

Forum: Reform Security Council**Student Officer(s): Minseo Kang, Seo Ho Chang, Hyunchan Cho****TOPIC 3: The issue of relationship of Israel and Palestine****Be sure to visit our [UNISMUN LibGuide](#) for your research.****I. Introduction to the Topic**

On 7 October 2023, Palestinian militant group Hamas in the Gaza Strip launched thousands of rockets to Israel. In response, the Israeli military declared a state of war alert and started to strike civilian residential buildings, hospitals, and other infrastructures in Gaza. The origin of this recent attack is actually traced back to the 1940s when the State of Israel was first established and the first Arab-Israeli War broke out. Since then, Israel has been constantly involved in conflict with its neighbouring countries such as Egypt, Jordan, and Syria over the control of territories like the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. This series of hostilities developed into the current internationally contentious issue, involving multiple actors including not only Israel and Palestine but also their bordering countries and even the United States, which is situated thousands of miles away from the actual battlefield. Furthermore, as the death and injury toll in Gaza continues to soar up and the desperate situation in the region is reported, the United Nations and other international humanitarian groups are calling for the immediate cease of violence and reconstruction of security in the Middle East.

Within the Middle East, the Israel-Palestinian Conflict is continuously generating tensions among different countries. The hostile atmosphere between the two religious groups, Jews in Israel and Muslims in the Arabic countries, is particularly intensifying, leading to an extreme polarisation. Solely from the October 7 Hamas aggression, more than 1,200 Israelis and foreign nationals were killed, which consisted primarily of civilians. Furthermore, millions of Palestinians were displaced from their homelands, and a lot of them are still awaiting their acceptance as refugees to other bordering countries. This issue is causing another friction between Israelis and other countries as those nations fail to accommodate all Palestinians due to their limited capacity of shelters.

The two states that are central to the conflict, Israel and Palestine, are both firmly opposing each other, condemning the territorial claim and military operation of each adversary. In addition, both Israel and Hamas captivated civilians from the opposing state as hostages and physically, sexually, and psychologically abused them. Each state is demanding the release of their own hostages back to their homelands; although some hostages ended up reuniting with their families, there are still innocent civilians in captivity, enduring each day in fear and desperation. With this situation aggravating day by day, it would become more and more complex to fully resolve the conflict between the two states.

Although it was the military groups from Israel and Palestine that invaded each other first, local citizens are severely suffering from the desperate circumstances within the Gaza Strip. Due to the deliberate bombardment from Israel on civilian infrastructures such as schools, residential buildings, and hospitals in Gaza, Palestinians are traumatised by the ongoing hostile and fearful atmosphere at the site, struggling to sustain their life in fear and anxiety. Facing the lack of basic necessities that are vital for

their everyday life such as food, water, and medical supplies, civilians left in the Gaza Strip are in urgent need of humanitarian support.

II. Definition of Key Terms & Concepts

Zionism

Zionism is, by the definition according to the United Nations, a self-determination movement of the Jewish people. After the Nazi holocaust engulfed millions of Jews in Europe, Jewish people sought their own autonomy and developed the idea of Zionism, which eventually led to the formation of the State of Israel. The independence of Israel provoked its neighbouring Arab countries to initiate the first Arab-Israeli War; as a result of the war, Israel gained control over the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

Gaza Strip

Gaza Strip is a region bordered by Egypt on the southwest and Israel on the east and north. Historically, the Gaza Strip has persistently been targeted as territory by several states in the Middle East; the British Mandate of Palestine was ruling the area when the first Arab-Israeli War broke out, as the consequence of which Israel began to occupy the territory. Even in the present, it is the Gaza Strip that soldiers of the Palestinian militant Hamas and Israeli military are brutally assaulting each other over the governance of.

Jerusalem

Jerusalem, the capital of Israel, serves as a sacred site to Muslims and, at the same time, the ancestral and spiritual homeland of Jewish people. This double-edged property of Jerusalem caused both Palestine and Israel to claim the city as their own capital. While Israel has determinedly stated that Jerusalem is its indivisible and eternal capital, the international community does not entirely acknowledge Israeli claim over eastern Jerusalem.

Intifada

The intifada, the Palestinian resistance against the Israeli occupation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, occurred first in 1987 and second in 2000. Aiming at founding an independent Palestinian state, the first intifada marks a historical milestone in which Palestinians and Israel first clashed exclusively from other Arab countries after the first Arab-Israeli War.

Two-state solution

The two-state solution has been proposed to resolve the conflict in the Gaza Strip and West Bank, which suggests that Israel occupy the Gaza Strip whereas the West Bank be controlled by a new state founded by Palestinians. However, Hamas has resolutely rejected this agreement, seemingly determined to destroy Israel; Israel also demands that Hamas be completely demilitarised to prevent its further threat towards Israel.

III. Key Stakeholders

State of Israel

Bordered by Lebanon to the north, Syria to the northeast, Jordan to the east and southeast, and Egypt to the southwest, the State of Israel was created in 1948 as a new Jewish state through the aftermath of the

Zionist movement. Since its establishment, Israel has continuously engaged in military conflicts with its surrounding Arab countries, from the first Arab-Israeli War to the current Israel-Gaza Crisis. As the state that is directly taking part in the current issue, Israel has steadfastly demanded the release of all Israeli hostages and complete, instant withdrawal of Hamas from the Gaza Strip.

Hammas

Hammas is an Islamist militant and political group that controls over 2 million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. In October 2023, Hammas ambushed Israel by launching thousands of rockets, in response to Israel policy over the Gaza Strip including the treatment towards Palestinians and the expansion of Israeli settlements. As well as Israel, Hammas expressed its determination to extract the Israel army from the Gaza Strip and accomplish complete governance over the area.

United States of America

Since the Second World War, the U.S. and Israel have maintained strong historical, diplomatic, and economic ties to each other. Recent political occurrences further demonstrate the explicit alliance of the two states; in 2018, Donald J. Trump administration cancelled the longstanding U.S. funding to the UN Relief and Works Agency, which offers humanitarian support to Palestinian refugees. Moreover, the current President Joe Biden also proclaimed strong support for Israel, providing arms and moving the U.S. Mediterranean Sea warships closer to Israel.

Arab Countries in the Middle East

Arab countries located near Israel – Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and so on – are also significantly associated with the Israel-Palestinian Conflict. Formerly in territorial dispute with Israel over the Gaza Strip and West Bank, these countries have a strong historical and geographical relation to the two states of the conflict and the issue itself. As well as the UN, the countries have officially requested several ceasefires during recent attacks, endeavouring to prevent further damages both within the Gaza Strip and, potentially, the countries themselves. Due to their geographical proximity, they are experiencing large-scale immigration of Palestinian refugees, while the available capacity of their shelters are acutely limited.

United Nations

The United Nations is playing a crucial role in seeking a peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, brokering ceasefires and peace corridors to pause the violence at the site. Recently, the UN Security Council has called for urgent pauses of violence to enable immediate and safe access of humanitarian aid to the civilians. While no UN peacekeepers are currently deployed directly within Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) is maintaining more than 10,000 peacekeeping personnels along Israeli border regions, who have reinforced their tasks in response to recent bombardments.

IV. Key Issues including Background Information

Humanitarian Crisis

With approximately 1,300 Israelis and 10,000 Palestinians killed in a single month, civilians, including children and women, within Israel and the Palestinian territories are directly exposed to threats from not

only indiscriminate rockets and artillery weapons but also physical and sexual harassment. Moreover, the military groups, both from Israel and Hamas, are capturing, threatening, and abusing civilians as hostage, which international groups are expressing deep concern about. Civilian infrastructures in Gaza such as residential buildings, hospitals, and schools have also been targeted by Israeli attacks, not only directly jeopardising lives of millions of Palestinians but also posing long-term damages in terms of residence, healthcare, and education of civilians in the area.

Displacement and Refugees

According to the UN, 1.9 million Palestinians, which accounts for more than 80 percent of the total population, were internally displaced due to the conflict; they refer to this forced, violent displacement and its consequent circumstances as the “Nakba,” which means “catastrophe” in Arabic. The issue of Palestinian refugees has posed a dilemma for Egypt, Jordan, and other countries that border Israel and Palestine, which have already accepted hundreds of thousands refugees but are currently rejecting more accommodations due to possible involvement in the conflict. Such lack of capacity to accommodate refugees is deteriorating the circumstances of displaced Palestinians, calling for international attention to practical solutions.

Economic Instability

Experts have lately expressed concerns that the Israel-Hamas conflict would potentially have a significant impact on global trade if the war expands throughout the Middle East. Recently, possible risks of trading near the battlefield have already caused global uncertainty, which has limited progress in trade.

Furthermore, it is predicted that the war could aggravate the current global economic situation, which has been already weakened from the past Russo-Ukrainian Conflict and Chinese property sector crisis.

Political Complexity

The Israel-Palestinian conflict began in the 1940s due to the interest of different countries and states in territorial control, especially over the Gaza Strip, and feud between two religious groups of Arabs and Jews. However, with the situation persisting for more than 70 years up to the present, the conflict developed into a multifaceted issue in which multiple aspects should be addressed, including the political dynamics that involves not only Israel and Hamas but also other neighbouring countries and far-away allies like the U.S.

V. Timeline of Resolutions, Treaties, and Events

Date	Description of event
29 November 1947	The United Nations implemented Resolution 181, also referred to as the Partition Plan, which separated the British Mandate of Palestine into Jewish and Arab states, to alleviate the tension between the two ethnic groups within Palestine.
May 1948	The State of Israel was established and declared itself an independent state. This provoked five Arab countries – Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria – to invade Israel, resulting in the first Arab-Israeli War.

- 10 March 1949 The first Arab-Israeli War ended with Israel's Victory, which allowed Israel to occupy a substantial area of territory. However, the war also displaced 750,000 civilians in Palestine and divided the region into 3 parts: the State of Israel, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip.
- 29 October 1956 The Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalised the Suez Canal, which entailed the Suez Crisis. Egypt also sealed Israeli maritime shipping routes, and Israel accordingly invaded Egypt; in response, Egypt, Jordan, and Syria collectively agreed on mutual defence pacts against Israel.
- 5~10 June 1967 Israel attacked Egyptian and Syrian air forces and initiated the Six-Day War. The war resulted in an Israeli victory, which gave Israel 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.
- 8 December 1987 Aiming to terminate Israeli occupation over the West Bank and Gaza Strip and create an independent Palestinian state, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians revolted against the Israeli government; this is referred to as the first intifada.
- 1993~1995 The 1993 Oslo I Accord was signed to mediate the conflict, which recognized the new Palestinian Authority and founded the framework of Palestinian governance in the region. In 1995, the Oslo II Accords was added to completely withdraw Israel from 6 cities and 450 towns of the West Bank.
- 2000~2005 Triggered by the failure of the peace process between Israel and Palestine, the second intifada was launched. In response, the Israeli government decided to construct a barrier wall around the West Bank in 2002, which was opposed by the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court.
- 2006~2011 In 2006, Hamas won the Palestinian parliamentary elections and overthrew Fatah, the longtime majority party in Palestine, consequently taking control over the Gaza Strip. After a series of violent confrontations and failed peace talks between the two political parties, Fatah and Hamas merged into a unity government.
- 2014~2018 The Israeli military and Hamas confronted each other in the Palestinian territories, which culminated in a ceasefire deal arranged by Egypt after the death of 73 Israelis and 2,251 Palestinians. However, the violence between the two states resumed and eventually resulted in Palestinian noncompliance of the Oslo Accords. Fatah and Hamas were also disunited, with Fatah ruling the Palestinian Authority from the West Bank and Hamas de facto controlling the Gaza Strip.
- May 2021 Israeli police forcefully evicted several Palestinian families from East Jerusalem, which triggered a series of Palestinian protests, and responded against the demonstrators through violence. With the indignation against Israel accumulated over the long history, Hamas and other Palestinian militants launched hundreds of

rockets into Israel territory, and Israel attacked Palestine by utilising artillery bombardments and airstrikes on both military and civilian infrastructure. After 11 days, death of 250 Palestinians and at least 13 Israelis, injury of 2,000 others, and displacement of 72,000 Palestinians, a ceasefire was agreed between the two states.

2023

After several alternations of battles and ceasefires, Palestinian military groups recommenced the war by launching rockets to Israel, and the Israeli military declared a state of war alert on October 7, 2023. On December 3, Israel further expanded its offensive to include the entirety of the Gaza Strip, leaving 2.3 million Gazans in danger.

VI. Possible Challenges & Solutions

Humanitarian Crisis

As stated by the United Nations Secretary General, all indiscriminate military operations on UN premises, hospitals, and schools should be rigorously condemned. Furthermore, the need for humanitarian aid to civilians, including life-saving provisions such as fuel, food, water, and medical supplies, is extremely urgent at the site; aside from the necessity, it is also crucial to secure the sources of sufficient humanitarian supplies and personnels under current conditions. In addition, although efforts to mitigate the hostage crisis have been made and resulted in reunions of some hostages back with their families, a lot of other civilians still remain captive, which is causing deep concerns within the international community.

Displacement and Refugees

Though some nations adjacent to the battlefields have contributed to the accommodation of refugees displaced from the war, the capacity of shelters in those nations is not permanently guaranteed to accept all Palestinians. Therefore, securing more possible capacity to host displaced Palestinians would provide immediate relief to the distressed population, while a lot of bordering countries displayed their reluctance to accept more refugees. The deterioration of the circumstance of the refugees is also calling for the urgent necessity of humanitarian assistance such as food, water, and medical supplies.

Economic Instability

The potential economic crisis can be tackled through the involvement of global economic organisations such as the International Monetary Fund, but it should be also noted that the global economy has already been negatively affected by recent events such as the Russo-Ukrainian War. In addition, since it is not guaranteed that the conflict will conclude in a short period of time, long-term policies are necessary to gradually facilitate the global trade flow.

Political Complexity

With multiple stakeholders, including surrounding Arab countries and even the far-away U.S. as well as the two states of Israel and Palestine, having their own interest in the conflict, multilateral diplomacy is necessary to achieve the comprehensive resolution of the Israel-Palestinian crisis. In other words, the solution should not only prevent further casualties and injuries of soldiers and civilians but also take into consideration the circumstances of all countries, organisations, and people associated with the issue.

VII. Recommendations for Resolution Writing including Research

Considering the long history of the Israel-Palestine Conflict, it would be beneficial for delegates to first examine significant historical events in the Middle East that led up to the current situation; this is also thoroughly described in the timeline of events section of this report. Then, delegates are advised to research the relationship of their respective delegation country with Israel and Palestine to determine the stance of the delegation countries on the issue. Delegates of the countries in the Middle East are particularly motivated to conduct in-depth research on whether their delegation country has directly been involved in a conflict with Israel or Palestine, which would greatly influence their stance. After deciding the stance, delegates are encouraged to interpret the issue by dividing it into multiple aspects, since the consequences of the conflict are diverse as aforementioned: humanitarian crisis, economic stability, population movement, and so on. In addition, it is suggested that delegates devise solutions to the issue for their draft resolutions in a multilateral approach. The multiple perspectives of different stakeholders are expected to be collectively taken into account, connecting to the theme of this conference – how can we use multilateral diplomacy to surmount the challenges of rapid societal change?

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IX: Additional Resources

Map of Palestine & the Gaza Strip



Map of Israel and Palestine in the chronological order

