

## Opposite the Editorial Page

# **Unending Conflict: Israel and Pale**



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The Conflict between Israel and Palestine has been ongoing for more than half a century, with no solution being able to be properly enforced within the heart of the Levant. However, this does not mean that there was no solution; there were many solutions presented to end the ethnic war between Israelites and Palestinians that just never practically worked out.

It all started after the conclusion of World War Two, with the sudden rise in the popularity of Zionism. Zionism was a Jewish belief that centered around Jewish determination and their rights to have their state. The Jewish population has been historically treated like nomadic people, moving from places after places: never having a true consolidated place to call home. The Zionist idea naturally became popular with both the Jewish population and the western world, due to the western sympathy for the Jewish people that formed after the events of the Holocaust.

Subsequently, the United Kingdom granted the Jewish people their old homeland on the western coast of the Levant, notwithstanding the effect it would have on the people that now inhabited the place.

Ethnic Tension immediately grew between the new Jewish and the Palestinian people that now both inhabited the region that would be called Israel, and eventually led to a civil war. This also caused tensions to grow between the Jewish State and its Islamic neighbors. This consequently led to the start of the First Israeli Arab war, when Israel was attacked by all of its Islamic neighbors, one day after they declared independence.

There were a total of six officially recognized wars that Israel was belligerent: six Arab-Israeli wars and also two Intifada uprisings. All six Arab-Israeli wars were fought upon Israel and its Arabic neighbors over Ideologies, territory, and occupation. The two Intifadas were civil uprisings and protests from

Palestinians exercising their rights to their state. Many Israelis and Arabs died from these conflicts, but it was the Palestinians that suffered the most from these series of conflicts because these wars all took place in the regions where the Palestinians were concentrated.

After the First Intifada, Palestine was granted the right to have its government, after the signing of the Oslo Accords. This meant the Palestinians finally were able to have their legislature, a judiciary court, and democracy.

It looked like everything was going well with peace talks and tension slowly decreasing after the Second Intifada. This somewhat peaceful period, however, came to an end once a right-wing politician: Benjamin Netanyahu was elected as prime minister of Israel.



A Palestinian man being arrested by the Israeli forces during a violent clash near Ramallah, West Bank, 2015.

This is now where we are at as of today in the issue revolving around Israel and Palestine, with the government of Israel taking a very aggressive approach to deal with the Palestinians. Most recently, the state of Israel has formalized its intentions to annex the occupied territory of the West Bank, where Palestinians are concentrated in mass numbers. Palestinian and Israeli relations are

deteriorating every day, and another conflict may rise again in Israel between the two ethnic groups.

The United Nations was quite ineffective in taking care of this conflict, ever since the day of the Israeli independence. Despite its incompetence in dealing with the Israel-Palestine issue, they did enforce some resolutions to address the ethical instability in Israel. The two main resolutions that the UN adopted are the UN Resolution 181 and 242, the first being the partition plan of the Palestine region, and the second being a peace plan for the Six-Day war.

UN resolution 181 was the original plan adopted in 1947 for the partition of British controlled Palestine between the ethnic Palestinians and the Jews. This plan was supposed to divide the two ethnic groups equally, so both the Jewish people and the native Palestinians can have their state. This plan, however, was rejected by both Israelis and the Arab world, because they both wanted to have most but all of the Palestine regions. The Arab world rejected this resolution to the point where they united against Israel to completely get rid of the Jewish State. That is how the First Arab-Israeli war started, all over this resolution.

ween Israel and Palestine: ethnic division. Division of the Palestine region between two ethnically and also religiously different groups of people was a recipe for civil and internal disaster within the Levant. The fact that one of those groups came in out of nowhere to displace the people who were already living in that place didn't help either. This ethnic tension led to wars and conflicts, which did nothing to heal the divide between the Jewish people and the Palestinians. However, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas had already admitted in 2011 that it was a mistake for the Arab world to reject Resolution 181, acknowledging their historical role in the division of the Palestine region.<sup>1</sup> Palestine has repeatedly shown their willingness to reconcile with Israel and make a peace agreement following the guidance of the UN, but Israel, perhaps still wounded by the damages of the past, continues to act against Palestinian

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<sup>1</sup>Williams, Dan. "Abbas Faults Arab Refusal of 1947 U.N. Palestine Plan." *Reuters*, Thomson Reuters, 28 Oct. 2011, [www.reuters.com/article/us-palestinians-israel-abbas-idUSTRE79R64320111028](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-palestinians-israel-abbas-idUSTRE79R64320111028).

self-determination with hostility. If the Israeli's would show some consideration to sit down with the Palestinian Authority to come up with a compromise.

UN resolution 242 was a peace plan outlined by the UN security council to put a quick end to the Six-Day war. Israel fought the Six-Day War against Syria, Jordan, and Egypt, fearing that there will be another sudden war against them, thus preemptively starting the aggression. This resolution states that Israel must withdraw from the recently occupied territories from the Six-Day War, in exchange for their "right to live in peace." This resolution also outlined what land should be considered Palestine and what isn't, but Israel did not comply with this partition.

This resolution was supposed to be the plan that would determine and finalize the borders between Palestine and Israel. Although Israel agreed to follow the terms of this resolution, they only agreed to it due to the part of the resolution that would guarantee the sovereignty of Israel, and their right to peacefully live.<sup>2</sup> Israeli dislike towards the Palestinians in the past has never died down after this resolution, and their harsh treatment of the people in the occupied regions of Palestine continued. If the Israelis want their right to live in peace, they should also grant the rights of Palestinians to live in peace and recognize their self-determination to have their state, much like how the rest of the world recognizes Israel. It is outrageous for Israel to not comply with an international resolution they agreed on, and their reluctant behavior to reconcile with the Palestinians is unjust. The international community needs to address this problem with serious intent to stop the conflict for the common good of the people living in Palestine and Israel, but that is something that I can only encourage.

Another concerning problem that has been a thorn for the peace in Israel is directly related to the global political trend that has been rising in recent years: the rise of right-wing politics. Right-wing politicians always strived for a more nationalistic approach in governing, usually favoring the majority people of their country. The current prime minister of Israel: Benjamin Netanyahu is one of many politicians that rose from the populist movement around the world.

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<sup>2</sup> Security Council, resolution 242, "land for peace" resolution, S/RES/242 (22 November 1967), available from <https://unispal.un.org/unispal.nsf/0/7D35E1F729DF491C85256EE700686136>.

The right-wing government of Israel does not support the two-state resolution adopted by the UN and has been actively trying to annex the occupied Palestinian territories as soon as possible. Under international law, the annexation of any kind is prohibited,<sup>3</sup> unless there is a mutual agreement between the two parties of annexation.<sup>4</sup> Palestinians living in the regions of the West Bank have clearly stated their determination to their state, and the Israeli government is ignoring international laws for the sake of their political agenda.<sup>5</sup> Justice needs to be served for the Palestinian people, and the Israeli government must recognize Palestinians as one of their citizens equal to the Jewish majority, or work with the Palestinian Authority to end the conflict between them.



Current Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is still taking a harsh stance against the Palestinians.

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<sup>3</sup>Sassoli, Marco, et al. "Annexation (Prohibition of)." *Annexation (Prohibition of) | How Does Law Protect in War? - Online Casebook*, ICRC, OAD, [casebook.icrc.org/glossary/annexation-prohibition](https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/annexation-prohibition).

<sup>4</sup>Sassoli, Marco, et al. "Civilian Population." *Annexation (Prohibition of) | How Does Law Protect in War? - Online Casebook*, ICRC, OAD, [casebook.icrc.org/law/civilian-population#chapter5](https://casebook.icrc.org/law/civilian-population#chapter5).

<sup>5</sup>VIDON, Tamar SHILOH. "Netanyahu's Annexation Plan Threatens Palestinian, Israeli Economies Already Struggling after Covid-19." *France 24*, France Médias Monde, 29 June 2020, [www.france24.com/en/20200629-netanyahu-s-annexation-plan-threatens-palestinian-israeli-economies-already-struggling-after-covid-19](https://www.france24.com/en/20200629-netanyahu-s-annexation-plan-threatens-palestinian-israeli-economies-already-struggling-after-covid-19).

The conflict between Israel and Palestine has been dragged on long enough. It is to my belief, that there is no real need for fighting to happen between the two sides, for a historical problem they both mishandled more than half a century ago. In my opinion, the intervention of the international community would do little to help the situation get better, shown by the results of the previous UN resolutions 181 and 242. The only country that can truly influence Israel is the United States, but it is unlikely for the US to take any action in favor of the Palestinian state due to the US had mostly voted against Palestinian self-determination in the UN assembly: favouring Israel. One of the most simple ways to end this conflict is for Israel to start taking an initiative on negotiating agreements and terms that would fit the interest of both the Israelis and Palestinians, as Palestinians I believe are ready to see some peace under reasonable circumstances. I sincerely hope that this conflict can be solved peacefully and diplomatically with a mutual agreement from both states.

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