GEC Model United Nations

GECMUN V

Ryan Pak
Daniel Son
Emily Park

United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

Violence in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Table of Contents

Letters from the Chairs

Greetings honorable delegates,

We are Ryan Pak, Daniel Son, and Emily Park, all from North London Collegiate School Jeju. It is our greatest pleasure to be serving you as the co-chairs of United Nations Security Council in Jeju MUN.

In the Security Council, you will be discussing the agenda regarding the violence taking place amid the longstanding Israel-Palestine conflict. Throughout the conference, we, the chairs, will try our best to help you engage in a fruitful discussion with fellow delegates and devise resolutions entertaining the matter at hand.

In order to yield effective and practical solutions, we thoroughly advise all delegates to have acquired sufficient background knowledge on the topic. When researching for the conference, make efficient use of various online and offline resources -- such as the CIA World Factbook, government statistics, newspaper articles, research papers, and most importantly this chair report.

If you have any further inquiries about the procedure or topic, please don't hesitate to contact us at any time. We wholeheartedly look forward to meeting you at the conference!

Kind Regards,
Ryan Pak, Daniel Son, and Emily Park
msson20@pupils.nlcsjeju.kr
wypark20@pupils.nlcsjeju.kr
jhpak20@pupils.nlcsjeju.kr

Key Terms

Anti-Semitism
Prejudice or discrimination against Jewish people and culture.

Zionism
Originally a movement for the re-establishment and now the development and protection of a Jewish nation in what is now Israel.

Nakba (literally meaning "disaster" or "catastrophe" in Arabic)
The event when 700,000 Palestinian Arabs fled or were expelled from their homes, during the 1948 Palestine war.

West Bank
Landlocked territory bordered by Israel and Jordan that Israel militarily occupied since the 1967 Six-Day War.

Gaza (also referred as the Gaza Strip)
A self-governing Palestinian territory on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea that borders Egypt and Israel.

Jerusalem
The capital of Israel, considered holy to the three major Abrahamic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Israeli Settlements
Civilian communities inhabited by Israeli people built on Palestinian territories, which Israel militarily occupied since the 1967 Six-Day War.

Intifadas
Name of Palestinian uprising against the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza.

BDS - The Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement
Works to end international support for Israel's oppression of Palestinians and pressure Israel to comply with international law.

The Israeli Wall
Separation barrier in the West Bank that divides Israel and Palestine, considered by Israelis as a security barrier against terrorism while Palestinians call it a wall of racial segregation.

Camp David Accords
Peace treaty between Israel and Egypt signed in September 1978 by American President Jimmy Carter, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin.

The Mitchell Report - (also referred to as the Sharm el-Sheikh Fact-Finding Committee Report)
The report describing possible causes of the al-Aqsa Intifada and recommending end to the violence between Palestine and Israel published by the international fact-finding committee and former US Senator George Mitchell in April 2001.

Topic Background and Introduction

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is rooted in a dispute over land claimed by the Jews as their biblical birthright and by the Palestinians, who seek self-determination. The dispute started in the early 20th century, when Jews were fleeing from Europe, with the rise of anti-Semitism, wanted to reside in what was then an Arab-Muslim majority territory.

After World War II and the terrors of the Holocaust, increased Jewish population moved to an area in the Middle East, known as Palestine at the time. As they viewed the area as a historical homeland, migration continued to escalate rapidly, specifically in regions near Jerusalem. With the increasing populations becoming a pressure to Palestine by the Jewish immigrants, in 1947, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 181 to call for the formation of two separate Jewish and Arab states in the Palestinian area. Israel then decided to declare itself as an independent state in 1948. They successfully drove back the other countries, enabling it to take land that was originally taken for the Arab Palestinians in the process, which ultimately created a mass refugee crisis in the Palestinian region.

The establishment of Israel would be followed by years of fighting and terrorism, from the 1948 Arab-Israeli War to the First and Second Intifadas. The intifadas were two Palestinian uprisings against Israel, the first in the late 1980s and the second is widely seen as the end of the 1990s era negotiating process. As a result of such conflicts, thousands of people have lost their lives, and millions have suffered, with entire populations suddenly becoming refugees.

Key Issues

The intense conflict and various or many internal forces of both states mean that the peace process necessitates the assistance of the international community to seek the path for peace. Some of the critical issues involved in the peacemaking process are:

1. 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.

2. Security and Terrorism: The conflict has created a brutal cycle of wars for both the Israeli and Palestinian states. The Israeli military seizes areas of Palestine to protect its territories taken over during the Arab-Israeli wars. This had led to intensified tensions and pressure with the Palestine people, resulting in insecurity and further conflicts. Furthermore, terrorist organizations, such as Hamas, is a leading group in Palestine that targets and fires into Israel, causing instability in the region.

Status Quo

Currently, the Gaza Strip remains a tragedy for the Palestinian people with over 7 million refugees, and unemployment higher than 40%. With sporadic violence, inaccessibility of water, and fear of a third Intifada rising from a lack of action, possibilities of war revolve around the two states. Hamas has been continuously strengthening their political basis and have won a majority in the Palestinian legislative assembly.

The Palestinian Authority has gained entrance into the United Nations as a non-member state, which is a significant victory for the Palestinians who now have a place in the United Nations, who originally drafted the partition in 1947. The two most vigorously debated areas are the West Bank and the Gaza strip, as Palestine strongly believes that the West Bank is a section of sovereign Palestine, and that the Israeli occupation is ultimately illegal.

At the discussions with President Obama in 2010, talks were delayed as Israel refused to put a stop to settlement construction throughout the West Bank, which was one of the top priorities of the Palestine people. In early 2017, the United Nations officially voted to ban the Israeli settlements, which was a big step for the Palestinians.

Timeline of Key Events

- On **May 19, 2011**, at a speech in the US State Department, President Obama of the United States "pressed Israel, in unusually frank terms, to reach a final peace agreement with the Palestinians, citing the boundaries in place on the eve of the June 1967 Arab-Israeli War as the starting point for negotiation about borders.

- On **Sep. 20, 2011**, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas sought full United Nations Membership for a Palestinian State. Abbas discussed with United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon that "he would press ahead with plans to ask for a Security Council vote on Friday on Palestinian membership." The White House underscored its threat to veto any Palestinian move at the Security Council and stated that it would concentrate more on bringing the two states back to negotiations.

- On **Oct. 31, 2011**, Palestine became the 195th Full Member of UNESCO. The vote of UNESCO's full membership was 107 to 14, with 52 abstentions. The foreign minister of Palestine, Riad al-Malki, claimed that "this vote will help erase a tiny part of the injustice done to the Palestinian people."

- On **November 11, 2011**, the Palestinian bid for statehood at the United Nations was effectively stalled Friday after the Security Council approved a report stating its inability "to make a unanimous decision".

- On **November 29, 2012**, The General Assembly voted to accept Palestine as a Non-Member Observer State in the United Nations. This elevated Palestine's status without prejudice to the acquired rights, privileges, and roles of the Palestine Liberation Organization in the United Nations as the representative of the Palestinian people, following with the relevant resolutions and practice.

- On **July 29, 2013**, Israeli-Palestinian peace talks resumed in Washington, DC. The aim of the negotiation was to establish a Palestinian state alongside Israel with agreed-upon borders and security arrangements.

- On **April 23, 2014**, the rival groups Hamas and Fatah combined into a united government. They held new elections, overcoming a seven-year split that left them divided into two governments.

- On **July 8, 2014**, the Israeli military carried out airstrikes against more than 150 sites in Gaza, killing five alleged members of Hamas.

- On **May 13, 2015**, the Vatican officially recognized the State of Palestine in a new Treaty. The treaty, which involves the actions of the Catholic Church in the Palestinian region, is very symbolic that the Holy See has altered its diplomatic recognition from the Palestine Liberation Organization to the state.

- On **Feb. 15, 2017**, United States President Trump stated that he was "open to one-state solutions" and "he is keeping his options open about how best to reach a peaceful solution in the Israeli-Palestinian situation."

- On **December 6, 2017**, US President Trump recognised Jerusalem as Israel's Capital, and ordered the United States Embassy to transfer.

Stances of Major Parties Involved

ISRAEL

Israeli troops routinely exert violence on Palestinian citizens, officially claiming that their actions are justified law enforcement against rioting refugees. The extreme form of this is its hard-line policy against Palestinians approaching the border, in which it openly states that anyone approaching within a certain distance of the border would be shot and killed. The Israeli government is extremely reluctant to engage in any discussions regarding its violence towards Palestinians.

PALESTINE

Palestinian provisional government, whose people are frequently injured and killed amid countless protests against Israel, condemns Israel's "excessive use of force" and calls for the termination of violence.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The USA, as a longtime ally of Israel, is very supportive of the Israeli government's actions. Its former ambassador to the UN, Nikki Haley, defended Israel, asserting that "No country in this chamber would act with more restraint than Israel has" after Israel's use of military force on Palestinians in May 2018, an assault that resulted in 58 Palestinian deaths. On the other hand, the USA is, rather predictably, quite unsympathetic to Palestine and its arguments regarding the situation at hand.

FRANCE

France is critical of Israel's use of force on Palestinians in general. French president Emmanuel Macron emphasised the Palestinian citizens' right to protest peacefully to Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu in 2018.

KUWAIT

Kuwait is disapproving of Israel's continuous violence, and is preparing to initiate international protection for the Palestinian civilians.

GERMANY

Germany, along with France, is deeply concerned about the violence taking place by the Israeli forces on the Palestinian civilians. The German foreign ministry called for an independent inquiry after the aforementioned Israeli violence of May 2018.

Past Actions

Partition Plan

The United Nations Partition Plan for Palestine was a proposal which advocated a partition with Economic Union of Mandatory Palestine to act in accordance with the termination of the British Mandate. On 29 November 1947, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution commending the application of the Plan as Resolution 181.

The resolution suggested the establishment of independent Arab and Jewish States and the Special International Regime for the City of Jerusalem. The Partition Plan specifically supported the termination of the Mandate, the withdrawal of British military forces and the definition of borders between the two States and Jerusalem.

The plan attempted to tackle the objectives and assertions of the Arab nationalism in Palestine and the Jewish nationalism (Zionism). The Plan also specified for Economic Union between the proposed states, and for the support of religious and minority rights.

While the Plan was adopted by the Jewish public, the Arab leaders and the government discarded the plan and declared reluctance in accepting any procedure for territorial allocation. They argued that it infringed upon the foundation of self-determination in the United Nations charter. As the civil war took place immediately after the appointment of the Resolution, the Partition Plan was ultimately not enacted.

Right of Return

The Palestinians' central idea behind the peace negotiations is justness towards the refugees, by giving them them the "right of return" to the homes their families deserted in 1948.

On the other hand, Israel cannot accept the "right of return" without abandoning either its Jewish or democratic identity. Increasing 7 million Arabs to the population of Israel would cause the Jews to become a minority, which ultimately is the reason for not considering to include the "right of return" in any of the compromises.

The principal point of discussion involves how to find an appropriate method to achieve justice for the refugees that both the Israeli and Palestinian people can agree to. Some ideas that have been currently mentioned revolve around compensation and resettlement, but the two leaders have not officially reached an agreement on how such strategies could work.

The UN Relief Works Agency

The United Nations Relief Works Agency (UNRWA) is in charge of providing humanitarian aid and support for the Palestinian refugees. UNRWA has developed education, health and social services to over 5 million refugees living in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and regions of Palestine, such as the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

Non-Government Organizations

Other than the United Nations, various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) attempt to deal with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. For instance, NGO Breaking the Silence includes "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."

United Nations Security Council

In the United Nations Security Council, the 2009 Resolution 1860 "called for immediate, durable and fully respected ceasefire leading to the full withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza." In September 2012, the President of the Security Council discussed efforts to begin peace talks again.

Other important resolutions which have been passed by the United Nations include:
1. Resolution 181 (Future government of Palestine)
2. Resolution 242 (aftermath of the Six-Day War)
3. Resolution 333 (the Yom Kippur War)
4. Resolution 338 (1973)
5. Resolution 3236 (Palestinian people's right to self-determination)

Peace Negotiations

- Oslo Accord (1993) is officially known as the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements, which was an attempt to establish a framework that would lead to the resolution of the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It was the first face-to-face accord between the government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

- The Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement (28 Sept 1995) regarding the Gaza Strip and West Bank was signed in Washington by Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat. Also known as Oslo 2, it planned the foundation of "Palestinian interim self-government in the Palestinian territories but did not promise an independent Palestinian state."

- Road Map for Peace (2003) was a scheme to find a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, proposed by the Quartet on the Middle East: the United States, the European Union, Russia and the United Nations. The proposal for a two-state solution was not completely effective as the Road Map was in difficulty from the early stages, and violence proceeded.

- The Geneva Accord tries to deal with the problem differently, where the "growth of security and confidence precede a political agreement and puts the agreement first."

- United States-mediated talks restarted in July 2013, but was delayed in April 2014 when Israel reclined to carry out prisoner releases unless it was given assurances that the Palestinian leadership would continue the talks even after that month.

1. UN Peacekeeping Forces

Deployment of UN peacekeeping forces may be considered as a temporary measure to stop violence in the region. These forces will be situated in locations of frequent violence and try to minimise clashes between the Israelis and the Palestinians. However, any involvement of the armed forces must be done in a way that does not infringe the sovereignty of any nation involved in the agenda at hand.

2. Non-Violence Treaty Through Regional Organisation

Regional mediating nations and the two directly involved nations can form an organisation in which a non-violence treaty can be produced. Effectively and appropriately incentivising both parties not only to stop authority violence but also to properly control intermittent civil violence would be key to this course of action.

3. "Soft Power" Solutions

As a long-term solution, measures to bridge the cultural differences between the two peoples (Israelis and Palestinians) and at least partially resolve their mutual hatred can be devised and executed to relieve some tension.

4. Two-State Solution

The so-called two-state solution calls for the principle of having two countries for two groups of people. This means that a new, independent state of Palestine, with the official recognition of the international community, will be formed in a portion of the current Israeli realms. This most basic solution tends to be supported by the Palestinians (who want separation from the Israeli), and detested by the Israeli.

Questions to Consider

- What has your country done to assist either Israelis or Palestinians?

- Do Palestinian refugees reside in your country?

- Should Palestine be recognized as a full member of the United Nations?

- The Oslo Accords and the Camp David I & II demonstrated that diplomatic solution may be attainable, but only with negotiations and mediating parties. Egypt has also served numerous times as an intermediary for Palestine and Israel. Is mediation and negotiation still a viable vehicle towards peace?

- Is there room for innovation within this conflict? Is there a solution other than the "two-state solution"?

Bibliography

UN Documents for Israel/Palestine, www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/israelpalestine/.

Security Council Meeting Notes, www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7b65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7d/s_pv_7020.pdf.

"Historical Timeline: 1900-Present - Israeli-Palestinian Conflict - ProCon.org." What Are the Solutions to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict?, israelipalestinian.procon.org/view.timeline.php?timelineID=000031#2005-present.

"MIDDLE EAST: The Road Map to Peace." Council on Foreign Relations, Council on Foreign Relations, www.cfr.org/backgrounder/middle-east-road-map-peace.

GECMUN V