



# **SECURITY COUNCIL**

# **DELEGATE STUDY GUIDE**

# **QUESTION OF PALESTINIAN STATEHOOD**

## **Introduction**

The Security Council is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations established by the UN Charter in 1946. The UN charter gives primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security to the Security Council, which may meet whenever peace is threatened.

The Security Council held its first session on 17 January 1940 at Church House, Westminster, London. Since its first meeting, it has taken permanent residence at the United Nations Headquarters. A representative of each of its members must be present at all times at the UN Headquarters so that the Security Council can meet at any time the need arises.

## **Historical Background**

The roots of the Israel Palestinian conflict can be traced back to the two nationalist movements that began in the 19th century.

Jewish nationalism grew in response to the rising anti-Semitism and pogroms of the 19th century in Europe and Russia. This opposition led to the creation of the First Zionist Congress and the birth of the movement known as Zionism, inspired by the words of Jewish writer Theodor Herzl who sought to create a safe haven for the Jewish people. The movement chose Palestine to be the place to establish their homeland as it was recognized as the biblical promised land. Unable to convince the British government to make their political movement a reality, they opted to migrate to Palestine to establish agricultural colonies.

During this period Palestine was controlled by the Ottoman Empire. Even though the Ottoman Empire was multicultural, there was a growing "Arab Awakening" within the region. This Arab nationalist movement began to further gain ground as the British promised support for the creation of an "Arab Nation" as means to undermine the Ottoman Empire during the First World War. It was also promised that Palestine would be made a self-governing province under Arab sovereignty. However, in contradictory to this promise, the British issued the Balfour Declaration in 1917 endorsing a Jewish national home in Palestine as means of accelerating American support for the allied movement. With the end of the First World War and the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, it became impossible for the Great Powers to meet all the contradictory promises they have given to various political factions. Therefore, it was the Sykes Picot Agreement between France and Britain that was taken as the primary basis for the division of the Ottoman Empire to what is currently known as the Middle East. But the promised Palestinian or the Jewish state was not created by them, leading to the beginning of what will be known as

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## **Creation of Israel**

**When the Second World War was nearing its end, and details about the Nazi Extermination lists were being made public, international pressure started building up calling for the creation of an independent Jewish state. In 1947 UN Special Committee on Palestine recommended the division of Palestine into an Arab state, Jewish state and the City of Jerusalem under the International Trusteeship, to be implemented under the recommendations of the UN Partition Plan. Even though many Arab states opposed the UN Partition Plan, Israel was declared to be independent.**

## **Status Quo**

**Even though many attempts have been made to broker a two-state solution, which involves the creation of an independent Palestinian state alongside the State of Israel, none has been successful. There have emerged nations and parties who are strong believers in alternate solutions to the crisis, including but not limited to the establishment of a one state solution. The key issues in the topic remain to be,**

- Mutual Recognition**
- Designation of the borders**
- Palestinian freedom of movement**
- Control of Jerusalem**
- Palestinian right to return**
- Israeli settlement expansions**
- The negative impacts stemming from the Sykes Picot agreement**

**Since 2006 the Palestinian side has been divided into two factions being the Fatah government that predominantly controlled the West Bank and the Hamas, the rulers of the Gaza Strip. Many conflicts have arisen between the two factions and between the Israeli government. Many nations have deemed Hamas to be a terrorist organization that is actively trying to create conflict within the region, while some countries do not share the same sentiments.**

**The conflict becomes much deeper as the Palestinian Unity Government is created in 2014, forming a union between the Fatah and Hamas. Even though a round of peace**

**talks were started in 2013, they were suspended in 2014 due to the failure to come to a conclusion between the parties.**

**The US government establishing an embassy in Jerusalem has resulted in the further complication of the conflict.**

## **Objectives**

**The delegates of the Security Council are expected to have a deep understanding about the historic background of the conflict and the treaties relating to the conflict. And they must be well aware of the recent developments taking place in the region. Lessons must be learnt from the past actions of the United Nations, and solutions must be made to ensure the eradication of one of the longest running conflicts of the 21st century.**