

Forum: General Assembly 3 Committee

Agenda: Measures to address the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict in Gaza

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Introduction

The Israel-Palestine conflict started in the early 20th century, emerging from nationalist movements among Jewish and Arab communities both vying for sovereignty in the same regions of the Middle East. This period saw a global rise in nationalism, with various ethnic and cultural groups seeking independence. The Jewish diaspora aimed to establish a sovereign state, particularly after the Holocaust, which intensified the Zionist movement. Many viewed Palestine, with its historical ties to the Jewish people, as the ideal location for this new state.

Following centuries of Ottoman rule, the region came under British control after World War I, as outlined in the Sykes-Picot Agreement (1916). The British divided the territory into two states: Arab Transjordan and a Jewish Palestinian state, as per the McMahon-Hussein Correspondence (1915) and the Balfour Declaration (1917). In 1947, amid rising tensions and the end of the British mandate, Britain referred the matter to the United Nations, which established the United Nations Special Committee on the Status of Palestine (UNSCOP). This committee proposed the UN Partition Plan, recommending the creation of independent Jewish and Arab states, along with an international regime for Jerusalem. The plan was adopted in November 1947, but while it was accepted by Jewish leaders, it was rejected by Arab leaders, who argued it violated the principles of national self-determination. Consequently, a civil war erupted, and the partition plan was never implemented.

In 1967, the Six-Day War resulted in Israel seizing the West Bank, Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights. In response, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 242, emphasizing principles such as the withdrawal of Israeli forces and the establishment of secure and recognized boundaries. The last significant action by the Security Council was Resolution 338 in 1973, which called for a ceasefire during the Yom Kippur War, initiated by a coalition of Arab states led by Egypt and Syria.

In 1974, the UN General Assembly passed Resolution 3236, recognizing the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and acknowledging the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) as their representative. Although the United States has hindered Palestine's full membership in the UN, it was granted Non-Member Observer Status in 2012, a move seen as symbolic.

Key issues in the conflict include territorial disputes, particularly Israeli settlements in the West Bank, and the status of East Jerusalem. The plight of Palestinian refugees is also critical, as Israeli forces have restricted their return, leading to demographic shifts favoring an Israeli majority. Additionally,

internal political divisions within the Palestinian territories complicate the situation, with Hamas controlling Gaza and Fatah governing the West Bank. Both factions claim to represent the Palestinian people, yet they differ in their approaches to achieving liberation. Other pressing concerns include access to drinking water and arable land in the region. Important UN Resolutions;

Resolution 181: Proposed the establishment of a government for Palestine.

Resolution 242: Addressed the aftermath of the Six-Day War.

Resolution 338: Related to the Yom Kippur War.

Resolution 3236: Affirmed the Palestinian people's right to self-determination.

Key Terms

Israel-Palestine Conflict - A long-standing political and territorial dispute between Israelis and Palestinians over land, sovereignty, and national identity.

Nationalism - A political ideology that emphasizes the interests and culture of a particular nation, often leading to the desire for self-governance and independence.

Jewish Diaspora - The dispersion of Jewish people outside their ancestral homeland, particularly after the destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem in 70 CE.

Zionism - A nationalist movement among Jewish people that emerged in the late 19th century, advocating for the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine.

Holocaust - The systematic genocide of six million Jews and millions of others by the Nazi regime during World War II, which significantly influenced Jewish nationalism and the push for a Jewish state.

Palestine - A geographic region in the Middle East, historically significant to both Jews and Arabs, and the name used to refer to the territories claimed by the Palestinian people.

Ottoman Rule - The period during which the Ottoman Empire controlled much of the Middle East, including Palestine, from the early 16th century until World War I.

British Control - The period after World War I when Britain governed Palestine under a League of Nations mandate, following the defeat of the Ottoman Empire.

Sykes-Picot Agreement - A secret 1916 agreement between Britain and France that divided the Ottoman Empire's territories in the Middle East into zones of influence.

McMahon-Hussein Correspondence - A series of letters exchanged during World War I in which Britain promised Arab leaders independence in exchange for their support against the Ottoman Empire.

Balfour Declaration - A 1917 statement by the British government expressing support for the establishment of a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine.

UN Partition Plan - A 1947 proposal by the United Nations to divide Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states, which was accepted by Jewish leaders but rejected by Arab leaders.

UNSCOP (United Nations Special Committee on the Status of Palestine) - A UN committee established to address the future of Palestine and propose solutions to the conflict.

Civil War - A conflict that erupted in Palestine following the UN Partition Plan, characterized by violence between Jewish and Arab communities.

Six-Day War - A 1967 conflict in which Israel fought against Egypt, Jordan, and Syria, resulting in Israel's capture of significant territories, including the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

West Bank - A landlocked territory located to the west of the Jordan River, home to a significant Palestinian population and a focal point of the conflict.

Gaza Strip - A small coastal territory bordering Israel and Egypt, governed by Hamas, and home to a large Palestinian population.

East Jerusalem - The eastern part of Jerusalem, which was captured by Israel during the Six-Day War and is claimed by Palestinians as the capital of a future state.

Golan Heights - A strategically important plateau captured by Israel from Syria during the Six-Day War, which remains a point of contention.

UN Security Council - A principal organ of the United Nations responsible for maintaining international peace and security, which has passed several resolutions regarding the conflict.

Resolution 242 - A UN Security Council resolution adopted in 1967 that called for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from occupied territories and the recognition of all states' right to live in peace.

Resolution 338 - A UN Security Council resolution adopted in 1973 that called for a ceasefire during the Yom Kippur War and the implementation of Resolution 242.

Yom Kippur War - A conflict in 1973 in which a coalition of Arab states led by Egypt and Syria launched a surprise attack on Israel during the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur.

UN General Assembly - A principal organ of the United Nations where all member states have equal representation and can discuss and make recommendations on international issues.

Resolution 3236 - A UN General Assembly resolution recognizing the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and national independence.

Non-Member Observer Status - A designation granted by the UN to entities that are not full member states, allowing them to participate in General Assembly debates but not vote.

Territorial Disputes - Conflicts over the ownership and control of specific geographic areas, particularly in relation to borders and land rights.

Israeli Settlements - Communities established by Israel in territories occupied during the Six-Day War, considered illegal under international law by many countries.

East Jerusalem Status - The contentious issue of whether East Jerusalem, captured by Israel in the Six-Day War, should be recognized as part of Israel or as the capital of a future Palestinian state, reflecting deep-seated political and cultural tensions.

General Overview

The statement from UN experts on November 16, 2023, raises serious concerns about the situation in Gaza following the events of October 7, 2023, when violence escalated significantly. The

experts assert that Israel's actions in Gaza may constitute genocide, citing evidence of genocidal incitement and intent to destroy the Palestinian people. They highlight the catastrophic humanitarian impact of the ongoing bombardment and siege, which has resulted in over 11,000 deaths, including a significant number of children and women, and the displacement of 1.6 million people.

The experts criticize the international community for failing to intervene effectively, calling for an immediate ceasefire and the provision of humanitarian aid to the besieged population. They emphasize that the destruction of civilian infrastructure, including homes, hospitals, and essential services, threatens the survival of the Palestinian population in Gaza.

Additionally, the report addresses the violence against Palestinians in the occupied West Bank, where there have also been numerous casualties and displacements. The experts express alarm over the rhetoric from Israeli officials that calls for the destruction of Gaza and the forced displacement of Palestinians, warning that such statements reflect a dangerous escalation that could lead to genocide.

The UN experts urge the international community to take immediate action to prevent further atrocities, including diplomatic and economic measures, and to ensure humanitarian access. They recommend deploying an international protective presence in the occupied territories and collaborating with international bodies to investigate potential war crimes. The overarching message is a call for urgent action to address the humanitarian crisis and prevent further escalation of violence, emphasizing the need to end the Israeli occupation and address the root causes of the conflict.

Israel

Israel Central to the conflict, Israel was established in 1948 and has since maintained control over territories claimed by Palestinians, including the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Palestine

Palestine is the territory at the heart of the conflict, with Palestinians seeking self-determination and statehood. The Palestinian Authority, led by the Fatah party, governs parts of the West Bank, while Hamas controls the Gaza Strip.

Egypt

Egypt has played a significant role in the conflict, having controlled the Gaza Strip from 1948 to 1967. Egypt has also served as a mediator in peace talks and has maintained a blockade on Gaza along with Israel.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia Traditionally, Saudi Arabia has supported the Palestinian cause, offering diplomatic and financial backing to Palestinian groups. However, in recent years, Saudi Arabia has sought closer ties with Israel, viewing it as a strategic ally against common regional threats.

Turkiye

Turkiye President Tayyip Erdogan has offered to mediate and soothe tensions between Israel and Hamas after the October 7 attacks. Turkiye has spoken out against Israel's pounding of Gaza after Hamas's October 7 attack.

United States

The United States has played a significant role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict since the mid-20th century, primarily acting as a mediator and supporter of Israel. U.S. involvement began with military and economic assistance to Israel, particularly after the 1967 Six-Day War, and has included diplomatic efforts to promote peace, such as the Oslo Accords in the 1990s and various peace proposals from successive administrations. The U.S. has consistently supported Israel's right to defend itself while also advocating for a two-state solution that recognizes Palestinian aspirations for statehood.

However, U.S. policy has fluctuated, with recent administrations taking different approaches to issues like settlement expansion and aid to Palestinians. The Biden administration has reaffirmed support for a two-state solution while navigating complex dynamics, including rising violence and regional tensions, particularly following the recent escalations in conflict.

United Nation

The United Nations has been actively involved in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict since its inception, proposing solutions such as the partition plan in 1947 to create separate Jewish and Arab states. The UN has established various agencies, like the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), to provide assistance to Palestinian refugees and has passed numerous resolutions addressing the rights of Palestinians and the need for a peaceful resolution to the conflict. Key milestones include the granting of non-member observer state status to Palestine in 2012 and the adoption of Security Council resolutions calling for an end to Israeli occupation and settlement activities.

Timeline of Key Events

UN Resolution 181 (1947): This resolution proposed the partition of Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states, leading to the establishment of Israel. The plan was accepted by Jewish leaders but rejected by Arab leaders, resulting in increased tensions and violence.

The 1948 Arab-Israeli War: Following Israel's declaration of independence, neighboring Arab states invaded, leading to a war that resulted in significant territorial changes and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, an event known as the Nakba.

The Six-Day War (1967): Israel launched a preemptive strike against Egypt, Jordan, and Syria, resulting in a swift victory and the occupation of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights. This war significantly altered the geopolitical landscape of the region.

The Oslo Accords (1993): These agreements marked the first time Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) officially recognized each other, establishing a framework for future peace negotiations and the creation of the Palestinian Authority.

The 2023 Israel-Hamas War: Triggered by a surprise attack from Hamas, this conflict resulted in significant casualties on both sides and escalated tensions in the region, leading to international calls for ceasefires and investigations into potential war crimes.

Major parties Involved

Hamas

Hamas: This Palestinian militant group governs the Gaza Strip and has been a central actor in the conflict, particularly following its takeover of Gaza in 2007. Hamas is known for its armed resistance against Israel and has been involved in multiple escalations of violence.

Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)

Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO): The PLO represents the Palestinian people and has historically been the main political entity advocating for Palestinian rights and statehood. It includes various factions, with Fatah being the most prominent.

Fatah

Fatah: A major political party within the PLO, Fatah has been involved in peace negotiations with Israel and governs parts of the West Bank. It often competes with Hamas for influence among Palestinians.

Timeline of Events

You must include short sentences to explain the timeline. Please follow the format specified below:

Date	Description of event
1917	The Balfour Declaration was a statement by the British government expressing support for the establishment of a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine, which laid the groundwork for future Jewish immigration and settlement in the region.
1947	The United Nations proposed a plan to partition Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states, which was accepted by Jewish leaders but rejected by Arab states, leading to increased tensions and violence.
1948	Israel declared independence on May 14, 1948, prompting an invasion by neighboring Arab states. The war resulted in Israel's survival and territorial expansion, while hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were displaced, marking the beginning of the Palestinian Nakba.
1967	Israel fought against Egypt, Jordan, and Syria, resulting in a swift victory and the capture of significant territories, including the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem, which intensified the conflict and led to ongoing disputes over these areas.
1993	A series of agreements between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) aimed at achieving a peace process and establishing a framework for Palestinian self-governance, though the accords ultimately faced challenges and setbacks.

2000-2005	A period of intensified violence and uprising by Palestinians against Israeli occupation, characterized by protests, suicide bombings, and military responses, which further strained relations and complicated peace efforts.
2005	Israel unilaterally withdrew its military and settlements from the Gaza Strip, leading to increased control by Hamas, which later resulted in conflicts between Israel and Hamas, including several military operations.
2014	A major military conflict between Israel and Hamas that resulted from escalating tensions, including the kidnapping and murder of Israeli teenagers, leading to significant casualties and destruction in Gaza.
2020	A series of normalization agreements between Israel and several Arab nations, including the UAE and Bahrain, which marked a significant shift in regional dynamics and relations, though the Israeli-Palestinian conflict remained unresolved.
2023	On October 7, Hamas launched a surprise attack on Israel, resulting in significant casualties and prompting a large-scale military response from Israel, escalating the conflict to new levels of violence and humanitarian crisis.
2024	The ICJ declared the Israeli occupation unlawful, leading to a General Assembly demand for an end to the occupation within 12 months, highlighting ongoing international concerns regarding the conflict and its implications for peace.

UN Involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

The UN has also facilitated peace negotiations, such as the Oslo Accords in the 1990s, and has condemned violence from both sides, emphasizing the need for a two-state solution. Recently, the UN has faced criticism for its handling of the conflict, particularly regarding statements made by its Secretary-General and the ongoing humanitarian crises in Gaza.

Important UN Resolutions;

- Resolution 181: Proposed the establishment of a government for Palestine.

- Resolution 242: Addressed the aftermath of the Six-Day War.
- Resolution 338: Related to the Yom Kippur War.
- Resolution 3236: Affirmed the Palestinian people's right to self-determination.
- Border Disputes: In 1948, Resolution 181 initially requested for a two-state solution, which the international community generally agreed with. However, with so many arising conflicts and wars, and with Israel occupying Palestine, there is controversy regarding the position and definition of the borders for both states.

Possible Solutions

Two-State Solution.

One of the most widely discussed solutions to the Israel-Palestine conflict is the Two-State Solution. This approach envisions the establishment of an independent State of Palestine alongside the State of Israel, based on pre-1967 borders. Proponents argue that this solution respects the national aspirations of both Israelis and Palestinians, allowing each group to have its own sovereign state. The two-state solution aims to address key issues such as borders, the status of Jerusalem, and the rights of refugees. By creating two distinct nations, it is believed that both peoples can coexist peacefully, reducing tensions and fostering mutual recognition and respect.

However, the implementation of a two-state solution faces significant challenges. The presence of Israeli settlements in the West Bank complicates the delineation of borders, and there are deep-seated fears on both sides regarding security and sovereignty. Additionally, political divisions among Palestinians, particularly between the Palestinian Authority and Hamas, create obstacles to a unified approach in negotiations. Despite these challenges, many international actors continue to advocate for this solution as a viable path toward lasting peace.

One-State Solution

Another proposed solution is the One-State Solution, which advocates for a single, democratic state that encompasses both Israelis and Palestinians. This approach emphasizes equal rights for all citizens, regardless of ethnicity or religion, and aims to create a society where both groups can live together with shared governance. Supporters argue that a one-state solution could eliminate the need for contentious border negotiations and address the intertwined nature of the populations in the region.

Nevertheless, the one-state solution raises concerns about the preservation of Israel's identity as a Jewish state. Many Israelis fear that granting equal rights to Palestinians could lead to a demographic shift that undermines the Jewish character of the state. Additionally, the historical animosities and ongoing violence between the two groups pose significant challenges to achieving a peaceful coexistence within a

single state. As such, while the one-state solution presents an alternative vision, it requires a fundamental shift in attitudes and a commitment to reconciliation from both sides.

Confederation Solution

A Confederation Solution is another potential approach, which envisions a partnership between two sovereign states, Israel and Palestine, that would cooperate on various issues while maintaining their independence. This model allows for shared governance on matters such as security, trade, and infrastructure, while each state retains control over its own internal affairs. Proponents argue that a confederation could foster collaboration and mutual benefit, addressing the needs of both populations without forcing a complete merger or separation.

However, the confederation model also faces significant hurdles. The historical mistrust between the two sides complicates the establishment of effective cooperation, and there are concerns about how power would be shared and disputes resolved. Additionally, the success of a confederation would depend on the willingness of both parties to engage in dialogue and compromise, which has proven difficult in the past. Despite these challenges, some view the confederation as a pragmatic solution that could pave the way for improved relations and stability in the region.

Autonomy-Plus

The Autonomy-Plus proposal suggests enhancing the current level of Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank while maintaining Israeli security control. This approach would grant Palestinians greater self-governance and control over their daily lives, including education, health, and local law enforcement, while Israel would retain authority over security matters. Proponents argue that this model could provide Palestinians with a sense of sovereignty and improve their quality of life without necessitating a complete withdrawal of Israeli forces.

Critics of the Autonomy-Plus model argue that it may not go far enough in addressing Palestinian aspirations for full statehood. Many Palestinians view this approach as a continuation of the status quo, which has not resolved the underlying issues of occupation and rights. Additionally, the lack of a clear timeline or pathway to full statehood raises concerns about the long-term viability of this solution. While Autonomy-Plus may offer some immediate benefits, it requires careful consideration of the broader political context and the aspirations of both peoples.

International Intervention Solution

International Intervention Solution proposes that a third-party entity, such as the United Nations or a coalition of countries, take a more active role in mediating the conflict and facilitating negotiations. This approach could involve peacekeeping forces, monitoring ceasefires, and providing humanitarian aid

to affected populations. Advocates argue that international involvement could help ensure that both sides adhere to agreements and create a more balanced negotiating environment.

However, the effectiveness of international intervention is often debated. Some argue that external forces may not fully understand the complexities of the conflict or may be perceived as biased by one side or the other. Additionally, the success of this solution would depend on the willingness of both Israelis and Palestinians to accept outside involvement and cooperate with international actors. While international intervention could provide a framework for dialogue and support, it must be approached with sensitivity to the historical and cultural context of the region.

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