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## I. Introduction

The Middle East, an area of high religious, political and cultural importance, has been a global reason for concern due to its continuing conflicts, especially surrounding the Gaza strip. The situation in Gaza, involving mainly Israeli forces and Palestinian groups, has a long history with violent and non-violent episodes. This war is deeply intertwined with the broader Israel-Palestine conflict, which has complex territorial disputes as well as religious and nationalist considerations.

After years of minor clashes between Hamas and Israel and an expanding blockage toward the Gaza strip, on the morning of October 7, 2023, Hamas militants broke through the border and attacked a roadside bomb shelter in Israel. The terrorists killed several people in different villages and took others as hostages from a festival. Simultaneously, they overran military bases and benefited from the unprepared Israeli armed forces, making their attack appear even more unexpected. It took several hours for the Israeli army to regain control of the situation.<sup>1</sup>

As a consequence, the Israeli army intervened and promptly occupied the northern Gaza Strip. In the process, they destroyed most infrastructure. Many civilian targets were also attacked due to suspicions that Hamas was operating under residential and hospital buildings. Millions of people from the north have been displaced to the south. Most people no longer have housing and the humanitarian situation remains precarious as aid supplies continue to be largely blocked.<sup>2</sup>

Now, it is up to the Security Council to foster peace by carefully balancing the legitimate interests of both Israelis and Palestinians..

## II. Definition of Key Terms

### A. Gaza Strip

The Gaza Strip is a narrow territory along the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, bordering Egypt to the southwest and Israel to the northeast. It covers roughly 365 m<sup>2</sup> (twice the area of Rostock) with around 2.3 million inhabitants, thus being one of the most densely populated areas in the world. Gaza has been under various forms of control since the mid-20th century; it was captured by Israel during the 1967 Six-Day War, and control

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<sup>1</sup> Maureen, Tkacik. "What Really Happened on October 7?" *The American Prospect*, 20 Mar. 2024, [prospect.org/world/2024-03-20-what-really-happened-on-october-7/](https://prospect.org/world/2024-03-20-what-really-happened-on-october-7/)

<sup>2</sup> Knell, Yolande. "Hamas Attack Shocks Israel, but What Comes Next?" *BBC News*, BBC, 7 Oct. 2023, [www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-67043563](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-67043563)



was transferred to the Palestinian Authority in 1994 following the Oslo Accords. Hamas took over the area in 2007 after winning elections and ousting Fatah forces. The region has endured economic difficulties and frequent conflicts.<sup>3</sup>

## **B. Hamas**

A Palestinian Islamist political organization and militant group that has governed the Gaza Strip since 2007. It was founded in 1987, originating from the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood. Most western countries, including the United States and the European Union, classify it as a terrorist organization.<sup>4</sup>

## **C. Zionism**

A nationalist and political movement advocating for the establishment and support of a Jewish state in the territory historically connected to the Jewish people, primarily the land of Israel. It emerged in late 19th century Europe and played a pivotal role in the founding of the State of Israel in 1948.<sup>5</sup>

## **D. Settlements**

The term describes communities established by a country in territory that it occupies, often involving the movement of its citizens into the region. In the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Israeli settlements refer to communities Israel has built on lands captured during the 1967 Six-Day War, including the West Bank and East Jerusalem. These settlements are considered illegal under international law, though Israel disputes this status. They are a significant and contentious part of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict.<sup>6</sup>

## **E. Intifada**

The term "Intifada" refers to two major Palestinian uprisings against Israeli control in the occupied territories. The first Intifada began in 1987 and was characterized by widespread grassroots violence involving stone-throwing and demonstrations. The second, or Al-Aqsa Intifada, started in 2000 and was marked by more intense armed conflict and terrorism. Both uprisings sought to end Israeli occupation and achieve Palestinian national

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<sup>3</sup> Haddad, Mohammed. "The Gaza Strip Explained in Maps." *Al Jazeera*, 9 Oct. 2023, [www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/8/7/the-gaza-strip-explained-in-maps](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/8/7/the-gaza-strip-explained-in-maps)

<sup>4</sup> Robinson, Kali. "What Is Hamas?" *Council on Foreign Relations*, 18 Apr. 2024, [www.cfr.org/backgrounder/what-hamas](http://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/what-hamas)

<sup>5</sup> Beauchamp, Zack. "What Is Zionism?" *Vox*, 20 Nov. 2018, [www.vox.com/2018/11/20/18080010/zionism-israel-palestine](http://www.vox.com/2018/11/20/18080010/zionism-israel-palestine)

<sup>6</sup> Beauchamp, Zack. "What Are Settlements, and Why Are They Such a Big Deal?" *Vox*, 20 Nov. 2018, [www.vox.com/2018/11/20/18080052/israel-settlements-west-bank](http://www.vox.com/2018/11/20/18080052/israel-settlements-west-bank)



aspirations, but they both ultimately failed, resulting in significant casualties and changes in political dynamics.<sup>7</sup>

## **F. Israeli Blockade**

The Israeli Blockade is a security and economic measure imposed by Israel on Gaza since 2007, intended to prevent arms from reaching Hamas but also restricting the movement of people and goods.<sup>8</sup>

## **G. Iron Dome**

The Iron Dome is a mobile all-weather air defense system developed by Israel to intercept and destroy short-range rockets and artillery shells fired from distances of 4 to 70 kilometers away. Deployed in 2011, it was designed to counter the threats from rockets fired by militant groups outside Israel's borders, notably from Gaza. The system uses radar-guided interceptors to detect, identify, and neutralize incoming projectiles before they can cause damage. It has proven highly effective, reportedly achieving a high rate of successful interceptions and significantly reducing casualties and property damage.<sup>9</sup>

## **H. Oslo Accords**

The Oslo Accords were a series of agreements between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in the 1990s. They aimed to achieve a peace treaty based on UN Resolutions 242 and 338 and to fulfill the "right of the Palestinian people to self-determination."<sup>10</sup>

## **I. Right of Return**

A political principle and demand by Palestinians that Palestinian refugees, and their descendants, have the right to return to the land they were forced to leave in what is now Israel.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> "What Does 'Globalize the Intifada' Mean and How Can It Lead to Targeting Jews with Violence?" *AJC*, 4 Dec. 2023, [www.ajc.org/news/what-does-globalize-the-intifada-mean-and-how-can-it-lead-to-targeting-jews-with-violence](http://www.ajc.org/news/what-does-globalize-the-intifada-mean-and-how-can-it-lead-to-targeting-jews-with-violence)

<sup>8</sup> Abdulrahim, Raja. "Gaza Has Suffered under 16-Year Blockade." *The New York Times*, 7 Oct. 2023, [www.nytimes.com/2023/10/07/world/middleeast/gaza-blockade-israel.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2023/10/07/world/middleeast/gaza-blockade-israel.html)

<sup>9</sup> "What Is Israel's Iron Dome Missile System and How Does It Work?" *BBC News*, BBC, 6 Nov. 2023, [www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-20385306](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-20385306)

<sup>10</sup> "Explainer: The Oslo Accords." *Institute for Middle East Understanding*, 1 Sept. 2023, [imeu.org/article/explainer-the-oslo-accords](http://imeu.org/article/explainer-the-oslo-accords)

<sup>11</sup> [Resolution 194 | UNRWA](http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2005/050501.htm)



### III. General Overview

#### A. Historical Background

##### 1. Late Ottoman and British Mandate Periods

Palestine in the late Ottoman era (1517-1917) was a diverse region with Christians, Jews and Muslims who coexisted under the millet system of the Ottoman Empire. For the most part, they lived in separate districts from each other, which was not mandatory, but it was common courtesy that the religions tolerated each other instead of mixing. This coexistence was strained by nationalist movements and the weakening authority of the Ottoman government. Later, the Balfour declaration was made in 1917 during the British mandate period (1917-1948), which called for the creation of a “national home for Jewish people” in Palestine. This act led to increased tension with Jewish migrants and resulted in conflicts with the Arab population. Importantly, a state of Palestine never existed, it was considered the British Mandate territory of Palestine and was therefore subject to the British crown.<sup>12</sup>

##### 2. Creation of the State of Israel and the 1948 Arab-Israeli War

The UN Partition Plan of 1947 suggested that Palestine should be divided into two separate states, one Jewish and the other Arab, with Jerusalem declared as an international city. On May 14, 1948 after the British Mandate expired, David Ben-Gurion, the head of the Jewish Agency, proclaimed Israel. This drew an immediate military response from neighboring Arab nations, initiating what is commonly referred to as the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. These claims originated from long-lasting opposition by Arabs against the immigration of Jews and their territorial claims on Palestine, which were increasing due to the international Zionist movements and a sense of urgency following the Holocaust.

This war resulted in many refugees as well as a significant loss of territory for Palestinians, while Israel was able to go beyond the original borders established under the UN partition plan resulting in many refugees.<sup>13</sup>

##### 3. 1967 Six-Day War and Its Aftermath

During the 1967 Six-Day War, major changes in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict led to significant territorial reorganization, affecting regional dynamics. The war

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<sup>12</sup> Gelvin, James L. "The Israel-Palestine Conflict: One Hundred Years of War." Cambridge University Press, 2007

<sup>13</sup> Morris, Benny. "1948: A History of the First Arab-Israeli War." Yale University Press, 2008



began with Israel's preemptive strike on Egyptian air forces bases due to fear of an Arab coalition assault. Israel seized two territories very quickly: the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula. As a result of the war, Israel captured the Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula from Egypt, the West Bank with East Jerusalem from Jordan, and the Golan Heights from Syria. The number of Palestinians living under Israeli rule skyrocketed because Israel now controlled two times as much land. Subsequent peace negotiations and international discussions concerning this conflict have centrally focused on the 1967 borders known nowadays as the Green Line.<sup>14</sup>

The Israeli preemptive strike had been designed to get rid of the formal armies of surrounding Arab nations that constituted an existential threat. The war was very short, and after it, there were several fronts that helped in extending superior military strategies which led to territory gain. Egypt regained the Sinai Peninsula with the Camp David Accords in 1982 and Israel evacuated the Gaza Strip in 2005. However, the Golan Heights still remain a contested territory between Syria and Israel, while the West Bank, including Jerusalem, is divided into various levels of administration and military under the Oslo Accords.<sup>15</sup>

## **B. Conflict in the West Bank**

### **1. Complexities of Sovereignty and Settlement**

Seized from Jordan in the 1967 Six-Day War by Israel, this territory is home to almost three million Palestinians. Ever since then, it has been under Israeli control and called Judea and Samaria, which are names that hold great historical and religious importance for many Jews who see places like the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron important to their religion.<sup>16</sup>

Approximately 700,000 Jewish settlers now live in the region, many along the borders with Israel. These settlements are considered illegal under international law, though Israel disputes this. The presence of these settlers complicates the peace process. Any potential peace deal requires the revaluation of current boundaries to accommodate demographic realities, by means of how the populations have been forced to migrate to other regions within the region. Forced

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<sup>14</sup> Oren, Michael B. "Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East." Oxford University Press, 2002

<sup>15</sup> William B. "Peace Process: American Diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict Since 1967." University of California Press, 2005

<sup>16</sup> Bowen, Jeremy. "1967 War: Six Days That Changed the Middle East." *BBC News*, BBC, 4 June 2017, [www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-39960461](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-39960461)



migration should be taken into consideration, when trying to meet the national aspirations of both Israelis and Palestinians.<sup>17</sup>

## 2. Palestinian Area Classification

The 1995 Oslo II Accord partitioned the West Bank into three areas—A, B and C—for a temporary period of administration before its full transfer to the Palestinian Authority, yet the partition has remained.

*Area A* is under full Palestinian administrative and police control and occupies 18% of the West Bank. It is the most densely populated, and development in this area is stifled as much of the land on which structures can be erected forms a common border with Area C.

*Area B* represents approximately 22% of the West Bank; it is non-contiguous and interspersed with Area C. The education, economy, health sectors, among others, are managed by itself but shares security responsibilities with Israeli authorities.

*Area C* is under Israeli administration; it constitutes more than 60% of the total territory of the West Bank where Palestinians live. The land has about 400,000 Israeli settlers who occupy roughly 230 settlements while hosting close to 300,000 Palestinians within 532 residential areas. Most parts of this region serve military purposes for Israel or are designated state nature reserves, thereby greatly limiting Palestinian access to housing and agriculture spaces. In addition, Israeli martial law applies in Area C, meaning Palestinians are tried by a military court, while Israeli citizens are allowed to choose between a military and a normal Israeli court.<sup>18</sup>

## C. Current Conflict in Gaza

### 1. Hamas and its Rule since 2006

Hamas's ascent to power in Gaza began when it won a significant majority in the 2006 Palestinian legislative elections, taking advantage of widespread discontent with the perceived corruption and inefficiency of the Fatah-led Palestinian Authority. In 2007, after increased hostilities and bloody clashes with Fatah, Hamas seized control by force over Gaza, thus institutionally separating it from the West Bank, which continues to be governed by the Palestinian Authority.

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<sup>17</sup> Beauchamp, Zack. "What Is the West Bank?" *Vox*, 20 Nov. 2018, [www.vox.com/2018/11/20/18080034/west-bank-israel-palestinians](https://www.vox.com/2018/11/20/18080034/west-bank-israel-palestinians)

<sup>18</sup> "What Are Area A, Area B, and Area C in the West Bank?" *Anera*, 21 Sept. 2023, [www.anera.org/what-are-area-a-area-b-and-area-c-in-the-west-bank/](https://www.anera.org/what-are-area-a-area-b-and-area-c-in-the-west-bank/)



Hamas is classified as a terrorist group by several states, including the USA and the European Union. Hamas strictly applies Islamic law to their governance and emphasizes fighting against Israel. Moreover, Israeli-Egyptian blockades have greatly damaged Gaza's economy and lowered people's living standards in this area.<sup>19</sup>

## 2. The 7th of October 2023

Hamas had launched an attack on Israel from Gaza on October 7, which resulted in the deadliest assault ever recorded in Israeli history. It claimed the lives of around 1,200 Israelis, some living near the Gaza strip, others who were attending music festivals, and kidnapped more than 250 hostages to Gaza. This prompted a massive response by Israel, including air strikes, ground incursions and naval bombardments mainly targeting northern and later southern Gaza, causing heavy casualties and devastation. The Gaza's health ministry has reported over 33,000 killed Palestinians, many of which are women and children. The objective of the Israeli Prime Minister was to wipe out Hamas and secure the release of captives. Iran-supported Hamas views its actions as retaliatory measures against Israeli practices in Jerusalem and the West Bank.<sup>20</sup>

It is suspected that Hamas got hold of weapons through aid deliveries to the Gaza Strip, which included weapons hidden in goods deliveries. Although the controls have been rigorous, weapons have repeatedly entered the territory, sometimes via uncleared detours.<sup>21</sup>

## 3. Humanitarian Precarity

Already grappling with a 16-year blockade that left over half the population dependent on international aid, the recent hostilities have pushed Gaza into a deeper crisis. Around 90% of Gazans now suffer from severe food insecurity. The continuing siege has stopped necessary supplies from entering, destroyed and damaged infrastructure, and made electricity scarce. It has limited the clean water supply and led to the shutdown of sewage treatment plants, greatly raising the risk of disease outbreaks.

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<sup>19</sup> Ross, Dennis. *Hamas: Politics, Charity, and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad*. Yale University Press, 2008

<sup>20</sup> "What Is Hamas and Why Is It Fighting with Israel in Gaza?" *BBC News*, 5 Apr. 2024, [www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-67039975](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-67039975)

<sup>21</sup> Lendon, Brad. "Analysis: How Does Hamas Get Its Weapons? A Mix of Improvisation, Resourcefulness and a Key Overseas Benefactor." *CNN*, 12 Oct. 2023, [edition.cnn.com/2023/10/11/middleeast/hamas-weaponry-gaza-israel-palestine-unrest-intl-hnk-ml/index.html](https://edition.cnn.com/2023/10/11/middleeast/hamas-weaponry-gaza-israel-palestine-unrest-intl-hnk-ml/index.html)





Gaza's health system is about to collapse. Hospitals are overwhelmed and lack basic medical supplies as well as fuel for emergency generators. Even major institutions like Nasser Hospital struggle to provide minimum care levels.

About 75% of Gazans have been forced out of their homes by Israeli military strikes, seeking shelter in places such as Rafah—the last declared “safe zone”. Expanding military operations into Rafah would put additional lives at risk apart from causing new massive displacement. Aiming at counteracting the gravity of these conditions, various international efforts, among them a UN flash appeal worth \$481 million, have been launched but still ongoing conflict interferes with delivery assistance while worsening suffering on ground.<sup>22</sup>

The United Nations and other international bodies have repeatedly called for an immediate ceasefire. In December 2023, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution calling for an immediate ceasefire, although it was met with resistance from some countries, including the United States, which voted against the measure.

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#### **D. Conflict with the Hezbollah**

The state of Israel views southern Lebanon as being occupied by hostile forces due to Hezbollah's huge amount of rockets and their positions within it. The Israeli Defense Forces have recently evacuated 80,000 people from towns near the border, which indicates an earnest readiness for escalation on their part. They believe that if Hezbollah combines their estimated more than 100,000 rockets, any major city in Israel could easily become targeted. Recent exchanges between Hezbollah and Israel have shown a worrying trend of escalation. Israeli airstrikes in the Bekaa Valley and Hezbollah's drone incursions into Israeli territory are indicative of a conflict that could spiral out of control at any moment.<sup>24</sup>

Many Hezbollah leaders have adopted a similar tone to Tehran and declared the annihilation of Israel as their objective. Israeli authorities are on a rapid confrontation course and have repeatedly fired rockets into southern Lebanon in recent months as a deterrent measure. The lack of a major response from Hezbollah can be attributed to good

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<sup>22</sup> Bouri, Christina, and Diana Roy. “The Israel-Hamas War: The Humanitarian Crisis in Gaza.” *Council on Foreign Relations*, 8 Feb. 2024, [www.cfr.org/in-brief/israel-hamas-war-humanitarian-crisis-gaza](https://www.cfr.org/in-brief/israel-hamas-war-humanitarian-crisis-gaza)

<sup>23</sup> “UN General Assembly Votes for Immediate Humanitarian Ceasefire during Emergency Session.” *United Nations*, 12 Dec. 2023, [news.un.org/en/story/2023/12/1144717](https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/12/1144717)

<sup>24</sup> Altstein, Galit. *Israel Prepares Forces as Conflict With Hezbollah Intensifies*, Bloomberg, 25 Apr. 2024, [www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2024-04-25/israel-prepares-forces-as-conflict-with-hezbollah-intensifies](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2024-04-25/israel-prepares-forces-as-conflict-with-hezbollah-intensifies)



fortune and subsequent diplomatic mediation by France. Despite keeping them from a full-scale war, recent signals have both Hezbollah in Lebanon and Israel thinking they might soon be fighting each other, which would contain disastrous consequences for the entire region.<sup>25</sup>

## E. Outer Influences

### 1. Iran

#### a. Iranian-Israeli Tensions

Israel and Iran have experienced significant changes over the years, going from secret cooperation after Israel's founding to open enmity following the Iranian revolution in 1979. This revolution, which replaced the pro-Western Shah with a theocratic regime under Ayatollah Khomeini, marked a dramatic shift in Iran's foreign policy from tacit support to active opposition.<sup>26</sup> Iran's ideological dedication towards Palestine as well as its rejection of Israel's legitimacy have been central to this hostility.

These animosities have been throughout history, there have always been animosities driven by politics, religion and nationalism, yet this is being exacerbated by Iran's support for anti-Israel groups and its secretly evolving nuclear ambitions, leading to increased Israeli concerns. The existential threats against Israel's security have led to Israel both parties frequently engaging Iran with each other in neighboring territories militarily and conducting covert operations targeting Iran's nuclear capabilities.<sup>27</sup>

#### b. Mutual Provocations and Firings in April 2024

Initially, Israel conducted an airstrike on the Iranian consulate in Damascus, which resulted in the death of several senior military commanders. This action prompted Iran to carry out its first direct assault on Israel, launching a barrage of missiles and drones.

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<sup>25</sup> Cook, Steven A. "War between Israel and Hezbollah Is Becoming Inevitable." *Foreign Policy*, 29 Feb. 2024, [foreignpolicy.com/2024/02/29/israel-hezbollah-war-inevitable/](https://foreignpolicy.com/2024/02/29/israel-hezbollah-war-inevitable/)

<sup>26</sup> Azizi, Arash. "Were Iran and Israel Really Friends before 1979? It's Complicated." *The National Opinion*, 17 Apr. 2024, [www.thenationalnews.com/opinion/comment/2024/04/17/were-iran-and-israel-really-friends-before-1979-its-compliated/](https://www.thenationalnews.com/opinion/comment/2024/04/17/were-iran-and-israel-really-friends-before-1979-its-compliated/)

<sup>27</sup> Davenport, Kelsey. "Iran-Israel Tensions May Push Iran to Rethink Nuclear Arms." *Arms Control Association*, May 2024, [www.armscontrol.org/act/2024-05/news/iran-israel-tensions-may-push-iran-rethink-nuclear-arms](https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2024-05/news/iran-israel-tensions-may-push-iran-rethink-nuclear-arms)



In retaliation, Israel executed a missile strike on Iran, an attack that U.S. officials confirmed., although Iran claims otherwise, saying that this minor accident was a detonation of Iranian defense missiles against small drones which were not sent from Israel. This series of events marks an important development in the ongoing conflict between Israel and Iran as, until now, they have only been fighting through proxies without admitting responsibility for any direct clash between them. However, the fact that Iran denied knowledge about renewed Israeli strikes also implies defiance towards engaging in full-scale war with Israel and its backing, the USA. Fortunately, since no lives were lost in this strike, Tehran decided to preserve composure.<sup>28</sup>

## 2. Syria

As a direct neighboring country, Syria has also repeatedly clashed with Israel throughout history. For example, although the Golan Caves are legally considered Syrian territory, they were never transferred back from Israel after the Six-Day War, as they are strategically important for control of the West Bank. Syria is also constantly accused of cooperating with Islamist militia and providing them with shelter. When Israel bombed several houses in Damascus in April 2024, Hamas strategic leaders were suspected of residing in them. Relations are difficult, but it should not be forgotten that Syria is still in a civil war, which is why Israeli provocations are currently not being countered.<sup>29</sup>

## 3. Egypt-Gaza Border

Egypt, which occupied the Gaza Strip as part of its territory from 1948 to 1959 and again from 1961 to 1967, is nowadays increasingly distancing itself from this piece of territory. Especially since Israel imposed a blockade in the 2000s, Egypt has also joined in and, with financial support from the USA, built a protective wall to help seal off the Gaza Strip. However, Egypt's intentions are different since they are a Muslim country themselves. Their main concern is to avoid an influx of refugees due to the poor living conditions in the Gaza Strip, for which they simply would not have the resources to manage. cannot afford to open the be left alone with

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<sup>28</sup> Berg, Raffi, et al. "Why Have Israel and Iran Attacked Each Other?" *BBC News*, 19 Apr. 2024, [www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-68811276](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-68811276)

<sup>29</sup> Schaer, Cathrin, and Omar Albam. *What Role Does Syria Play in the Hamas-Israel Conflict?*, Deutsche Welle, 18 Nov. 2023, [www.dw.com/en/what-role-does-syria-play-in-the-hamas-israel-conflict/a-67399322](https://www.dw.com/en/what-role-does-syria-play-in-the-hamas-israel-conflict/a-67399322)



hundreds of thousands of refugees and then abandoned by the West because they did not give in to Western demands to seal the Gaza Strip off. At the beginning of the war in October 2023, Egypt used its own funds and took the proactive initiative to expand the buffer zone and upgrade the protective walls out of its own budget.<sup>30</sup>

## F. Jurisdiction

### 1. Investigation on War Crimes

When Amnesty International reported on the Israeli-Gaza conflict, they specifically criticized the number of civilian casualties caused by Israeli air strikes in Gaza and indiscriminate rocket attacks from Hamas into Israel. Both are considered possible war crimes because they are indiscriminate and have led to high numbers of civilian deaths. From October 7-12 alone, Israeli air attacks on Gaza killed over 3,790 people, most of whom were civilians, and injured around 12,500 others. In contrast, around 1,200 Israelis — mostly civilians — died during the Hamas attack, with an additional 3,300 suffering injuries.<sup>31</sup>

The International Criminal Court (ICC) is reportedly considering issuing arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and other officials in response to the escalating conflict. Reports indicate more than 34,000 deaths in Gaza due to Israeli bombings. Israel argues its campaign is self defense. It is believed that the ICC is close to making a decision about potential war crimes, which would carry significant international implications for all parties involved.<sup>32</sup>

### 2. ICJ Lawsuit on Arms Deliveries (Germany v. Nicaragua)

According to Nicaragua, €326.5m worth of German weapons were sold in 2023 – an increase since previous years – and these may have been used in Gaza for war crimes. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) has declined Nicaragua's request as the number of recent transactions dropped dramatically and they were only defensive weapons. It also mentioned that Germany has taken steps internally to ensure they are not used for war crimes. No provisional measures will be issued by the ICJ, but it won't dismiss the case outright either, so there will still be legal

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<sup>30</sup> Murphy, Paul P. "Egypt Is Building a New Walled Buffer Zone More than 2 Miles Wide on Gaza Border." *CNN*, 16 Feb. 2024, [edition.cnn.com/2024/02/16/middleeast/egypt-wall-buffer-zone-gaza-border-intl-hnk/index.html](https://edition.cnn.com/2024/02/16/middleeast/egypt-wall-buffer-zone-gaza-border-intl-hnk/index.html)

<sup>31</sup> "Israeli Attacks Wipe out Entire Families in Gaza." *Amnesty International*, 8 Nov. 2023, [www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/10/damning-evidence-of-war-crimes-as-israeli-attacks-wipe-out-entire-families-in-gaza/](https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/10/damning-evidence-of-war-crimes-as-israeli-attacks-wipe-out-entire-families-in-gaza/)

<sup>32</sup> Cole, Brendan. "Will Netanyahu Be Arrested by ICC? What We Know." *Newsweek*, 29 Apr. 2024, [www.newsweek.com/israel-gaza-hamas-netanyahu-war-icc-1895165](https://www.newsweek.com/israel-gaza-hamas-netanyahu-war-icc-1895165)



proceedings regarding Germany's involvement in Gaza.<sup>33</sup> Fact is, German weapons make up 30% of Israel's arsenal, making them the second largest contributor after the USA. Germany was sued because, unlike the USA, it is subject to the Rome Statute and thus bows to the decisions of the ICJ.<sup>34</sup>

## IV. Major Parties Involved

### A. Hamas

It is a Palestinian Islamist political organization and militant group, governs the Gaza Strip and has been involved in ongoing conflict with Israel. It primarily advocates for Palestinian nationalism through both political and violent means, which includes rocket attacks and suicide bombings against Israeli targets.<sup>35</sup>

### B. Fatah

Fatah is a major Palestinian political party and the dominant faction of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). It engages in peace negotiations with Israel while supporting Palestinian self-determination. Historically, it has participated in armed resistance but has more recently focused on diplomacy and political processes.<sup>36</sup>

### C. Israel

Israel is a nation-state established in 1948 and is a key player in the Israel-Palestine dispute, holding control over territories claimed by Palestinians. It seeks security and recognition as a Jewish state while facing international scrutiny over its policies in the West Bank and its responses to conflicts with Hamas in Gaza.<sup>37</sup>

### D. United States of America

The United States plays a significant role in the Israel-Palestine dispute, often acting as a mediator in peace talks and providing substantial military aid to Israel. It seeks to balance its strategic interests in the region with promoting a peaceful resolution, although its actions and policies are sometimes viewed as biased towards Israel. Evidently, Israel

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<sup>33</sup> "ICJ Rejects Request to Order Germany to Stop Selling Arms to Israel." *The Guardian*, 30 Apr. 2024,

[www.theguardian.com/law/2024/apr/30/ici-rejects-request-to-order-germany-to-desists-arms-sales-to-israel](http://www.theguardian.com/law/2024/apr/30/ici-rejects-request-to-order-germany-to-desists-arms-sales-to-israel)

<sup>34</sup> Gozzi, Laura. "ICJ Rules It Will Not Halt German Arms to Israel." *BBC News*, 30 Apr. 2024, [www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-68929873](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-68929873)

<sup>35</sup> Robinson, Kali. *What Is Hamas?*, Public Broadcasting Service, 10 Oct. 2023,

[www.pbs.org/newshour/world/what-is-hamas-what-to-know-about-its-origins-leaders-and-funding](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/what-is-hamas-what-to-know-about-its-origins-leaders-and-funding)

<sup>36</sup> Imbert, Louis. *War in Gaza Fractures the Palestinian Party Fatah*, *Le Monde*, 16 Nov. 2023,

[www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2023/11/16/war-in-gaza-fractures-the-palestinian-party-fatah\\_6259610\\_4.html](http://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2023/11/16/war-in-gaza-fractures-the-palestinian-party-fatah_6259610_4.html)

<sup>37</sup> "What's the Israel-Palestinian Conflict about and How Did It Start? ." *Reuters*,

[www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israel-palestinian-dispute-hinges-statehood-land-jerusalem-refugees-2023-10-10/](http://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israel-palestinian-dispute-hinges-statehood-land-jerusalem-refugees-2023-10-10/), 11 Oct. 2023



could not maintain its standing in the Middle East without the backing of the US, its biggest financier.<sup>38</sup>

### E. Muslim Brotherhood

The Muslim Brotherhood is a transnational Sunni Islamist organization that indirectly influences the Israel-Palestine conflict through its ideological and historical ties to Hamas. It supports Palestinian resistance against Israeli occupation, advocating for an Islamic framework in the pursuit of Palestinian statehood and rights. Hamas is part of this brotherhood and also emerged from it.<sup>39</sup>

## V. Timeline of Events

Date	Event
November 2, 1917	Balfour Declaration: British government supports a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine. <sup>40</sup>
1947	UN Partition Plan: divides the region into an Israeli and Arab state. <sup>41</sup>
May 14, 1948	Israel declares independence following the end of the British Mandate; First Arab-Israeli War follows immediately.
1949	Israel signs agreements with Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria following the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, establishing armistice lines known as the Green Line. <sup>42</sup>
June 5-10, 1967	Six-Day-War: Israel launches preemptive air strikes against Egypt on June 5, 1967, in response to escalating tensions and military threats from surrounding Arab countries, resulting in Israel gaining control of several key territories. <sup>43</sup>
October 6-25, 1973	Yom-Kippur-War: Egypt and Syria launched a surprise attack on Israel on the Jewish holy day of Yom Kippur. Despite initial

<sup>38</sup> Terry, Eva. "Republicans and Democrats Differ in Support for Israel, WSJ Poll Finds." *Deseret News*, 20 Dec. 2023, [www.deseret.com/2023/12/19/24003138/republican-and-democrat-views-on-israel-poll/](http://www.deseret.com/2023/12/19/24003138/republican-and-democrat-views-on-israel-poll/)

<sup>39</sup> Dr. Omar, Khairy. "The Muslim Brotherhood: Organizational Crisis and Declining Capabilities ." *The Washington Institute*, 14 June 2023, [www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/muslim-brotherhood-organizational-crisis-and-declining-capabilities](http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/muslim-brotherhood-organizational-crisis-and-declining-capabilities)

<sup>40</sup> Tahhan, Zena Al. "The Balfour Declaration Explained." *Al Jazeera*, 2 Nov. 2018, [www.aljazeera.com/features/2018/11/2/more-than-a-century-on-the-balfour-declaration-explained](http://www.aljazeera.com/features/2018/11/2/more-than-a-century-on-the-balfour-declaration-explained)

<sup>41</sup> "United Nations Resolution 181." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, [www.britannica.com/topic/United-Nations-Resolution-181](http://www.britannica.com/topic/United-Nations-Resolution-181)

<sup>42</sup> "The Arab-Israeli War of 1948." *U.S. Department of State*, [history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/arab-israeli-war](http://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/arab-israeli-war)

<sup>43</sup> "The 1967 Arab-Israeli War." *U.S. Department of State*, [history.state.gov/milestones/1961-1968/arab-israeli-war-1967](http://history.state.gov/milestones/1961-1968/arab-israeli-war-1967)



Arab gains, Israel managed to counterattack and regain lost territory.<sup>44</sup>

September 1978

Camp David Accords: a series of agreements brokered by the U.S. President Jimmy Carter between Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin. The accords led to the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty in 1979, making Egypt the first Arab country to officially recognize Israel.<sup>45</sup>

September 1993

A series of peace agreements between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) initiated in Oslo, Norway.<sup>46</sup>

September 28, 2000

Second Intifada: a violent five years lasting uprising by Palestinians against Israeli occupation, marked by widespread clashes.<sup>47</sup>

August 2005

Gaza Disengagement, Israel unilaterally withdraws all Israeli settlements and military presence from the Gaza Strip, while maintaining control over the airspace and coast. This was followed by the Israeli Blockade of Gaza.<sup>48</sup>

October 7, 2023

Hamas launches a significant attack on Israel, firing rockets and infiltrating the border, which resulted in the taking of multiple hostages and Israel taking occupation of the Gaza Strip.<sup>49</sup>

April 14, 2024

In response to the attack on the Iranian consulate in Damascus on April 1, Iran launches its first direct missiles at Israel for retribution purposes, which were repelled by the Iron Dome.<sup>50</sup>

## VI. Previous & Possible Solutions

### A. UN Partition Plan (1947)

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<sup>44</sup> "Yom Kippur War Explained." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, [www.britannica.com/event/Yom-Kippur-War](http://www.britannica.com/event/Yom-Kippur-War)

<sup>45</sup> *Camp David Accords Explained*, Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., [www.britannica.com/event/Camp-David-Accords](http://www.britannica.com/event/Camp-David-Accords)

<sup>46</sup> "The Oslo Accords and the Arab-Israeli Peace Process." *U.S. Department of State*, [history.state.gov/milestones/1993-2000/oslo](http://history.state.gov/milestones/1993-2000/oslo)

<sup>47</sup> "The Second Intifada Explained." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, [www.britannica.com/place/Israel/The-second-intifada](http://www.britannica.com/place/Israel/The-second-intifada)

<sup>48</sup> "Israel's Disengagement from Gaza." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, [www.britannica.com/event/Israels-disengagement-from-Gaza](http://www.britannica.com/event/Israels-disengagement-from-Gaza)

<sup>49</sup> Menhaim, Noa. "October 7, 2023, a Day That Will Live in Infamy." *Ynetnews*, 19 Oct. 2023, [www.ynetnews.com/article/bkextmcwa](http://www.ynetnews.com/article/bkextmcwa)

<sup>50</sup> Palmer, Alexander, et al. "Assessing Israel's Strike on Iran." *Center for Strategic & International Studies*, 3 May 2024, [www.csis.org/analysis/assessing-israels-strike-iran](http://www.csis.org/analysis/assessing-israels-strike-iran)



The 1947 UN Partition Plan, also known as United Nations General Assembly Resolution 181, was a critical moment in Middle East history that aimed to settle the competing Jewish and Arab claims within British controlled Palestine. It was proposed on November 29th of the same year and suggested dividing Palestine into separate states for Jews and Arabs with Jerusalem under international administration. This decision was influenced by the Zionist movement of Jews towards self determination and Holocaust aftermaths that had left many Jewish refugees without a home. It was accepted by Jewish leaders but rejected by Arabs who opposed any establishment of a Jewish statehood leading to immediate 1948 Arab-Israeli war after the British mandate ended.

The legacy of the UN Partition Plan is complex, setting the stage for decades of conflict but also being a crucial step towards the establishment of Israel as an independent nation. The UN's decision was shaped by geopolitical considerations and humanitarian concerns, reflecting the intense international pressure to find a solution to the Jewish-Arab conflict in Palestine.<sup>51</sup>

## **B. Oslo Accords (1993)**

The Oslo Accords established the framework for Palestinian self-governance and set the stage for further negotiations on permanent status issues, such as the status of Jerusalem, Palestinian refugees, Israeli settlements, security, and borders. The most tangible outcome was the creation of the Palestinian Authority (PA), tasked with limited self-governance of parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The Oslo Accords divided the West Bank into three areas: A, B and C.

### **1. Area A**

It consists of major Palestinian urban areas, and it is placed under the full administrative and security control of the Palestinian Authority (PA). This includes cities such as Ramallah, Bethlehem, and parts of Hebron. In Area A, the PA is responsible for all aspects of governance, law enforcement, and public services. It is where the majority of the Palestinian population resides, and the PA maintains a police force to ensure internal security.

### **2. Area B**

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<sup>51</sup> Winder, Alex. "UN Partition Plan, 1947." *Palquest Encyclopædia*, [www.palquest.org/en/highlight/159/un-partition-plan-1947](http://www.palquest.org/en/highlight/159/un-partition-plan-1947)





It includes Palestinian rural areas with significant populations. The governance of public affairs and civil issues in this zone is managed by the Palestinian Authority, but security is a joint Israeli-Palestinian responsibility. This arrangement allows for a PA administrative presence and local governance, while Israeli forces retain a role in security, particularly to counter threats perceived by Israel.

### **3. Area C**

It comprises about 60% of the West Bank's territory, and remains under full Israeli control. This area includes Israeli settlements, strategic military zones, and much of the land suitable for agriculture and development. The Palestinian population in Area C has limited autonomy, with Israel retaining control over law enforcement, planning, and construction. This zone is crucial for Israel's security concerns and includes areas that are contentious in the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict.<sup>52</sup>

### **C. Resolution 2720 (2023)**

The Security Council's core objectives are to enforce compliance with international laws, especially those related to saving civilians' lives and providing humanitarian assistance. It highlights the need for immediate and complete access to the Gaza Strip as well as safety of personnel involved in supplying aid in this area. Additionally, the Council supports a two-state solution and seeks to alleviate the severe humanitarian crisis in Gaza by facilitating temporary ceasefires and using border crossings as entry points for relief supplies. The council demands that global players remain actively involved in pursuing these objectives, it promotes peace talks and observance of human rights too.<sup>53</sup>

### **D. Resolution 2728 (2024)**

It condemns every act that violates international law involving terrorism against civilians, asserting the illegality of hostage-taking under international law. Moreover, the Security Council expresses deep concern at grave humanitarian conditions in Gaza, whilst also recognizing and appreciating peace-making efforts made by Egypt together with Qatar as well as the United States. In addition to demanding an immediate ceasefire during

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<sup>52</sup> "Oslo Accords." *UN Peacemaker*, 29 Aug. 1994, [Oslo Accords.pdf](#).

<sup>53</sup> [S/RES/2720 \(2023\) Security Council](#)



Ramadan without any preconditions from either side. Furthermore, they are calling for a release of all hostages taken so far unconditionally while stressing unrestricted humanitarian access as well protection for people affected by conflicts. The Council urges lifting barriers to aid, reiterating previous resolutions and commits to ongoing engagement with the issue.<sup>54</sup>

#### **E. Ensuring a Sustainable Ceasefire**

As often demanded, a ceasefire is the only way to immediately end the suffering of civilians and restore order to the humanitarian situation. One reason why a ceasefire has not worked well in the past is that Israel is anxious that Hamas, as in the past, will use the opportunity to strengthen its underground structures and thus jeopardize Israel's sovereignty once again. Moreover, a withdrawal until its hostages have been released is not an option for Israel.

Egypt and Qatar have negotiated a compromise, which has been accepted by Hamas, but not Israel, on May 6, 2024. The details of the proposal mediated by Egypt and Qatar are not yet fully known. However, it is said to involve a multi-stage plan that includes the release of hostages and the withdrawal of Israeli soldiers. It remains unclear whether the agreement meets Hamas's primary demand for an end to the war and a complete withdrawal of Israeli troops. Israel is not convinced by this compromise and still insists on intervening in the refugee reception areas of Raffah, as they suspect hostages there.<sup>55</sup>

A sustainable compromise would therefore require mutual trust that hostages will be released and that the period of peace will not be used by either side to form new attack structures.

This action could be monitored by the United Nations with the help of peacekeeping troops from the Blue Helmets, which could be sent to the region to secure peace, as authorized by the Security Council at the time in Bosnia (UNPROFOR 1992).<sup>56</sup>

## **VII. Conclusion**

The Israeli-Gaza conflict has always been complicated and hard to solve because of the continuous revenge attacks, which are caused by a long history of political tensions and disputes over territories. The fact of Gaza being governed by a terrorist organization has resulted into

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<sup>54</sup> [S/RES/2728 \(2024\) Security Council](#)

<sup>55</sup> Gritten, David. "Hamas Says It Accepts Gaza Ceasefire Proposal." *BBC News*, 6 May 2024, [www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-68964108](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-68964108)

<sup>56</sup> "Italy Pushes for UN Peacekeeping Force in Post-War Gaza." *Decode39*, 9 Nov. 2023, [decode39.com/8205/italy-pushes-for-un-peacekeeping-force-in-post-war-gaza/](https://decode39.com/8205/italy-pushes-for-un-peacekeeping-force-in-post-war-gaza/)



extreme economic and political isolation, which is being aggravated further by the Israeli as well as Egyptian blockades. The dire situation escalated dramatically on October 7, 2023, following a devastating attack by Hamas on Israel, prompting a severe military response from Israel aimed at eradicating Hamas and rescuing hostages. This operation led not just to more military confrontations but also plunged Gaza city into a deep humanitarian crisis. While grappling with these ongoing problems internationally, there have been immediate demands for a cease fire and increased humanitarian aid. The continuation of such a war threatens stability within the region, thereby inviting involvement from external forces, including neighboring countries. Thus, all parties involved need to consider peaceful negotiations to ensure the safety of innocent civilians in an area already scarred by prolonged agony and insecurity.

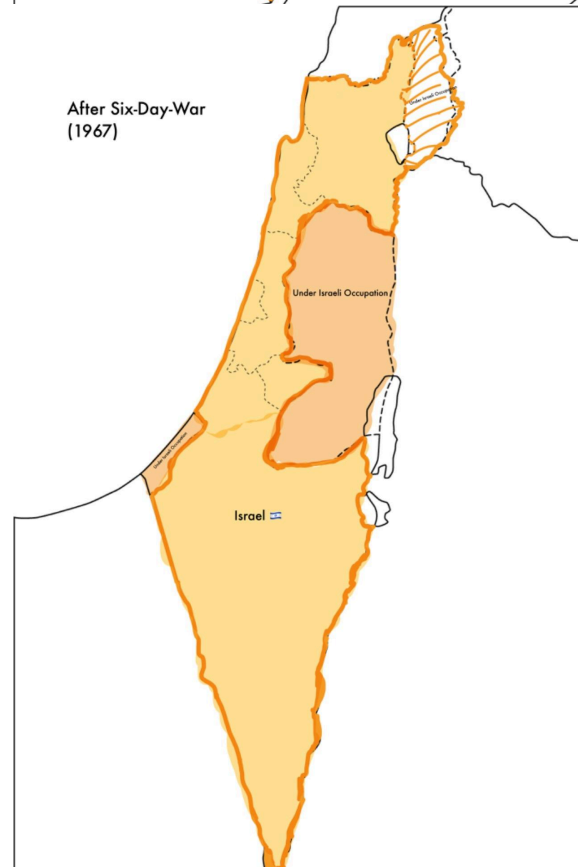
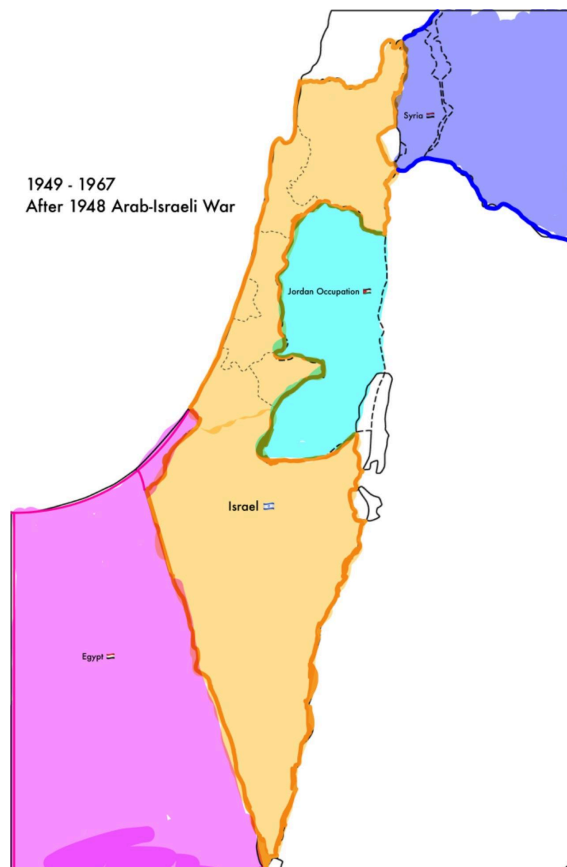
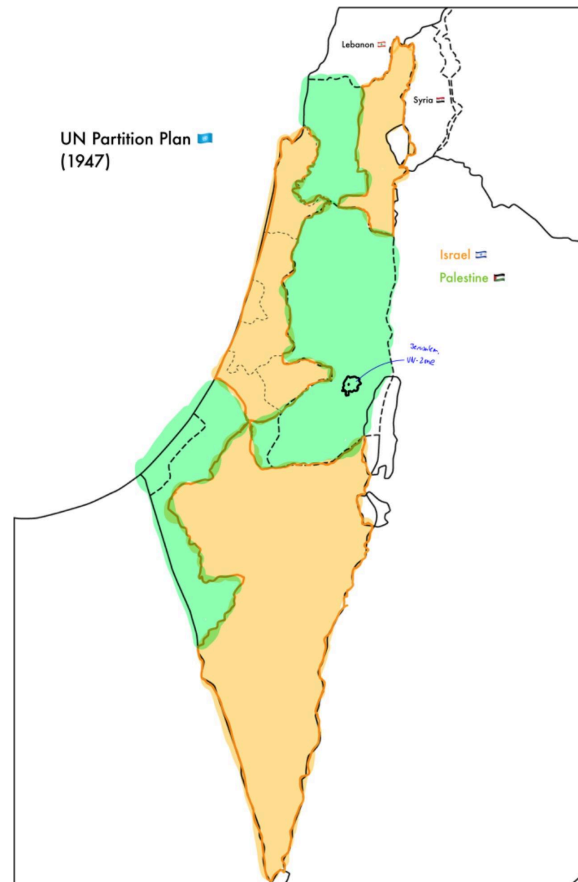
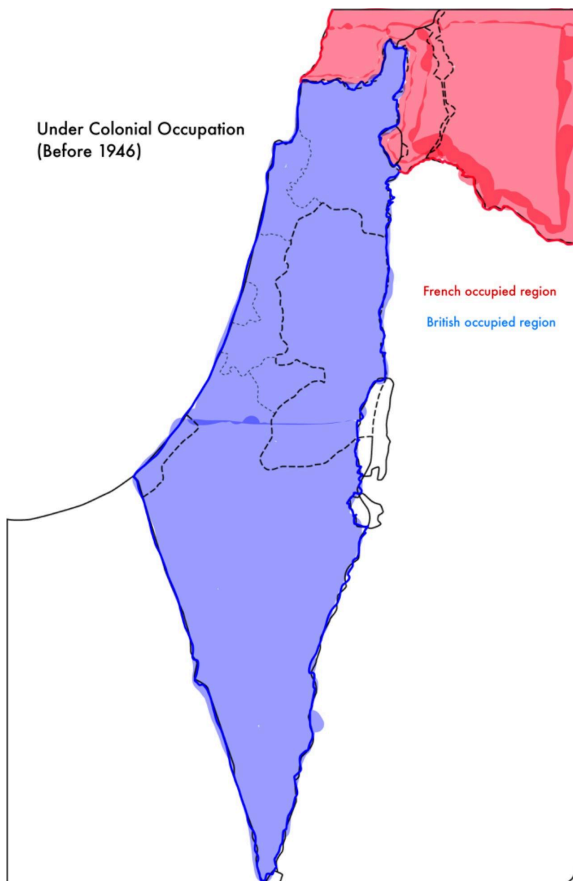
The Security Council has the mandate to deal with questions of state sovereignty, their composition, and legitimate constitution in the sense of a fundamental creation of human decency. Executing this mandate is now up to the Security Council to raise awareness of contrary and differentiated security concerns through cooperation and mutual understanding.

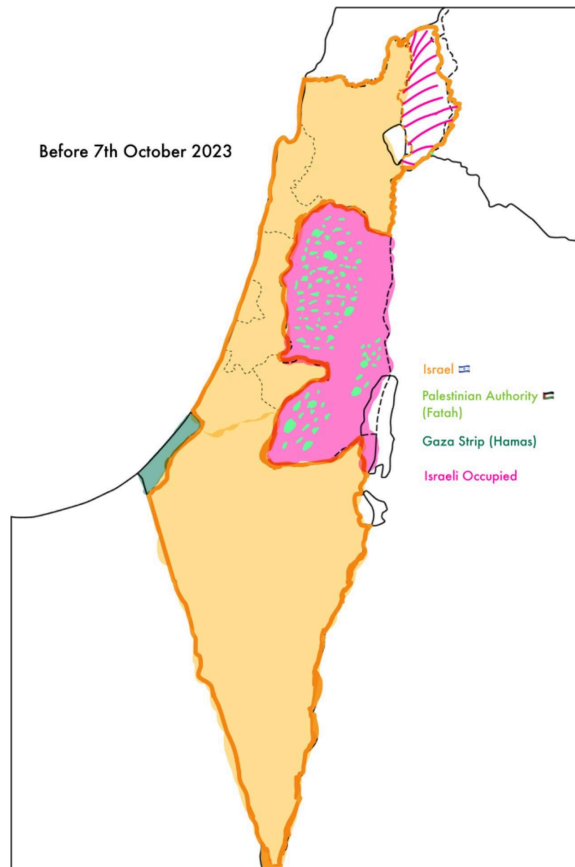
### **VIII. Questions to Consider**

- What are the immediate humanitarian needs in Gaza, and how can international organizations effectively deliver aid despite ongoing hostilities?
- Can a sustainable ceasefire be negotiated, and what would the conditions for such a ceasefire look like?
- How can international law be enforced concerning alleged war crimes and human rights abuses reported in the conflict?
- What role can regional powers play in mediating and resolving the current crisis?
- How can the international community address the influence and actions of external actors, such as Iran, that are believed to be exacerbating the conflict?
- How can basic supplies of shelter, water and nutrition be guaranteed for the civilian population while Israel tightens the blockades?



## IX. Appendix





## X. Sources for further research

- **Israel Gaza War: History of the Conflict Explained**

<http://www.bbc.com/news/newsbeat-44124396>

An article that is illustrating further historical context on how this conflict emerged in the first place.

- **Assessing Israel's Strike on Iran**

[www.csis.org/analysis/assessing-israels-strike-iran](http://www.csis.org/analysis/assessing-israels-strike-iran)

A report that is giving an important insight on how Iran's strike on Israel that occurred on April 13, 2024 has an influence on the region's stability.

- **Why Hezbollah Doesn't Want a Full-Scale War. Yet**

<https://responsiblestatecraft.org/hamas-israel-war-hezbollah/>

An interesting article on the aims and ambitions that Hezbollah hold in Southern Lebanon, but also how Israel sometimes exaggerates signs coming from the terrorist group.



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