

**Committee: Political Committee**

**Issue: Addressing the territorial claims in the Gaza Strip.**

**Chairs: Alex Buckley, Ian Wilder**

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## I. Introduction

Territorial claims in the Gaza strip has been a major debating point in the UN since 1967 when it called on Israel to return its land acquired in the war with Syria and Egypt. Palestine, although not fully recognized by the UN as a nation, has been fighting to keep that land ever since. As of August 2014, 2,104 Palestinians, and 72 Israelis have died in the conflict ("Gaza Crisis: Toll of Operations in Gaza"). Out of the 2,104 Palestinian deaths, 1,462 were civilians. This is only expected to increase as the conflict goes on. As seen in the image below, in 1949, Israel, signed an armistice with Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria to devote the land (signified by a black dotted line) to an "Arab State". In the 'War of Attrition', Israel broke the armistice and in the UN resolution 242, demanded that they return the lands.

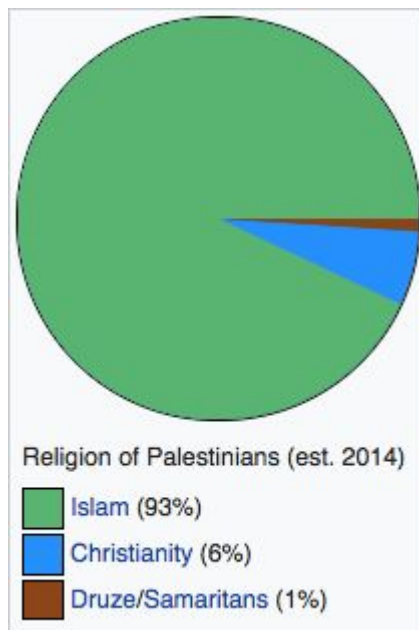


Map of Israel and Palestinian borders.  
(O., *West Bank & Gaza Map 2007*)

## II. Definition of Key Terms

### a) Palestine and the Palestinian People

Palestine is a state located in the Gaza strip. 93% of people who consider themselves Palestinians are Muslims, out of which a vast majority is the Sunni Branch of Muslims. One of the most holy buildings for the Palestine is the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which is located in Jerusalem. Palestine is a fully democratic state. Palestine does not currently have a set border, and is officially under Israeli occupation, according to the Israeli government, but has declared itself as a state, given the Palestinian state considers Israeli presence as an occupation. The rightful owner of Jerusalem and the Gaza strip are one of the major dividing points between Israel and Palestine.



### b) Ethnic Cleansing

Ethnic Cleansing is the process in when an ethnic majority targets an ethnic minority by expulsion, imprisonment, or killing, in order to reach Ethnic Purity (also known as *Ethnic Homogeneity*).

### c) Hamas

Hamas is a far-right organization that in the the years 2006-2014 had the majority in the Palestinian parliament. They have been in an unofficial war with Israel since their founding, and in the 2007 battle of Gaza, took over the Gaza Strip. Since then, after Israel imposed economic sanctions on the west bank, tensions have been extremely high between Hamas and Israel. This was not helped when the President of The United States of America, Donald J. Trump stated "I have determined that it is time to officially recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel." Hamas considered this as a "Declaration of War" and called for an uprising of the Palestinian people. Hamas has also been found responsible for: Extrajudicial killing of rivals, Guerilla Warfare, has publicly praised martyrdom and jihad, and attacks on civilians. Some

countries recognize all of Hamas as a terrorist organization, however some only recognize branches of Hamas to be terrorist.

#### **d) Gaza Strip**

The Gaza Strip is a conflict area (officially located) in the land of Israel. It has been contested by both parties which claim that the land is rightfully theirs. It includes the city of Gaza. The Gaza Strip is currently under Palestinian authority. The Gaza strip has played a major part in the Arab-Israeli conflict as a whole, with thousands of rocket and mortar attacks having been launched from Palestinian controlled Gaza into Israel.

### **III. General Overview**

**a)** Currently, the Israeli military is involved in an action to “neutralise Palestinian terrorists in the West Bank and Gaza strip, however according to several sources 1,462 out of the 2,104 Palestinians killed were civilians. Because of this, many countries and people have accused Israel of ethnic cleansing.

**b)** After the comments made by President of the United States, Donald Trump, claiming that Jerusalem is the rightful capital of Israel, Hamas has called for an uprising of the Palestinian people against ‘the Israeli Regime’. Hamas has before spoken out in support of self-emulation and jihadism, so naturally them calling for a ‘second uprising’ has raised several additional concerns from Israel and the international community.

**c)** The Gaza strip, being the second most contested territory in the middle east after Jerusalem, is currently under official Palestini jurisdiction. Therefore several questions arise as to who is the rightful owner of the Gaza Strip. This territory was seized by the Palestinian State in the 2007 Battle of Gaza. However, the Battle of Gaza wasn’t the last of military conflict in the Gaza strip. In late 2008, Israel proceeded with a 3 week armed invasion of Gaza in response to rocket fire on Gaza. Even though said invasion did stop missile fire, however it has since led to a humanitarian crisis and deterioration of basic resources and infrastructure in Gaza. However, in 2012, in what Israel claims to be more missiles, once again invaded the Gaza strips. During the Israeli operation ‘Pillar of Defense.’

### **IV. Major Parties Involved and their Views**

- **Hamas**

- Hamas is an extremist fundamentalist Sunni-Islamic organization, that is in *de facto* have control of the Gaza strip territories. Hamas has stated in the Hamas Charter the Palestinian that it was founded to liberate Palestine, what is now Israel, Gaza and the West bank, from Israeli control. Their means of liberations include attacks carried out on both military and civilian targets, leading to Hamas being designated as a terrorist organization by many Western and Arab countries and organizations including but not limited to the EU, the United States, Canada, and Saudi Arabia. It should be noted that some

countries do not recognize Hamas as a terrorist organization including but not limited to Russia, China, Turkey and Brazil. Hamas currently holds 74 of the 132 seats in the Palestinian Legislative Council.

- **Fatah (Fmr. Palestinian National Liberation Movement)**

- Fatah is the second largest group in the Palestinian Legislative Council, holding 50 of the 132 seats in the council. Fatah is also the largest member of the multi-party PLO. Unlike Hamas, Fatah claims to be secular, and is far more moderate than Hamas. As a result of being more moderate, Fatah has received some funding from the US, EU, and even from Israel. Unlike Hamas, Fatah is against Jihadism, and takes much more of a diplomatic approach than Hamas, and is willing to cooperate with Israel in order to reach a more suitable agreement, unfortu

- **Israel**

- Israel, officially declared in its current form in 1948, is the country with which Gaza, along with the Palestinian state as a whole, is in an ongoing conflict with. Israel occupied the Gaza Strip during the Six Day war with Egypt, and occupied the area until 2005, when Israel disengaged from the region, removing all it's settlers. That being said, Israel is still heavily involved with the Gaza strip, and since 2006, has maintained a blockade on the region, ensuring no one can leave the area by land, sea, or air without the approval of the Israeli government. The Israeli government also maintains citizen records in the Gaza strip, and of course records of border crossings. Israel

- **Iran**

- Iran funds, among other anti-Israel groups, Hamas, and provides Hamas with some of the more advanced missiles in its arsenal, the Fajr-5. To quote *The Washington Post*, "Depending on whom you ask, Iran either helps Hamas because it is committed to Israel's destruction, because it sees this as a way to project its influence in the region, or because it fears an Israeli or American attack and uses Hamas as a deterrent."

- **United States of America**

- The USA is a notoriously strong supporter of Israel. The US, other than simply being allied with Israel, also sells large amounts of military equipment to Israel, often at a generously low price. The vast majority of the Israeli armies equipment ranging from attack helicopters to missiles, is comprised of U.S, Ex-U.S, or joint Israeli-US produced items. As most will know, the U.S president recently officially recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. This recognition further cemented the U.S's stance in terms of the conflict between Israel and Palestine, including the Gaza strip, and created increased tensions in the region.

## V. Relevant United Nations Documents

- UN Security Council Resolution 242

<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpi/palestine/ch3.pdf>

- Resolution 181

<https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/0/7F0AF2BD897689B785256C330061D253>

- Resolution 1860

<https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/0/96514396E8389A2C852575390051D574>

- Resolution 1073

<http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/1073>

## VI. Questions to Consider

- How might my country's primary religion factor into my stance?
- Does my country have economic interest in the region?
- Is my country allies or enemies with a country that is involved in the conflict?
- Is my country in a treaty or agreement that may force me to take a particular stance?
- Who should the city of Gaza belong to?
- Should Israel be able to intervene against Hamas and/or Palestine with military conflict?
- Is Palestine a state?
- How can one prevent radicalism in Palestine?

## VII. Conclusion

The Gaza Strip conflict is one that will not resolve itself unless directly addressed. The presence of several groups, each having a reasonable reason for their claim to the area, makes for a difficult and tense situation, one made even more volatile by the recent acknowledgement of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel by the USA. Due to the involvement of a multitude of international entities, national and otherwise, as well as the clear religion-based aspect of the conflict, ultimately mean that the process of finding a resolution that may appease the most parties as possible may be difficult, yet with sufficient effort, cooperation, and diligent thought from all delegates, this feat may be achieved.

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