Andrew Ciacci

Israel and Palestinian Crisis Committee Application:

My interest in MUN has been present for as long as I can remember. I have participated in MUN as a middle school student. In my high school career I have attended two conferences, one at Yale, and the other at Cornell. Last year, I also represented the Islamic Republic of Iran in my schools yearlong MUN simulation. I also took a class with a similar simulation at Yale this past summer, representing Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on the topic of nuclear nonproliferation.

The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict has many issues, however, I believe three certain issues are at its core. The first issue is border disputes. Both parties believe they are entitled to the contested land from god. This causes a problem because neither claim has any more basis than the other. The “possession” of Jerusalem is also a major issue as it is the major city for Judaism and the third most important to Islam. The second issue is security. Israel feels constantly threatened by the Palestinians and other Muslim countries. They are boxed between the Palestinian occupied West Bank, Jordan, Syria, and other “threatening” countries. Israel needs a presence in the Jordan Valley to defend against attacks from Jordan (Hezbollah) however the Palestinians refuse to relinquish control over the area. The apparent distrust and animosity between the parties makes me believe that more than a treaty is required to ease tensions in the region. The third issue would be dealing with the refugees. After Israel became an independent nation, many refugees were forced out of Israel. Now, Palestine requires that all refugees have the right to return to Israel. Israel refuses to do so because they feel it jeopardies their safety, leaving about five million people with nowhere to go.

The unification of the Hamas and Fatah parties bodes well for the successful peace talks. Hamas has very openly stated that their main goal is for the destruction of Israel and for that land to be “rightly” returned to Palestine. Contrastingly, Fatah acknowledges the right for Israel to exist and believes there can be a solution with Israel in it. Clearly, Fatah is the more After the agreement to unity this April, President Abbas assured Israel that the new government would recognize Israel as a legitimate state and that its top priority is still a two state solution.

The first possible solution I would like to mention is the two state solution. This solution proposes two different states for two different peoples. The Palestinian territory would be the same from the pre 1967 maps. The benefits of this solution are two separate states, but Israel would no longer have control of certain areas for security. Also, problems have risen due to Israel continued funding of settlements in the West Bank taking precious land and resources from a possible Palestinian nation. Another solution is the proposal of offering Palestinians dual citizenship. However this solution is not very likely as Palestinians desire their own nation and citizens of both sides would not feel as safe in the others territory.

Israel has, for a while, desired to be recognized by the international community as a Jewish state. However, this idea conflicts directly with Israel’s notion of democracy. The definition of a Jewish state is a nation that has an “affinity towards Jewish Heritage and Tradition”. This idea, in theory, conflicts with the idea of democracy. Israel balances these two sides by stating that they are a “Jewish and Democratic State”, meaning that Israel possess certain Jewish cultural values (the flag), while providing the freedom for citizens to worship whatever religion they please. These two ideas can stay in balance as long as Israel’s connection to Judaism does not become forced upon its citizens (infringe on the domain of democracy). Israel’s desire to be recognized as a Jewish state seriously threatens the possibility of peace in the region. There is a long lasting animosity and tension between the sides, results in a lack of trust. The Palestinians would find it much harder to trust a Jewish nation. However, if Israel were to give up its desire to be recognized as a Jewish state, the Palestinians would be more inclined towards a peaceful solution.