off from southern Gaza and squeezing Hamas. Hundreds of thousands of civilians remain in the city. Gazan health officials say the war has killed 10,000 Palestinians, including more than 4,000 children. The territory is also desperately low on water, fuel, and supplies as Israel has rejected humanitarian pauses and limited the amount of aid that can enter.

The displacement of millions more Palestinians presents a dilemma for Egypt and Jordan, which have absorbed hundreds of thousands of Palestinians in the past but have resisted accepting anyone during the current war. They fear that Gazans, many of whom were already displaced from elsewhere in Israel, will not be allowed to return once they leave. Egypt also fears that Hamas fighters could enter Egypt and trigger a new war in the Sinai by launching attacks on Israel or destabilizing the authoritarian regime of Abdel Fattah el-Sisi by supporting the Muslim Brotherhood. So far, negotiations have resulted in only 1,100 people exiting Gaza through the Rafah border crossing to Egypt. The other 1.5 million displaced Gazans—70 percent of the territory’s population—have nowhere to go and face increasingly dire living conditions and security risks.

The Israel-Palestine Crisis: Causes, Consequences, Portents

In the wake of the 23 March Israeli elections, from which a new coalition government has yet to emerge, Israeli politicians are taking hawkish stances. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defence Minister Benny Gantz, as well as their major opponents, Yair Lapid and Naftali Bennett, have all said they want to deal a major blow to Hamas. On 11 May, Netanyahu declared, “Hamas and Islamic Jihad have paid and – I tell you here – will pay a very heavy price for their aggression. I say here this evening – their blood is on their heads”.

Gantz warned on 12 May that, “Israel is not preparing for a ceasefire. There is currently no end date for the operation. Only when we achieve complete quiet can we talk about calm”. Israeli military spokesperson Hidi Zilberman said on 13 May that the army has not ruled out a ground invasion: “We have a foot on the gas”. Others criticize the government for its lack of strategy regarding Gaza

since Israel pulled soldiers and Jewish settlers out of the strip in 2005. Giora Eiland, a retired major-general and former head of Israel's National Security Council, chided the leadership in comments to Crisis Group for having "kept the status quo for fifteen years. The state is evading other options. It is not even discussing other strategies. They are in default mode".

Israel benefits from being able to conflate the Palestinian struggle for freedom with Hamas's Islamist ideology and indiscriminate rocket fire at residential areas. It can use the latter in particular to justify responding with even greater force, highlighting the severe power imbalance between the two sides, and dodging responsibility for its own attacks taking civilian lives by claiming that Hamas, a designated "terrorist" organization, is using Gaza residents as "human shields" for its military facilities.

Israeli commentators and military analysts have started assembling a victory narrative, talking about how heavy a hit Hamas has taken, giving the appearance that the war may wind down within a matter of days. Meanwhile, on the domestic front, Bennett has called off efforts to form an alternative coalition with Lapid, saying he will go back to negotiating with Netanyahu to form a government. Alternatively, Israel would go to yet another election. In either case, Netanyahu would succeed, for now, in his effort to stay in power.

Hamas has issued a list of demands, all of which, unlike in past escalations, have centred on Jerusalem. It has made clear that it will not consider a ceasefire until Israel ceases its expulsions in Sheikh Jarrah, and evacuates its forces from Al-Aqsa mosque, allowing for freedom of access to and worship at the mosque. Beyond these two central demands, Hamas has also called for the release of all prisoners detained in these recent events and Israeli acquiescence to Palestinian legislative elections including in East Jerusalem. Unlike in previous Gaza wars, Hamas has deliberately sidelined the issue of Gaza and centered its demands solely on Jerusalem in a clear demonstration of its intent to represent itself as the defender of all Palestinians across Palestine's divided terrain.

Hamas is unlikely to see its demands regarding Jerusalem fulfilled – no Israeli government can afford to make concessions in that respect. In Gaza, the Islamist movement will have to consider how much destruction it can allow, given that the task of rebuilding will fall on its shoulders. Its endgame remains unclear.

The PA has been largely silent, offering little more than soundbites condemning Israeli violence against Palestinians in Jerusalem and Gaza. Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh criticized the UN Security Council for failing to produce a joint statement on the situation in a 13 May tweet – but PA officials have said little else of note.

Other Middle Eastern countries have deplored the turn of events but likely to little avail. The Arab League issued a statement on 11 May, condemning Israeli airstrikes on Gaza as “indiscriminate and irresponsible”, and stating that Israel had provoked the escalation with its actions in Jerusalem. Egypt declared its “total rejection and condemnation of these oppressive Israeli practices” in Jerusalem, and Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry said Cairo had reached out to Israel in an attempt to calm tensions but was met with indifference. Jordan was slow to react, but issued statements supporting the Palestinians in East Jerusalem and decrying Israel’s heavy-handed retaliation. Turkey has expressed similar sentiments.

Wider international reaction has likewise been muted, at least at the government level, reflecting a deep malaise in diplomacy regarding the Israel-Palestine conflict.

What will happen next, and what should happen for things to calm down?

Hamas issued its demands when it first launched rockets at Israel over the Jerusalem crisis. Yet it is unclear what it could hope to achieve beyond a ceasefire and a return to the political status quo ante, at which point it will face huge physical devastation in Gaza, especially to its own facilities and capabilities, and to some extent also to its military capacity and command structure. The Israeli military claims it has killed at least 100 Hamas fighters, including commanders, so far, as well as its military research and development team. It posits that these losses, along with the fact that Hamas has used most of the rockets in its arsenal, will force the group to pursue a ceasefire – at which point Israel would need to decide what to do next.

Outside powers could help in laying the ground for a ceasefire. Turkey and Qatar enjoy proximity to Hamas, but Egypt, because of its longstanding interest in what happens on its northern border, is particularly well suited for this task. When the last major Israel-Gaza war happened in 2014, Cairo’s rulers were new in their seats, fresh off the 2013 coup deposing President Muhammad Morsi, a Muslim Brotherhood member. They were in no rush to press for a ceasefire, seemingly content to let Morsi’s ideological confreres in Gaza take a beating. Since then, Cairo’s rulers have become more pragmatic, in part because of the Abraham Accords, which threaten their privileged status as Israel’s main partner in the Arab world. They have pressed for a ceasefire since fighting broke out, in an effort to divert attention from their internal challenges and demonstrate their relevance and

diplomatic worth, especially to a new administration in Washington. But with Hamas focused on Jerusalem, and Israel bent on crushing Hamas, their effort so far has come to naught. At the moment, Cairo can give neither side what it most wants.

While the UN and Europeans, too, can play useful roles, today only the U.S., Israel's primary backer, is able to make a real difference in Israel's calculations. So far, the Biden administration seems content to follow Israel's lead. Israel will want to be able to claim to its public that it has exacted the right price for Hamas' rocket barrage – that it has, in the words of its security establishment, “restored deterrence”. With the Security Council meeting on 16 May, however, the White House's diplomatic considerations might change. So, too, might its domestic considerations. The longer the fighting in Israel-Palestine goes on, the greater the risk of spillover into U.S. domestic politics and disruption of Biden's agenda. Already, the crisis has started to bleed into Congressional debates.

There is another variable at play in this escalation that has not been there before: the violence between Palestinians and Israelis on the streets of Israel itself. Whether a ceasefire with Gaza would end all this violence is unclear. But continuing the bombardment of the coastal strip likely will keep feeding the country's internal convulsions. Israel must make a choice: seek a quicker ceasefire than it otherwise might like or see a quicker unraveling of its social fabric.

This new situation gives Hamas new leverage, but it also confronts the movement with a new quandary. Does it continue to press for substantial Israeli concessions in Jerusalem, which are difficult to imagine, or does it consider the sort of deal that in its past wars was unachievable but today might be more plausible and within Cairo's ability or even Israel's willingness to deliver, such as a more substantial relaxation of the blockade? Today, Hamas says such a step-back is off the table – that it has its sights set on Jerusalem and has rockets sufficient for a two-month war. But as time drags on, its arsenal is depleted, Gaza's destruction mounts and, most importantly, the Palestinian death toll climbs, it might wish that it had looked for the deal that it had been unable to achieve in four previous wars.

As for Israel's choice, if it wishes to prevent a slide into deeper civil strife, Israel should end categorical limitations on Palestinian access to the Holy Esplanade, and remove its soldiers from the compound in all but the direst circumstances, while Muslim religious authorities (the Waqf) should control stone throwing and other violent protest activities there. Israel also should immediately call a

halt to evictions of families in East Jerusalem, or at least communicate privately to Egypt and other parties that it will indefinitely postpone any further action.

More broadly, Israel should denounce violence and incendiary hate speech, no matter the source, and mete out impartial justice to all. Israeli officials have a particular responsibility to combat ethnic hatred emanating from the Jewish far right and to make sure Palestinian citizens are protected from both police and civilian violence in the same way that Jewish citizens are. Palestinian leaders in Israel have a parallel obligation within their own communities. Many around the globe, and especially in the U.S. and Europe, have been surprised by the images of Jewish mob violence, but the sentiments they embody did not spring up overnight. They have long been cultivated and endorsed at the highest levels of the state. Tamping down ethnic incitement is a matter of self-preservation for the Jewish majority, because the alternative, a steady escalation of civil strife, is already on the horizon.

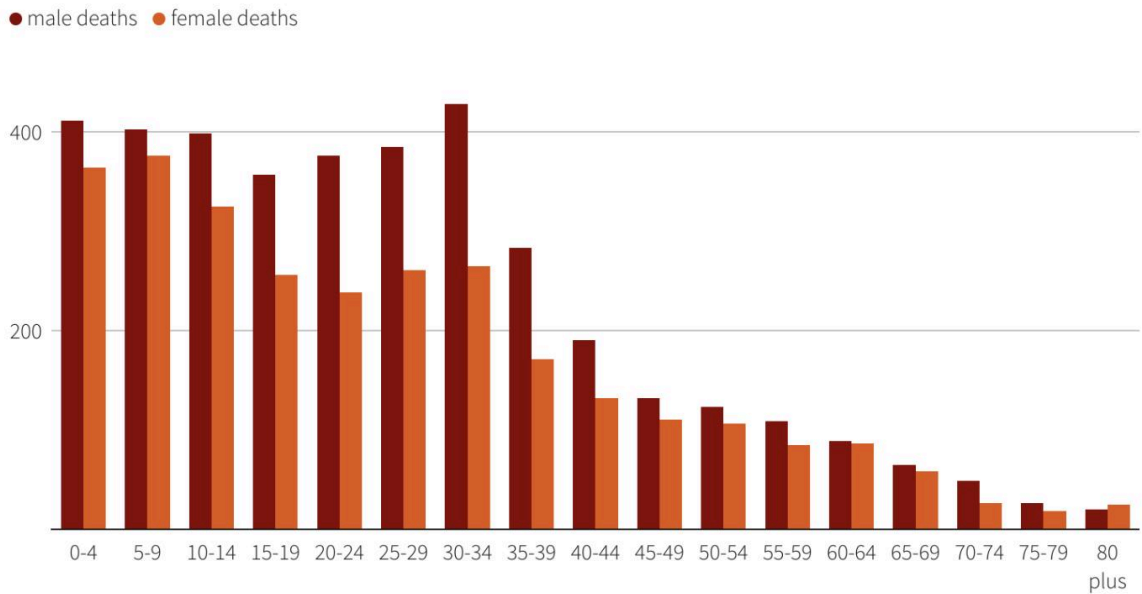
The Human Cost Of The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Violence has broken out after weeks of tension stoked by violent clashes between Israeli police and Palestinian protests in Jerusalem. Israel has carried out heavy airstrikes in Gaza with the Hanadi tower, a combined office and apartment complex owned by Hamas, targeted and destroyed. The militant group has fired rockets towards major Israeli cities including Tel Aviv, Ashkelon and Beersheba with one volley of 130 projectiles thought to be the single largest barrage ever seen. Footage posted on social media shows Israeli Iron Dome missiles intercepting many of the incoming rockets as air raid sirens blared in the background.

Since the upswing in violence on Monday night, 35 people have been killed in Gaza while there have been five deaths in Israel. UN Middle East envoy Tor Wennesland urged both sides to "stop the fire immediately", stating that "we're escalating towards a full-scale war". Meanwhile, Israeli Defense minister Benny Gantz said that "this is just the beginning" of Israel's strikes while Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh warned that "if Israel wants to escalate, we are ready for it". Unfortunately, such violence and rhetoric are nothing new in a conflict that has killed thousands of people over the last ten years alone.

Palestinian deaths, by age, in Gaza from Oct 7 to Oct 26

The health ministry says 60% of the people killed over the period were under the age of 30



Source: Palestinian Health Ministry

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has been tracking deaths in the conflict since 2008 and its data shows that 5,600 Palestinians died up to 2020 while 115,000 were injured. 250 Israelis died during the same period while 5,600 were injured. Violence was especially high in 2014 when Israel conducted Operation Protective Edge in Gaza in response to the kidnapping and murder of three teenagers. The campaign lasted seven weeks and resulted in more than 2,000 deaths, the majority of which were Gazan. Major protests also erupted in 2018 along the Israel Gaza border which saw more than 28,000 Palestinians injured.

The One-State Solution

A poll conducted in 2010 by Israel Democracy Institute suggested that 15% of right-wing Jewish Israelis and 16% of left-wing Jewish Israelis support a binational state solution over a two states solution based on 1967 lines. According to the same poll, 66% of Jewish Israelis preferred the two-state solution.

Some Israeli government spokespeople have also proposed that Palestinian-majority areas of Israel, such as the area around Umm el-Fahm, be annexed to the new Palestinian state. As this measure would cut these areas off permanently from the rest of Israel's territory, including the coastal cities and other Palestinian towns and villages, Palestinians view this with alarm. Many Palestinian citizens of Israel would therefore prefer a one-state solution because this would allow them to sustain their Israeli citizenship.

Some Israeli Jews and Palestinians who oppose a one-state solution have nevertheless come to believe that it may come to pass.^[10] Israeli Prime Minister Olmert argued, in a 2007 interview with the Israeli daily *Ha'aretz*, that without a two-state agreement Israel would face "a South African-style struggle for equal voting rights" in which case "Israel [would be] finished". This echoes comments made in 2004 by Palestinian Prime Minister

Ahmed Qurei, who said that if Israel failed to conclude an agreement with the Palestinians, that the Palestinians would pursue a single, bi-national state. In November 2009, Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat proposed the adoption of the one-state solution if Israel did not halt settlement construction: "[Palestinians must] refocus their attention on the one-state solution where Muslims, Christians and Jews can live as equals. ... It is very serious. This is the moment of truth for us."¹

Support for a one-state solution is increasing as Palestinians, frustrated by lack of progress in negotiations aiming to establish the two-state solution, increasingly see the one-state solution as an alternative way forward. In April 2016, then-U.S. Vice President Joe Biden said that because of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's policy of steady expansion of settlements, an eventual "one-state reality" with Israeli Jews no longer in the majority was the likely outcome.

In favor

Today, the proponents for the one-state solution include Palestinian author Ali Abunimah, Palestinian writer and political scientist Abdalhadi Aljila, Palestinian-American producer Jamal Dajani, Palestinian lawyer Michael Tarazi, American-Israeli anthropologist Jeff Halper, Israeli writer Dan Gavron Lebanese-American academic Saree Makdisi, and Israeli journalist Gideon Levy.¹ The expansion of the Israeli Settler movement, especially in the West Bank, has been given as one rationale for bi-nationalism and the increased infeasibility of the two-state alternative:

"Support for one state is hardly a radical idea; it is simply the recognition of the uncomfortable reality that Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories already function as a single state. They share the same aquifers, the same highway network, the same electricity grid and the same international borders... The one-state solution... Neither destroys the Jewish character of the Holy Land nor negates the Jewish historical and religious attachment. Rather, it affirms that the Holy Land has an equal Christian and Muslim character. For those who believe in equality, this is a good thing."

They advocate a secular and democratic state while still maintaining a Jewish presence and culture in the region. They concede that this alternative will erode the dream of Jewish supremacy in terms of governance in the long run.

Hamas has at times ruled out a two-state solution, and at other times endorsed the possibility of a two-state solution. Hamas co-founder Mahmoud Al-Zahar has been cited saying he *"did not rule out the possibility of having Jews, Muslims and Christians living under the sovereignty of an Islamic state."* *Islamic Jihad for its part rejects a two state solution. An Islamic Jihad leader Khalid al-Batsh stated that " The idea cannot be accepted and we believe that the entire Palestine is Arab and Islamic land and belongs to the Palestinian nation."*

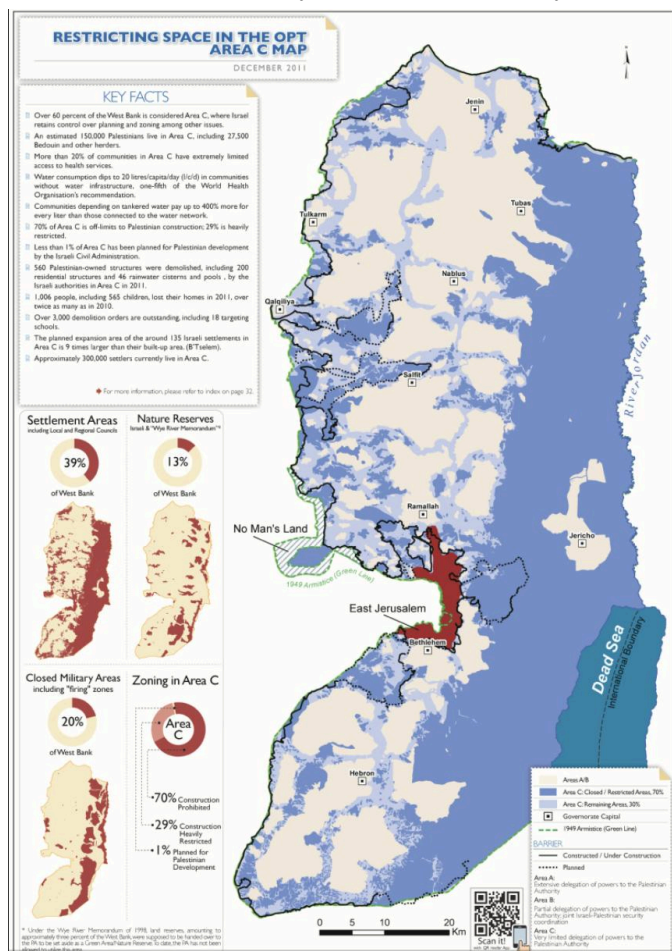
In 2003, Libyan leader Muammar al-Gaddafi proposed a one-state solution known as the Isratin proposal.

The Israeli right

In recent years, some politicians and political commentators representing the right wing of Israeli politics have advocated annexing the West Bank, and granting the West Bank's Palestinian population Israeli

citizenship while maintaining Israel's current status as a Jewish state with recognized minorities. Proposals from the Israeli right for a one-state solution tend to avoid advocating the annexation of the Gaza Strip, due to its large and generally hostile Palestinian population and its status as a self-governing territory without any Israeli settlements or permanent military presence. Some Israeli politicians, including former defense minister Moshe Arens, and former President Reuven Rivlin and Uri Ariel have voiced support for a one-state solution, rather than divide the West Bank in a two-state solution. Moshe Dayan, on the back of Camp David Accords, felt that an opportunity for a one-state solution with "liberal autonomy" for the Arabs and open borders was within reach, but squandered nevertheless.

In 2013, Likud MK Tzipi Hotovely argued that Jordan was originally created as the Arab state in the British Mandate of Palestine and that Israel should annex the West Bank as a historic part of the Land of Israel.^[59] Naftali Bennett, Prime Minister of Israel, included in many Likud-led coalitions, argues for the annexation of Zone C of the West Bank. Zone C, agreed upon as part of the Oslo Accords, comprises about 60% of West Bank land and is currently under Israeli military control.



In a 2014 book *The Israeli Solution*, *The Jerusalem Post* columnist Caroline Glick challenged the census statistics provided by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) and argued that the bureau had vastly over-inflated the Palestinian population of the West Bank by 1.34 million and that PCBS statistics and predictions are unreliable. According to a Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies (BESA) study, the 2004 Palestinian population of the West Bank and Gaza stood at 2.5 million and not the 3.8 million claimed by the Palestinians. According to Glick, the 1997 PCBS survey, used as the basis for later studies, inflated numbers by including over three hundred thousand Palestinians living abroad and by double-counting over two hundred thousand Jerusalem Arabs already included in Israel's population survey. Further, Glick says later PCBS

surveys reflect the predictions of the 1997 PCBS survey, reporting unrealized birth forecasts, including assumptions of large Palestinian immigration that never occurred.

Based on this study, Glick argued that annexation of the West Bank would only add 1.4 million Palestinians to the population of Israel. She argued that a one-state solution with a Jewish majority and a political system rooted in Jewish values was the best way to guarantee the protection of democratic values and the rights of all minorities.

The demographic statistics from the PCBS are backed by Arnon Soffer and quite similar to official Israeli figures. Sergio DellaPergola gives a figure of 5,698,500 Arabs living in Israel and the Palestinian territories in 2015, while the core Jewish population stood at 6,103,200.

Questions To Be Answered (QTBA)

1. *What have been the major peace initiatives and negotiations between Israel and Palestine?*
2. *How do security concerns on both sides influence policies and actions?*
3. *What are the challenges in balancing security needs with the rights and freedoms of civilians?*
4. *How have regional actors influenced the dynamics of the Israel-Palestine conflict?*
5. *What are the human rights concerns and violations on both sides of the conflict?*
6. *How do these issues impact the perceptions of the conflict on the global stage?*
7. *How does media coverage shape public opinion on the Israel-Palestine conflict?*
8. *To what extent is propaganda used by both sides, and how does it impact perceptions?*
9. *What are the arguments for and against a one-state solution?*
10. *What events in the early to mid-20th century contributed to the establishment of the State of Israel and the displacement of Palestinians?*