



Security Council

Situation in Armenia and Azerbaijan

Situation in Israel and Palestine

UCIMUN 2022



Welcome Delegates,

My name is Mary Lee, and I am the Secretariat-General for the UCI Model United Nations 2021-2022 school year. I am honored to serve as part of your Secretariat this year and are excited for everything we have planned for the conference. Now that we are finally hosting an in-person conference again after two years, we hope that everyone will reunite together, have a fun, engaging and informative time in debate.

I am a fourth year Criminology, Law and Society major. I have been involved in UCIMUN since freshman year of college and loved my experiences here by far. My favorite part of actively being involved in MUN is cooperating with other students to contribute to raising awareness of global issues and their relevance to the holistic wellbeing of the entire world. In UCIMUN, I have been an Assistant Director of the Legal Committee, Director of the SPECPOL Committee and Secretariat-General for the year of 2020-2021. Outside of UCIMUN, I am actively involved in advocacy for basic needs, research, and legal organization. In my leisure time, on the other hand, I like listening to music and watching YouTube videos.

By now, we have spent roughly two years in this unprecedented time due to Covid-19. This year, however, in light of the global pandemic that has been slowly attenuated by vaccination, our theme, “reaffirming UN leadership in rebuilding a fractured world”, has become more relevant than ever. As we are transitioning to the new-normal in such turbulent times, it is imperative to recognize the responsibility of the UN and address any lingering issues that are influencing different communities across the globe. With your research and your resolutions, I would like you all to delve into ways to benefit as many people as possible, because global issues go beyond nations and governments—they affect all of us.

Our staff’s goal, as always, is to provide delegates with high quality debate and an opportunity to immerse themselves in an intellectual discussion of relevant issues. Please feel free to reach out to me or our Directors anytime between now and our conference. We are here to help you in any way we can.

Thank you for your time, and I look forward to seeing you in the Spring!

Sincerely,

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Hello Delegates,

Welcome to the 30th annual UC Irvine Model United Nations conference! My name is Anthony Antonyan, and I will be serving as the Director for the Security Council Committee as well as Under-Secretary General for the UCIMUN 2021-2022. I am a third-year undergraduate student majoring in English and double-minoring in Political Science and Armenian Studies. This year marks my eighth consecutive year participating in Model United Nations, and my third year working with UCI's Model United Nations team. I have always felt that Model UN conferences have been wonderful places to express my interests and passions for humanitarianism and international politics, which is why I keep coming back to the club each year! Through Model UN, I have sharpened my debate and public speaking skills, which will be incredibly beneficial for me as I begin to prepare myself for entering law school soon—and eventually, for my future in the legal field.

The topics for the Security Council this year are *Topic A: Situation in Armenia and Azerbaijan* and *Topic B: Situation in Israel and Palestine*. It is incredibly important to address these topics as they parallel our theme for this conference: “Reaffirming UN leadership in rebuilding a fractured world.” The situations in these tumultuous territories have resulted in conflicts that have lasted for generations. Regarding Topic A, Armenia and Azerbaijan have consistently fought for the right to hold onto the territory of the Nagorno-Kharabagh since the fall of the Soviet Union. Though the countries frequently enter cease-fires every now and then, they are almost always illegally broken. For Topic B, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict arose subsequent to the First World War after the British government supported the establishment of a “national home for the Jewish people” within Palestine. Since then, the situation between the established states of Israel and Palestine has only escalated, spawning multiple conflicts and acts of violence targeted at both parties. In summary, the situation in all of the aforementioned territories is evidently in dire need of international guidance and assistance directly from the United Nations.

As a delegate, this topic synopsis will serve as a guidance for you to understand the overarching information about both topics. However, as the director of this committee, I strongly encourage you to use a variety of resources rather than just the topic synopsis alone when constructing your viewpoints and resolutions for this committee. It is crucial that you diligently research on these pertinent issues to have a comprehensive understanding of these conflicts; I'm especially looking forward to hearing innovative ideas that go beyond what lies within the topic synopsis on how the UN should approach handling these sensitive situations. With that, I am eagerly anticipating our conference in April and cannot wait to see and hear from each and every one of you.

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Topic A: Situation in Armenia and Azerbaijan

Introduction

The situation in Nagorno-Karabakh bears one of the world's longest-lasting inter-ethnic conflicts—a conflict between two southern Caucasian countries, Armenia and Azerbaijan. For a century, Armenia and Azerbaijan have clashed with one another by claiming ownership of this territory, citing historical, cultural, and economic justifications. This conflict has not only instigated tensions amongst the two former Soviet countries, but it has also forced neighboring countries (i.e., Iran, Russia, and Turkey) to intervene in an attempt to mitigate tensions (Akhmetova, 2021).

The conflict primarily originated as a result of the rise of conflicts amongst ethnicities (Armenian and Islamic/Turkic) due to the prominence of nationalism during the latter half of the 19th century (Saparov, 2014). Although the territory is currently internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan, there is not only a significant Armenian population living within its borders (vastly surpassing Azerbaijani numbers) but also there is an established self-governing de facto government, called the Republic of Artsakh, that is comprised of the Armenians who live within that territory (Petithomme, 2013). Moreover, Armenians living in this territory refer to themselves as citizens of Artsakh. Armenians claim their rightful ownership of the territory through pointing out various archaeological findings of ancient Armenian artifacts, the presence of Armenian churches from many centuries ago (most notably Ghazanchetsots), and the significant Armenian populace—encompassing approximately 76% of the population in 1989



(towards the end of the Soviet Union) and approximately 99% of the population in 2015 (Nagorno Karabakh Republic USSR, 1989; Sergey, 2005).

Similarly, Azerbaijanis also claim ownership of the territory, citing reasons of how many Azeri nomads, while living within the Karabakh mountain range, never participated in the census despite considering the territory their homeland (Yamskov, 1991). Additionally, as an economic justification to their claims, many of the roads within Karabakh lead toward the Azerbaijani capital—Baku—and not the Armenian capital—Yerevan (Hovannisian, 1919).

To summarize, in an attempt to try and reclaim the territory each country sees as rightfully their own, the century-long Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has propagated tensions of such an extreme degree between the countries of Armenia and Azerbaijan (which have even forced neighboring countries to step in to try and resolve this seemingly never-ending issue).

Additionally, it is important to note that throughout this topic synopsis, “Nagorno-Karabakh” and “The Republic of Artsakh” will be used interchangeably, as the former is what the territory is known as internationally, and the latter is what citizens of said territory (largely the Armenian population living there) refer to themselves as.

Description

As is laid out in the introduction, this is an ongoing conflict that has lasted for generations. Due to this fact, this topic synopsis will not be able to cover every minute detail regarding its intricacies; however, it will serve as a useful guide to your own research.

The subtopics for this topic will deal with the following: Pre-Soviet Involvement, Soviet Involvement, Unstable Ceasefires, and Contemporary Conflicts, Problems, and Occurrences.



These subtopics will help you obtain a comprehensive understanding of the topic while also understanding the focus of the committee.

Pre-Soviet Involvement

The conflict originated during the beginning of the 20th century, prior to the establishment of the Soviet Union and subsequent annexations of Armenia and Azerbaijan, with violent clashes between the ethnic minorities who lived within the territory taking place (as was laid out in the introduction).

During the early years of the 20th century, ethnic Turks living in Transcaucasia Russia began to identify themselves as Azerbaijanis, and in 1918, they began to draw borders of their homeland: The Azerbaijan Democratic Republic. They outlined four provinces—Baku, Ganja, Karabakh, and Nakhichevan; however, these outlines did not go without protest from neighboring states, as the Bolsheviks held control of Baku at the time, and the Armenians contested their sovereignty for both Nakhichevan and—more importantly to Topic A—Nagorno-Karabakh. Additionally, within the territory of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic included a significant non-Muslim population, prompting more problems for the Azerbaijanis (Broers, 2019). This prompted several ethnic conflicts, including the deportations and homicides of Armenians from the Turkish side and the slaughtering of Azerbaijanis and other ethnic Turks from Transcaucasia by Russians and Armenians (Krüger, 2010).

It was around the year of 1920 the conflict began to escalate to an extreme degree. This conflict was soon brought to naught, however, once all contested territories were annexed into the Soviet Union.



Soviet Involvement

Yet the annexation of these countries only made the struggle for the sovereignty of Nagorno-Karabakh even more tumultuous. In 1921, then Premier of the Soviet Union, decided to make Nagorno-Karabakh an oblast of Azerbaijan. Since this territory was the center of a major conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, he believed it would make the countries more vulnerable and dependent on the Soviet Union (Betta, 1999).

In short, the Soviet Union—particularly Joseph Stalin, on the basis of trying to make his recently annexed states more dependent on the nation he ruled—made a pivotal decision between Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict by declaring Nagorno-Karabakh an oblast (and therefore an extension) of the state of Azerbaijan. This has led to massive ramifications throughout the following years.

Unstable Ceasefires

Following the fall of the Soviet Union, a war, known as the First-Karabakh War took place during the year of 1992-1994. The Nagorno-Karabakh parliament favored uniting with Armenia, seceding from Azerbaijan; however, Azerbaijan heavily protested. This led to long-lasting ethnic tensions, with a full-scale war launching in 1992. Towards the end of the war, Armenia came out as the clear victor as they were in primary control over most of the territory. The war ended with a Russian-brokered ceasefire in 1994 (Freizer, 2015).

A ceasefire is usually conducted when two or more groups who are at odds with one another (in this case, Armenia and Azerbaijan) come together to form a truce; it is a temporary



suspension of fighting. Unfortunately, though, this ceasefire has been broken on multiple occasions, and many times, the country who instigates the violence rather than taking accountability instead blames the other party for being the perpetrators.

Between 1994 and 2009, over 3,000 people from both sides, particularly soldiers, died (International Crisis Group, 2011). In 2016, tensions rose so high during the beginning of April, that the name “Four-Day War” was coined to refer to the fighting. The “Four-Day War” was instigated by Azerbaijan on April 2 against the Armenian occupied territories of Karabakh/Artsakh (Jarosiewicz & Falkowski, 2016).

Contemporary Conflicts, Problems, and Occurrences

Between 2016 to 2020, the ceasefire was broken again, though nowhere near the extreme extent as it was in 2016. In September 2020, however another large-scale war broke out between Azerbaijan (supported by their closest ally, Turkey) and Artsakh (supported by Armenia). The war was once again Azerbaijani instigated with the main goal of attempting to reclaim territory they saw as rightfully theirs, and in the end, they were largely successful, as the war ended with them reclaiming the second-largest city in the territory, Shushi/a (Armenians refer to it as Shushi, while Azerbaijanis refer to it as Shusha). The war was once again ended with the establishment of a Russian-backed ceasefire. The treaty signed alongside the ceasefire also recognized the newly drawn borders of the territory that was Azerbaijani-controlled and Artsakhi-controlled. Despite this war taking place relatively recently, the new ceasefire has been broken many times since its establishment. In fact, an Armenian defense ministry spokeswoman had accused



Azerbaijan of attacking Armenia “just four minutes” after the ceasefire was brokered (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2020).

Unstable ceasefires continue to be a major problem, even today. In 2018, Ilham Aliyev, current president of Azerbaijan, stated that Yerevan, the capital of Armenia is Azerbaijan’s “historical land and... Azerbaijanis must return to these historical lands” (Kucera, 2018). This incited further conflict.

There has been a push by some legislators in some countries to recognize the independence of Artsakh. More will be explained in the “Bloc Positions” section of the Topic Synopsis; however, this is important to note here because throughout the world, there seems to be a trend in support toward the oppression of the Armenians who live within the enclave of Artsakh by both the Azerbaijanis and Turks.

Summary

In summary, conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh is a long, complicated one, beginning in the early 20th century, extending throughout the Soviet era, and still lasting throughout contemporary times.

Bloc Positions

North American Bloc

While it is true that Artsakh is internationally recognized as Nagorno-Karabakh and a part of Azerbaijan, many lawmakers and states/provinces within North America recognize the



territory's sovereignty (for instance, 10 US states recognize Artsakh as an independent state, whereas only 2 recognize it as part of Azerbaijan) (Digital Day Book, 2020).

European Bloc

Europe has played a relatively large role regarding the conflict. While many European countries stayed away from the fighting and conflict, they instead acted as humanitarian agents. For instance, the European Union offered €3 million (equivalent to over \$3.5 million) to war-afflicted areas of Karabakh.

Additionally, Russia has been the constant third-party in this conflict since its inception. Today, Russia acts a sort of mediator, while also being a main supplier of arms to Armenia.

Turkish Bloc

Turkey and other ethnically Turkish nations all side unequivocally with Azerbaijan. Turkey is the fourth most significant nation in this conflict with the 1st and 2nd being Armenia and Azerbaijan, 3rd being Russia (some can even argue that their presence is even more significant than Russia's). Ethnically Turkish countries, primarily Turkey, have been large suppliers of arms to Azerbaijan.

Additionally, Turkish countries (primarily their governments) harbor a deep resentment towards Armenia—a feeling which is shared mutually. The governments of these countries for centuries have oppressed Armenians (the most notable example being the Armenian Genocide, which was committed by the Ottoman Empire/present-day Turkey).

Middle Eastern Bloc

The Middle East is home to a wide range of ethnically diverse countries, and with that comes multiple, different opinions regarding the conflict of Nagorno-Karabakh. Within the



Middle East, Iran, Israel, and Syria play the most important roles. While Iran particularly acts as a mediator between the two countries, it generally has supported Armenia over Azerbaijan (Ramezanzadeh, 1996). Israel and Syrian mercenaries have played an important role only recently, as they supported Azerbaijan by sending military arms in the 2020 Karabakh war. It is reported that Turkey had a role in orchestrating their roles in the conflict (Fahim et al., 2020).

Committee Goals

For this topic, your primary goal is to focus on building solutions to maintain the ceasefire and de-escalate any further attempts at war between these two countries regarding the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh. Try to research and discover ways to resolve this long-lasting conflict. Try to find ways to mitigate tensions between the countries. Perhaps even try to find ways to talk with presidents or prime ministers of the country regarding this delicate subject. Additionally, I would like you to leave this conference with a comprehensive understanding of how delicate the United Nations is; it may be possible to unearth a solution for this multi-generational conflict, but it is also entirely possible that the solutions and ideas we come up with may not work.

Research Questions

1. How does your country feel about this conflict?
2. Is there a fair way to address or approach the conflict?



3. Is there a fair way to address the concerns of both Armenians and Azerbaijanis regarding this conflict?
4. Does your country have any active interest in Armenia or Azerbaijan? If so, how does that affect your involvement in this conflict?
5. Are there any other solutions or alternatives to the unstable ceasefires?
6. What solutions could we use to solve the conflict?



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Topic B: Situation in Israel and Palestine

Introduction

The situation in Israel and Palestine is internationally known as one of the world's most complicated and longest-lasting conflicts. The conflict has roots predating centuries, and over time, it has escalated into a violent and emotionally taxing situation.

The conflict originated in the beginning of the 20th century when a large number of Jewish people immigrated to Palestine to escape the persecution they experienced in Europe (Woodley, 2013). In 1947, the British, who controlled the land post World War I, divided Palestine into two separate states: the Jewish state of Israel and Arab state of Palestine (History, 2018a). While the Israelis accepted this territorial outline, the Palestinians rejected it, believing that the borders were unfairly drawn and favored the Israelis (Vox, 2016). This led to a large-scale war, where Israel fought against Palestine and their neighboring allies (Egypt, Transjordan, Syria, etc.), and in the end, Israel was victorious, and ending up taking control of even more territories than was originally designated to them (Vox, 2016).

Since the Israeli-Palestine war of 1947, tensions between the two have only escalated, with unsuccessful attempts at negotiating for peace always being quashed by far extremists from both sides (CNN, 2021). Needless to say, the situation is incredibly complex with no foreseeable resolution, but actions must be taken to prevent further needless bloodshed and to ensure that no more casualties ensue among innocents.



Description

The Israel-Palestine conflict is now centuries-old and is still escalating today. Now more than ever, the United Nations' presence is needed to quell this escalating conflict. To fully understand the scope of the situation and how the UN can play a role in mitigating it, Topic B has been broken into subtopics to allow the information to be more comprehensive and digestible. The subtopics for topic B will deal with the following: Zionism vs. Palestinian Identity, The Palestine War and Its Consequences, Attempts at Peace, and Contemporary Problems. These subtopics will help you obtain a comprehensive understanding of the topic as well as the focus of the committee.

Zionism vs. Palestinian Identity

In the second millennium BC, both Muslim and Jewish people had strong religious ties to the geographical region Palestinians and Israelis currently contest over (at the time known as “Canaan”). Within this area, both Muslim and Jewish religious sites were established—primarily in Jerusalem—and therefore creating “historical legacies” for their modern claims to the land (History, 2018a). An example is Solomon’s Temple (built by King Solomon), and it is considered to be a holy site for Muslims, Jews, and Christians (History, 2018a). Throughout the following centuries, however, the land of Canaan was conquered and colonized by several different countries, including the Greeks, Persians, and Ottomans—all of which referred to this land as “Palestine” (History, 2018a). During this era of colonization, the Jewish people of Historical Palestine were unjustly treated and persecuted, thus prompting them to flee to different parts of the world, predominantly settling in Europe (History, 2018a). By the end of the 19th century, the



area was predominantly Muslim (over 400,000) followed by Christians (over 50,000) and lastly Jews (over 40,000) (DellaPergola, 2001).

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, however, the demographic of this region changed. Despite a large majority of ethnic and religious Jews fleeing Historical Palestine to escape persecution, they experienced similar struggles across Europe—the most notable being the Holocaust, where the Weimer Republic (modern-day Germany) committed genocide and killed over six million Jews, homosexuals, disabled, Roma, etc. (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2021). Because of this, many Jewish people began to strongly believe in Zionism—the nationalist movement that supports the establishment of a Jewish state in order to escape persecution (Britannica, 2019). Many Jewish people believed that Historical Palestine would be the perfect state to fulfill this goal, due to their historical roots in the area as well as the presence of a decently sizeable Jewish population already there. Therefore, many Jewish people from across the world began to repatriate to Historical Palestine in hopes of a better life (Woodley, 2013).

Concurrent with the growth of Zionism, there was also a strong Palestinian national identity forming within the people living in Historical Palestine (Vox, 2016). The 19th century saw a spread of strong nationalist identity throughout the entire world, and Palestine was no exception. The formation of nationalistic identities for both Zionists and Palestinians were not uncommon, as nationalism and pride for each of their own country was a popular sentiment throughout many parts of the world in the 20th century (Encyclopedia, 2019).

Throughout the era of Jewish repatriation to Historical Palestine, Britain was in control of the area after the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire post-World War I (Rayman, 2014). Tensions



began to rise between Jewish immigrants and the Palestinians who had lived within the area for generations, so much so that Britain attempted to limit Jewish immigration to Historical Palestine (Vox, 2016). This only fueled tensions, however, as Jewish militias formed in retaliation (Vox, 2016).

Once again, the situation completely changed in 1917 with the Balfour Declaration, where Great Britain announced their support for the establishment of a “national home for the Jewish people” within Palestine (Tahhan, 2018). Britain divided Palestine into two UN-approved states: the Jewish state of Israel and the Arab state of Palestine (History, 2018a; Vox, 2016). Britain believed that this was fair for both Jews and Arabs because the Jewish people would have their own state and the Palestinian people would finally be independent from a colonial leader like the Ottoman Turks or the British (Vox, 2016). The immigrant Jews accepted this proposal, as it is what they had hoped to get from the Zionist movement; however, the Palestinians rejected it, believing that border outline was not only unfairly drawn, favoring the Israelis, but that it also was yet another form of European colonialism, rendering Britain’s justification of “independence for Palestinians” moot (Vox, 2016). The Palestinians’ concerns fell over deaf ears, though, since the British removed themselves from the situation as much as they possibly could after this, forcing the Palestinians to work out their problems with their new neighbors: The Israelis.

The Palestine War and Its Consequences

The conflict soon escalated even more. A violent war broke out, known as The Palestine War, between 1947-1949 (Firestone, 2012). The war culminated with the establishment of the state of Israel, with its borders now exceeding what the British originally outlined, including



Western Jerusalem (Vox, 2016). The aftermath of the war created several negative consequences for the Palestinians, including losing more land and mass emigration from the state their families lived in for generations (Ibish, 2018).

The Palestinian Exodus of 1948 took place following the The Palestine War, and this phenomenon is referring to the mass emigration and forced deportations of thousands of Palestinians within the area (The Atlantic, 2018). Over 100,000 Palestinians fled/left the region (Ibish, 2018). For Palestinians and other Arabs, the war was so devastating that they refer to it as *Nakba*, or the “Day of Catastrophe,” but for the Israelis, they consider it to be their “Independence Day” (DW, 2016). These two names illustrate how differently the two viewed the war and how it impacted their lives.

The Six-Day war transpired in 1967 between Israel and Palestine’s Arab neighbors (Bowen, 2017). Once again, Israel emerged victorious, and seized occupied territory from all participants, including the Jordanian-occupied West Bank, Syrian-occupied Golan Heights, and the Egyptian-occupied Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula (though Sinai was soon given back to Egypt as part of controversial Peace Treaty that was signed subsequent to the culmination of the war) (Vox, 2016). At this point, Israel had occupied all Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the idea of the Arab state of Palestine was scrapped, causing over 700,000 Arabs to flee primarily to West Bank and Gaza Strip (History, 2018a). It was not until 2005 when Israel withdrew from the Gaza Strip, though they still occupied the West Bank (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013).

The Palestinian Liberation Organization formed in 1964 with their sole goal being the “liberation of Palestine” through armed forces (Palestine National Charter of 1964). They believe



Zionists unjustly took Palestinian lands just because they had ancient, religious ties to the land (a claim Palestinians have as well). The PLO originally wanted to end Israel, but today, it acts as the primary form of government for the Palestinian people, fighting for statehood with the United Nations, advocating for Palestinian recognition across the world, and so on (History, 2018b; Vox, 2016). Hamas was formed in the late 1980s as a substitute for the PLO, believing that they did not go far enough for Palestinian rights and was too compromise-minded. Hamas's goal is to destroy Israel and has thus been labelled as a terrorist group by the United States and the European Union (Laub and Robinson, 2021). Hamas constantly violently clashes with Israel. Today, the PLO distances themselves from Hamas (Vox, 2016). Both the PLO and Hamas are political organizations in Palestine, as well, and can run for Palestinian elections (Laub and Robinson, 2021).

In the 1980s, Palestinians began to retaliate against Israeli oppression and colonialism. By this time, Israelis began to occupy Palestinian territory (Tahhan, 2020). These people are known as settlers, and they advance into these occupied territories for religious, political, and financial reasons. This forces Palestinians off their land, dividing communities (Tahhan, 2020). The First Intifada broke out in the 1980s, with large-scale protests and boycotts led by the Palestinian people against the Israeli state that oppressed them (Tahhan, 2020). These boycotts eventually became violent, and the Israelis responded similarly—so much so that the Israeli military followed a governmental policy of “breaking the bones of protestors”; this of course led to high fatalities (PBS, 2019).

Attempts at Peace



The OSLO Accords (1992) was the first and most notable step at peacemaking between Israel and Palestine. It also simultaneously marked the first step of Israel withdrawing from Palestinian territory, paving the way for Palestinian independence (CNN, 2021). Unfortunately, extremists on both sides had problems with the accord, with Hamas attempting to sabotage it with suicide bombings on the Palestinian side and a far-right Israeli assassinating the Israeli prime minister on the Israeli side (CNN, 2021; Vox, 2016). In the end, they were unable to reach a decision with the OSLO Accords and instead showed how both sides can be violent when decisions do not go their way (CNN, 2021).

Given this failure, the Second Intifada took place in 2005 to continue peacemaking efforts (PBS, 2019). In fact, the Public Broadcasting Station refers to the Second Intifada as the “end of the 1990s era negotiating process and catalyzing a darker era of Israeli-Palestinian relations” (PBS, 2019). This uprising caused Israelis to doubt if Palestinians will ever accept peace within the region, marking an ideological and political shift towards the right for many Israelis (Vox, 2016).

The UN has done more to maintain peace within the area, for instance by offering humanitarian aid to affected individuals within Gaza and the West Bank as well as playing a major role in peacekeeping negotiations (United Nations News, 2021; General Assembly, 2003).

Contemporary Problems

The Second Intifada marks the start of the contemporary problems associated with the Israel-Palestine conflict. In 2005, Israel withdrew from Gaza; Hamas splits from the Palestinian authority in a civil war and takes control of Gaza, dividing it from the West Bank (Israel Ministry



of Foreign Affairs, 2013; Federman, 2020). Following this, Israel blockaded Gaza, and according to the United Nations, in 2020, this blockade has caused severe economic losses—amounting up to \$16.7 billion in losses—skyrocketing unemployment, and mass poverty throughout the region (Federman, 2020). Israel, to this day, is still occupying the West Bank, with several settlers moving into these territories (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013).

The latest instance of Israeli occupation in Palestinian territory transpired in 2021 in Sheikh Jarrah, a neighborhood in Jerusalem (TRT World, 2021). For context, in 1956, Palestinians took refuge in Sheikh Jarrah from Israeli persecution; however, in 1972, Israeli settlers began to challenge Palestinian claims to the neighborhood as they believed that they had legal right to the land based on an Israeli law (Ott and Mitchell, 2021). This law favors settlers, allowing them to claim property based on historical claims predating 1948, without allowing the same right to Palestinians (TRT World, 2021). In an attempt to continue their occupation in this land, in 2008, Israeli courts began a long process to try and evict Palestinian families from their homes in Sheikh Jarrah where they had been living in for generations after fleeing from war and persecution (Ott and Mitchell, 2021). The process was reaching its culmination in the summer of 2021, where Israeli district courts ordered the forced evictions of these Palestinian families between May to August (Middle East Eye, 2021). This action was internationally viewed as morally reprehensible and illegal, with the UNCHR labelling the forced removal of Palestinian families from Sheikh Jarrah as a war-crime (Ott and Mitchell, 2021). Protests erupted in support of these families not only in Palestine and Israel but also throughout the entire world; the protests were somewhat successful, as the eviction was put on hold (albeit primarily to ease tensions) (Ott and Mitchell, 2021).



Bloc Positions

North and Latin American Blocs

All countries within North America, the United States, Mexico, and Canada, all fully back and recognize Israel as a state, with both the United States and Canada in particular being ardent supporters (Aivalis, 2021). Mexico, while recognizing Israel over Palestine as a state, has attempted to stay neutral in the situation, a stance echoed by many other Latin American countries (Di Ricco, 2018).

Arab Bloc

All Arabic states fully support Palestine in this conflict. Additionally, these Arabic states do not recognize Israel as an official state. Many Arabic countries, including Egypt, Jordan, and Syria, have all had critical roles to varying degrees throughout the conflict, most of which to aid Palestine. (Vox, 2016)

Israeli Bloc

Unsurprisingly, Israel believes in and recognizes their own statehood over Palestinian statehood. Many Jewish people believe in the Zionist movement. It is also important to recognize that not all Jewish people are Zionists and do not fully support the actions of the Israeli government, similar to how not all Arabs and Palestinians support the actions of Hamas, the PLO, or other pro-Palestinian organizations/political parties.



European Bloc

Similar to North America, the EU and UK support Israeli statehood, not Palestinian statehood. It is also important to note that within many European countries, for example France, have been taking many bold anti-Muslim stances (For instance, the controversy that had erupted when France instilled a burqa ban) (Silverstein, 2020). While not all Palestinians are Muslim, a large majority are. It's important to take into context the culture and perspectives of these countries when considering where they stand in issues such as these.

Committee Goals

This topic synopsis is meant to give you a starting point for conducting your own research, as the situation in Israel and Palestine is an ongoing conflict.

Thus far, most of the United Nations' involvement with this conflict has called for deescalation on both sides and to work out a peaceful negotiation to end hostilities on both sides. Unfortunately, Israel and Palestine do not see each other eye-to-eye. Because of this, your primary goal is to focus on building solutions to create peace within the region. Research on the difference between one-state and two-state solutions and determine if either of them can help the situation. How can countries incentivize Israel to refrain from engaging in state-sanctioned violence against Palestinians and groups like Hamas to stop terrorizing Israelis? We highly encourage delegates in this conference to discover new and innovative ways to resolve this long-lasting conflict and mitigate tensions between the countries. Nonetheless, this committee would like you to leave this conference with a comprehensive understanding of how delicate the



United Nations is; it may be possible to unearth a solution for this multi-generational conflict, but it is also entirely possible that the solutions and ideas we come up with may not work.

Research Questions

1. How does your country feel about this conflict?
2. Are there any ways to improve upon previous UN actions? For example, How can we improve UN mediation in Israel/Palestine to prevent a repeat of the issues that plagued the Oslo Accords?
3. Does your country have any active interest in Palestine or Israel? If so, how does that affect your involvement in this conflict?
4. How can we mitigate tensions between Israel and Palestine surrounding the current ceasefires, and prevent further escalation?
5. Will a two-state solution help the situation? If not, what other solutions can help mitigate tensions?



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