



United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

Background Guide

On the Question of Iran-Israel Conflict



MIT Model United Nations Conference (MITMUNC) II
February 5-7, 2010
Cambridge, Massachusetts

1. Introduction

Recent times have seen a rapid escalation of tension between these 2 nations. As Iran continues with its nuclear program, refusing cooperation with the UN or the IAEA, tensions rise between Iran and Israel, with the latter feeling threatened by Iran's nuclear program. Recent statements by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad such as at the 2009 UN General Assembly Meeting regarding the state of Israel, Zionism, and the holocaust, have inflamed relations between Iran and Israel even more. On one side, Israel believes their security is threatened by Iran, stressing that Iran's nuclear program is designated to create nuclear weapons that will target the country, offering a literal interpretation of President Ahmadinejad's statement that Israel should have been "wiped off the map". Iran, on the other side, maintains that its nuclear program is peaceful, and that all enriched uranium is being used for energy and civilian research. Iran maintains that its views on Israel, though legitimate in their perspective, will not be translated to a direct military conflict.

2. Background

During the Pahlavi Dynasty in the 20th century, Iran and Israel had close ties to each other. In fact, Israel viewed Iran as a Muslim ally in a predominantly Muslim region. Yet, eventually, the two countries' friendship deteriorated especially after the Iranian Revolution and hostility took its place.

One of the first instances of discord occurred in 1975 when Iran voted in support of the UN General Assembly Resolution 3379 which stated that Zionism equaled racism. Resolution 3379 was later nullified by United Nations General Assembly Resolution 4686, although Iran voted against the new resolution. The Zionist movement became a formal organization in 1897. The Zionists wished to establish a "Jewish Homeland" in Palestine under Turkish or German rule. Initially, most Zionists were not concerned about the Arab population, which they ignored, or thought would agree to voluntary transfer to other Arab coun-

tries.

However, following the Islamic Revolution (also known as the Iranian Revolution or the 1979 Islamic Revolution), Iran began severing all ties with Israel. During Ayatollah Khomeini's campaign to overthrow Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi from 1979 to 1989, Iran began referring to Israel as "an enemy of Islam" and "The Little Satan." After Iran was established as an Islamic Republic, they officially cut all ties with Israel. Following Ayatollah Khamenei's appointment in 1989, tensions between the two countries continued to escalate.

In the year 2005, the tension reached a high after Iran publicly supported the Palestinian uprising in Israel saying, "Palestine belongs to Palestinians, and the fate of Palestine should also be determined by the Palestinian people." For the Middle East, the issue of Palestine has always been a disputed topic. In the mid 1940s, the United Nations Special Commission on Palestine (UNSCOP) recommended that Palestine be divided into an Arab state and a Jewish state. The commission called for Jerusalem to be put under international administration and the UN General Assembly adopted this plan on Nov. 29, 1947 as UN Resolution (GA 181). The Jews accepted the UN decision, but the Arabs rejected it. The resolution divided the land into two approximately equal portions in a complicated scheme with zig-zag borders. This plan failed as not all of the countries supported it and as a result conflict broke out until the region came to an uneasy peace in the years leading up to the Gulf War. Following the Gulf War, the problems between Palestine and Israel continued until the events of 2000 in which Palestinian violence broke out.

Following the year 2005 rumors about the situation between Israel and Iran continued until Ayatollah Khamenei stated, on September 20, 2008, that "it is incorrect, irrational, pointless and nonsense to say that we are friends of Israeli people... we are on a collision course with the occupiers of Palestine and the occupiers are the Zionist regime. This is the position of our regime, our revolution and our people."

In addition to the hostility felt between these countries due to religious and political differences, the situation is worsened by Israeli fear over the

nuclear program of Iran and the potential for Iran to build nuclear weapons. This has led to the possibility of an Israeli pre-emptive strike against Iran; In June 2009, Israel threatened to attack Iran's nuclear facilities, and Iran promised to fight back. Recently Israel has alleged that Russia is helping Iran with its nuclear program. Thus, the current condition of Israeli and Iranian relations has become an issue of world-wide concern due to the unstable nature of the current Middle East.

Latest Updates:

[http://www.stljewishlight.com/
commentaries/296054378654001.php](http://www.stljewishlight.com/commentaries/296054378654001.php)

3. Committee Goals

The focus of this topic is not just to rein in Iran's rogue nuclear program, which is primarily IAEA's domain; the goal is instead to propose a resolution that can find solutions to the Iran-Israel conflict that are feasible for both sides. There are measures that are required immediately, and those that are needed to be implemented in the long run to ensure peace and security in the region. The underlying issues pertain to more than just nuclear weapons, and therefore a comprehensive resolution that addresses these events would be ideal. Working papers and resolutions need to establish long term and short term goals separately. While the immediate focus is to prevent a war that appears to be imminent, unless prompt action is taken, long-term stability can only be established by reconciliation of differences between the two states, and direct and open negotiation regarding the conflict. The UNSC should aim to discuss each of these major differences separately in order to reach a consensus regarding how to settle the various aspects of the dispute, and resolutions and working papers should highlight these as well. From time to time, we will throw crises at you to see how well you can respond to new developments.

4. Conclusion

In this topic, it is of prime importance to be abreast with, both, the history of the conflict and

the latest developments. Position papers must underscore the stands the country has maintained in the past, and what aspects of the problem they think is of prime importance, along with possible solutions to these aspects of the problem. In general, points will be assigned to bringing new issues to the front, suggesting feasible solutions that would be acceptable to both nations in question, and also providing insight on the implementation of these solutions.