

POSITION PAPER

COUNTRY: INDIA

COMMITTEE: UNGA

TOPIC: ISRAEL'S ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES IN
EAST OCCUPIED JERUSALEM AND OTHER
OCCUPIED PALASTINIAN TERRETORIES

INTRODUCTION

“ We would have recognized long ago, because Israel is a fact . We refrained because of our desire not to offend the sentiments of our friends in the Arab countries” said Jawaharlal Nehru on 17th September,1950 after India's recognition of Israel . The creation of Israel was supported by Mahasabha's leader Veer Savarkar both on moral and political grounds.

BACKGROUND

The conflict has its origins in the rise of Zionism in Europe and the consequent first arrival of Jewish settlers to Ottoman Palestine in 1882. The local Arab population increasingly began to oppose Zionism, primarily out of fear of territorial displacement and dispossession .The Zionist movement garnered the support of an imperial power in the 1917 Balfour Declaration issued by Britain, which promised to support the creation of a "Jewish homeland" in Palestine. Following British occupation of the formerly Ottoman region during World War I, Mandatory Palestine was established as a British mandate. Increasing Jewish immigration led to tensions between Jews and Arabs which grew into

intercommunal conflict. In 1936, an Arab revolt erupted demanding independence and an end to British support for Zionism, which was suppressed by the British. Eventually tensions led to the UN adopting a partition plan in 1947, triggering a civil war. During the ensuing 1948 Palestine war, more than half of the mandate's predominantly Palestinian Arab population fled or were expelled by Israeli forces. By the end of the war, Israel was established on most of the former mandate's territory, and the Gaza Strip and the West Bank were controlled by Egypt and Jordan respectively. Since the 1967 Six Day War, Israel has been occupying the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, known collectively as the Palestinian territories. Two Palestinian uprisings against Israel and its occupation erupted in 1987 and 2000, the first and second intifadas respectively. Israel's occupation, which is now considered to be the longest military occupation in modern history, has seen it constructing illegal settlements there, creating a system of institutionalized discrimination against Palestinians under its occupation called Israeli apartheid. Israel has drawn international condemnation for violating the human rights of the Palestinians .

CURRENT

Hamas launched its deadly attack on Israel on October 7, 2023, prompting the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) to engage in aerial campaigns and ground operations within the Gaza Strip. On June 8, the IDF undertook an operation in central Gaza to rescue four hostages while Gazan authorities reported that 274 Palestinians were killed, and hundreds of others were injured. Other efforts to free the more than one hundred remaining Israeli and foreign hostages taken by Hamas on October 7 have been largely unsuccessful, and their location and health status are unknown. Almost two million Gazans ,more than 85 percent of the population,have fled their homes since October 2023. Recent casualty estimates from the Hamas-run Gazan Health Ministry place the death toll in Gaza at around 40,000, though such numbers are challenging to verify due to limited international

access to the strip. On July 13, Israel conducted a major strike on south Gaza, targeting two top Hamas commanders that killed at least seventy-one people. Meanwhile, neither Hamas nor Israel have agreed to the terms laid out by U.S. President Joe Biden for a ceasefire and hostage release.

COUNTRY POLICY

Indian foreign policy underwent a significant revision in the early 1990s as the Cold War ended – it decided to move on from the anti-Americanism stance of the Cold War era by redefining its non-aligned foreign policy to engage with everybody in world politics. Starting diplomatic relations with the state of Israel was one of India's most critical corrections. The diplomatic normalisation with Israel has seen 30 years of growth and deepening ties with the Indian National Congress and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the two predominant national parties. Israel has become a bipartisan issue at the government level, not in the socio-political public space. Much of the diplomatic deepening occurred when the Congress was in power, starting with normalising relations with Israel in 1992. However, the Congress preferred to keep much of its dealings with Israel in the closet, whereas BJP went public about India's friendship with Israel. No wonder India's first Prime Minister to visit Israel had to be Narendra Modi – a BJP leader – in 2017." Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi quickly extended his support for Israel on October 7 when Hamas attacked the ordinary people of Israel. He Tweeted, "Deeply shocked by the news of terrorist attacks in Israel. Our thoughts and prayers are with the innocent victims and their families. We stand in solidarity with Israel at this difficult hour". More than 1,200 people were killed in a single day in Israel, and there has not been such a big loss of lives for the Israeli citizens in recent history. Narendra Modi's firm and candid support for Israel is also in sync with India's long-standing principled position against all forms of terrorism in the world. To make that point clear, India wanted the United Nations General Assembly resolution of October 27 to condemn the act of terror committed by Hamas on Israel. When that was not included, India abstained from the resolution led by Jordan on October 27 with the support of major Arab states that called for an immediate humanitarian truce between Israel and Hamas to stop the ongoing conflict.

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

1. Two-State Solution:

- Establish an independent Palestinian state alongside the State of Israel.
- Borders to be negotiated based on the 1967 lines with mutually agreed-upon land swaps.

2. Jerusalem's Status:

- Shared capital, with East Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine and West Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.
- Special arrangements for the Old City, ensuring access and control for both parties.

3. Security Arrangements:

- Israel and Palestine to engage in security cooperation, ensuring the safety of both nations.
- International forces or observers may be deployed to monitor and support the agreement.

4. Settlements and Borders:

- Israel to freeze settlement expansion and work towards a border agreement based on the 1967 lines.
- Land swaps or other arrangements to address Israeli settlements in the West Bank.

5. Refugee Issue:

- Fair and realistic solution for Palestinian refugees, considering options like:
 - Compensation
 - Resettlement in Palestine or other countries

- Limited return to Israel (with Israel's agreement)

6. Economic Cooperation:

- Encourage economic collaboration between Israel and Palestine, fostering mutual growth and development.
- Joint projects, trade agreements, and cooperation in areas like water management and energy.