



# Historical Security Council



# THS MUN 24

## UNITED NATIONS HISTORIC SECURITY COUNCIL STUDY GUIDE

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### **Chairperson's Address-**

Greetings from the executive board,

The Middle East is a region filled with uncertainty, tragedy and complexity which perplexes even the most experienced of delegates. Undeniably, the situation in Palestine is only made worse by the explosive dynamism of the region and the ever increasing number of stakeholders in the conflicts. The bottom line, however, is that a countless number of lives have been lost in this process and given the current trajectory, the potential death toll is much higher. The Middle East faces real threats today - including but not limited to tyranny, large scale famines and death, radicalization, the prospect of all-out wars and even weapons of mass destruction. The single most important thing we can do as the youth to force a change in this grim status quo is to remain politically engaged and educated. Model United Nations is an extremely potent means to that end, allowing adolescents to be politically active by promoting discourse and enabling an increased awareness about what is happening around the world regardless of your distance from it. We as the UNSC executive board members want the same of you, and sincerely hope this study guide helps add to your knowledge.

Please note that in this committee, your understanding of the Middle East and the Palestinian question in particular is secondary, as a thorough understanding of the Security Council is indispensable if you wish to stand out. Hence, a major portion of the guide is dedicated to building and reinforcing your knowledge about the Security Council. In this guide we have provided you with an extensive background regarding this particular agenda as well as given a nuanced view of its various aspects. Also as this is an historic committee it is important for delegates to have a brief knowledge of the occurrences around and before the free date of this committee which is 31st march,1949 . Hoping to have a fruitful committee with an effective resolution passed .

Warm Regards,  
Ishan Ghosh - Chairperson  
Spandan Adhikari - Vice Chairperson  
Shivangi Bhartia - Vice Chairperson  
Shirleen Gaheer - Director  
Aarusha Kasat - Director  
Pratik More - Rapporteur



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### **What is the Security Council?**

The United Nations came into being on October 24, 1945, after 29 nations had ratified the UN charter, an important document which outlined the basic duties of the United Nations as well as the responsibilities of the principal organs of the UN (these organs were established as per Article 7, Chapter III of the UN charter). Out of these organs, the Security Council is one of them.

The UN Security Council is that organ of the United Nations which is concerned with the maintaining of international peace and security in the world, and to take action in the case of presence of veritable threats that threaten the process of maintaining peace, outlined as per Article 24, Chapter V of the UN Charter.

Chapter V of the UN Charter devotes itself entirely to the composition, duties and functioning of the Security Council. In accordance with Article 23, the Security is composed of eleven members of the United Nations. There are 5 permanent members sitting on the Security Council, and are as follows: The Republic of China (presently known as Taiwan), France, the USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America. The six other non- permanent member states of the United Nations are elected by the UNGA (General Assembly). Article 23 also makes it clear that the election of these six non- permanent members depends on the “due regard being specially paid, in the first instance to the contribution of Members of the United Nations to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the Organization, and also to equitable geographical distribution”.



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Aside from the assurance of a permanent seat in the Security Council, the P5 members (as they are commonly called) occupy a special place in the Security Council because of their ability to wield the 'veto' power. Article 27 (3) of the UN Charter establishes that all substantive decisions of the Security Council must be made with "the concurring votes of the permanent members".

This effectively means that if a P5 member feels that if a proposed course of action goes against the basic tenets of its foreign policy, or threatens its interest of national security, or might even 3 remotely go against the wishes of its government, it has the power to 'veto' or stop the proposal from passing through the Council, effectively scrapping further debilitation of the proposal. Beside permanency, the presence of the 'veto' power is probably the UN Charter's most significant delineation between permanent and non- permanent members of the UNSC. The UNSC can be often thought as an independent wing of the United Nations, owing to the fact that Articles 28 through 30 lay down the precedent of independent functioning of the Security Council. It decides when and where it wants to hold a session and has the power to establish subsidiary organs as deemed necessary for the fulfillment of certain functions. Perhaps the most apparent power granted to the Security Council is the fact that it can adopt its own rules of procedure as outlined under Article 30. Articles 31 and 32 also give the Security Council power to include non- members of the United Nations in their sessions as and when it deems necessary.

The importance of the Security Council, really, is underscored by Article 37 of the Charter, which states that parties which fail to peacefully settle issues that endanger the maintenance of international security and peace may refer it to the Security Council, thus outlining the fact that the Security Council is the de- facto body of the United Nations that can solve disputes if peaceful and legal efforts fail to do so. However, the Security Council need not be a reactive body i.e., it only solves disputes that are presented to it, but it can also proactively seek to investigate and solve issues that it feels might hamper the maintenance of international peace and security, in accordance with Article 34 of the UN Charter. Thus, this establishes the importance of the UN Security Council and the immense responsibility it must bear while seeking to maintain international peace. It is arguably, one of the most complex and most powerful global regulating bodies that there is.



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## **Membership**

The Council is composed of 15 Members, including five permanent members: China, France, Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States, and ten non-permanent members elected for two-year terms by the General Assembly. A State which is a Member of the United Nations but not of the Security Council may participate, without a vote, in its discussions when the Council considers that country's interests are affected. Elections for non-permanent seats on the Security Council can be extremely competitive, with countries expressing interest years in advance. Countries elected to serve on the Security Council are expected to represent the interests of their region, and also usually have an influence at the international level and demonstrate leadership in specific areas of interest in their foreign policy. Both Members and non-members of the United Nations, if they are parties to a dispute being considered by the Council, may be invited to take part, without a vote, in the Council's discussions; the Council sets the conditions for participation by a non-member State.

## **Governance**

The UNSC is the only UN body with the authority to issue binding resolutions on member states. According to Article 25 of the UN Charter, member nations are obliged to carry out the decisions and recommendations of the Council once a resolution has been adopted. The Security Council also has other tools to address issues like Presidential Statements. However, these are not legally binding.

## **Presidency**

Each member of the Security Council holds the presidency of the Council for one month, rotating according to alphabetical order. Security Council meetings can be held at any time when convened by the President of the Security Council and by the request of any Member State. Under Article 35 of the Charter, the president shall call a meeting if a dispute or situation calls the Council's attention. The provisional agenda for each meeting is set by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and is further approved by the President of the Security Council.



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## **Subsidiary Organs**

Under Article 29 of the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council “may establish such subsidiary organs as it deems necessary for the performance of its functions”. Over the years the Security Council has created a wide variety of organs to address issues relating both to the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as to its own working methods and procedures. Some examples include: the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, the United Nations Counter Terrorism Committee, Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee, and ad hoc committees.

## **Voting**

Every Member State of the Security Council has one vote. Votes on all matters require a majority of nine Member States. However, if one of the five permanent members of the Council votes against a draft resolution, it does not pass. This is known as the “veto power”. While in the 1950s, SC Member States, in particular the former Soviet Union, made frequent use of their veto power, its usage declined in the 1960s. During the last decades, however, the use of the veto power has been comparatively low. Over the last few years, the Council has adopted many resolutions by consensus and has only been divided on a very limited number of issues, like the Palestinian question and the Syrian Civil War.

## **Mandate**

The United Nations Charter gives primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security to the Security Council, which may meet whenever peace is threatened. According to Article 39 of the United Nations Charter, the Security Council shall determine any threat to international security and formulate recommendations accordingly. To prevent the escalation of a given conflict, the Council may call upon the parties to comply with provisional measures. The Security Council may also recommend the addition of new members to the General Assembly or the expulsion of a current member if it is found that an existing member has persistently violated 5 of the principles of the United Nations Charter. The mandate of the Security Council is further outlined in Chapter VII of the UN Charter.



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The main purposes of the Security Council are:

- to maintain international peace and security;
- to develop friendly relations among nations;
- to cooperate in solving international problems and in promoting respect for human rights;
- and to be a centre for harmonising the actions of nations.

For the above purposes, the Security Council may choose to:

- set forth principles for a peace agreement;
- undertake investigation and mediation
- dispatch a mission or appoint special envoys;
- request the Secretary-General to use his good offices to achieve pacific settlements of disputes.
- issue ceasefire directives that can help prevent an escalation of the conflict;
- dispatch military observers or a peacekeeping force to help reduce tensions, separate opposing forces and establish a calm in which peaceful settlements may be sought.
- impose economic sanctions, arms embargoes, financial penalties and restrictions, travel bans, blockades
- sever diplomatic relations and even institute collective military action

### **How was Palestine formed and it's history -**

The first recorded human occupancy in the area until Alexander the Great's conquests in the fourth century BCE it is known as the ancient period. In addition to the impact of past civilizations like the Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian ones, it includes the civilizations of the Canaanites, Israelites, Philistines, and others. After Alexander the Great's conquests, Hellenistic influence spread to Palestine, which later joined the Roman Empire. Palestine gained significance as the birthplace of Jesus Christ and the hub of the earliest Christian communities with the spread of Christianity. Later, the area was ruled by the Byzantine Empire until the seventh century CE.

Palestine entered the Islamic Caliphates following the Arab conquests in the seventh century CE, and under Muslim authority, the country enjoyed periods of both cultural and economic prosperity. This era includes, among additional periods, the Umayyad, Abbasid, Fatimid, and Ayyubid dynasties. It was followed by crusades when Latin Christian Crusader nations conquered Palestine, which were started by European Christians in the eleventh and thirteenth centuries. There was plenty of battle during this time between Muslim and European Crusader forces.





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Palestine was a component of the Ottoman Empire from the sixteenth century until the First World War. The Ottoman Empire ruled this era, which was marked by economic stagnation and growing European influence. However, after the first world war Palestine was given to the British government by the League of Nations as a mandate. Competing nationalism movements developed during this time, and tensions between the Arab and Jewish communities grew. The period of the British Mandate saw rising tensions and violence between Jewish and Arab communities.

In 1947, the United Nations proposed a partition plan to divide Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states, with Jerusalem as an international city. Following the declaration of the State of Israel in May 1948, neighboring Arab states invaded. The war resulted in the establishment of Israel.

Peace lines following the 1948 Arab-Israeli War placed Israel in command of a wider territory than that originally suggested by the UN partition plan. Jordan took administration of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, while Egypt was in charge of the Gaza Strip. Later, during the Six-Day War in 1967, Israel took control of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, and other areas. Despite calls from throughout the world for Israeli departure and the creation of a Palestinian state. To fight for it Palestine established the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1964 which rose to prominence as the main organization supporting Palestinian independence. Through the establishment of the Palestinian Authority, the Oslo Accords between Israel and the PLO allowed for limited Palestinian self-governance in areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. However, in spite of these accords, there has been no sign of peace, since there is still violence, a growing number of settlements, and political rifts.

**CURRENT SITUATION:** The West Bank, which is partially under the administration of the Palestinian Authority, and the Gaza Strip, which is under the control of Hamas, make up the modern Palestinian territory. One of the most divisive topics is still Jerusalem's status. Palestine is recognized as a state by more than 135 UN members, but it lacks complete international sovereignty



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### **Formation and History of Israel -**

The history and formation of Israel before its declaration as a state in 1948 involve a series of significant events and movements spanning several decades. The land of Israel, historically known as Palestine, has long been significant to Jewish history and culture. This region, located on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, is considered the ancestral homeland of the Jewish people, dating back to biblical times. Over the centuries, Jews faced various exiles and diasporas, but the hope of returning to Zion remained a central element of Jewish identity and religious tradition.

By the late 19th century, this historical connection began to take a political form with the rise of the Zionist movement, which sought to re-establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine. This movement, combined with the geopolitical changes of the 20th century and the profound impact of the Holocaust, culminated in the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, fulfilling a long-held aspiration of the Jewish people.

The Zionist movement emerged in the late 19th century, founded by Theodor Herzl, an Austro-Hungarian journalist who was motivated by the widespread anti-Semitism in Europe. Herzl's seminal work, "Der Judenstaat" (The Jewish State), published in 1896, argued for the establishment of a Jewish state as a solution to the Jewish question. Herzl organized the First Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland, in 1897, where the goal of creating a Jewish homeland in Palestine was formally articulated. This congress marked the beginning of political Zionism and laid the foundation for future Jewish immigration to Palestine. Herzl's vision resonated with many Jews who faced persecution and sought a safe haven, leading to the establishment of Zionist organizations worldwide that promoted Jewish settlement in Palestine.

The movement gained as Jews began to immigrate to Palestine, which was then part of the Ottoman Empire. The First Aliyah (1882-1903) saw around 25,000 Jews, mainly from Eastern Europe, settle in Palestine. These early settlers focused on agricultural development, establishing farming communities and reviving the Hebrew language. The Second Aliyah (1904-1914) brought another 35,000 Jews to the region, many of whom were motivated by socialist ideals. They established collective communities known as kibbutzim and contributed to the socio-economic infrastructure of the emerging Jewish society. During this period, key figures such as David Ben-Gurion and Chaim Weizmann emerged as leaders who would later play crucial roles in the establishment of Israel.



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Following World War I, the Ottoman Empire was dismantled, and Palestine came under British control. In 1920, the League of Nations granted Britain the mandate to govern Palestine, officially known as the British Mandate for Palestine. The British Mandate period (1920-1948) was crucial for the development of the Jewish national home. In 1917, the British government issued the Balfour Declaration, which supported "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people" while ensuring that "nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities." This declaration encouraged further Jewish immigration and investment in the land. The mandate system was intended to prepare the territories for self-governance, but it also entailed significant political complexities.

During the Mandate period, Jewish immigration continued, particularly during the Third Aliyah (1919-1923) and the Fourth Aliyah (1924-1929), driven by economic hardship and rising anti-Semitism in Europe. By the late 1930s, the Fifth Aliyah (1929-1939) brought a significant influx of Jews fleeing Nazi persecution. These immigrants contributed to the establishment of vital institutions and infrastructure, such as the Histadrut (labor federation) and the Jewish Agency, which played a key role in coordinating immigration and settlement activities. The Jewish community also developed a robust agricultural sector, education system, and defense organizations, laying the groundwork for a future state.

The increasing Jewish presence in Palestine led to heightened tensions with the Arab population, who also aspired to national independence. The Arab Revolt of 1936-1939 was a series of nationalist uprisings against British rule and Jewish immigration. The British response included repressive measures and the issuance of the White Paper of 1939, which limited Jewish immigration and land purchases, exacerbating Jewish discontent. Despite these restrictions, Jewish immigration continued through clandestine operations, highlighting the determination of Jews to seek refuge in their ancestral homeland.

The rise of Nazism in Germany and the Holocaust during World War II had a profound impact on Jewish aspirations for a homeland. The extermination of six million Jews underscored the urgency for a safe haven. Jewish underground organizations in Palestine, such as the Haganah, Irgun, and Lehi, intensified their efforts against British rule, conducting acts of sabotage and resistance. The end of World War II saw a significant increase in Jewish refugees seeking to enter Palestine, many of whom were survivors of the Holocaust. The British, under pressure from both Jewish and Arab communities, found it increasingly difficult to maintain control and sought to limit Jewish immigration through measures such as the detention of immigrants in camps in Cyprus.



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The plight of Jewish refugees and survivors of the Holocaust added urgency to the call for a Jewish state. Jewish underground organizations, such as the Haganah, Irgun, and Lehi, intensified their efforts against British rule. The post-war period saw a rise in Jewish immigration, often conducted illegally, as Jews sought to escape the devastation of Europe. The British, unable to resolve the escalating conflict and burdened by the aftermath of the war, referred the Palestine issue to the United Nations in 1947.

The UN formed a Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) to investigate and propose a solution. On November 29, 1947, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 181, which recommended the partition of Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states, with Jerusalem under international administration. The Jewish Agency, led by David Ben-Gurion, accepted the plan despite its limitations, as it provided a legal pathway to statehood. However, the Arab states and Palestinian Arabs rejected the plan, leading to widespread violence. The rejection of the partition plan by the Arab side led to a civil conflict in the region, further escalating tensions as the end of the British Mandate approached.

As the British prepared to withdraw, violence between Jewish and Arab communities escalated. The Jewish leadership, anticipating the end of the British Mandate, intensified their preparations for independence. Despite facing significant military challenges and internal debates, the Jewish community remained united in its goal. On May 14, 1948, David Ben-Gurion, the head of the Jewish Agency, proclaimed the establishment of the State of Israel in Tel Aviv, just hours before the British Mandate was set to expire. The declaration was based on the historic connection of the Jewish people to the land, the achievements of the Zionist movement, and the international legitimacy provided by the UN partition plan. The proclamation of the State of Israel was met with immediate invasion by neighboring Arab countries, marking the beginning of the 1948 Arab-Israeli War.



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### **The Arab-Israeli War , 1948**

The 1948 Arab-Israeli War, also known as the Palestine war, took place from November 30, 1947 to July 20, 1949 in British-ruled Mandatory Palestine. The war began when five Arab nations invaded the former Palestinian mandate after Israel declared independence on May 14, 1948.

Israel won the war, which resulted in the displacement of 750,000 Palestinians and the division of the territory into three parts: Israel, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict dates back to the end of the 19th century. In 1947, the United Nations adopted the Partition Plan, Resolution 181, which sought to divide the British Mandate of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states. The United States recognized the Israeli Provisional Government in 1947 and again on May 14, 1948, but maintained an arms embargo against all belligerents during the war.

Some say that the 1948 war was a national conflict with religious elements that was more complicated than "us against them". Others say that inter-Arab politics played a major role in Israel's success in the war. The Arab-Israeli War of 1948 broke out when five Arab nations invaded territory in the former Palestinian mandate immediately following the announcement of the independence of the state of Israel on May 14, 1948. In 1947, and again on May 14, 1948, the United States had offered de facto recognition of the Israeli Provisional Government, but during the war, the United States maintained an arms embargo against all belligerents.

On November 29, 1947, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 181 (also known as the Partition Resolution) that would divide Great Britain's former Palestinian mandate into Jewish and Arab states in May 1948. Under the resolution, the area of religious significance surrounding Jerusalem would remain under international control administered by the United Nations. The Palestinian Arabs refused to recognize this arrangement, which they regarded as favourable to the Jews and unfair to the Arab population that would remain in Jewish territory under the partition. The United States sought a middle way by supporting the United Nations resolution, but also encouraging negotiations between Arabs and Jews in the Middle East. The United Nations resolution sparked conflict between Jewish and Arab groups within Palestine. Fighting began with attacks by irregular bands of Palestinian Arabs attached to local units of the Arab Liberation Army composed of volunteers from Palestine and neighbouring Arab countries. These groups launched their attacks against Jewish cities, settlements, and armed forces. The Jewish forces were composed of the Haganah, the underground militia of the Jewish community in Palestine, and two small irregular groups, the Irgun, and LEHI.



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The goal of the Arabs was initially to block the Partition Resolution and to prevent the establishment of the Jewish state. The Jews, on the other hand, hoped to gain control over the territory allotted to them under the Partition Plan.

After Israel declared its independence on May 14, 1948, the fighting intensified with other Arab forces joining the Palestinian Arabs in attacking territory in the former Palestinian mandate. On the eve of May 14, the Arabs launched an air attack on Tel Aviv, which the Israelis resisted. This action was followed by the invasion of the former Palestinian mandate by Arab armies from Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Egypt. Saudi Arabia sent a formation that fought under the Egyptian command. British trained forces from Transjordan eventually intervened in the conflict, but only in areas that had been designated as part of the Arab state under the United Nations Partition Plan and the corpus separatum of Jerusalem. After tense early fighting, Israeli forces, now under joint command, were able to gain the offensive.

Though the United Nations brokered two cease-fires during the conflict, fighting continued into 1949. Israel and the Arab states did not reach any formal armistice agreements until February. Under separate agreements between Israel and the neighbouring states of Egypt, Lebanon, 10 Transjordan, and Syria, these bordering nations agreed to formal armistice lines. Israel gained some territory formerly granted to Palestinian Arabs under the United Nations resolution in 1947. Egypt and Jordan retained control over the Gaza Strip and the West Bank respectively. These armistice lines held until 1967. The United States did not become directly involved with the armistice negotiations, but hoped that instability in the Middle East would not interfere with the international balance of power between the Soviet Union and the United States. The Arab-Israeli War of 1948 broke out when five Arab nations invaded territory in the former Palestinian mandate immediately following the announcement of the independence of the state of Israel on May 14, 1948. In 1947, and again on May 14, 1948, the United States had offered de facto recognition of the Israeli Provisional Government, but during the war, the United States maintained an arms embargo against all belligerents. After decades of confrontations between Arabs and Jews under the British mandate of Palestine, where both communities sought self-determination after the fall of the Ottoman Empire in 1922, the United Kingdom announced its intention in 1947 to withdraw its forces from Palestine and endorsed United Nations Resolution 181, which partitioned the British mandate into a Jewish state and an Arab state. The plan, although accepted by the international community, was rejected by the Arabs, and in May 1948, as British forces withdrew, Israel was born in a region with unresolved disputes over borders, security, land ownership, and other matters. Since that time.



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### **The Peel Commission Partition Plan -**

In 1936, the British government established a commission of investigation led by Lord Peel to investigate the reasons behind the Arab riots and the effectiveness of the Mandate government in reaction to the Arab Revolt against the British mandatory government and the ongoing Arab violence against Jews.

The United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) recommended the partition in its report, which was presented to the General Assembly in 1947. The plan called for the creation of independent Arab and Jewish states, with Jerusalem designated as a separate international entity due to its significance to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

In 1947, the UN General Assembly passed Resolution 181, which approved the partition proposal. Arab authorities opposed the plan, believing it to be unfair and unjust.

The plan aimed to partition Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states, along with an internationally administered area around Jerusalem, which would be given special status due to its religious significance.

Violence between the Arab and Jewish communities increased after the partition plan was approved, sparking the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. Following Israel's declaration of independence on May 14, 1948, when the British Mandate came to an end, surrounding Arab nations intervened on behalf of the Palestinian Arabs.



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### **PARTITION PLAN: which was rejected (proposed by the UN)**

Territorial Division: Separate Jewish and Arab states were to be created out of Palestine under the proposed concept. About 56% of the land was to be occupied by the Jewish state, and about 42% by the Arab state. The remaining 2 percent was set aside for Jerusalem, which is under international administration.

Population Distribution: The distribution of people was not uniform, even with the division of territory. In the area set aside for the Jewish state, Arabs made up the majority and Jews made up a sizable minority. On the other hand, the region set aside for the Arab state was populated mostly by Arabs.

International Administration of Jerusalem: The United Nations was to be in charge of overseeing Jerusalem and its environs on an international level. The purpose of this system was to protect the interests of the various ethnic and religious minorities living in the city.

The UN established the UN Special group on Palestine (UNSCOP), an inquiry group with members from 11 nations, to look into a proper course of action. In the end, UNSCOP presented two recommendations: the majority's, which called for the economic union of two distinct nations, and the minority's, which favored the creation of a single binational state composed of autonomous Jewish and Palestinian regions. The Arabs were against both of these propositions, while the Jewish community supported the first. Jewish support was not shown for a counterproposal that included the clause stating that citizenship in the state would only be granted to those Jews who had come before to the Balfour Declaration and their descendants.





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### **THE UN PARTITION PLAN- RESOLUTION 181**

The UN resolution 181, if had to be summed in one line, was a resolution passed by UNGA in 1947 that called for the partition of Palestine into two independent states, one Jewish and one Arab. The Jerusalem- Bethlehem area was considered corpus separatum (Latin for separate entity), that was to be governed by a special international regime. This resolution garnered mixed opinions, on one hand, the Jews considered it to be the legal basis to establish Israel, the Arabs completely opposed this decision. This was immediately met with violence, turbulence and conflicts. The reason behind why the Arabs were enraged by this decision was that the plan proposed a Jewish state on more than half of Mandate Palestine at a time when Jews comprised less than a third of the population and owned less than 7 percent of the land. Since Palestine was under British rule (1922), Jewish immigration to Palestine increased, leading to the rising tension between the Jews and Arabs.

When Britain got exhausted of its resources in 1947 due to world war 2 and became intent upon withdrawing from the Middle east, it referred this issue of Palestine to the UN, leading to the formation of the UN Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) comprising of .Australia , Canada , Czechoslovakia , Guatemala , India , Iran , the The Netherlands , Peru , Sweden , Uruguay , and Yugoslavia.

UNSCOP's September 1947 report listed eleven unanimous recommendations on general principles, including the transition of Palestine from Mandated territory to independence, preservation of the pre-existing "status quo " on the holy places and rights of the religious communities as well as of the foreign privileges conceded by the Ottomans, and—crucially—linking the Palestine question to a solution to the postwar Jewish refugee problem. Also, the organization, stated 2 possible solutions:

1. Palestine divided into two separate entities, joined economically (supported by Canada, Czechoslovakia, Guatemala, the Netherlands, Peru, Sweden, and Uruguay)
2. Palestine turned into a binational state with separate, autonomous areas for both Jews and Arabs (supported by India, Iran, and Yugoslavia).

While the Jews agreed to the first proposal, the Arabs declined both of them. They then released a counter proposal- Only those Jews that arrived before the Balfour Declaration (and their descendants) , were allowed to gain citizenship of Palestine. This did not win British favour.



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What is the Balfour Declaration essentially? It was basically a statement of support put out by the British that declared the the 'establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people'.

The Balfour Declaration, issued through the continued efforts of Chaim Weizmann and Nahum Sokolow, Zionist leaders in London, fell short of the expectations of the Zionists, who had asked for the reconstitution of Palestine as "the" Jewish national home. The declaration specifically stipulated that "nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine." The document, however, said nothing of the political or national rights of these communities and did not refer to them by name. Nevertheless, the declaration aroused enthusiastic hopes among Zionists and seemed the fulfillment of the aims of the World Zionist Organization.

The British government hoped that the declaration would rally Jewish opinion, especially in the United States, to the side of the Allied powers against the Central Powers during World War I (1914–18). They hoped also that the settlement in Palestine of a pro-British Jewish population might help to protect the approaches to the Suez Canal in neighbouring Egypt And thus ensure a vital communication route to British colonial possessions in India.

The Balfour Declaration was endorsed by the principal Allied powers and was included in the British mandate over Palestine, formally approved by the newly created League of Nations on July 24, 1922. In May 1939 the British government altered its policy in a White Paper recommending a limit of 75,000 further immigrants and an end to immigration by 1944, unless the resident Palestinian Arabs of the region consented to further immigration.

Zionists condemned the new policy, accusing Britain of favoring the Arabs. This point was made moot by the outbreak of World War II (1939–45) and the founding state of Israel in 1948. On 23 September 1947, the UN General Assembly formed an Ad Hoc Committee to consider UNSCOP's report. Representatives of the Arab Higher Committee (Hay'a) (AHC) and the Jewish Agency attended. The AHC rejected the proposals of both UNSCOP working groups, arguing that any solution that privileged the claims of Jews to Palestine was inconsistent with the UN Charter. The Jewish Agency—which in August 1946 had submitted its own partition proposal, with a Palestinian rump state whose boundaries bear some resemblance to those of the post-1948 West Bank—accepted the partition proposal but lobbied for the inclusion of Jerusalem and the western Galilee (e.g., Acre, Nazareth) in the Jewish state. The ad hoc committee made some revisions to the UNSCOP report's boundaries, and the proposal for partition proceeded to the General Assembly for a vote.



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The proposed Jewish state covered some 56 percent of Mandate Palestine divided into three barely contiguous parts/areas: the eastern Galilee (including Safad , Tiberias , Baysan , and the Sea of Galilee ), a coastal area (about two-thirds of Palestine's coast, including Haifa , Tel Aviv , and the fertile lowland plains), and most of the Negev (excluding Bir al)

Sabi' and a strip/area running about half-way down the border with Egypt , but giving access to the Red Sea ). Of Mandate Palestine's sixteen districts, nine were allotted to the Jewish state, only one of which had a Jewish majority; the UN-proposed Jewish state as a whole had an Arab “minority” approaching 47 percent.

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 favour, 13 against, and 10 abstentions.

The announcement of the UN acceptance of partition was met in Arab Palestine by a general strike and demonstrations; some—in Jerusalem and elsewhere—turned to destructive riots. Meanwhile, emboldened by the international imprimatur given by the UN decision, the Zionist military organizations attacked Arab villages and residential quarters before launching the highly organized campaigns of Plan Dalet starting in early April 1948. Villagers together with the more organized Arab volunteer and irregular forces defended their territory and attacked Zionist areas. This “civil war” phase of the 1947–49 Palestine War ended with Israel's declaration of statehood on 15 May 1948.

By emphasizing their acceptance of the idea of partition and Arab rejection of it, while ignoring the deep injustice written into the details of the proposal in terms of both land and population, Zionists were able to cloak the ensuing conquest and displacement of Palestinians as both legitimate and defensive. The UN Partition Plan thus represents both the fruits of Zionist efforts to secure international recognition of Jewish sovereignty in Palestine and the immediate precursor to the establishment of the State of Israel in May 1948, predicated as it was on the expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians from their lands.

After the 1948 war, the Assembly by resolution 194 (III) of 1949 established the Conciliation Commission for Palestine (UNCCP) to help the parties reach a final settlement, while reaffirming the rights of Palestine refugees to return and restitution. UNRWA, a Palestine refugee agency, was established by the Assembly the same year.



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## Peace Processes and useful history

### 1. Madrid Peace Conference

The United States began trying to convene an international Middle East peace conference during the final year of Ronald Reagan's Presidency. Hoping to stop the violence caused by the intifada and address Palestinian grievances, Secretary of State George Shultz called for an international convention that would serve as a prelude to direct negotiations between Israel, Jordan, and local Palestinians on interim autonomy for the occupied territories, followed by talks on a permanent status agreement.

Shultz's plan, however, went nowhere. Israel rejected the Secretary's proposals because they did not call for an end to the Palestinian intifada as a precondition to negotiations. In July 1988, Jordan's King Hussein rendered the Shultz Plan unworkable when he renounced his kingdom's links to the West Bank. After the Gulf War, however, President Bush and the then Secretary of State James Baker seemed to imply that the pro-Israel Reagan days were over.

In addition to maintaining a permanent U.S. naval presence in the Gulf, providing funds for Middle East development, and instituting safeguards against the spread of unconventional weapons, the centrepiece of his program, however, was the achievement of an Arab-Israeli treaty based on the territory-for-peace principle and the fulfilment of Palestinian rights.

The Madrid Conference convened on October 30, 1991 and lasted for three days. It was hosted by the Spanish government and co-sponsored by the US and the Soviet Union.

The conference includes delegations from Israel, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, and the Palestinians. The Madrid conference marks the first time most of the Arab parties (except for Egypt) and Israel sat down at a table together. The conference is organised along bi-lateral lines as well as multilateral lines.

The purpose of the conference was to serve as an opening forum for the participants. It had no power to impose solutions or veto agreements. It inaugurated negotiations on both bilateral and multilateral tracks. Syrian and Lebanese negotiators agreed on a common strategy.



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These first-ever public bilateral talks between Israel and its neighbours (except Egypt) were aimed at achieving peace treaties between the three Arab states and Israel, while the talks with the Palestinians were based on a two-stage formula, the first consisting of negotiating interim self-government arrangements, to be followed by permanent status negotiations. (This formula was essentially followed in the later Oslo Accords.)

The talks opened immediately following the conference on November 3, 1991 in Madrid and were followed by over a dozen formal rounds in Washington, DC from December 9, 1991 to January 24, 1994.

The multilateral negotiations, which opened in Moscow on January 28, 1992, were held in five separate forums, each focused on a major issue: water, environment, arms control, refugees and economic development. These continued until November, 1993 at venues throughout the world, including European Capitals and the Middle East.

At first, Israel refused to take part in the refugee and economic meetings as Palestinians from outside the West Bank and Gaza were present. Syria and Lebanon refused to take part in multilateral meetings as long as there was no concrete progress on the bilateral level. Israel-Jordan negotiations eventually led to a peace treaty signed in 1994, while Israel-Syria talks led to several series of negotiations, which came quite close according to some reports, but did not result in a peace treaty.

### **2. The Oslo Accords**

Secret talks between Israeli and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) negotiators begin in Oslo, Norway. On September 13, Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin sign a Declaration of Principles in Washington on the basis of the negotiations between Israeli and Palestinian teams in Oslo, Norway.

The Oslo Accords aimed to establish a framework for a peaceful settlement represented the first face-to-face agreement between the government of Israel and the PLO. The first agreement, Oslo I negotiated in 1993, provided for the creation of the Palestinian National Authority, as an interim self-government with responsibility for the administration of the territory under its control. The Accords also called for the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) to withdraw from parts of the Gaza Strip and West Bank.



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The second agreement in 1995, Oslo II, gave Palestinians self-rule in Bethlehem, Hebron, Jenin, Nablus, Qalqilya, Ramallah, Tulkarm, and some 450 villages. Neither promised a Palestinian state, but a lasting solution was anticipated within a matter of years. Through the negotiations, Israel recognized the PLO and gave them limited autonomy (in the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza) in return for peace. The PLO in turn gave up its claims to Israel's territory as defined by its borders before the 1967 war. The Palestinians also agreed to end the Intifada and establish security in the West Bank and Gaza.

The trade-offs made became known as "land for peace." Because they could not resolve all the issues right away, the two sides agreed to make gradual steps towards a final settlement of the conflict. The process by which the two sides would gradually exchange land for peace and work-out the more difficult issues standing in the way of a final agreement became known as the "Oslo Peace Process."

### **History - Present Day Timeline**

1915-1917: The British planned to divide the territory into a made two parts – the Arab state Transjordan (as promised in the McMahon-Hussein Correspondence in 1915) and the Jewish Palestinian state (as promised in the Balfour Declaration of 1917).

1916: After having been under Ottoman rule for many years, the area came under British rule during the 1st World War, as stated in the Sykes-Picot Agreement between Britain and France in 1916.

1919-1920: Although several attempts were made to reconcile both sides to implement this decision such as the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, the London Conference (1920) and finally the San Remo Conference (1920), no agreement was everlastingly achieved. The Faisal-Weizmann Agreement, which established the British Mandate and called for a demarcation of the borders for these areas by a special commission therefore was signed by all parties in 1919 but never implemented.

Under rising conflicts and in the aftermath of World War II, the British government decided to terminate their mandate in 1947 and referred to the United Nations for all matters regarding the future of Palestine. The roots of the conflict and mistrust are deep and complex, often predating the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948. A coalition of Arab states, allied with Palestinian factions, battle Israeli forces. In the end, Israel controls a large portion of its territory. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians flee or are driven from their land.



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1956: Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalised the Suez Canal, a vital trade route connecting the Red Sea and the Mediterranean. Israel invades Egypt, followed by forces from Britain and France. A peace deal, backed by the United States and the Soviet Union, ends the fighting. But the canal was blocked by sunken ships and did not reopen until 1957.

1967: The “Six-Day War” begins with Israeli warplanes striking Egyptian airfields and Israeli ground forces entering the Sinai Peninsula. The war broke out amid lingering conflicts, including Egypt’s continued block of shipping into the Gulf of Aqaba. Jordan joins the fighting alongside Egypt, but Israeli forces have the upper hand after nearly wiping out Egypt’s air power. Israel takes control of the Gaza Strip, Sinai, the West Bank, the Golan Heights, and predominantly Arab East Jerusalem. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians flee or are displaced.

1973: A coalition of Arab nations, led by Egypt and Syria, launches a surprise attack on Israel. The Arab forces initially gained ground but were driven back by an Israeli counteroffensive aided by supplies from allies, including the United States.

1978: A peace deal between Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin, known as the Camp David accords, was brokered on Sept. 17, 1978, by President Jimmy Carter. Potential Palestinian peace proposals were discussed but never carried out.

1987: A Palestinian uprising, or intifada, brings clashes and protests in the West Bank, Gaza, and Israel. Unrest continues for years, with many killed or injured on both sides.

1993-1995: The first of two parts, known as the Oslo accords, are signed between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation, setting out a peace process based on previous U.N. resolutions. (A followup accord was signed in 1995.) The agreements created the Palestinian Authority, to oversee most administrative affairs in the West Bank and Gaza. The PLO is recognized by Israel and the United States as a negotiating partner. Left unresolved, however, are key issues such as Israeli settlements in the West Bank and the status of Jerusalem, which is viewed by the Palestinians as the capital of any future state.

2000: The second intifada, or Palestinian uprising, begins after riots broke out following a visit by rightwing Israeli political figure Ariel Sharon (and later prime minister) to a compound in Jerusalem venerated in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Clashes and other violence continued until 2005, leaving hundreds dead on both sides.



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2006: The Palestinian militant group Hamas wins elections in Gaza, leading to political strains with the more moderate Fatah party controlling the West Bank.

2008: Israel begins three weeks of attacks on Gaza after rocket barrages into Israel by Palestinian militants, who are supplied by tunnels from Egypt.

2012: Israel kills Hamas military chief Ahmed Jabari, touching off more than a week of rocket fire from Gaza and Israeli airstrikes.

2014: Hamas militants kill three Israeli teenagers kidnapped near a Jewish settlement in the West Bank, prompting an Israeli military response. Hamas answers with rocket attacks from Gaza. A seven week conflict leaves more than 2,200 Palestinians dead in Gaza. In Israel, 67 soldiers and six civilians are killed.

2017: The Trump administration recognizes Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and announces that it plans to shift the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv, stirring outrage from Palestinians.

2018: Protests take place in Gaza along the fence with Israel, including demonstrators hurling rocks and gasoline bombs across the barrier. Israeli troops kill more than 170 protesters over several months. In November, Israel staged a covert raid into Gaza. At least seven suspected Palestinian militants and a senior Israeli army officer are killed. From Gaza, hundreds of rockets are fired into Israel.

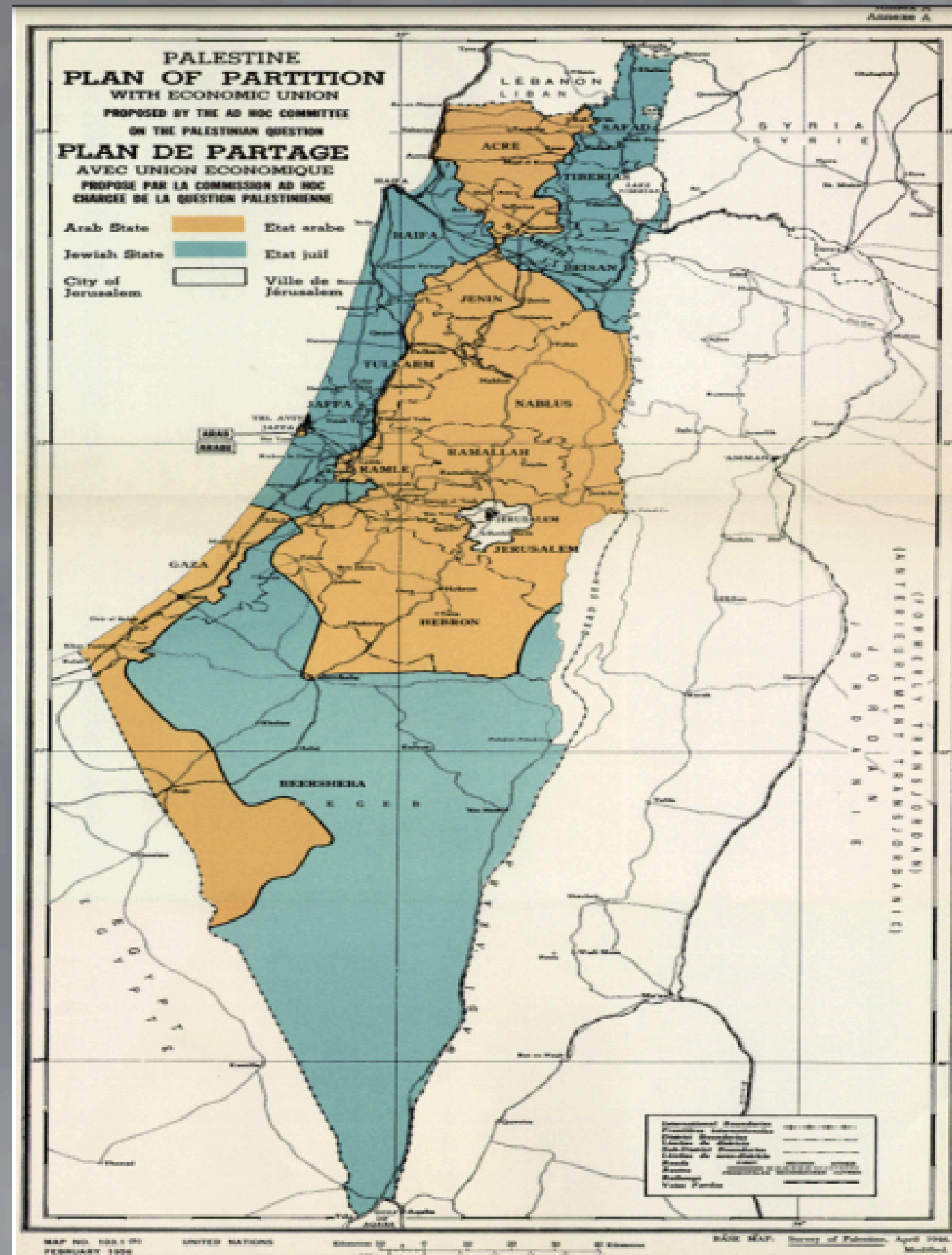
2021: After weeks of tension in Jerusalem led to Israeli police raiding al-Aqsa Mosque, one of the holiest sites in Islam, Hamas fired rockets toward the city for the first time in years, prompting Israel to retaliate with airstrikes. The fighting, the fiercest since at least 2014, saw thousands of rockets fired from Gaza and hundreds of airstrikes on the Palestinian territory, with more than 200 killed in Gaza and at least 10 killed in Israel.





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## Important Maps for Reference



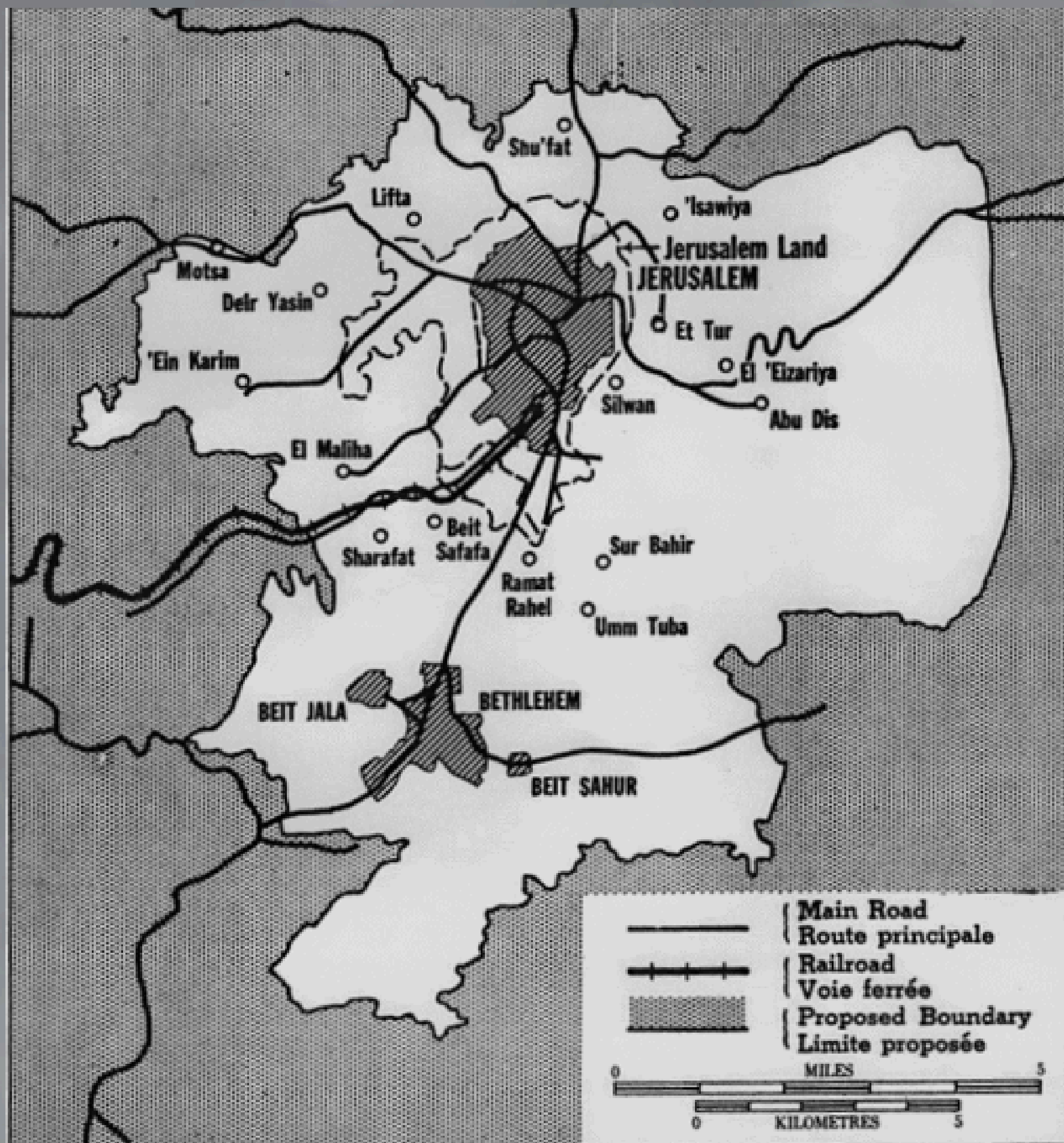
### PLAN OF PARTITION

### WITH ECONOMIC UNION

proposed by the Ad Hoc Committee on the Palestinian Question  
[Annex A to resolution 181 (II) of the General Assembly,  
dated 29 November 1947]



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## CITY OF JERUSALEM BOUNDARIES PROPOSED

[Annex B to resolution 181 (II) of the General Assembly,  
dated 29 November 1947]



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### The Final Question?

To whom should Jerusalem and Palestine belong? That is a question which, despite many wars and conquests and diplomatic talks, has never been fully resolved. This fascinating and complex dispute stretches back to the earliest attacks on Jerusalem in 597 BCE by Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon, which led to the destruction of King Solomon's first temple. Since then, there have been a constant stream of attempts to displace the historical Judean population from their ancient land; the later Ottoman attacks forced most of the Jewish population to flee their homeland. Most of them settled in Europe, where they continued to face discrimination in the places they settled, including England, Venice and the Austro-Hungarian Empire ruled by the then Habsburg monarchy. Meanwhile, the Ottomans had lost control over their historic territories in the Middle-East and had seceded most of them to the United Kingdom, as per the suggestions of the League of Nations, in 1922. Needless to say, Palestine also came under the British mandate during that time. While some of the Middle-Eastern territories did eventually become sovereign states, Palestine was not one of them. The key area of contention being the Balfour Declaration previously adopted by the British in 1917, which sought to establish Palestine as a "national home" for the Jewish people, so to speak. This resulted in large-scale immigration of Jews, mainly from Eastern Europe, into Palestine during the extension of the Mandate from 1922 to 1947. These numbers increased rapidly from the 1930s with the increasing persecution of the Jews by the Nazis. This large-scale immigration of the Jews was in part encouraged by the Balfour declaration, and this phenomenon was vehemently opposed by the Arabs. The Arabs then violently revolted in 1937, in part because of the recommendation of the Peel Commission to split Palestine into a Jewish and an Arab state. In response to these revolts, the British government issued martial law and used armed force to put down the rebellion, whilst simultaneously detaining thousands of Arabs. Several Jewish paramilitary organizations also supported the British fight against the Arabs, the most notable being the Haganah. The military response did not abate the security concerns however, but instead aggravated the Arabs more and plenty of skirmishes followed. Stretched to the end of its tethers, the British finally turned over the Palestine Problem to the UN. The UN proposed the abolishment of the British Mandate and recommended the partition of Palestine along the lines of the Peel Commission, but with Jerusalem as a *corpus separatum* (international zone) under the purview of the UN.



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These proposals were outlined in UN Resolution 181 (II), and the UNSCOP was created in order to oversee the withdrawal of British troops and push towards international arbitration to solve this prickly issue. However, the Arabs vociferously protested UN Resolution 181 (II) as well as the declaration of Israel as an independent state and thus in 1948 began the first Israeli- Arab War. With the increasing political instability in the region and the failure of a pacific settlement of this issue, the matter was referred to the UNSC, where important decisions must be taken in order to put forward a final solution to the Palestine problem..

### Links for research -

[uncharter.pdf](#)

The Veto : UN Security Council Working Methods : Security Council Report  
A History and Overview of the United Nations Security Council | Latest News | News | ND

International Security Center | University of Notre Dame

What is the Security Council? | United Nations Security Council

<https://www.palquest.org/en/highlight/159/un-partition-plan-29-november-1947>

<https://www.palquest.org/en/highlight/157/balfour-declaration-2-november-1917>

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<https://www.britannica.com/topic/United-Nations-Resolution-181>

<https://lsa.umich.edu/content/dam/cmenas-assets/cmenas-documents/unit-of-israel-pale>

[stine/Section1\\_UnitedNationsPartitionPlan.pdf](stine/Section1_UnitedNationsPartitionPlan.pdf)

<https://history.state.gov/israelwarofindependence>

<https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/background-and-overview-israel-war-of-independenc>

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<https://www.britannica.com/event/Balfour-Declaration>

<https://www.britannica.com/event/Arab-Israeli-wars>

<https://www.un.org/unispal/history2/origins-and-evolution-of-the-palestine-problem/part-i>

-1917-1947/#Origins\_and\_Evolution\_of\_the\_Palestine\_Problem\_1917-1947\_Part\_I

Plan of Partition(Map): <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-204145/>

City of Jerusalem(Map): <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-209955/>

<https://documents.un.org/doc/resolution/gen/nr0/038/88/pdf/nr003888.pdf?token=t>

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