

Forum: GA1

Issue: The Israeli-Palestinian Conflicts on the Gaza Strip

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Overview

The Gaza–Israel conflict is a part of the wider Israeli–Palestinian conflict, an ongoing struggle between Israelis and Palestinians around the historic rights, territorial demands, security issues and the human rights since Israel's entry to the West Bank in the mid-20th Century.

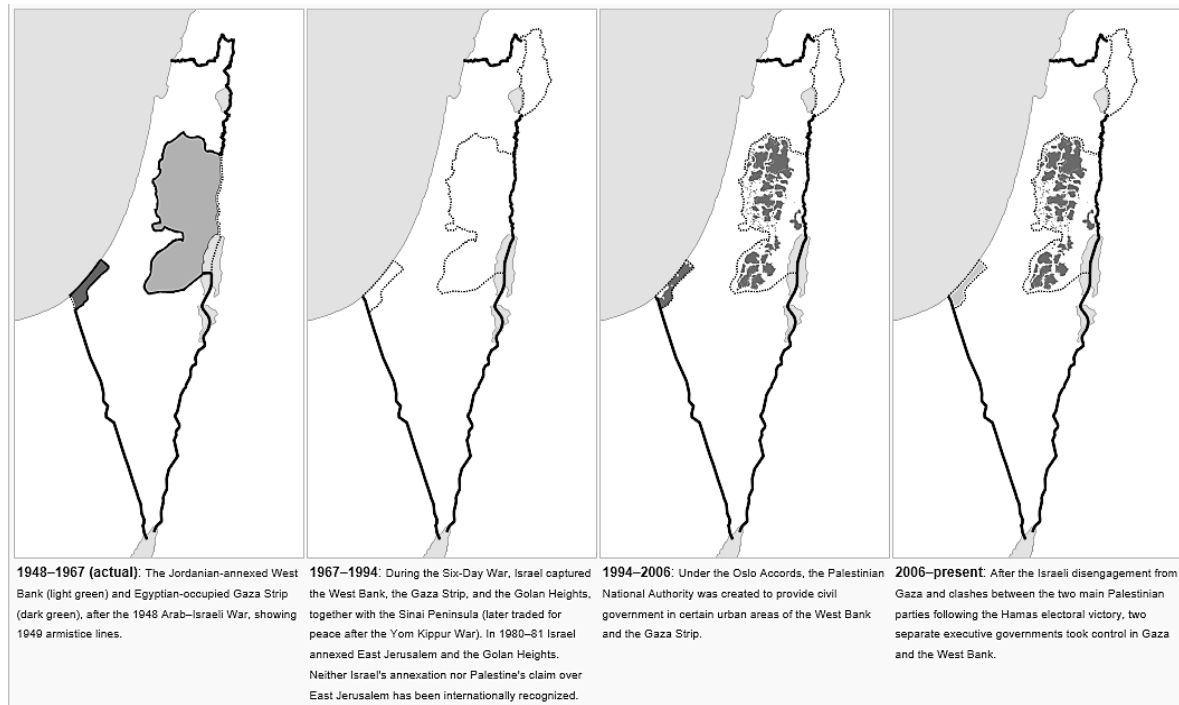
Palestinian militant actions escalated in the Gaza Strip following the overwhelming election to government of the Islamist political party Hamas in 2005 and 2006. The conflict escalated with the split of the Palestinian Authority into the Fatah government in the West Bank and the Hamas government in Gaza and the following violent ousting of Fatah after Fatah lost the election to Hamas. Palestinian rocket attacks on Israel and the joint Egyptian-Israeli blockade of Gaza have exacerbated the conflict. The international community considers indiscriminate attacks on civilians and civilian structures that do not discriminate between civilians and military targets illegal under international law.



As part of its 2005 disengagement plan, Israel retained exclusive control over Gaza's airspace and territorial waters, continued to patrol and monitor the external land perimeter of the Gaza Strip, with the exception of its southernmost border and continued to monitor and blockade Gaza's coastline. Israel largely provides and controls Gaza's water supply, electricity and communications infrastructure. According to Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, Israel remains an occupying power under international law.

The United Nations has stated that under resolutions of both the General Assembly and the Security Council, it regards Gaza to be part of the "Occupied Palestinian Territories".

Meanwhile, the Fatah government in the West Bank, internationally recognized as the sole representative of the State of Palestine, refers to the Gaza Strip as part of the Palestinian state and does not recognize the Hamas government, thus avoiding the conflict.



International Response

United States

Representative for the U.S. Government reaffirmed the position that Israel has the right to self-defense. State Department spokesman also stated that his country is aware of the difficulty of targeting terrorists without civilian casualties. He added that Israel must "take all possible actions in order to avoid any civilian casualties, to avoid any undue damage to the Palestinian infrastructure and always to consider the effects of their actions on the political process, the Israeli-Palestinian track and moving that forward."

Turkey

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan called Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi an "illegitimate tyrant". He also stated that "If Israel continues with this attitude, it will definitely be tried at international courts."

Indonesia

The Indonesian people and government were very concerned about Gaza during the conflict. They donated humanitarian aid and some volunteered to come to Gaza and work on the ground. Indonesia also built a hospital in Gaza named "Indonesia hospital," which is slated to open in 2015. Its construction was not impacted during the fighting and remained on schedule.

Ireland

The Irish government condemned both the unacceptably high civilian casualty rate resulting from the disproportionate military action on Israel's part as well as the firing of rockets by Hamas and other militants into Israel.

Key Terms

Israel–Gaza barrier

The Gaza Strip has been separated from Israel by the Israel–Gaza barrier since 1996. Since the beginning of the Second Intifada, Gazans are no longer permitted to enter Israel for work purposes. Special permits to enter Israel for medical purposes have also been greatly reduced, has made travel for Palestinians a difficult task.

Second Intifada

Also known as the *al-Aqsa Intifada* began in September 2000. Many Palestinians consider the Intifada to be a struggle of national liberation against Israeli occupation imposed on them following the 1967 War, whereas many Israelis consider it to be a terrorist campaign.

Unilateral disengagement

Israel implemented its Disengagement Plan in August–September 2005, withdrawing its civilian and military presence from the Gaza Strip, and retaining control over the Gaza airspace, maritime access and borders even with Egypt according to the 2005 agreement with Palestinian authority.

Southernmost Border

A location on the Southern border where Egypt retained control and crossings were supervised by the European monitors.

Important Events/Timelines

Date	Event
2006	Large-scale conventional warfare beyond the peripheries of the Gaza Strip began when Palestinian militants abducted Corporal Gilad Shalit, and Israel responded by launching Operation "Summer Rains" on 28 June 2006.



2007	A series of battles between Palestinian militants in Hamas-governed Gaza and the IDF that began in mid-May 2007, with the violence flaring in the meantime. Palestinians fired more than 220 rocket attacks on Israel in more than a week.
2008	On 27 February 2008, Palestinian militants fired more than 40 rockets into southern Israel and the Israeli army fired three missiles at the Palestinian Interior Ministry in Gaza destroying the building. Israel began its air and ground operations on 29 February.
Late 2008	The 2008 Israel–Hamas ceasefire was an Egyptian-brokered six-month lull, "for the Gaza area", which went into effect between Hamas and Israel on 19 June 2008.
2008-2009	The Gaza War started when Israel launched a large military campaign in the Gaza Strip on 27 December 2008, codenamed Operation "Cast Lead" with the stated aim of stopping Hamas rocket attacks on southern Israel and arms smuggling into Gaza.
2010	2 Israeli soldiers and two Hamas militants were killed during clashes on the Gaza Strip's southern border. Two other soldiers were wounded during the fighting which broke out east of the town of Khan Younis.
2011	A series of cross-border attacks was carried out in southern Israel near the Egyptian border, by a squad of militants. The militants first opened fire at civilian bus. Several minutes later, a bomb was detonated next to an Israeli army patrol along Israel's border with Egypt. In a third attack, an anti-tank missile hit a private vehicle, killing four civilians.
Mar/2012	During the second week of March 2012, Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) initiated Operation "Returning Echo". It was the worst outbreak of violence covered by the media in the region since the 2008–09 Operation "Cast Lead" (the Gaza War).
Oct/2012	An Israeli air strike killed the chief of the Hamas military wing in Gaza. During the operation, four Israeli civilians and one soldier were killed by Palestinian rocket fire.
2014	Fighting intensified between Israel and Hamas, leading to another full-scale Gaza War, this one far deadlier than the previous in 2008-2009. The IDF launched Operation Protective Edge on 8 July 2014, in response to Hamas rocket attacks; Israel troops entered the Gaza Strip.
2018	During the 2018 Land Day protests, at least 32 Palestinians have been killed and thousands were injured during clashes with Israeli troops at the Gaza-Israel border Between November 11 th and 12 th , Palestine fired 460 rockets and mortars into Israel, killing 1 and multiple injured. As a revenge, Israeli carried out airstrikes



	to 160 Palestinian targets.
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Major Nations/Organizations

United Nation Security Council (UNSC)

The United Nation Security Council charges with the maintenance of international peace and security and approving any changes to its United Nations Charter. Its powers include the establishment of peacekeeping operations, the establishment of international sanctions, and the authorization of military action through Security Council resolutions.

World Bank

The World Bank is an international financial institution that provides loans to countries of the world for capital projects. It comprises two institutions: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), and the International Development Association (IDA). The World Bank's most recent stated goal is the reduction of poverty.

United Nation Relief Works Agency (UNRWA)

The United Nation Relief Works Agency is responsible for delivering humanitarian aid to Palestinian refugees. UNRWA provides education, health, relief and social services to over 5 million Palestinian refugees living in countries across the Middle East, including Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria, and areas of Palestine, including the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

Other International NGOs

The Amnesty International

The Amnesty International is a non-governmental organization focused on human rights. The organization claims to have more than seven million members and supporters around the world.

Shurat HaDin

Shurat HaDin, or Israel Law Center is a civil rights non-governmental organization focused on representing terror victims, and Jewish and Israeli causes. The organization uses the power



of the courts in litigation against groups and people it accuses of supporting terrorism or being enemies of Jews and Israel.

Human Rights Watch

Human Rights Watch (HRW) is an international non-governmental organization that conducts research and advocacy on human rights.

Important Documents/Passed Solutions

The international community has taken many actions to assist Israel and Palestine find peace. In the UN Security Council, the most recent resolution adopted on the situation was in 2009, Resolution 1860, which “called for an immediate, durable and fully respected ceasefire leading to the full withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza.” More recently, in September 2012, the President of the Security Council issued a statement describing the latest efforts to restart peace talks.

In addition to the UN, numerous NGOs address the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. For example, breaking the Silence is one NGO that comprises “veteran combatants who have served in the Israeli military since the start of the Second Intifada, and have taken it upon themselves to expose the Israeli public to the reality of everyday life in the Occupied Territories.

Possible Solutions

The Israel-Palestine conflict is broad and complex, and many of the issues that are key to finding peace need to be negotiated directly between Israeli and Palestinian leaders. However, there are several key issues that the United Nations and the Security Council can act on that could impact peace negotiations:

- **Palestine 194:** Palestine is applying to become the 194th member state of the United Nations. Becoming a member state would give the state of Palestine more credibility and legitimacy in the eyes of the international community. And it would help Palestinian leaders in negotiations with Israel. However, membership to the UN requires a vote by the Security Council, and historically the US has vetoed Palestine’s bid for membership.

- **Security Concerns:** Currently, the Israeli military occupies Palestine. From the Israeli point of view, this is to protect its borders, ensure national security, and prevent acts of



terrorism. From the Palestinian point of view, this is a violation of Palestine's sovereignty and is seen as a show of force and intimidation. And at the same time, there are groups within Palestine that do not recognize Israel's right to exist, and have committed acts of terror within Israel.

- **Human Rights:** Palestinian leaders have accused Israel of violating the human rights of Palestinians, starting with the Israeli occupation of Palestine to Israel's refusal to recognize the right of reply of Palestinian refugees. However, various Palestinian groups have refused to recognize Israel's right to exist. And Israeli leaders believe it is their right to preserve Israel's national security.

- There seems to be opportunity for Israeli and Palestinian leaders to negotiate peace, but the opportunity may not last long. It is imperative for the UN and the international community to act and help both sides find an end to this long and violent conflict.

Additional Links

- *Council on Foreign Relations – Crisis Guide: The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict:*
<http://www.cfr.org/israel/crisis-guide-israeli-palestinian-conflict/p13850>
- *Security Council Report: UN Documents for Israel/Palestine:*
<http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/israelpalestine/>
- *Global Policy Forum: Israel, Palestine, and the Occupied Territories:*
<http://www.globalpolicy.org/security-council/index-of-countries-on-the-security-council-agenda/israelpalestine-and-the-occupied-territories.html>
- *US State Department: Background Briefing on Israeli-Palestinian Peace Talks (July 30, 2013):* <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2013/07/212564.htm>
- *“United Nations International Meeting in Support of Israeli-Palestinian Peace”:*
<http://bit.ly/10ADdrp>

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- *Council on Foreign Relations – Crisis Guide: The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict:*
<http://www.cfr.org/israel/crisis-guide-israeli-palestinian-conflict/p13850>
- *Security Council Report: UN Documents for Israel/Palestine:*
<http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/israelpalestine/>



- *Global Policy Forum: Israel, Palestine, and the Occupied Territories:*

<http://www.globalpolicy.org/security-council/index-of-countries-on-the-security-council-agenda/israelpalestine-and-the-occupied-territories.html>

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a b "Statistics". Retrieved 19 December 2014.

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