



# **ISRAEL AND THE MIDDLE EAST**

## **THE FACTS**

ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE

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# Glossary of Key Terms and Events in Israel's History

## Zionism

Zionism is the Jewish national movement of rebirth and renewal in the land of Israel -- the historical birthplace of the Jewish people. The yearning to return to Zion, the biblical term for both the Land of Israel and Jerusalem, has been the cornerstone of Jewish religious life since the Jewish exile from the land two thousand years ago, and is embedded in Jewish prayer, ritual, literature and culture.

Modern Zionism emerged in the late 19th century in response to the violent persecution of Jews in Eastern Europe and anti-Semitism in Western Europe. Modern Zionism fused the ancient Jewish biblical and historical ties to the ancestral homeland with the modern concept of nationalism into a vision of establishing a modern Jewish state in the land of Israel.

The "father" of modern Zionism, Austrian journalist Theodor Herzl, consolidated various strands of Zionist thought into an organized political movement, advocating for international recognition of a "Jewish state" and encouraging Jewish immigration to build the land.

Today, decades after the actual founding of a Jewish state, Zionism continues to be the guiding nationalist movement of the majority of Jews around the world who believe in, support and identify with the State of Israel.

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## United Nations Partition Plan 1947 (U.N. Resolution 181)

The General Assembly of the United Nations voted on November 29, 1947 to divide the British Mandate-controlled area of Palestine into two states, Arab and Jewish. According to the plan, the two states, roughly equal in size and natural resources, would cooperate on major economic issues, sharing their currency, roads, and government services. The Jews reluctantly accepted the partition plan, as it offered at least two of their requirements, sovereignty and control over immigration. The Palestinian Arabs and the surrounding Arab nations rejected it outright, refusing to accept the establishment of a Jewish state in the region.

## Founding of the State of Israel 1948

Israel's independence was officially declared in Tel-Aviv on Friday May 14, 1948 by Zionist leader David Ben-Gurion, the day the British Mandate over Palestine was officially terminated.

Ben-Gurion proclaimed: "...the establishment of the Jewish State in Palestine, to be called Israel...The State of Israel will be open to the immigration of Jews from all countries of their dispersion; will promote development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; will be based on the precepts of liber-

ty, justice and peace taught by the Hebrew Prophets; will uphold the full social and political equality of all its citizens, without distinction of race, creed, or sex; will guarantee full freedom of conscience, worship, education and culture; will safeguard the sanctity and inviolability of the shrines and Holy Places of all religions; and will dedicate itself to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations...We offer peace and unity to all the neighboring states and their peoples, and invite them to cooperate with the independent Jewish nation for the common good of all."

**The State of Israel will uphold the full social and political equality of all its citizens, without distinction of race, creed, or sex**

The political, social and economic institutions which governed Jewish life in the pre-state period served as the infrastructure of the new state. Despite the euphoria of the moment, Israel faced imminent disaster with an expected invasion by Arab nations who rejected the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. Outnumbered in men and arms, the new Israeli army was attacked from all directions. In addition, the fledgling state had to deal with the huge challenge of absorbing shiploads of immigrants who arrived daily - many penniless Holocaust survivors and refugees from Arab states.

### **War of Independence 1948-1949**

On May 15, the day after the creation of the State of Israel, the Arab armies of Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Lebanon invaded the new state. The Arab forces were significantly larger and better equipped than Israel's. Yet coordination and organization within the Arab armies was lacking, and political squabbles over conquered territories strained relations among the Arab allies. Despite its small number, the Israeli army was well-organized, well-disciplined and well-trained.

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Months of fighting interspersed with temporary cease-fires officially ended in January 1949, followed by a series of armistice agreements between Israel and Egypt (February), Lebanon (March), Jordan (April) and Syria (July). Israel held the 5,600 square miles allotted to it by the UN partition plan plus an additional 2,500 square miles. Jordan held the eastern sector of Jerusalem and the West Bank, and Egypt held the Gaza Strip. Borders were finalized based on the frontlines. Though Israel hoped the agreements would lead to official peace treaties, the Arab states refused to recognize Israel's existence. A total economic, political, and social boycott of Israel was maintained.

### **Arab Economic Boycott**

The Arab Economic Boycott was initiated in 1946 by the newly formed League of Arab States. The boycott was aimed at preventing the continued growth of the Jewish community in Mandate-era Palestine by boycotting the goods and services produced by Jews in the region. After Israel's establishment in 1948, the Arab League expanded the boycott in an effort to undermine Israel's economic viability.

The Arab boycott operated on several levels, targeting not only Israel, but also governments, companies, organizations, and individuals around the world with ties to Israel. The boycott weakened through the 1980s due to the decline in Arab economic power. The 1979 Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty also served to further lessen the effects. The greatest change occurred after the signing of the Israel-Palestinian Declaration of Principles in September 1993, the start of the so-called "Oslo process" where there was significantly less adherence to the boycott by Arab countries.

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The United States was the only nation in the world to adopt comprehensive anti-boycott legislation. U.S. legislation prohibits American citizens or businesses to refuse to do business with Israel at the request of a foreign government and prohibits furnishing information about business relations with Israel or blacklisted companies at the request of a foreign government.

Unlike the United States, response to the Arab boycott of Israel in Europe and the Far East was ambivalent at best. In the 1970s, the European Economic Community (EEC) included anti-boycott provisions in the EEC constitution and anti-discrimination clauses in economic agreements with Arab states but did not enforce these clauses. In the Far East, the impact of the Arab boycott on Israeli relations with Japan and Korea was severe. Until June 1998, no Japanese government minister had ever visited Israel - although today Japanese products are ubiquitous throughout Israel. Likewise, South Korea's strong compliance with the Arab boycott of Israel made contact non-existent.

From its initiation, the Arab boycott undoubtedly impaired Israel's economic growth, but it has never been able to thwart that growth altogether. While the actual cost is impossible to quantify, the Federation of Israeli Chambers of Commerce estimates that due to the boycott, Israel's annual exports were 10 percent smaller than might otherwise be expected. Despite the restrictions placed upon it, Israel has grown into a technological power, with strong economic ties to many countries.

While the scope and power of the official Arab boycott has lessened in the past decade, organized campaigns by pro-Palestinian groups in Europe and the United States promoting grassroots economic sanctions against Israel have gained momentum. Among these efforts are calls for the boycotting of Israeli goods, campaigns to prevent the participation of Israeli professionals and academics in international conferences and projects, and initiatives to "divest" university, church and city investment portfolios from Israeli companies and companies that do business with Israel. Most of these initiatives, particularly divestment campaigns on campuses and city councils, have failed. However, the campaigns have been somewhat effective among several mainline Protestant church groups in the United States and with British academic unions where they had a largely symbolic, rather than practical impact on Israeli academics, universities and companies doing business in Israel. The Presbyterian Church USA, for example passed a resolution calling for divestment, which has since been overturned. British academic unions have similarly passed resolutions (also eventually overturned for procedural reasons). These campaigns are not covered by American anti-boycott legislation.

## Refugees

The Palestinian refugee problem originated as a result of the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, when five Arab armies invaded the State of Israel just hours after it was established. During the ensuing war as many as 700,000 Palestinians fled their homes in the newly created state. Many of the Palestinians who fled

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did so voluntarily to avoid the ongoing war or at the urging of Arab leaders who promised that all who left would return after a quick Arab victory over the new Jewish state. Other Palestinians were forced to flee by individuals or groups fighting for Israel.

Of the Palestinians who left, one-third went to the West Bank, one-third to the Gaza Strip, and the remainder to Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. The Arab nations refused to absorb these Palestinians into their population and they were instead settled into refugee camps. Only Jordan's King Abdullah agreed to confer citizenship on the 200,000 Palestinian living in Jordan and the Jordan-controlled West Bank and East Jerusalem. In 1949, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) was created to oversee the economic integration of the refugees into these Arab countries. The Arab governments refused to consider integration, insisting that it would undermine the refugees' "right" to return to their homes in Palestine. UNRWA continues to operate, providing relief, health care, education and vocational training to the refugee populations in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

During the 1967 Six Day War, another estimated 250,000 Palestinians fled the West Bank and Gaza Strip with the arrival of Israeli forces. Some of these were people who had left their homes in Israel in 1948. These individuals are considered by the international community to be displaced persons, not refugees.

A Jewish refugee problem was also created with the establishment of the State of Israel. From 1948-1951 as many as 800,000 Jews were expelled from their native Arab nations or forced to flee as a result of state-sponsored anti-Zionist violence. They left behind their property and the lives they had built in these lands over hundreds of years. As many as 500,000 of these refugees fled to Israel from Iraq, Tunisia, Syria, Egypt, Yemen, Algeria, Libya and Morocco and were immediately and fully absorbed into the new nation. Others fled to Europe and North and South America where they rebuilt their lives.

Tallying the number of individuals considered Palestinian refugees today is a matter of debate. UNRWA, which registers Palestinian refugees, claims that refugees and their descendants number about 4.2 million (as of March 2005), and includes those who left Israel in 1948, those who left the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967, those who were abroad but were subsequently not allowed to return to Israel, and all of their descendants. (UNRWA's inclusion of the children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of those who left in 1948 and 1967 into the refugee population for demographic and aid purposes is not done for any other refugee group.) Israel believes the UNRWA statistics are exaggerated. Israel also strictly distinguishes "refugees" from "displaced persons" and from "expired permit Palestinians" who were abroad at the time the conflicts ensued and were not allowed to return.

Palestinians' insistence that refugees must have a "right of return" to their former homes inside Israel, and that this "right" is founded in international law, is rejected by Israel. Israel denies that there is any foun-

dition in international law for a Palestinian "right of return," and that the non-binding international resolutions on the issue call not for a "return" to Israel, but for a just resolution of the refugee problem. Israel also argues that a "return" is not viable for such a small state, given that the influx of millions of Palestinians into Israel would pose a threat to its national security and upset the country's demographic makeup. The "right of return" of Palestinian refugees was a rallying cry in the decades that the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) did not recognize Israel's right to exist and actively sought to bring about Israel's downfall and replace it with a Palestinian state. In 1993, the PLO recognized Israel's right to exist and committed to a negotiating process to establish an independent Palestinian state alongside the State of Israel. Given this situation, world leaders, including U.S. President George W. Bush, have publicly stated that Palestinian refugees should rightly be resettled in a future Palestinian state.

Israel says it is not responsible for the Palestinian refugee problem since it is the result of a war forced on Israel by invading Arab armies. However, on humanitarian grounds Israel has agreed to be part of an international effort to resolve the situation. Negotiations to date have focused on Palestinian refugees settling in a newly independent state of Palestine, an international compensation fund, and individual cases of family reunification.

## **Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)**

The PLO was founded in 1964 during the first Arab summit in Cairo, where leaders of 13 Arab nations pledged to take a more active role for the "liberation of Palestine." Since that time it has declared itself the representative of the Palestinian people and their nationalist aspirations. The PLO has operated primarily as an umbrella organization for six Palestinian groups, most prominently, Yasir Arafat's Fatah group. In 1969, Arafat was elected PLO Chairman, and Fatah became the dominant party in the PLO.

The guiding ideology of the PLO was outlined in the Palestine National Covenant which was adopted at its founding in 1964 and amended in 1968. The Charter functioned as the PLO's constitution, and contained 33 articles calling for the destruction of the State of Israel. In June 1974 the PLO adopted its "Phased Program" which declared "Any liberation step that is achieved constitutes a step for continuing to achieve the PLO strategy for the establishment of the Palestinian democratic state...to pave the way for completing the liberation of all Palestinian soil."

**The guiding ideology of the PLO was calling for the destruction of the State of Israel.**

The PLO was responsible for numerous acts of terrorism from its creation, resulting in the deaths of thousands of civilians. Among the infamous attacks conducted by the PLO are: the murder of 11 Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympic Games; the killing of 21 schoolchildren at Ma'alot in 1974; the death of 35 people and wounding of 85 in an attack on Israeli tourist buses along the Haifa-Tel Aviv coastal highway in 1978; the hijacking of the Achille Lauro cruise ship in 1985 and the murder of disabled American Jewish passenger Leon Klinghoffer. The PLO also launched terrorist and guerrilla attacks against Israel from Jordan - until they were ousted by King Hussein in September 1972 - and from Lebanon - until they were ousted by Israel in 1982.

In 1988 in Geneva, Yasir Arafat announced that he would accept the existence of the State of Israel, renounce terrorism, and accept U.N. resolutions 242 and 338. Despite this declaration, the PLO continued terrorist attacks against Israelis.

Following secret negotiations with Israel in Oslo, on September 9, 1993, Arafat sent a letter to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin recognizing Israel's right to exist, renouncing terrorism, and pledging to remove clauses in the Palestine National Charter calling for the destruction of Israel. In return, Israel recognized the PLO as the "official representative" of the Palestinian people and began formal negotiations with the PLO. The Charter was revised in the presence of U.S. President Bill Clinton in December 1998. However, the original Charter is still featured on some Palestinian Authority Web sites.

Today, the PLO continues to exist; however, most of its leaders have now become top officials in the Palestinian Authority, which was established as part of the Oslo peace process and is now the official governing body of the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Fatah-related militia groups, such as the Tanzim, Force 17 and the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade have played a leading role in Palestinian violence since 2000, including suicide terrorist attacks, ambushes, and shootings of Israeli vehicles and facilities.

With the death of Arafat in November 2004, Mahmoud Abbas, a long-time secretary general of the PLO, became the new Chairman of the PLO and was subsequently elected President of the Palestinian Authority.

## **Six Day War**

By May 1967, Israel believed an Arab attack was imminent; Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser had ordered a withdrawal of the U.N. forces on the border and announced a blockade of Israeli goods through the Straits of Tiran. At the same time, Syria increased border clashes along the Golan Heights and mobilized its troops. Israel withheld military action due to a request by the United States, but international diplomatic efforts to stop the blockade failed. The Arab states began to mobilize their troops, and Arab leaders called for a war of total destruction against Israel.

Arab mobilization compelled Israel to mobilize its own troops, 80 percent of which were reserve civilians. Israel launched a pre-emptive strike against Egypt on June 5. Israel captured the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip from Egypt, and when Jordan and Syria entered the conflict Israel also gained control of the West Bank and the eastern sector of Jerusalem from Jordan

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and the Golan Heights from Syria. In a catastrophic military defeat - which shook the Arab world for many years to come - the Arab nations ceased their fight six days after the war began.

This new territory brought great changes to Israeli daily life and created new challenges for policymakers. With the reunification of Jerusalem, Jews, who were prevented by Jordan from entering the eastern part of the city, flocked to pray at the Western Wall for the first time in 19 years. In the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Israel had to grapple with the implications and challenges of having one million Palestinian Arabs now under its administration.

Soon after the end of the fighting, the United Nations passed Security Council Resolution 242, calling for an Israeli withdrawal from territories recently occupied and an acknowledgment by the Arab nations of Israel's right to live in peace within secure borders.

## **6 Israel and the Middle East: The Facts**

## **West Bank and Gaza Strip**

The territory now known as the West Bank formed the heart of ancient Israel and was the site of many significant events in Jewish history. Since ancient times, the area has been known as Judea and Samaria and was identified as such through the British Mandate period and by the United Nations. In the 9th Century BCE, Samaria (in the northern West Bank) was the capital of the Israelite Kingdom. Much of the Old Testament takes place in Judea and Samaria. While Gaza has less of a presence in the Bible, it does appear in the books of Joshua and Judges. From that time until partition, the West Bank and Gaza Strip were occupied by the Romans, the Ottomans and the British. The Gaza Strip, and particularly the West Bank, are rich in archeological remains of centuries of Jewish communal life.

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The 1947 U.N. Partition Plan proposing an independent Arab state in Palestine alongside a Jewish state was rejected by the Arab states, which instead proceeded to invade the State of Israel hours after its establishment. In the ensuing war, Jordan occupied the West Bank (which it annexed in 1950) and Egypt occupied the Gaza Strip. For the next 19 years neither Egypt nor Jordan made any attempt to establish an independent Palestinian state in these territories. Indeed, these areas were relatively neglected in terms of economic and agricultural development.

In 1967 Israel gained control of the West Bank and Gaza Strip (and at least one million Arabs) in the Six Day War. Israel immediately made clear that it would be ready to redeploy from territories in return for a peace agreement with its Arab neighbors. Israel's offer was rebuffed. As part of the Oslo process, Israel agreed to redeploy from Palestinian population centers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Beginning with the West Bank city of Jericho and a large portion of the Gaza Strip in May 1994, there were a series of Israeli redeployments totaling 40 percent of the West Bank and over 85 percent of the Gaza Strip, leaving 99 percent of the Palestinian population living under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority. At Camp David in July 2000, Prime Minister Ehud Barak reportedly offered an Israeli withdrawal from as much as 95 percent of the West Bank, 100 percent of the Gaza Strip, and parts of Jerusalem. Chairman Arafat rejected this offer, argued that only a full withdrawal to the pre-1967 lines would be acceptable, and made no serious counter-offer.

In 2003, then-Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon announced a plan for Israel to unilaterally disengage from the Gaza Strip and some small settlements in the northern West Bank in order to further Israel's political, security and demographic interests. The disengagement was approved by the Cabinet and Knesset and began on August 15, 2005. By September 15 all Israeli civilians had left the Gaza settlements, and on October 1 the last Israeli soldier left the strip, completing the disengagement.

## **Settlements**

Settlements are Jewish communities that were established in the West Bank and Gaza Strip after the territories came under Israeli military control at the end of the 1967 War.

Historically, Judea and Samaria (the West Bank) is the cradle of Jewish civilization, containing the birth-places and burial sites of key personalities in the Bible. Jews lived in the area until 1948, when the West Bank was occupied by Jordan in the Arab-Israeli war. Indeed, several of the current settlement communities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip existed prior to 1948 when they were overrun by invading Arab armies. Kfar Etzion and other villages in the Jerusalem-Bethlehem corridor, for example, fell to Arab forces in May 1948 and those captured were massacred. Sons and daughters of those who lived there until 1948 were the first to return after the 1967 war. The Gaza Strip has archeological remains of centuries of Jewish communal life.

In the 1970's, successive Israeli governments believed that settlements in certain sections of the West Bank, particularly in the Jordan Valley and eastern slopes of Samaria, as well as in areas of the Gaza Strip would provide Israel with an important military buffer zone.

While often characterized as "ideological, right-wing, nationalist and religious," the settler population is actually more diverse and includes secular Israelis and new immigrants as well as those who chose their homes based on affordability and convenience rather than on religion or politics. Many settlers and supporters of the movement do believe that there is a religious obligation to settle and hold on to this land. In addition, the vast majority of settlers and their supporters believe that they play an essential

**Settlers and their supporters believe that they play an essential role in providing security for the State of Israel, by providing a first line of defense.**

role in providing security for the State of Israel, by providing a first line of defense against Palestinian or other Arab attack.

Indeed, Israeli settlements have suffered greatly from Palestinian terrorism. Since 2000, Israeli settlers in the West Bank have been directly targeted by snipers and bombers. Settlements in the Gaza Strip were the favored target of Palestinian rocket attacks.

Since 1967, Israeli governments have maintained a willingness to withdraw from areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in a peace agreement with the Arabs. In the event of such an agreement, it has always been expected that at least some of the settlements, particularly those of the Gaza Strip, would have to be uprooted, just as the Israeli town of Yamit in the Sinai was dismantled following Israel's peace agreement with Egypt.

In the Oslo Accords, settlements were to be negotiated as a final status issue, and were not to be discussed during the interim period. At Camp David, in July 2000, Prime Minister Ehud Barak reportedly offered to uproot all Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip and the isolated settlements in up to 95 percent of the territory of the West Bank. The remaining settlements in five percent of the territory of the West Bank - which contain the vast majority of the settler population - was to be gathered into settlement "blobs" which would be annexed to Israel. Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasir Arafat refused the plan.

In 2003, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, a long-time advocate for settlements, announced plans for Israel to unilaterally disengage from the Gaza Strip, uproot its settlements and relocate its 8,000 residents along with four settlements in the northern West Bank. Sharon argued that in the absence of a serious Palestinian peace partner and ongoing Palestinian terrorism, Israel needed to take unilateral steps to

ensure its own security and improve conditions on the ground. The dismantlement of the Gaza and four West Bank settlements was concluded in August 2005, and the Israeli army completed its full disengagement from Gaza in September 2005. Public opinion polls showed that the majority of Israelis supported the disengagement; however, a large and vocal minority of Israelis, particularly the settler community and their supporters, opposed the move and protested and resisted the army's evacuation of the settlements.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has promoted a "convergence" or "realignment" plan which would involve a large Israeli unilateral disengagement from areas of the West Bank, the dismantlement the settlements in these areas, the relocation of tens of thousands of settlers, and the establishment of a new secure border for the State of Israel. Prime Minister Olmert has said that Israel will take this step should bilateral negotiations with the Palestinian Authority not be feasible. Many in Israel are critical of this plan, particularly those on the political right who opposed the Gaza disengagement, as well as those who believe that such steps should only be taken in coordination with the Palestinians for reasons of security, sustainability and ideology.

### **United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242/338**

United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 were passed (respectively) in the aftermaths of the 1967 and 1973 Arab-Israeli wars. Resolution 242 (reaffirmed in 338), was designed to provide the framework for peace negotiations based on a "land-for-peace" formula and has become the foundation of all subsequent peace treaties in the region. The resolutions called for the withdrawal of Israeli forces "from territories of recent conflict," an Arab "termination of all claims or states of belligerency," and a recognition of the State of Israel and its "right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force." The resolution also called for "achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem."

As 242 and 338 call for Israel's "withdrawal from territories" and not "*the*" territories as part of a peace agreement, it is understood by the drafters of the resolution and by Israel and the United States that Israel may withdraw from areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip consistent with its security needs, but not from all the territories.

### **Jerusalem**

Jerusalem is Judaism's holiest city, and is also holy to Christianity and Islam.

The Jewish people are inextricably bound to the city of Jerusalem. No other city has played such a dominant role in the history, politics, culture, religion, national life and consciousness of a people as has Jerusalem in the life of Jewry and Judaism. Since King David established the city as the capital of the Jewish state circa 1000 BCE, it has served as the symbol and most profound expression of the Jewish people's identity as a nation.

Since the exile, Jerusalem has embodied the Jewish yearning for the return to Zion. In their daily prayers, Jews worship in the direction of

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Jerusalem, and prayers for Jerusalem are incorporated throughout. Passover Seder tables have resonated with the refrain "Next Year in Jerusalem." With the brief exception of the Crusader period, no other people or state has made Jerusalem its capital.

Since King David's time, Jews have maintained a continuous presence in Jerusalem, except for a few periods when they were forcibly barred from living in the city by foreign rulers. Jews have constituted a majority of the city's inhabitants since 1880, and today, Jews represent over two-thirds of the city's population.

Jerusalem is an important spiritual and historic center for Christianity. Jerusalem is central to the events of the New Testament. According to tradition, many events in Jesus' childhood and adulthood took place in Jerusalem, and it was in Jerusalem that he was tried, crucified and resurrected. Jerusalem took on added significance for Christianity when Queen Helena, the mother of Constantine (the Roman Emperor who adopted Christianity), designated the holy sites in Jerusalem associated with the last days of Jesus' life. The great Churches built on these spots continue to attract streams of pilgrims, and are surrounded by Christians monasteries, convents, hospices, churches, and chapels.

Jerusalem is also a holy city for Muslims, who refer to it as "al-Quds" (the holy one). According to Islamic tradition, the Prophet Muhammad traveled to heaven via the rock which the Dome of the Rock currently envelops. The prophet Muhammad and his followers initially turned to Jerusalem in prayer and although the direction was later changed towards Mecca, the sanctity of Jerusalem continued to be stressed in Islamic tradition. Jerusalem is considered Islam's third holiest city after Mecca and Medina. The 20th century saw a renewed emphasis on the sanctity of Jerusalem in Islamic religious tradition. Since the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, Muslim leaders have strengthened their determination to achieve Muslim rule over the city.

The only time Jerusalem was divided was between 1948-1967 when armistice lines drawn between the army of the newly declared State of Israel and invading Arab armies divided Jerusalem into two sectors, with Jordan occupying and annexing the eastern sector, including the Old City, and Israel retaining the western and southern parts of the city. Barbed wire divided the sides. In violation of the Armistice Agreement, Jordanians denied Jews access to and the right to worship at their holy sites, including the Western Wall. The 58 synagogues in the Jewish Quarter were systematically destroyed and vandalized and Jewish cemeteries were desecrated.

Jerusalem was reunited under Israeli sovereignty as a result of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. Israel immediately passed the "Protection of Holy Places Law," which guarantees the sanctity of all holy sites and makes it a punishable offense to desecrate or deny freedom of access to them. Under Israeli rule, Christians and Muslims have always administered their own holy places and institutions and have had access to Israel's democratic court system in order to present any claim of violation of these rights.

Israel maintains that Jerusalem is the undivided and eternal capital of Israel. Palestinian leaders insist that all of East Jerusalem, including the Temple Mount, be the capital of an independent Palestinian state. Successive Israeli leaders have proposed creative solutions that might satisfy some Palestinian aspirations, including sovereignty over some Palestinian neighborhoods both inside and outside municipal Jerusalem.

## **The Yom Kippur War 1973**

On the holiest day of the Jewish calendar, Yom Kippur, Egypt and Syria attacked Israel in an effort to force Israel to surrender the land gained in 1967. Caught by surprise, in the war's initial days, Israel suffered severe losses of life, military equipment, and territory, abruptly shattering the euphoria the country had experienced since its show of strength in the Six-Day War. Following an Egyptian refusal to accept a cease-fire and a Soviet airlift of military equipment to bolster Egyptian forces, the United States sent an airlift to Israel enabling her to recover from the first blow and inflict damage on Egypt and Syria. In response, Saudi Arabia led the Arab world in an oil embargo directed against the United States and other western nations. The war officially ended with a U.N.-declared cease-fire, but fighting continued.

When hostilities stopped later in the month, the Israeli army held an additional 165 square miles of territory from Syria and had encircled the Egyptian Third Army by the Suez Canal. Efforts for peace treaties at that point failed, and only a year later following U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's "shuttle diplomacy" were disengagement treaties signed by the parties. As per these limited agreements, Israel withdrew from all areas it had acquired from Syria during the 1973 war, and some territory from the 1967 war. Israel also withdrew from parts of the Sinai. Prisoners of war were exchanged, and the Arab world ended its oil embargo. Despite the victory, Israel's near-defeat by the Arab nations highlighted her continued vulnerability.

## **Camp David Accords/Israel-Egypt Peace Agreement 1978/1979**

The Israel-Egypt peace agreement was a watershed event and marked the first such agreement between the Jewish state and an Arab neighbor. The breakthrough came in November 1977 when Egyptian President Anwar Sadat made a bold and unprecedented visit to Israel and in a speech at the Israeli Knesset (parliament) addressed the Israeli people with words of reconciliation and peace.

Formal negotiations ensued the following September when Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin joined U.S. President Jimmy Carter at the Camp David presidential retreat in Maryland. The so-called "Camp David Accords" of September 17, 1978 were based on U.N. resolutions 242 and 338, and were meant to constitute a basis for peace not only between Egypt and Israel, but also to reach "a just, comprehensive, and durable settlement of the Middle East conflict" for all neighbors willing to negotiate with Israel. Israel agreed to withdraw from all of the Sinai within three years and to dismantle its air bases near the Gulf of Aqaba and the town of Yamit; Egypt promised full diplomatic relations with Israel, and to allow Israel passage through the Suez Canal, the Straits of Tiran, and the Gulf of Aqaba. The accords also stipulated a framework for solving the problem of the West Bank and Gaza.

**Egyptian President Anwar Sadat made a bold and unprecedented visit to Israel and in a speech at the Israeli Knesset (parliament) addressed the Israeli people with words of reconciliation and peace.**

On March 26, 1979, the two countries signed a peace treaty on the White House lawn. The Egyptian President, having gone out on a limb for the peace treaty, was vilified in the Arab world. Sadat was assassinated in 1981.

The groundbreaking Israel-Egypt peace paved the way for subsequent Israeli negotiations and treaties with Jordan and the Palestinians. Relations between Cairo and Jerusalem have not been warm, and the two nations share what is commonly referred to as a “cold peace.” However, in recent years, Egypt has played a key behind-the-scenes role in facilitating Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and helping prepare the Palestinian Authority for the Israeli disengagement from Gaza. In December 2004, Israel, Egypt and the U.S. signed a joint free trade agreement.

## **Lebanon War 1982**

The Lebanon War was Israel's longest and most controversial war. In the mid-1970s, the PLO broadened its presence in Lebanon, establishing military training centers and escalating artillery and cross-border attacks on civilians in northern Israel. Following the attempted assassination of the Israeli ambassador in London, Israel attacked PLO targets in Lebanon on June 4, 1982. The PLO responded with rocket and artillery barrages, and Israel retaliated by sending ground troops into Lebanon, in a mission titled "Operation Peace for the Galilee."

While the original plan called for Israeli troops to undertake a 25-mile incursion to wipe out PLO positions in Southern Lebanon, Israeli troops on the ground quickly overran PLO positions in the south of Lebanon, destroyed Syrian installations in the Bekaa Valley, and reached Beirut by June 9. After battles in West Beirut, the PLO surrendered and agreed to evacuate to Tunisia in September.

**The PLO broadened its presence in Lebanon, establishing military training centers and escalating artillery and cross-border attacks on civilians in northern Israel.**

On September 16, Defense Minister Ariel Sharon and Chief of Staff Rafael Eitan permitted Israel's Lebanese allies, the Christian Phalangist forces, to enter the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatilla with the purpose of rooting out remaining PLO forces who had evaded evacuation. The Phalangists, however, brutally massacred Palestinian civilians in the camp. Many Israelis were horrified by the incident, and on September 24, 400,000 gathered at the first of many demonstrations to protest the Lebanon War. The Government-appointed Kahane Commission released its report in February 1983 finding Sharon "indirectly responsible" and concluding that given the well-known Phalangist hatred of the Palestinians, he should have anticipated that they "were liable to commit atrocities." Sharon resigned as Defense Minister.

In 1983, Israel signed an agreement with Lebanon terminating the state of war between the neighbors. While the PLO state-within-a-state had been dismantled, Syrian troops remained in Lebanon and the Christian-dominated Lebanese Government was too weak to control rival factions from attacking each other and Israel. A year later, under pressure from the Syrian government, Lebanon reneged on its agreement and the country remained volatile. Israeli troops completed a phased withdrawal from Lebanon in June 1985 and created a 9-mile-wide security zone in southern Lebanon along the border. The zone was intended to shield Israeli civilian settlements in the Galilee from cross-border attacks, and facilitated the capture of many terrorists. However, many Israeli soldiers continued to be killed in the security zone by terrorist groups supported by Iran and Syria, particularly Hezbollah.

The high number of casualties incurred in the South Lebanon security zone sparked widespread debate within Israel. In March 2000, the Israeli cabinet voted unanimously for a full troop withdrawal

from Lebanon by July. The expectation was that such a withdrawal would be part of an agreement with Syria and Lebanon. However, after Syrian President Hafez al-Assad refused to continue talks with Israel, such coordination was not possible, and Prime Minister Ehud Barak authorized a unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon on May 24, 2000. Israel remained in the Sheba Farms/Har Dov region, which it has held since the 1967 Six Day War. The area is recognized by the United Nations as Syrian, not Lebanese territory, and thus should be the subject of Syrian-Israeli negotiations. Hezbollah insists that it is Lebanese territory and frequently attacks Israeli troops in the area, as well as along the border, and occasionally launches rocket attacks against northern Israeli cities.

## Hezbollah

Hezbollah ("Party of G-d") is a terrorist organization, based in Lebanon, whose goal is the destruction of Israel. In that pursuit it has attacked Israeli and Jewish targets worldwide. It is also responsible for infamous attacks against American military installations in Lebanon in the early 1980s.

Hezbollah, a Shi'ite Muslim group, is financed and armed by Iran and enjoys full backing from Syria. Hezbollah was founded with the help of Iranian Revolutionary Guards who traveled to the Bekaa Valley in Lebanon in 1982 to fight Israel following the Israeli incursion into south Lebanon. According to its 1985 platform, Hezbollah advocates the establishment of an "Islamic Republic" in Lebanon. It also states: "The conflict with Israel is viewed as a central concern. This is not only limited to the IDF presence in Lebanon. Rather, the complete destruction of the State of Israel and the establishment of Islamic rule over Jerusalem is an expressed goal."

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Hezbollah has in recent years attempted to reinvent itself as a domestic political proponent of Shi'ite interests in the electoral process, where it enjoys solid support from the country's Shi'ite community (which comprises 40 percent of Lebanon's population). The party secured a substantial bloc of seats in spring 2005 "Syria-free" parliamentary elections in Lebanon. Hezbollah and its Shi'ite ally Amal won 35 seats in the 128-seat Parliament (of which 64 are allocated to Muslims).

In the early and mid 1980s Hezbollah was responsible for numerous attacks against U.S. installations in Lebanon, most infamously the 1983 attack on the U.S. Marines barracks in Beirut, which killed 241 servicemen. Hezbollah is responsible for scores of attacks against Israeli forces in south Lebanon and civilians in northern Israel.

The Syrians, who effectively controlled Lebanon from 1976 on, allowed Hezbollah to operate along the Israeli border with impunity. Analysts argue that Syria has long preferred a proxy battle with Israel via the Lebanese border (using Hezbollah) to escalation on its own border with Israel.

In September 2004, the U.N. Security Council passed Resolution 1559, calling on Syria to remove its troops from Lebanese territory and for Hezbollah to disarm. In April 2005, under massive international pressure, Syria withdrew its forces from the country, ending a 29-year military occupation of Lebanon. But the withdrawal of Syria's forces did not stop its support for Hezbollah, which continued to amass a huge stockpile of weapons, including longer range rockets capable of striking farther into Israeli territory, with direct assistance from Syria and Iran.

Since Israel's unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon in May 2000, Hezbollah has continued its unprovoked attacks on Israel. On July 12, 2006, Hezbollah terrorists attacked Israel in a cross-border raid, killing eight Israeli soldiers and kidnapping two others. The assault sparked a monthlong conflict, with Hezbollah launching thousands of Katyusha rockets at Israel's northern cities and Israel targeting Hezbollah positions throughout Lebanon with air strikes and, eventually, ground forces.

A cessation of hostilities was declared after the U.N. Security Council adopted Resolution 1701, which called for a phased withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon and the deployment of an expanded international UNIFIL force working alongside Lebanese troops to re-assert security control of south Lebanon. The resolution required Hezbollah to completely disarm and called for Lebanon to assert its sovereignty over the entire nation.

**Al-Manar is more than Hezbollah's mouthpiece; it is its tool for incitement to terror against Americans and Israelis.**

Hezbollah's continuing operations in Lebanese civilian centers violate international humanitarian law and previous U.N. Security Council resolutions.

In October 2000, Hezbollah orchestrated the kidnapping of three Israeli soldiers and an Israeli businessman. Hezbollah, with Iranian support, is also believed to be responsible for a number of terrorist incidents in the wider Middle East, Western Europe, Asia, and Latin America, including two bombings in Buenos Aires - the 1993 bombing of the Israeli embassy and the 1994 bombing of the AMIA Jewish community building.

Hezbollah also runs a satellite television network, Al-Manar ("the beacon"), which broadcasts Hezbollah's messages of hate and violence worldwide. Hezbollah owns and operates the station, staffing it with members of Hezbollah and directing its programming and communications. Al-Manar is more than Hezbollah's mouthpiece; it is its tool for incitement to terror against Americans and Israelis. It broadcasts images of Iraqi devastation attributed to the U.S.-led action with voiceovers calling for "death to America," glorifies suicide bombings and calls for the recruitment of Palestinian "martyrs" to kill Jews. Al-Manar appears to be the source of the conspiracy theory that claimed that 4,000 Israelis were absent from their jobs at the World Trade Center on September 11, thereby implying that Israel was in some way behind the attack. The story was posted on its Web site on September 17, 2001 and picked up by extremists around the world. Al-Manar's messages of hate and violence are also often accompanied by anti-Semitic themes, such as the medieval blood libel. Al-Manar is also a conduit to channel money to Hezbollah - openly and actively soliciting funds on the air and on its Web site. In 2004 and 2005, the European Union, France and others have taken steps to ban Al-Manar from transmitting within their borders.

**The Intifada 1987-1990**

In December 1987, collective Palestinian frustration erupted in the popular uprising against Israeli rule known as the Intifada, or "shaking off." At first a spontaneous outburst, the Intifada developed into a well-organized rebellion. Masses of civilians attacked Israeli troops with stones, axes, Molotov cocktails, hand grenades, and firearms supplied by Fatah, killing and wounding soldiers and civilians. Israeli troops, trained for combat, were not prepared to fight this kind of war. Amid confusing directives, abuses occurred.

The Intifada petered out by 1990, with most of its leadership arrested. Nonetheless, it had a tremen-

dous impact on Israeli public opinion and policymaking throughout the ensuing decade. While many Israelis were outraged by the Palestinian violence and angered by the danger their family members in the IDF encountered in the territories, the Intifada intensified the Israeli longing for normalcy and an end to the conflict, creating consensus for the peace negotiations of the 1990's.

For the Palestinians, the Intifada created a new cadre of leadership based in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. These youths were supporters of the PLO leadership in Tunis, but did not consider themselves accountable to it. Many of the youths most active in the Intifada later became officials in the Palestinian Authority.

### **Madrid Peace Conference 1991**

In October/November 1991, just after the Gulf War, the United States and Russia convened an Arab-Israeli peace conference in Madrid. The historic conference marked the first time that Israel, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and a Palestinian delegation (which was officially part of the Jordanian delegation) sat at the same table to negotiate. The participants agreed to establish two tracks for negotiations: a bilateral track for direct negotiations between Israel and Syria, Israel and Lebanon, and Israel and the Jordanian/Palestinian delegation; and a multilateral track for region-wide negotiations on issues such as water, environment, refugees, arms control and economic development.

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A series of bilateral negotiation sessions were held in Washington over the next 18 months. The negotiations were significant on a symbolic level, but yielded very few practical results. A number of multilateral working groups were also convened, laying the groundwork for cooperative regional projects on issues such as the environment, water, arms control, economic development and refugees. The bilateral track was essentially halted by the surprise announcement of an Israeli-Palestinian agreement in August 1993.

### **The Oslo Accords/Oslo Process**

The "Oslo Process" refers to the Israeli-Palestinian negotiating process begun in September 1993 which established a framework for resolving the conflict.

In August 1993 the world was astonished to learn that secret negotiations in Oslo, Norway, between high-level Israelis and Palestinians, had led to the first Israeli-Palestinian agreement. The talks, initiated months earlier under the auspices of the Norwegian Foreign Ministry, had begun informally with low level Israeli and Palestinian diplomats and academics. But with growing success in the drafting of an agreement, the talks were upgraded and soon were conducted by high-level Israeli and Palestinian officials. On August 20 a draft of a "Declaration of Principles" (DOP) was initialed.

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On September 9, Israel and the PLO exchanged letters of mutual recogni-

tion to precede the official signing of an agreement. In his letter to Prime Minister Rabin, Chairman Yasir Arafat recognized Israel's right to exist "in peace and security." Arafat renounced "the use of terrorism and other acts of violence." Arafat also pledged to revoke articles in the Palestinian National Covenant which deny Israel's right to exist. In a response to Arafat's letter, Rabin confirmed that "in light of the PLO commitments included in your letter, the Government of Israel has decided to recognize the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people and commence negotiations with the PLO within the Middle East peace process."

On September 13, 1993, the Israel-Palestinian Declaration of Principles (DOP) was signed by Prime Minister Rabin and Chairman Arafat in the presence of U.S. President Bill Clinton on the White House Lawn amidst tremendous fanfare.

The DOP, the first in a series of what are known as the "Oslo Accords," consisted of a carefully constructed two-phased timetable. The first phase, or the "interim period," was to last five years, during which time Israel would incrementally withdraw from Palestinian population centers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, while transferring administrative power to a soon-to-be-elected Palestinian Authority. The Palestinian Authority would be responsible for combating terrorism and coordinating security with Israel. The second phase was the "permanent status" or "final status" negotiations, to resolve "remaining issues, including: Jerusalem, refugees, settlements, security arrangements, borders, relations and cooperation with other neighbors, and other issues of common interest." A final status agreement would mark the official peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

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The rationale behind the two-phased plan was to save the most difficult issues for last. While the drafters of the DOP did not believe these issues would be easily resolved, it was hoped that after building confidence and cooperation through the interim period, Israel and the Palestinians would be better able to tackle the most complex and divisive issues in the conflict.

Over the next six years a series of further interim agreements were signed, most significantly the September 1995 "Oslo II" Agreement and the October 1998 Wye River Accord. Following the implementation of these agreements, as of September 2000, over eighty-five percent of the Gaza Strip and 39.7 percent of the West Bank were under the control of the Palestinian Authority. Ninety-nine percent of the Palestinian population resided under the Palestinian Authority's jurisdiction.

The negotiations were supported by the majority of the Israeli population who believed that Israel needed to make difficult territorial concessions in the pursuit of peace. A very vocal minority, however, stood vehemently opposed to the agreements and the Government's policies. In November 1994, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated by an anti-Oslo activist.

Throughout the interim period Palestinian terrorist groups conducted scores of terrorist attacks against Israeli civilian targets. Over the years, Israelis grew increasingly disenchanted with the Palestinian Authority who did nothing to control terrorist organizations, and continued to spread anti-Israel and anti-Semitic propaganda.

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## Hamas

Hamas is an Islamic extremist terrorist organization based in the West Bank and Gaza strip that calls for the eradication of the State of Israel. Both the United States and the European Union have designated Hamas as a terrorist organization. Hamas now holds the majority of seats in the Palestinian Authority Parliament and controls the PA government.

Hamas (the Arabic acronym for Harakat Al-Muqawama Islamiya fi Filistin, or the Islamic Resistance Movement in Palestine) was established in 1988 by Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, then a preacher with the Muslim Brotherhood in Gaza. Its ultimate goal is the establishment of an Islamic Palestinian state ruled by Islamic theocratic law in place of the State of Israel. Hamas' covenant, issued in 1988, is replete with anti-Semitism, and echoes the notorious *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and charges Jews with an international conspiracy to gain control of the world. In Hamas' world-view, Islamic precepts forbid a Jewish state in the area known as Palestine, the Jewish people have no legitimate connection to the land of Israel. As its covenant proclaims, "The land of Palestine is an Islamic trust... It is forbidden to anyone to yield or concede any part of it... Israel will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it..." To this end, the leaders of Hamas have traditionally denounced compromise with Israel as a betrayal of the Palestinian cause, although recently some Hamas officials have softened their stances, calling for a temporary Israeli withdrawal to 1967 borders as a stepping stone for the "liberation" of all of "Palestine."

Funding for the group has traditionally come from Iran, Muslim charities around the world and sympathetic sources in the Gulf and Saudi Arabia.

Hamas is both a terrorist organization and a mass social, political and religious movement. It operates schools, medical clinics and youth groups. The division of Hamas into military and political/social wings has led many observers to erroneously assume that the social wing of Hamas is completely separate from its military wing. However, funds raised for the social programs of Hamas free up other funds for the military wing. Moreover, Hamas' military wing utilizes the organization's social wing for indoctrination and recruitment. The social, cultural, religious and educational institutions of Hamas are well-known venues for anti-Israel and anti-Jewish hatred and serve as recruitment centers for suicide bombers.

Since 1994, Hamas has been the main organization perpetrating terrorist attacks in major Israeli cities with targets including shopping malls, cafes, buses and hotels. Its most deadly attacks include the March 2002 suicide bombing of the Park Hotel in Netanya, killing 30 and injuring 140 during their Passover seder; the August 2001 suicide bombing of the Sbarro pizzeria in Jerusalem killing 15 and injuring 130; and the June 2001 suicide bombing at the Dolphinarium nightclub in Tel Aviv, killing 21 and injuring 120, most of them youths.

In the years of the Oslo process, Hamas positioned itself as the main opposition to the Palestinian Authority and its negotiations with Israel. From 2000-2004, however, many of their terrorist operations were approved by and coordinated with the Palestinian Authority. With election in 2005, PA President Mahmoud Abbas attempted to induce these groups to cease their terrorist operations, and although Hamas officially agreed to a cease-fire, they continued to conduct some attacks.

Hamas entered the Palestinian political arena and secured nearly half of the municipal seats up for

grabs in the January 2005 Palestinian elections. In the January 25, 2006 parliamentary elections, Hamas had tremendous success routing Fatah, and won 74 seats in the 132-seat legislature, with Fatah earning a disappointing 45 seats.

In its new capacity as leaders of the Palestinian Authority Hamas has not disavowed its commitment to an "armed struggle" against Israel, its refusal to recognize Israel's right to exist, or the precepts of the Hamas Charter. Following an April 2006 terrorist attack in Tel Aviv which killed 9 people and wounded 40, the Hamas-led PA government called it an act of "self-defense." Hamas official spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri called the attack "a natural result of the continued Israeli crimes against our people."

Following the Hamas victory, the West suspended financial aid to the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority (for many countries any financial dealings with Hamas would violate anti-terrorism laws). While European and American donors remain committing to ensuring the flow of humanitarian aid, they have been stalwart (as of this writing) in their refusal to deal with Hamas politically or financially until they recognize Israel's right to exist and condemn terrorism.

## **Islamic Jihad**

Palestinian Islamic Jihad is a radical Islamic extremist organization inspired by the Iranian revolution of 1979. It was established by Palestinian students in Egypt who were admirers of the Iranian Revolution and the Muslim Brotherhood. Like Hamas, its expressed goal is the violent destruction of the State of Israel, which Islamic Jihad believes will then bring about the unification of the Arab and Islamic world, "purified of modern Western elements." The PIJ carried out its first terror attacks against Israeli civilians and soldiers in mid-1986, half a year prior to the outbreak of the Intifada. It regards itself as part of the larger Islamic Jihad movement, which originated in Lebanon with the backing of Iran.

Unlike the larger and better-funded Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad does not manage social welfare programs; it concentrates instead on spectacular attacks against Israeli civilians and military forces, sometimes using women and children as suicide bombers. Its most deadly attacks include the October 2003 suicide bombing at the Maxim restaurant in Haifa, killing 22 and wounding 60; the June 2002 suicide bombing at Meggido junction, killing 18 and wounding 50; and the March 1996 suicide bombing of the Dizengoff shopping mall in Tel Aviv, killing 13 and injuring 75. Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for the July 12, 2005 suicide attack on a Netanya shopping mall, killing 5 and wounding 90, and against at the Netanya mall on December 5, 2005, killing 5 and wounding 50.

## **Camp David Summit 2000**

The Camp David Summit was convened by U.S. President Bill Clinton on July 11, 2000, to bring together Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Chairman Arafat at Camp David for intensive negotiations for a final status agreement. By July 25, President Clinton announced that the Summit had failed and that no agreement had been reached. President Clinton publicly acknowledged that Prime Minister Barak had shown "particular courage and vision and an understanding of the historical importance of the moment."

Barak entered the summit convinced that a final agreement with the Palestinians was reachable. According to reports, he offered Palestinians an ambitious peace package which included far reaching

concessions on Jerusalem, borders, settlements, refugees and other issues. Barak's offer reportedly included: an Israeli redeployment from as much as ninety-five percent of the West Bank and one hundred percent of the Gaza Strip and the creation of a Palestinian state in that area; the uprooting of isolated Jewish settlements in the areas to be transferred to Palestinian control; Palestinian control over parts of Jerusalem; and "religious sovereignty" over the Temple Mount. In return, Barak wanted the final status agreement to include an "end of conflict" clause under which the parties would pledge that all issues between them were now resolved and further claims would not be made at a future date.

According to reports, Chairman Arafat refused Israel's offer and clung to maximalist positions, particularly on Jerusalem and refugees. The Palestinian delegation did not offer any counter-proposals. On his return to Israel, Barak said: "Today I return from Camp David, and can look into the millions of eyes and say with regret: We have not yet succeeded. We did not succeed because we did not find a partner prepared to make decisions on all issues. We did not succeed because our Palestinian neighbors have not yet internalized the fact that in order to achieve peace, each side has to give up some of their dreams; to give, not only to demand." Barak later said that at Camp David, Yasir Arafat, and his true intentions, were "unmasked."

Faced with criticism after abandoning the negotiations at Camp David and the turn to violence barely two months later, Palestinians publicly declared that the failure of Camp David was due to lack of preparation by the Americans, personality differences between Barak and Arafat, and by Barak's "take-it-or-leave-it" negotiating posture. Many Israeli and American high-level officials who were at Camp David dismiss these excuses. Instead, Camp David demonstrated that Arafat and the Palestinian leadership had unrealistic expectations that they could force Israel to concede to their maximalist demands without making important compromises of their own. While there were additional negotiating sessions in October and December at Taba, they were conducted in the midst of persistent Palestinian violence, and no agreement was reached.

## **Outbreak of Palestinian Violence September 2000**

Widespread Palestinian violence erupted on Friday, September 29, 2000 in the Old City of Jerusalem and in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Palestinians said the violence was "provoked" by the visit of then-Likud

**The outbreak of Palestinian violence and terrorism was particularly disheartening for Israelis.**

Party Chairman Ariel Sharon to the Temple Mount the previous day. Israeli leaders maintain that the violence was orchestrated by the Palestinian leadership pointing to other incidents of violence against Israeli targets in the Gaza Strip days before the Sharon visit, and to the fact that widespread violence did not break out until a full day after Mr. Sharon's visit to the area.

Well before the Sharon visit there were incendiary calls for action in the Palestinian media and in sermons by religious leaders. Furthermore, on September 29, the PA closed the

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**The Palestinians turned to directly attacking Israeli civilian centers, military installations, vehicles, and civilians through suicide bombings, drive-by shootings, and rocket launchings.**

schools under its jurisdiction and coordinated the busing of demonstrators to the Temple Mount. Palestinian leaders have been quoted boasting that the violence was planned as early as July 2000.

The outbreak of Palestinian violence and terrorism was particularly disheartening for Israelis, especially those who were supportive of negotiations with the Palestinians, because it erupted just as the most serious negotiations for a final status agreement between Israel and the Palestinians were being pursued. Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak had offered the Palestinians far

greater concessions on Jerusalem, settlements, and territory than ever anticipated. Yet, the Palestinians refused the Israeli offer and turned to violence.

In the initial weeks, there was a popular element to the violence (commonly referred to by Palestinians as the Al-Aqsa Intifada or the Second Intifada), with large demonstrations in some Palestinian cities. Intermingled with the civilians at these demonstrations were armed Palestinian gunmen, who often used the cover of the crowd to shoot at Israeli installations. During this period, a Palestinian mob in Ramallah attacked two off-duty Israeli reservists, lynched them, and celebrated their deaths. In a short time, grassroots participation in the violence ended, and the Palestinians turned to directly attacking Israeli civilian centers, military installations, vehicles, and civilians through suicide bombings, drive-by shootings, and rocket launchings.

The Palestinian Authority was involved in the violence against Israel through PA-affiliated militia groups such as Fatah's Tanzim and the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade. The PA authorized the members of the Tanzim to conduct armed warfare against Israeli soldiers and civilians and encouraged Palestinian children and teenagers to participate in the early demonstrations to provide cover for Palestinian militia shooting at Israelis. Israeli officials also maintain that the PA encouraged terrorist attacks against Israelis, and released Hamas and Islamic Jihad terrorists held in PA prisons. Israeli officials have also uncovered proof of financial payments made by high level Palestinian officials, including Yasir Arafat, to members of the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade who were carrying out suicide terrorist attacks. The PA leadership, including Yasir Arafat, was also fully involved in numerous arms shipments that were intercepted by Israel en route to the Gaza coast, most notably a large cache found in January 2002 aboard the Karine A ship which was on its way from Iran to the Palestinian Authority.

Israel attempted to counter Palestinian violence in a variety of ways. Most directly, it engaged in military operations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to destroy the terrorist infrastructure. In 2003, the Government of Israel approved the building of a security fence or barrier, intended to prevent Palestinian terrorists from reaching their civilian targets inside Israel.

There have been numerous international efforts to end the crisis, including plans presented by a commission headed by former Senator George Mitchell (known as the Mitchell Plan, calling for an end to violence, Israeli confidence building measures, followed by final status negotiations) as well as a timetable set out by CIA chief George Tenet (known as the Tenet Plan, calling for an end to Palestinian violence and terror, Israeli confidence building measures, followed by negotiations for a final status agreement). In September 2002, the United States, the European Union, the Russian Federation, and the United Nations (collectively dubbed "The Quartet") announced its sponsorship of the "*Roadmap*," a phased peace plan which still officially remains active.

The “second Intifada” petered out slowly, due in part to Palestinian malaise as well as the effectiveness of Israeli military defense and the protective security fence.

## **Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade**

The Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade was formed as the military arm of Yasir Arafat's political party, Fatah, shortly after the outbreak of the Palestinian violence in September 2000. Financed in part by the Palestinian Authority, it conducted some of the conflict's deadliest and most destructive attacks on Israeli civilians, and was designated a foreign terrorist organization by the U.S. in 2002. Israeli officials uncovered proof of financial payments made by high level Palestinian officials, including Yasir Arafat, to members of the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade who were carrying out suicide terrorist attacks. Like Fatah, it is a secular organization whose ideology - although colored by Islam - is centered on Palestinian nationalism. Several of its leaders were killed or arrested during the “Second Intifada.” Its leader Marwan Barghouti is currently serving five consecutive life sentences in Israel. Its major operations include the January 2002 Jerusalem bombing by the first female suicide bombing, killing 1 and injuring 100, twin suicide bombings in downtown Tel Aviv on January 5, 2003, killing 22 and injuring 100. The Brigade claimed responsibility (along with Islamic Jihad) for the April 17, 2006 suicide bombing near Tel Aviv's old bus station, killing 9 and wounding 40.

## **The Roadmap**

In September 2002, amidst continued Palestinian terrorism, the United States, the European Union, the Russian Federation, and the United Nations (collectively dubbed “The Quartet”) announced its sponsorship of the “*Roadmap*,” a phased peace plan which called for: first, the replacement of Yasir Arafat and his then-PA underlings with a democratic, representative leadership, untainted by involvement in terrorism; an end to Palestinian terrorism and violence; and an Israeli withdrawal from areas re-occupied in September 2000; second, Israeli confidence building measures, including a provisional Palestinian state in the territory that was under PA jurisdiction on September 28, 2000; and third, negotiations for a final status agreement and the establishment of a Palestinian State by the end of 2005. The Roadmap was based on a speech by U.S. President George W. Bush on his vision for Israel and the Palestinian Authority in June 2002.

Little practical progress has been made in the implementation of the Roadmap because of the failure of the PA to clamp down on terrorism - the first phase of the plan. The election of Hamas also stymied any progress forward since Hamas does not recognize the Roadmap or other proposals for Israeli-Palestinian coexistence.

## **The Security Barrier/Fence**

In 2002, the Government of Israel formally approved plans to build a security fence or barrier as a defensive measure to prevent Palestinian terrorists from reaching their civilian targets inside Israel. The decision to build the fence was undertaken following over two years of unabated terrorism by Palestinians suicide bombers, who targeted Israeli buses, cafes, shopping centers and other gathering points for Israeli civilians. Over 1,000 Israelis were killed, and thousands severely injured in these attacks. Throughout this period, the Palestinian Authority did little to prevent these attacks or to abolish the

**Israel approved plans to build a security fence or barrier as a defensive measure to prevent Palestinian terrorists from reaching their civilian targets inside Israel.**

terrorist infrastructure despite its commitment to do so in agreements with Israel. Israel felt it had no choice but to take strong action to stop these terrorists from entering Israel from their operation centers in the West Bank.

The Government of Israel has stated that the security fence is a temporary and reversible measure that has been created in reaction to the reality of ongoing Palestinian terrorism. Israeli leaders have said that should Palestinian terrorism end, there will be no need for this protective barrier and it can be dismantled.

**The security fence is a temporary and reversible measure that has been created in reaction to the reality of ongoing Palestinian terrorism.**

The 480-mile security barrier, being constructed in phases, is comprised 97 percent of chain link fence and 3 percent of a concrete barrier. The entire barrier is a multi-fence system which incorporates ditches, barbed wire, patrol roads and observation systems. Contrary to anti-Israel propaganda, only 5 miles of the barrier is concrete, or can be described as "a wall." The concrete sections are primarily in the area of the Palestinian cities of Qalqilya and Tulkarim, the locus of many terrorist operations, where snipers often shoot at Israeli civilians.

The security fence is helping to prevent terrorist bombings. According to the Israeli government, there has been a dramatic decrease in Palestinian terrorism - not because there have been no attempted attacks, but because the security barrier has impeded terrorists from reaching Israeli cities, or has forced them to take more circuitous routes, leading to their capture. According to the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, according to the route of the barrier in 2005, 74 percent of the West Bank's 240,000 Jewish settlers will be placed on the Israeli side of the fence and 99.7 percent of West Bank Palestinians on the Palestinian side of the fence.

The fence has caused hardship for a small percentage of Palestinians located on or near its route; however, recent alterations to the route help it to affect a minimal number of people, especially given the population density and demographic complications that define the area. The Israeli Supreme Court has issued rulings on the barrier's route, ordering it changed in areas where it would lead to unnecessary hardship for Palestinians. More challenges and route changes are anticipated.

In July 2004, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued a decision on the Israeli security fence. The Court announced that Israel violated international law in the routing of the security fence and called on Israel to dismantle sections built in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. In its decision, the Court completely dismissed the arguments of Israel, along with those of 22 other nations who submitted written briefs, while accepting without reservation the arguments of the Palestinians and their supporters.

The issue of the fence was brought before the ICJ by a Palestinian-initiated resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2003. The resolution sent the issue to the ICJ for an advisory opinion on the question: "What are the legal consequences arising from the construction of the wall being built by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory." The Palestinian Authority and supporters had attempted to have the Security Council pass such a resolution, but when these efforts were unsuccessful, they turned instead to the General Assembly, where anti-Israel resolutions are routinely supported by the majority of member nations. The resolution passed 90-8, with 74 countries abstaining.

There was extensive controversy regarding the ICJ's involvement in this issue and their non-binding advisory opinion. Israel and its supporters argued that issues related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including the security fence, should be settled through bilateral negotiations, and not be predetermined or imposed by the ICJ or other international bodies. Furthermore, the countries who lobbied for the UN resolution to send the issue of the fence to the ICJ were more interested in scoring public relations points against Israel than in seeking constructive opportunities to promote reconciliation between Israel and the Palestinians.

## **Disengagement**

In December 2003, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, a long-time advocate for settlements, first announced plans for Israel to disengage from the entire Gaza Strip and from four settlements in the northern West Bank. In an address to the "Herzlyia Conference," Sharon argued that in the absence of a serious Palestinian peace partner and amidst ongoing Palestinian terrorism, Israel needed to take unilateral steps to ensure its own security and improve conditions on the ground. Sharon stated: "...it is a step Israel will take in the absence of any other option, in order to improve its security." "The purpose of the disengagement plan is to reduce terrorism as much as possible, and grant Israeli citizens the maximum level of security. The process of disengagement will lead to an improvement in the quality of life, and will help strengthen the Israeli economy."

**"[Disengagement] is a step Israel will take in the absence of any other option, in order to improve its security."**

The plan was approved by Israel's cabinet in June 2004 and by the Israeli Knesset in October 2004 and mechanisms were put in place to implement the pull-out, including the establishment of a "disengagement authority."

The disengagement plan required the uprooting and resettlement of twenty-five Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip and northern West Bank. Many of these settlers, had lived in the area for decades and built lives, families and business there.

Public opinion polls showed that the majority of Israelis supported the disengagement. Supporters of the plan argued that this painful move was necessary to protect Israel in the long term. They argued that that

**"The process of disengagement will lead to an improvement in the quality of life, and will help strengthen the Israeli economy."**

the cost of protecting 8,000-plus Israelis living in the midst of one million-plus Palestinians was hurting Israel economically and socially. Moreover, given the high Palestinian birthrate, were Israel to continue to administer the Gaza Strip, Palestinians would begin to outnumber the population of Israeli Jews within a few decades. Removing Israeli rule over the Palestinian population would ensure the continuation of a democratic, essentially Jewish nation of Israel

for years to come. The disengagement would also allow Israel's security apparatus to better protect those West Bank settlements which are more heavily populated, of clearer strategic or historical importance to the State, and likely to be annexed to Israel in a final status agreement with the Palestinians. Finally, they argued that an Israeli presence in the Gaza Strip was always intended to be temporary, and that it was always understood that Israel would give up control of Gaza and uproot its settlements as part of any negotiated final agreement with the Palestinians.

Opponents of the plan argued that Israel was retreating from Gaza “under fire” - that the decision to disengage is a capitulation to Palestinian terrorism, and not in the context of mutually agreed concessions. They argued that this move will be perceived as a show of weakness by the Palestinians and the Arab world, and rather than strengthening Israel's security, would lead to increased threats and attacks in the future. Some opponents reject the plan because it called for the ceding of the area given its role in Jewish history. Some were opposed in principal to the very idea of uprooting Jews from their homes.

Opponents of the plan organized large demonstrations in the period leading up to and during the disengagement, and groups traveled to the Gaza settlements where they staged (primarily) non-violent protests against the evacuations.

While initial plans called for an evacuation of all settlements by September 15, the army's operation was much quicker. Moreover, despite predictions of widespread “civil war” and amidst protests and acts of civil disobedience by some settlers and other opponents, the evacuations went remarkably smoothly and civilly. The disengagement officially began on August 17 and by August 22, all settlers had been evacuated from the Gaza Strip. The evacuation of residents of the four settlements in the West Bank was completed by August 23. The Israel Defense Forces officially left Gaza on September 12.

It was hoped that the Palestinian Authority would ensure a smooth transition of this area to full Palestinian control, and that many structures in the former settlements - including the greenhouses - would be used to benefit Palestinian housing and industry. Indeed, James Wolfensohn, the U.S. special envoy to the Middle East and former president of the World Bank, raised \$14 million in private donations to purchase the greenhouses from their Israeli owners so that Palestinians could take over these profitable enterprises. However, in the immediate aftermath of the Israeli withdrawal, Palestinians entered the former Israeli settlements and burned building - including synagogues - and materials from buildings and greenhouses were looted. The greenhouses are now operational under Palestinian administration, and there is some building in the settlements for Palestinian industry, educational institutions, and for private housing.

The evacuated settlers were compensated for the loss of their home and businesses. However, many have yet to find permanent housing or employment, and among these former Gaza settlers there is much dissatisfaction regarding the Government's assistance and responsiveness to their situation.

While the Israeli military fully withdrew from the Gaza Strip, there are ongoing security concerns. Most serious is the continual launching of Kassam rockets by Palestinian terrorist organizations from Gaza locations. Since August 2005, Palestinian terrorist groups have launched over 500 rocket attacks at vulnerable southern Israeli cities such as Sderot and nearby environs, landing in or near private homes, schools and day care and recreation centers.

## **Convergence/Realignment**

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert is advancing a Convergence or Realignment Plan (in Hebrew: *Ha'Hitkansut*) in which in the absence of a Palestinian negotiating partner, Israel would unilaterally disengage from much of the West Bank while setting a new border between the State of Israel and the Palestinian territories. While no details have been discussed publicly, the plan envisions the consolidation of the largest and most populous settlements into settlement blocs and incorporating them into Israel. The rest of the West Bank would be fully under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority, and

presumably would be joined with the Gaza Strip to create an independent Palestinian state. The Prime Minister has said that this plan would be implemented within four years.

It is believed that Ariel Sharon intended to pursue this type of policy when he established the centrist Kadima Party in November 2005, seeing a unilateral disengagement from the West Bank as a logical and necessary step following the disengagement from Gaza. Following his stroke and incapacitation and Ehud Olmert's election as Prime Minister, Kadima Party officials have implied that in promoting Convergence, they are continuing Sharon's legacy and vision. The international community has reacted positively but cautiously to the Plan, and have stressed that bilateral negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians over borders, withdrawal and settlements are preferable over unilateral action. Prime Minister Olmert said he will still pursue talks with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, but would go ahead with Convergence should feasible negotiations with Abbas be impossible (particularly given the Hamas-dominated PA government).

**The plan envisions the consolidation of the largest and most populous settlements into settlement blocs and incorporating them into Israel. The rest of the West Bank would be fully under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority, and presumably would be joined with the Gaza Strip to create an independent Palestinian state.**

## **Lebanon War of 2006**

On July 12, 2006, Hezbollah terrorists crossed the border from Lebanon into Israel and attacked a group of Israeli soldiers patrolling the border, killing eight soldiers and kidnapping two others-Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev.

Israel responded with precision air strikes specifically aimed at Hezbollah positions and operational assets inside Lebanon; Hezbollah immediately unleashed a barrage of Katyusha rockets targeting civilian population centers in Israel's northern cities including Kiryat Shemona, Haifa and Safed. The rocket fire continued at an unprecedented pace of more than 100 per day, totaling nearly 4,000 rockets over the duration of the conflict.

Israel's air strikes targeted known Hezbollah positions including the offices of its leadership, weapons storage sites, bunkers and rocket launch sites. Israel sought to disable infrastructure used by Hezbollah including Beirut's airport and certain roads and bridges through which Iran and Syria supplied weaponry to Hezbollah. Air strikes were supported by limited ground incursions to specific villages in southern Lebanon near Israel's border followed by a broader ground offensive with the goal of expelling as many Hezbollah terrorists as possible from southern Lebanon.

Hezbollah terrorists have occupied the region south of the Litani River since shortly after Israel's U.N.-certified withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000. Following that withdrawal, Hezbollah terrorists moved into the vacated area and established themselves in bunkers throughout Lebanon's civilian population, despite the presence of UNIFIL observer troops stationed there under the terms of Security Council Resolution 1559. Since Israel's withdrawal in 2000, Hezbollah attacked Israel more than 20 times with cross-border raids and Katyusha rockets. Hezbollah terrorists live among civilians, store their weapons and hold meetings in civilian houses, and fire their rockets into Israel from civilian neighborhoods, in direct violation of international humanitarian law.

Israel's air strikes were intended to hit only legitimate military targets. Israel took extra steps to ensure minimal civilian casualties. In advance of strikes in civilian areas, Israel gave up a certain degree of surprise by

dropping fliers and sending radio messages warning civilians to leave specific areas. Israel also employed precise ordnance rather than larger, more effective ordnance to avoid collateral damage.

Despite Israel's best efforts, the situation created on the ground by Hezbollah led to the temporary displacement of 800,000 Lebanese civilians and the death of an estimated 1,000 Lebanese. Hezbollah does not report its casualty figures, and many non-uniformed Hezbollah terrorists are suspected of being among the dead.

During the conflict, Hezbollah indiscriminately fired Katyusha rockets at Israeli population centers with the intent of harming innocent civilians. At least 157 Israelis were killed during the conflict and countless more injured. The rockets also drove nearly 400,000 Israelis from their homes in the north, while those remaining had to spend long periods in bomb shelters for the duration of the monthlong conflict. Damage to northern Israel surpassed \$1.5 billion.

The conflict subsided with the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1701, passed unanimously on August 11, 2006 and adopted by Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's Cabinet -- also unanimously -- on August 13, 2006. The resolution called for an immediate cessation of hostilities to be followed by a withdrawal of Israeli forces from southern Lebanon during a simultaneous takeover of the territory by a 15,000 troop contingent of the Lebanese army and a 15,000 troop beefed-up UNIFIL force comprised of international troops. The resolution required that Lebanon assert its sovereignty over the entire country and forbade the rearming of terrorist militias in Lebanon.

Nearly identical to Resolution 1559, which was passed in 2004 but never fully implemented, these stipulations require that Hezbollah be disarmed and not rearmed by any foreign powers, including most notably Iran and Syria.

## **United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1559/1701**

Resolutions 1559 and 1701 both broadly aim at preventing Lebanon from becoming or remaining a failed state and at creating the circumstances that will result in the security of the Israel-Lebanon border. Resolution 1559 was adopted in 2004, but was never fully implemented. Resolution 1701 was passed by the Security Council in August 2006 with the immediate aim of halting the hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah terrorists that began in July of that year, and with the longer term aim of implementing the un-enforced stipulations of 1559.

Both resolutions call for Lebanon to assert its sovereignty over the whole of its country, including the southern region, which has been under Hezbollah control since Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000. This is to be accomplished by the deployment of the Lebanese army over all of its territory and the disarming of Hezbollah as an illegal armed militia operating on Lebanese territory. The resolutions stipulate that no militias, domestic or foreign, are to be armed within Lebanon. Foreign powers, including specifically Iran and Syria, are forbidden from rearming Hezbollah.

Hezbollah remained active and armed by its Iranian and Syrian allies in violation of 1559, and thus the same stipulations were included in 1701. The new resolution also called for the immediate cessation of hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah, followed by the simultaneous withdrawal of Israeli forces from southern Lebanon and the deployment of the Lebanese army and an expanded international U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) force into the area.

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# RESPONSES TO COMMON INACCURACIES ABOUT ISRAEL

## Palestinian Violence and Terrorism

**INACCURACY:** The Palestinian use of terrorism is understandable since they have no other weapon to fight Israeli occupation.

**RESPONSE:** The use of terrorism is never justified. Terrorism is the premeditated use of violence deliberately directed against random civilians, with the aim of killing as many as possible and sowing psychological fear and despair. There is no moral justification for terrorism.

Moreover, it is simply untrue that Palestinians have no option besides terrorism. Viable bilateral negotiations with Israel offer the way to a more stable and secure future for all Israelis and Palestinians. Indeed, in 2000, a Palestinian campaign of terrorism erupted just after Israel had made its most ambitious offer for a final status agreement that would have created a Palestinian state in 95 percent of the West Bank and 100 percent of the Gaza Strip. Negotiations were bringing the Palestinian state closer to reality.

While there is genuine frustration and suffering among Palestinians, the unconditional end to Palestinian violence and terrorism, a true acceptance of Israel's right to exist and a commitment to bilateral negotiations are the true "weapons" to resolve the conflict.

**INACCURACY:** The Palestinian use of terrorism is a legitimate tool in the Palestinian national struggle for liberation.

**RESPONSE:** As many Palestinian leaders, including Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, have publicly acknowledged, violence and terrorism do nothing to hasten the realization of Palestinian nationalist aspirations.

**The unconditional end to Palestinian violence and terrorism, a true acceptance of Israel's right to exist and bilateral negotiations are the true "weapons" to resolve the conflict.**

Terror attacks bring fear to everyday life for Israelis, who know that a suicide terrorist attack can happen anywhere to anybody - to children on the way to school on a city bus, to teens gathering at a nightclub or shopping mall, or to people socializing at a cafe. Following such attacks, grief and fear are often joined by anger towards the terrorists and to the Palestinians who condone, celebrate or incite terrorism. A terror attack merely convinces Israelis that the Palestinian people do not seek reconciliation.

While there is genuine frustration among Palestinians, viable bilateral Israeli-Palestinian negotiations offer the only way to achieve a more stable and secure future for all Israelis and Palestinians. However, the willingness of the Israeli public to accept substantial concessions depends on their belief that the Palestinians are truly interested in peace and reconciliation, capable of carrying out agreements, and resolutely reject terrorism and violence.

**INACCURACY:** The Palestinian people are waging a war of independence against a colonial, hegemonic power.

**RESPONSE:** In no way can the State of Israel be considered a colonial or hegemonic power. Israel is not a foreign invader. The State of Israel is built on the foundation of thousands of years of Jewish connection to and a presence in the land.

Moreover, Israel has no desire to empire-build, gain financial benefit, or rule over the lives of millions of Arab Palestinians in the West Bank or Gaza Strip. For example, Israel willingly withdrew from the oil-rich Sinai Peninsula in exchange for a comprehensive peace agreement with Egypt in 1979.

Israel's presence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip was the result of a defensive war and the decades-long refusal of surrounding Arab states to negotiate peace with Israel. As a result of the Oslo process, by September 2000, Israel had redeployed from Palestinian population centers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, resulting in 99 percent of the Palestinian public living under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority. When the Palestinians began a campaign of violence and terror against Israeli civilians, Israel had no choice but to re-enter some of these areas. Indeed, in August 2005, Israel unilaterally disengaged from the Gaza Strip, removing its military presence and evacuating 25 settlements. In the absence of viable negotiations, the Government of Israel is considering further redeployments from the West Bank.

## **Israeli Responses to Palestinian Violence**

**INACCURACY:** Israel is building a "wall" on the West Bank in order to encircle the Palestinian population and to seize more land for Israeli control.

**The security fence is helping to prevent terrorist bombings.**

**RESPONSE:** Israel's security barrier is a defensive measure enacted by Israel to prevent Palestinian terrorists from reaching their civilian targets inside Israel.

The decision to build the barrier was undertaken by the Government of Israel in 2002 following two years of unabated terrorism by Palestinians suicide bombers, who targeted Israeli buses, cafes, shopping centers and other gathering points for Israeli civilians. Over 1,000 Israelis were killed, and thousands severely injured in these attacks. Throughout this period, the Palestinian Authority did little to nothing to prevent these attacks or to abolish the terrorist infrastructure despite its commitment to do so in agreements with Israel. Israel had no choice but to take strong action to stop these terrorists from entering Israel from their operation centers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Moreover, this barrier is no "wall." The 480-mile security barrier, currently under construction, is comprised 97 percent of chain link fence and 3 percent of a concrete barrier. The entire barrier is a multi-fence system which incorporates ditches, barbed wire, patrol roads and observation systems. Contrary to anti-Israel propaganda, only 5 miles of the barrier is concrete, or can be described as "a wall." The concrete sections are primarily in the area of the Palestinian cities of Qualqilya and Tulkarim, and in the outskirts of Jerusalem, the locus of many terrorist operations, where snipers often shoot at Israeli civilians.

Most importantly, the security fence is helping to prevent terrorist bombings. Israeli security officials say that scores of attacks have been thwarted since 2003 as terrorists have been unable to reach Israeli cities, or have been forced to take more circuitous routes, leading to their capture.

The fence has caused hardship for a small percentage of Palestinians located on or near its route, however, recent alterations to the route help it to affect a minimal number of people, especially given the population density and demographic complications that define the area. The Israeli Supreme Court has issued a number of rulings on the barrier's route, ordering it changed in areas where it would lead to unnecessary hardship for Palestinians. It is anticipated that further modifications to the route will continue to be made.

The Government of Israel has stated that the security fence is a temporary and reversible measure that has been created in reaction to the reality of ongoing Palestinian terrorism. Israeli leaders have said that should Palestinian terrorism end, there will be no need for this protective barrier and it can be dismantled.

**INACCURACY:** The Israeli army uses excessive force against unarmed Palestinians.

**RESPONSE:** Israel has shown the greatest possible restraint and makes a determined effort to limit Palestinian casualties. Whenever possible, the Israel Defense Forces respond to Palestinian violence in a very directed manner, at carefully specified targets. These operations to root out terrorists and their infrastructure are consistent with the Israeli Government's right and responsibility to defend Israel and its population from attack. The Israeli military seeks to prevent civilian casualties, in stark contrast to the Palestinian terrorist organizations' goal of killing as many civilians as possible.

**Most Palestinian casualties are individuals who are directly engaged in anti-Israel violence and terrorism who aim to kill and maim as many civilians as possible in their attacks.**

Israel has had no option but to go into Palestinian centers, since Palestinian terrorists and militia often deliberately position themselves in densely populated areas. Terrorist organizations set up their operation and training centers in the middle of heavily populated centers, such as West Bank and Gaza refugee camps. Snipers shoot guns or launch mortar shells and rockets at Israeli targets from residential areas. Tunnels smuggling weapons from Egypt are deliberately situated in private homes in Gaza. In the early days of the violence, Palestinian Tanzim shot at Israeli forces from behind groups of demonstrating children and young men. During these demonstrations, stones, firebombs, and Molotov cocktails were thrown by adults and children alike, and protestors were often seen carrying rifles and machine-guns.

Most Palestinian casualties are individuals who are directly engaged in anti-Israel violence and terrorism who aim to kill and maim as many civilians as possible in their attacks. Tragically, innocent Palestinians have been caught in the crossfire. This is in contrast to Palestinian terrorist operations, which seek to kill as many civilians as possible. In many cases of Palestinian casualties, the Israeli military conducts internal investigations to determine whether errors were made by its soldiers.

**INACCURACY:** The purpose of Israel's policy of "closure" and its system of checkpoints is to collectively punish the entire Palestinian population for the acts of individuals and to deliberately cause economic hardship to the Palestinians.

**RESPONSE:** The closures and checkpoints are instituted by the Israeli government to protect its citizens. Border closures and checkpoints have been among the only mechanisms at Israel's disposal to pre-

vent would-be suicide bombers from entering Israeli cities. Indeed, checkpoints have allowed Israel to thwart numerous terrorists attempting to enter Israeli population centers in this manner. Israel understands the economic hardship the closures impose upon Palestinian civilians who cannot go to their jobs in Israel or receive and send shipments. Israel eases the closures and passage through checkpoints at the first sign that the violence has abated and the threat of terrorism reduced. The checkpoints themselves have been terrorist targets. In January 2004, a 22-year-old mother of two detonated a bomb strapped to her body at the Erez checkpoint in Gaza, killing four soldiers.

Because of the checkpoint system, would-be terrorists attempted to enter Israel through uninhabited and unmanned areas. The building of Israel's security fence aims to prevent such infiltrations.

## **Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process / Disengagement / Convergence**

**INACCURACY:** Israel is not interested in or prepared to make meaningful compromises to achieve peace with the Palestinians.

**RESPONSE:** Israel is fully committed to pursuing negotiated agreements with the Palestinians so that it may finally live in peace and security. Peace has proven difficult only for want of peace partners willing to recognize Israel's right to exist and able to uphold their peace commitments. Israel was able to reach historic peace agreements with Egypt (1979) and Jordan (1994) in which both sides made serious compromises for the sake of normalized relations.

Public opinion polls in Israel since the start of the Oslo process in 1993 consistently show that the vast majority of Israelis are supportive of negotiations with the Palestinians and support making extremely difficult compromises on territory, settlements, Jerusalem and other contentious matters. Recognizing this great support for peace, every candidate for Prime Minister of Israel since 1993 has pledged to continue the pursuit of peace - albeit with different approaches.

However, with the start of Palestinian violence in September 2000, Israelis grew skeptical of the Palestinian commitment to reconciliation. In the absence of a serious Palestinian negotiating partner but still interested in improving conditions on the ground, the Israeli government unilaterally disengaged from the Gaza Strip, proof of its willingness to make painful sacrifices even when mutual cooperation is not available. Israel is considering further unilateral moves from the West Bank, while still remaining ready to engage in serious bilateral peace negotiations should negotiations with the PA be viable.

**INACCURACY:** Israel's disengagement from Gaza in August 2005 and its plans for a similar move from parts of the West Bank are ploys to strengthen Israel's hold on the rest of the West Bank. Decisions such as borders should be determined in negotiations with the Palestinians, and not by Israel alone.

**RESPONSE:** Israel's disengagement plans are a means to ensure its own security and improve conditions on the ground in the absence of a Palestinian negotiating partner. This does not necessarily preclude further negotiations with the Palestinians or further Israeli territorial concessions.

The Gaza disengagement was initiated when prospects for negotiations with the Palestinians were very bleak. The Israeli Government believed that given the Palestinian Authority's collusion with the cam-

paign of terrorism there was no hope for a mutually negotiated agreement. At the same time, the Israeli Government realized that something needed to be done - even if it was done by Israel alone - to change the situation on the ground and enhance Israel's long term security. While it was understood that the disengagement from Gaza would be painful and difficult given the uprooting of Israeli settlements, it was believed it was the bold step Israel needed to make. A disengagement from Gaza would free the army from protecting 8,000-plus Israeli settlers living in the midst of Palestinian population of over a million (and demographic studies show, quickly growing). It was also stressed that this move was intended to improve the life of Gaza Palestinians who would no longer have to deal with Israeli soldiers or Israeli settlements in their midst.

**Israel's disengagement plans are a means to ensure its own security and improve conditions on the ground in the absence of a Palestinian negotiating partner. This does not necessarily preclude further negotiations with the Palestinians or further Israeli territorial concessions.**

A year after the Gaza disengagement, bilateral negotiations are again on hold, not because of Israel's actions, but because the lack of a partner on the Palestinian side. The PA Hamas leadership rejects Israel's right to exist, continues to support terrorism, and does not recognize negotiations or agreements with Israel. Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas has proven himself incapable of carrying out agreements with Israel - particularly as regards the ongoing operations of terrorist organizations.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has stated that he is giving the Palestinians time to come to the negotiating table themselves, but they must first combat terrorism, guarantee border security, and Hamas itself must repudiate terrorism and recognize Israel's right to exist.

However, in the meantime, Israel needs to go forth with policies that will ensure its own security. Thus, Prime Minister Olmert is considering unilateral measures, specifically a retrenchment from a large area of the West Bank, which will include the uprooting of Israeli settlements similar to the unilateral disengagement Israel undertook from Gaza in August 2005. Such a move also aims to improve the quality of life for Palestinians - who will be fully governed by Palestinians and have the ability to build up an independent state with limited contact with Israeli civilians and military.

**INACCURACY:** The disengagement from Gaza was a capitulation to terrorism. Olmert's proposed realignment or convergence plan is similarly misguided. It rewards the Palestinians with territory without getting anything in return.

**RESPONSE:** Israel disengaged from Gaza and is proposing to do the same from areas of the West Bank out of its own long-term security and political interests. It is not a direct response to Palestinian terrorism but an attempt to ameliorate an intractable situation.

Prime Minister Sharon initiated the Gaza disengagement policy at a time when the Israeli military had managed to quell Palestinian violence and many of the terrorist groups were in disarray. It was not believed that disengaging from Gaza would reduce their operations. Indeed, it is the security fence and Israel's continued hard line against terrorist groups (most of whom operate from the West Bank) that has led to a decrease in the number of attacks against Israeli civilian center.

Similarly, Israel's proposed convergence or realignment plan, aims to ensure the long-term security and viability of the largest settlement blocs, and a strong border with the West Bank.

Whatever deployments may take place, Israel has said it will not refrain from reacting to terrorist activity wherever it originates.

**INACCURACY:** The Palestinians had no choice but to reject the Israeli proposals at Camp David.

**RESPONSE:** At the Camp David Summit in July 2000, Palestinians had the opportunity to negotiate a final peace agreement with Israel that would have provided them with a Palestinian state. Prime Minister Ehud Barak offered the Palestinians a final status agreement with concessions that went far beyond what most Israelis ever expected. Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasir Arafat refused to accept an “end of conflict” agreement, offered no counteroffer, failed to demonstrate any flexibility or willingness to compromise and clung to maximalist positions on the contentious issues under negotiation. There was no reason or justification for the inscrutable Palestinian rejection of the Barak offer and their refusal to present a counteroffer after seven years of anticipating final status negotiations.

After rejecting the Israeli offer - which included extensive concessions on sharing Jerusalem, including the Temple Mount, establishing an independent Palestinian state in 100 percent of the Gaza Strip and as much as 95 percent of the West Bank, uprooting isolated settlements - the Palestinian walked away from negotiations.

After the Summit, President Clinton openly acknowledged Israel's tremendous concessions and stated that Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak “showed particular courage and vision and an understanding of the historical importance of the moment.” On his return to Israel, Prime Minister Barak declared: “Today I return from Camp David, and can look into the millions of eyes and say with regret: We have not yet succeeded. We did not succeed because we did not find a partner prepared to make decisions on all issues. We did not succeed because our Palestinian neighbors have not yet internalized the fact that in order to achieve peace, each side has to give up some of their dreams; to give, not only to demand.”

In the aftermath of Camp David, Palestinians publicly declared that the failure of Camp David was due to lack of preparation by the Americans, personality differences between Barak and Arafat, and by Barak's “take-it-or-leave-it” negotiating posture. These excuses do not explain the Palestinian behavior at the Summit. Instead, Camp David demonstrated that Arafat and the Palestinian leadership had unrealistic expectations that they could force Israel to concede to their maximalist demands without making important compromises of their own. With the Palestinian behavior at Camp David and their turn to violence, Israelis became skeptical of the Palestinian commitment to peace and the viability of the Palestinian leadership as partners for peace. Ehud Barak himself said that at Camp David, Yasir Arafat and the Palestinian leadership was “unmasked.”

**INACCURACY:** The concept of a two-state solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is unfeasible and outdated. Instead, there should be one state, a “bi-national” state that would be created out of Israel and the West Bank and Gaza Strip that would protect the Jewish/Israeli and Palestinian identity and interests of its citizens.

**RESPONSE:** The proposal of a bi-national state is nothing less than a veiled attempt to abolish Israel as a Jewish state.

Out of nearly 200 states in the international system, only the Jewish state is asked to end its own existence. Binationalism, therefore, means that the Jewish nation is being asked to surrender sovereign rights which other nations take for granted. It is unrealistic and unacceptable to expect Jews in Israel to voluntarily end their own sovereign existence.

**It is unrealistic and unacceptable to expect Jews in Israel to voluntarily end their own sovereign existence.**

Given the high birth rate among the Palestinians, Jews would very soon be a minority within this new country thus likely ending any semblance of equal representation and protections. Moreover, given the degree of hostility to Jews by many Palestinians, what is euphemistically called “binationalism” would mean persecution and oppression for those Jews allowed to remain on the territory of their former state.

Finally, as Israeli journalist Yossi Klein Halevi has argued, “the notion that Palestinians and Jews, who can't even negotiate a two-state solution, could coexist in one happy state is so ludicrous that only the naive or the malicious would fall for it.”

Any just solution to the conflict, therefore, cannot be based on the disappearance of the Jewish state.

## **Israeli Settlements**

**INACCURACY:** Settlements are a violation of international law.

**RESPONSE:** Settlements, Jewish communities that were established in the West Bank and Gaza Strip after the territories were gained in the 1967 War, do not violate international law.

Israel's administration of the territory in 1967 replaced Jordan's control of the West Bank and Egypt's of the Gaza Strip. Egypt and Jordan gained control of these areas during the 1948 War with the newly-established Israel, which according to the 1947 U.N. Partition Plan, were to be part of the independent Arab state to be established alongside an independent Jewish state (a plan rejected by Arab nations and Palestinian leadership). Neither Jordan nor Egypt had legal sovereignty over these areas. Israel maintains that these areas can thus not be considered “occupied territories” under international law, since Israel did not “occupy” it from another sovereign nation, but are “disputed territories” over which there are competing claims, and whose future must be determined through negotiations. Since 1967, Israeli governments have maintained a willingness to withdraw from areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in a peace agreement with the Arabs. Israel uprooted the settlements of the Gaza Strip on August 2005 as part of its unilateral disengagement from Gaza.

Critics of Israel frequently cite Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits the forcible transfer of segments of a population of a state to the territory of another state which it has occupied through the use of armed force, as proof of the illegality of settlements. However, Israel maintains that the Geneva Convention, drafted after World War II, was intended to protect local populations from dis-

placement, such as the forced population transfers experienced before and during the war in Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary. The situation in today's West Bank is clearly different. Israel has not forcibly transferred Israelis to these settlements. Rather, Israeli settlers voluntarily reside in areas where Jews have historically dwelled.

Jews have lived in the West Bank throughout recorded history, until 1948 when they were forced to flee the invading Arab armies. Indeed, several of the current settlement communities existed prior to 1948 when they were overrun by invading Arab armies. Kfar Etzion and other villages in the Jerusalem-Bethlehem corridor, for example, fell to Arab forces in May 1948 and those captured were massacred. Sons and daughters of those who lived there until 1948 were the first to return after the 1967 war.

## **Palestinian Refugees**

**INACCURACY:** Palestinian refugees have a “right of return” under international law - the right to reclaim and return to their former homes inside Israel.

**RESPONSE:** Neither international law nor international statute call for a Palestinian “right of return” to Israel, but rather for a resolution of the long-standing Palestinian refugee problem which was caused by the war imposed on Israel by the Arab invasion in 1948. Nonetheless, on humanitarian grounds, Israel is committed to participating in an international effort to resettle and compensate Palestinian refugees.

United Nations Resolutions 242 and 338 refer not to a “right of return,” but of the need to resolve the Palestinian refugee issue. The international resolutions Palestinians often base their claim of a “right” on, such as the December 1948 United Nations General Assembly Resolution 194 and Article 12 of the December 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, are non-binding. Moreover, these non-binding resolutions are inconsistent with current conditions and realities. Resolution 194 calls for a return of refugees to “live at peace with their neighbors,” hardly realistic given the refugees’ long-standing refusal to recognize Israel's right to exist. Article 12 refers to individuals, not a group of people, who left the country as a result of war and infers a relationship, even citizenship, between the individual and the country.

The “right of return” is also not viable on practical grounds. An influx of millions of Palestinians into Israel would pose a threat to its national security and upset the country's demographic makeup. Moreover, the “right of return” of Palestinian refugees was a rallying cry in the decades that the PLO and Arab nations did not recognize Israel's right to exist and actively sought to bring about Israel's downfall and replace it with a Palestinian state to which Palestinians would return. (Indeed, Arab states with Palestinian refugee populations used this “right” as an excuse not to provide Palestinians with citizenship, or educational and professional opportunities.) In 1993, the PLO officially recognized Israel's right to exist and engaged in a negotiating process that was expected to ultimately establish an independent Palestinian state alongside the State of Israel. Palestinian refugees should rightly be resettled in a mutually negotiated Palestinian state, not in the State of Israel. Indeed, U.S. President George Bush declared in April 2004: “It seems clear that an agreed, just, fair and realistic framework for a solution to the Palestinian refugee issue, as part of any final status agreement, will need to be found through the establishment of a Palestinian state and the settling of Palestinian refugees there, rather than Israel.”

Israel is not responsible for the Palestinian refugee problem since it was the result of a war forced on Israel by invading Arab armies. However, Israel has said that on humanitarian grounds it will participate in an international effort to resolve the situation through resettlement and compensation. Israel would also consider individual cases of family unification for Palestinians. This international effort should also provide compensation for as many as 800,000 Jews who were expelled from their native Arab nations or forced to flee as a result of state-sponsored anti-Zionist violence.

**INACCURACY:** Palestinians were systematically expelled from their land by Israel in 1948.

**RESPONSE:** There was no official, deliberate or systemic Israeli policy of expelling Palestinians. As many as 700,000 Palestinians abandoned their homes in the newly created State of Israel when five Arab armies invaded the newly declared state on May 15, 1948. During the chaotic and volatile war, many of the Palestinians who left did so voluntarily to avoid the ongoing war or at the urging of Arab leaders who promised that all who left would return after a quick Arab victory over the new Jewish state. Recent historical studies have revealed that some Palestinians were forced to flee by individuals or groups fighting for Israel. Palestinians who stayed were made full citizens of the new State of Israel.

## **Israel/Zionism Is Racist**

**INACCURACY:** Zionism is a racist ideology.

**RESPONSE:** Zionism is the Jewish national movement of rebirth and renewal in the land of Israel - the historical birthplace of the Jewish people. The yearning to return to Zion, the biblical term for both the Land of Israel and Jerusalem, has been the cornerstone of Jewish religious life since the Jewish exile from the land two thousand years ago, and is embedded in Jewish prayer, ritual, literature and culture.

Rooted in the liberal principles of freedom, democracy, equality, and social justice, Zionism is fundamentally opposed to racism. Israel is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society, comprised of Jews and non-Jews from at least 100 different countries from diverse ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds.

**Rooted in the liberal principles of freedom, democracy, equality, and social justice, Zionism is fundamentally opposed to racism.**

Israel's Law of Return, which some critics of Israel accuse of being "racist," is for Jews a potent testimonial to the safe and free haven they will always have in the State of Israel after centuries of persecution and isolation. Israel's uniqueness as a country which grants automatic citizenship to Jews (as well as their non-Jewish immediate family members) who seek to settle there is in no way racist. Individuals ineligible for automatic citizenship under the Law of Return are eligible for Israeli citizenship under regular procedures equivalent to such requirements in other countries.

The false equation of "Zionism equals racism" has its origins in the passage of the Arab and Soviet-sponsored United Nations resolution of November 10, 1975 which declared Zionism a "form of racism and racial discrimination." The highly politicized resolution was aimed at denying Israel its political

legitimacy by attacking its moral basis for existence. The resolution, which UN Secretary General Kofi Annan described as a “low point” in the history of the UN, was finally repealed on December 16, 1991. Unfortunately, there have been numerous efforts by Arab representatives at international conferences and forums to reintroduce this heinous equation.

**INACCURACY:** As a self-described “Jewish State,” Israel is by nature an undemocratic and discriminatory country.

**As in every country, much more needs to be done to promote greater educational and employment opportunities for minorities, particularly for Israeli Arabs.**

**RESPONSE:** Democracy is the cornerstone of the State of Israel. As declared in its Declaration of Independence, Israel's government will be “for the benefit of all its inhabitants; it will be based on freedom, justice, peace as envisaged by the Prophets of Israel, it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture; it will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions; and it will be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.”

Israel's two official languages are Hebrew and Arabic, and all citizens regardless of religion, ethnicity or color are accorded full civil and political rights, and equal participation in all aspects of Israeli social, political, and civic life.

As in every country, much more needs to be done to promote greater educational and employment opportunities for minorities, including Israeli Arabs and new immigrants. Much of this disparity is due to scarce resources. The Israeli government has committed to investing in the necessary infrastructure and assistance for these communities and there are numerous non-government organizations in Israel and abroad who monitor government policies and treatment of minorities.

**INACCURACY:** Israel treats Arabs as second-class citizens.

**RESPONSE:** Israeli law makes no distinction between its Arab and Jewish citizens. Israeli Arab citizens enjoy the same rights as their Jewish neighbors. They are free to practice their religion without discrimination, in accordance with Israel's commitment to democracy and freedom. There are a number of Israeli Arab parties represented in the Israeli Knesset (parliament), and Arab members of Knesset are extremely vocal in promoting their issues and opinions. Recently, disappointed by the scarcity of Arab ministers in high-level governmental positions, the Israeli courts instituted a policy of affirmative action for Arabs in the higher echelons of the government. In 2004, an Israeli Arab, Salim Jubran, was appointed to the Israeli Supreme Court.

**Those that make the comparison between the Jewish state and the Nazis and Hitler - who perpetrated the greatest and largest act of anti-Semitism in world history - have not chosen this comparison innocently or dispassionately.**

As in every country, much more needs to be done to promote greater educational and employment opportunities for minorities, particularly for Israeli Arabs. The Israeli government has committed to investing in the necessary infrastructure and assistance for these communities. As in the United States, non-governmental organizations publicly advocate for increased investment in Israeli Arab communities.

It is important to note that Palestinian Arabs living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip are not citizens of Israel. After gaining territory in the 1967 War, Israel found itself with a million Palestinian Arabs under its administration. Israel hoped its authority over the Palestinians in these areas would be short-lived and would be exchanged for peace with its Arab neighbors. As a result, Israel did not annex or incorporate the West Bank and Gaza Strip into Israel proper, and thus did not apply the same laws that govern Israeli civilian life.

**INACCURACY:** Israeli treatment of the Palestinians today is comparable to the treatment of Nazis toward the Jews, and policies of “ethnic cleansing” or “genocide.”

**RESPONSE:** Absolutely no comparison can be made between the complex Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the atrocities committed by the Nazis against the Jews. The Nazis' “final solution” to the “Jewish problem” was the deliberate and systematic extermination of European Jewry. Hitler's final solution led to the calculated, premeditated murder of six million Jews and the destruction of thriving Jewish communities across Europe.

**There is no Israeli ideology, policy or plan to segregate, persecute or mistreat the Arab population.**

Nor can Israeli actions or policies be characterized as acts of ethnic cleansing or genocide. Nothing of the sort is occurring, or has ever occurred. While there have been tragic casualties throughout this conflict and instances when Israel has felt compelled to impose harsh measures in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, there is no Israeli ideology, policy or plan to persecute, exterminate or expel the Palestinian population. Israeli policies toward the Palestinians are dictated solely by its need to defend its population and combat threats to Israel's security, while promoting a negotiated resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Those that make the comparison between the Jewish state and the Nazis and Hitler - who perpetrated the greatest and largest act of anti-Semitism in world history - have not chosen this comparison innocently or dispassionately. It is a charge that is purposefully directed at Jews in an effort to associate the victims of Nazi crimes with the Nazi perpetrators, and serves to diminish the significance and uniqueness of the Holocaust. To make such a comparison constitutes blatant hostility toward Jews, Jewish history and the legitimacy of the Jewish State of Israel.

**INACCURACY:** Israel is an apartheid state and should be fought in the same manner that apartheid in South Africa was fought - through divestment and other punitive economic steps.

**RESPONSE:** In no way can the treatment of Arabs by the State of Israel be compared to the treatment of the Blacks of South Africa under apartheid. There is no Israeli ideology, policy or plan to segregate, persecute or mistreat the Arab population.

Apartheid was a uniquely repressive system, through which South Africa's white minority enforced its domination over the black and other non-white racial groups who made up more than 90 percent of the population. Apartheid - which means “separate development” in the Afrikaans language - was enabled through a host of laws such as the Group Areas Act, which banned blacks from “white areas,” the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act, which prevented blacks and whites from marrying or even having sexual relations with each other, and the Bantu Education Act, which regulated the education of black children in accordance with their subservient social position. The regime imposed “Bantustans” -

impoverished autonomous homelands whose borders were designed to exclude economically viable land - upon 12 million black South Africans.

No such laws exist in Israel, which pledged itself to safeguard the equal rights of all citizens in its Declaration of Independence. Arab citizens of Israel have the full range of civil and political rights, including the right to organize politically, the right to vote and the right to speak and publish freely. Moreover, Israel has declared its acceptance, in principle, of a sovereign Palestinian state in most of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Divestment campaigns singularly demonize Israel and designate Israel for pariah status, while ignoring other states, including many in the Middle East, which systematically abuse human rights. As Benjamin Pogrund, the prominent South African Jewish journalist who was imprisoned by the apartheid regime, has written: "Palestinians are not oppressed on racial grounds as Arabs but are, rather, the competitors in a national/religious conflict for land."

## **Anti-Semitism and Criticism of Israel**

**INACCURACY:** Jews unfairly label anyone who criticizes Israel an anti-Semite.

**RESPONSE:** Criticism of particular Israeli actions or policies in and of itself does not constitute anti-Semitism. Certainly the sovereign State of Israel and its government can be legitimately criticized just like any other country or government in the world. However, it is undeniable that there are those whose criticism of Israel or of Zionism is used to mask anti-Semitism.

**However, it is undeniable that there are those whose criticism of Israel or of "Zionism" is used to mask anti-Semitism.**

How can one distinguish between criticism of Israel that is within the bounds of legitimate political discourse, and that which crosses the line into anti-Semitism? One way is to recognize when those that criticize Israel invoke traditional anti-Jewish references, accusations and conspiracy theories. For example, when Israelis are depicted using *Der Sturmer*-like stereotypes: i.e., hooked noses; bent over, dark, ugly, demonic figures. Or when Israelis are accused of crimes that are reminiscent of age-old anti-Jewish conspiracy theories - i.e., alleged Israeli/Jewish plans for world domination; a Jewish cabal (elders of Zion) behind Israel's strength, or allegations of Israeli actions that are eerily similar to medieval blood libels.

Another common theme is when Israelis are compared to Nazis and Hitler. This comparison between the Jewish state and those who perpetrated the greatest and largest act of anti-Semitism in world history is not an impartial or dispassionate accusation. It is a charge that is purposefully directed at Jews in an effort to associate the victims of the Nazi crimes with the Nazi perpetrators, and serves to diminish the significance and uniqueness of the Holocaust. To make such a comparison is an act of blatant hostility toward Jews and Jewish history.

Finally, deeper bias against Israel and Jews may be evident when Israel is held to a different standard than any other country in the world. Such an example is when critics of Israel question or deny Israel's right to exist. No one questions France's right to exist or Egypt's, simply because there is disagreement

with their policies. Only the Jewish state's legitimacy is in question. Similarly questions of motivation arise, when Israel is singled out for criticism for actions or policies that other nations around the world perform with impunity.

**INACCURACY:** Arabs who hate Jews cannot be labeled as anti-Semitic because they themselves are Semites.

**RESPONSE:** The term anti-Semitism was formulated to refer specifically to the hatred of Jews. The term has never been used to refer to hatred against Arabs. The recent claims by some Arabs to the contrary is an effort to diminish the potency of the term, or seize this resonant term as their own.

**Finally, deeper bias against Israel and Jews may be evident when Israel is held to a different standard than any other country in the world.**

The historical roots of the term "anti-Semitism" go back to the 19th century when it was invented and popularized by anti-Jewish German writers and intellectuals in the closing decades of the 19th century. The anthropology of that era gave the name "Semitic" - from the Hebrew "Shem," one of Noah's sons - to a family of languages that included Hebrew, Arabic, Assyrian and Phoenician; members of groups that spoke these languages were "Semites." Through the ministrations of late-century racial "science," Semitic was increasingly used to designate Jews as a "race" with inborn biological attributes. The use of the term "anti-Semitism" to specifically denote opposition and antagonism to Jews was first suggested by the German journalist Wilhelm Marr in his 1879 work *The Victory of Judaism over Germanism*, a best-seller that helped push "the Jewish question" to the center of German politics.

Quite simply, anti-Semitism refers to the hatred of Jews, whatever the nationality, race, color or creed of the perpetrator. Attempting to dismiss the term anti-Semitism because of semantics does not erase the fact of its existence or its history.

## **U.S.-Israel Relations**

**INACCURACY:** The only reason the United States supports Israel is because of the powerful Jewish lobby.

**RESPONSE:** The United States is a longstanding strong ally of Israel based on shared democratic values and strategic interests including the rejection of terrorism and violence. The United States has a great interest in the stability of the Middle East, a region that is afflicted by extremists who violently oppose the U.S., Israel and democracy, rogue states with large military arsenals which include non-conventional weaponry, and other authoritarian regimes. Bolstering and supporting peace, stability and democracy in the region through relations with Israel is in America's strategic interest. Indeed, public opinion polls have consistently demonstrated that Americans of all backgrounds support strong U.S.-Israeli relations and view Israel as a key ally of the United States.

As citizens of the United States, the American Jewish community's advocacy on behalf of Israel is an appropriate exercise of American democracy and reflective of the community's commitment to American democratic ideals. The American Jewish community's active engagement in the political process is mirrored in the activism of other minority constituencies.

**INACCURACY:** The U.S. relationship with Israel threatens our national interests as it alienates important Arab allies the U.S. needs for access to oil and for support against Middle East-based extremists such as Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda.

**Public opinion polls have consistently demonstrated that Americans of all backgrounds support strong U.S.-Israeli relations and view Israel as a key ally of the United States.**

**RESPONSE:** U.S.-Israel relations do not jeopardize relations with others in the region. The U.S. enjoys a symbiotic relationship with its Arab allies, who have overriding national interests in maintaining their close relations with the U.S. They are an important source of oil for Americans, while the U.S. provides them with crucial military and political support.

For U.S. allies such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia, internal pressures dictate how much those nations can show support for any U.S.-led coalition against extremists - regardless of Israeli policies or involvement. Because of internal threats from Islamic extremists in their own populace, these nations will not provide too much public assistance - for example, using their countries as takeoff points for U.S. military actions - lest they antagonize these anti-American extremists. At the same time, given the threat Islamic extremist terrorist organizations pose to both the Egyptian and Saudi regimes, they are supportive of the U.S. effort against Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda.

America's Arab and Muslim allies recognize that support for U.S. efforts against Middle East-based extremists is in their interest. U.S. policies towards Israel, and Israel's policies and actions have no bearing on these overriding interests.

**INACCURACY:** Islamic terrorists such as Osama bin Laden and his Al Qaeda network target the United States because of its relationship with Israel and its favoring of Israel in the conflict with the Palestinians. If the U.S. ended its close relations with Israel these terrorists would no longer have a reason to attack the U.S.

**RESPONSE:** The hatred of the United States and the West by Islamic extremist terrorists such as Osama bin Laden has little to do with U.S. policy towards Israel and the Palestinians. Indeed, were there no Israeli-Palestinian conflict or were the U.S. to sever its ties with Israel, their key "grievances" against the U.S. and the West would remain.

These extremists are ideologically opposed to everything the U.S. and the West holds dear: democracy, modernism, freedom, globalism and diversity. In Al Qaeda's public pronouncements the U.S. is blamed for its presence on Muslim soil (the war in Iraq, stationing U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan), and for its support of "moderate Arab regimes" such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Egypt and others that they consider corrupt and anti-Muslim. Bin Laden and his supporters recognize that the U.S. and its allies in the region (including Israel, Saudi Arabia and Egypt) stand in the way of his ultimate goal: the establishment of a theocratic, unified Muslim state spanning the region. Until the U.S. launched military action against Al Qaeda following the 9/11 attacks, bin Laden said hardly a word about the Palestinians or Israel. His attempt to champion the Palestinian cause was clearly calculated to woo support from the "Arab street," and has no effect on his goals and plans for future terrorist attacks.

**INACCURACY:** The United States gives Israel too much foreign aid making it difficult to meet critical needs at home.

**RESPONSE:** Foreign aid, which represents approximately one percent of the federal budget, is a crucial tool in promoting American interests around the world. Foreign affairs spending generally is vital to advance our country's security, economic and humanitarian interests and preserve America's leadership worldwide. It is a tool for spreading liberty and democracy. That is why such a broad array of faith, business and humanitarian organizations continue to advocate for a strong foreign affairs budget - which still only amounts to just over a penny for every federal dollar. Foreign aid creates jobs in the United States. Indeed, by law, nearly all U.S. assistance must be spent on American-produced goods.

**The United States has an ongoing strategic interest in supporting Israel – a stalwart democratic ally with whom it shares many core values, including a commitment to democracy and a rejection of extremism and terrorism.**

Aid to Israel promotes stability and democracy in the Middle East. The United States has an ongoing strategic interest in supporting Israel - a stalwart democratic ally with whom it shares many core values, including a commitment to democracy and a rejection of extremism and terrorism in a vital region of the world.

Moreover, history has shown that American aid, particularly military assistance, keeping Israel strong, is the primary ingredient in bringing Israel's neighbors to the peace table.

In recent years, aid to Israel has decreased and its proportion of the overall foreign aid budget has been cut in half. Israel in the final stages of phasing out economic assistance from the United States, maintaining only military assistance to promote Israel's security.

## **Establishment of Israel**

**INACCURACY:** Jews are interlopers in the Middle East. The Jews living in the region have no connection with the land which was populated solely by indigenous Palestinians.

**RESPONSE:** The Land of Israel - the historical birthplace of the Jewish people, the land promised to Abraham, the site of the holy Temple and David's Kingdom - has been the cornerstone of Jewish religious life since the Jewish exile from the land two thousand years ago, and is embedded in Jewish prayer, ritual, literature and culture.

A small number of Jews lived continuously in the Land of Israel after their exile in the year 70, through Byzantine, Muslim and Crusader rule. At the time of the Ottoman conquest in 1517, Jews lived in Jerusalem, Nablus, Hebron, Safad and in Galilean villages. Hundreds of Hasidic Jews immigrated in 1700 from Eastern Europe, along with Jews fleeing pogroms in the Ukraine. Many pious Jews left Eastern Europe in the late 18th and early 19th centuries in order to pray and die in the four sacred cities of the Holy Land: Jerusalem, Safed, Tiberias and Hebron.

There has been a continuous presence of Jewish residents in Jerusalem from King David's time (except for periods when Jews were barred from living in the city), and by 1844, Jews were the largest single religious community in Jerusalem. By 1856, the Jewish population in Palestine was

over 17,000. Organized Jewish immigration began in 1880 with the emergence of the modern Zionist movement.

The number of Palestinian Arabs living in the area when Jews began arriving en masse in the late 19th century remains the subject of dispute among historians. The early Zionist pioneers saw the Arab population as small, apolitical, and without a nationalist element and they therefore believed that there would not be friction between the two communities. They also thought that development of the country would benefit both peoples and they would thus secure Arab support and cooperation. Indeed, many Arabs attracted by new employment opportunities, higher wages and better living conditions migrated to Palestine in the wake of economic growth stimulated by Jewish immigration.

**INACCURACY:** The Palestinians were justified in rejecting the 1947 U.N. Partition Plan.

**RESPONSE:** The rejection of the partition plan in 1947 by the Arab nations demonstrated an unwillingness to recognize the existence of a Jewish state in the region.

Neither the Jews nor the Arabs were fully satisfied with the plan calling for a division of British-mandated Palestine into two states, with Jerusalem as an international city, and there was much internal opposition. Giving the Jews only 12 percent of the land promised to them in the Balfour declaration, and drawing borders for the new state which were virtually indefensible, the plan was a difficult compromise for many of the Jews of Palestine. On the other side, the Arab nations desired full control over the land of Palestine and the Arab people in the region. Both peoples had the same goal; either one or both had to settle for less than their ideal. Israel accepted the partition plan despite its less-than-ideal solution, understanding the need to compromise. It was the Arab nations who refused the plan and gathered their armies to wage battle against Israel. Had the Arabs accepted the plan in 1947 there would have been an Arab state alongside the Jewish State of Israel and the heartache and bloodshed that has characterized the Arab-Israeli conflict could have been avoided.

**It was the Arab nations who refused the plan and gathered their armies to wage battle against Israel.**

## **Lebanon War of 2006**

**INACCURACY:** Israel's "occupation" of Arab land, including the Shebaa Farms region, sparked the conflict.

**RESPONSE:** Israel withdrew completely from Lebanon in 2000 under United Nations observation and certification. The conflict between Israel and Hezbollah began on July 12, 2006 when Hezbollah terrorists crossed the border into Israel and attacked an Israeli army convoy, killing eight soldiers and kidnapping two others. The occupation of Arab land had nothing to do with the conflict; Israel has not been in control of any Lebanese territory for six years.

Hezbollah and Hezbollah sympathizers often use the Shebaa Farms region in the Golan Heights as an example of continued Israeli occupation of Lebanese territory. In reality, Shebaa Farms is a small piece of land that was captured by Israel from Syria in the 1967 war, and has never been under Lebanese control. Numerous maps inspected by the United Nations show the land under Syrian control, and the U.N. has officially certified that Lebanon has no claim to the area.

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**INACCURACY:** Israel violated humanitarian law by targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure, while Hezbollah was simply defending Lebanon.

**RESPONSE:** Hezbollah, not Israel, systematically violated international humanitarian law during the conflict with its actions in both Lebanon and Israel. Hezbollah embedded itself within a civilian population, housing its office buildings, military positions, and weapons caches among civilians. Hezbollah also fired its rockets from within civilian villages and cities making it extremely difficult if not impossible to distinguish between civilian and Hezbollah areas. Hezbollah indiscriminately fired rockets at Israeli population centers. The terrorists' aim was nothing more than causing as much civilian suffering as possible.

Israel, on the other hand, went to great lengths to avoid civilian casualties and collateral damage in Lebanon. Israeli air strikes utilized precision ordinance that targeted only Hezbollah positions. Israel dropped leaflets and broadcast radio messages warning civilians to leave certain areas often giving up the element of surprise. While Israel puts true value on human life, Hezbollah does not.

Inaccuracy: During the bombing of Hezbollah positions inside Lebanon, Israel deliberately targeted a U.N. observer outpost on July 25, resulting in the deaths of four U.N. military observers.

Response: Israel has no reason to ever target U.N. personnel and it did not target them in Lebanon. An internal Israeli investigation revealed that the air strike was a tragic mistake based on inaccurate maps and a hurried operation in the face of an onslaught by Hezbollah Katyusha rockets. The Israeli air strike was meant to target nearby positions that were being used by Hezbollah as sites to launch rockets into Israel. Hezbollah terrorists frequently use civilians as human shields and have been known to do the same with U.N. personnel inside of Lebanon.

Inaccuracy: Hezbollah has the right to be armed. After all, it has duly elected representatives in the Lebanese parliament.

Response: Hezbollah did not have the right to be armed before the conflict began and does not have the right to be armed today. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559, passed in 2004, calls for the disarming of all militias in Lebanon. Resolution 1701, passed on August 11, 2006, once again demanded that Hezbollah disarm. Both resolutions also ban the rearming of Hezbollah, specifically by Iran and Syria.



## KEY DATES IN ISRAELI HISTORY

February 14, 1896	Publication of Theodor Herzl's treatise "The Jewish State"
August 29, 1897	Opening of the First Zionist Congress at Basel, Switzerland
November 2, 1917	Issuing of Balfour Declaration: British support for a "Jewish Homeland"
April 24, 1920	Britain assigned mandatory power over Palestine at San Remo Conference
August 23, 1929	Arab attack on Jewish community of Hebron
April 15, 1936	Arab revolt begins
May 17, 1939	British White Paper limiting Jewish immigration to Palestine passes
December 1945	Initiation of Arab League Boycott (on the Jewish community of Palestine)
July 22, 1946	Irgun bombs King David Hotel
February 14, 1947	Britain gives UN responsibility for Palestine
November 29, 1947	UN Partition Plan approved (Resolution 181)
May 14, 1948	Declaration of the State of Israel
May 15, 1948 - January 1949	War of Independence
January 25, 1949	Israel's first national election takes place; David Ben-Gurion elected Prime Minister
May 1950	Operation Ali Baba begins; brings 113,000 Iraqi Jews to Israel
September 1950	Operation Magic Carpet completed; 47,000 Yemeni Jews brought to Israel
October 29 - November 6, 1950	Suez Campaign
October 10, 1959	Creation of Fatah
January 1964	Creation of Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)

January 1, 1965	Planned Fatah attack on Israeli water system (Land Day)
May 15-22, 1967	Egyptian Mobilization in the Sinai/Closure of the Tiran Straits
June 5-10, 1967	Six Day War
November 22, 1967	Adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 242
April 4, 1968	Establishment of Jewish settlement in Hebron
July 18, 1968	Hijacking of El Al airliner by PLO
February 1-4, 1969	Arafat becomes PLO Chairman
March 8, 1969 - August 7, 1970	War of Attrition
September 5, 1973	Massacre of 11 Israeli athletes at Munich Olympics
October 6-24, 1973	Yom Kippur War
October 17, 1973	Arab Oil Embargo
October 19, 1973	U.S. sends \$2.2 billion in military aid to Israel to counter Soviet arms shipments to Egypt
October 22, 1973	Adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 338
November 5, 1973	Kissinger begins shuttle diplomacy
May 15, 1974	Attack on school in northern Israeli town of Ma'alot
November 10, 1975	"Zionism is Racism" resolution passed by the UN
May 17, 1977	Menachem Begin becomes PM/ Likud victory in Israeli elections
November 19, 1977	Egyptian President Anwar Sadat visits Jerusalem
September 17, 1978	Camp David accords signed
March 26, 1979	Egypt-Israel peace treaty signed
June 7, 1981	Israel attacks Iraq's Osirak nuclear reactor
October 6, 1981	Assassination of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat

April 25, 1982	Final Israeli withdrawal from Sinai
June 6, 1982	Operation "Peace for the Galilee" launched; start of Lebanon War
August 21, 1982	PLO evacuation from Lebanon
September 16-17, 1982	Attack on Sabra and Shatila by Christian Phalangists
September 15, 1983	Begin resignation
October 23, 1983	Bombing of U.S. Marine barrack in Beirut
September 14, 1984	Formation of Israeli National Unity Government
November 1984	Operation Moses airlifts 7,000 Ethiopian Jews to Israel
June 10, 1985	Withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon; Israel retains buffer zone in southern Lebanon
October 7, 1986	Hijacking of Achille Lauro
December 8, 1987	Start of the Intifada
January 16 - Feb 27, 1991	Gulf War; Iraq launches SCUD missiles at Israel
May 24, 1991	Operation Solomon airlifts 14,000 Ethiopian Jews to Israel
October 30, 1991	Madrid Peace Conference
December 16, 1991	UN repeals "Zionism is Racism" resolution
June 23, 1992	Labor victory in Israeli elections; Yitzhak Rabin elected Prime Minister
January 19, 1993	Israel repeals ban on contacts with the PLO
August 30, 1993	Secret agreement between Israel and the PLO in Oslo announced
September 9, 1993	Israel-PLO letters of mutual recognition exchanged
September 13, 1993	Israel-Palestinian Declaration of Principles announced
February 25, 1994	Jewish gunman kills 29 Palestinian worshippers in Hebron
April 6, 1994	Afula suicide bombing

May 4, 1994	Agreement on the Gaza Strip and Jericho reached
May 13, 1994	Israel withdraws from Jericho
May 18, 1994	Israeli withdrawal from Gaza
July 1, 1994	Arafat enters Gaza
October 9, 1994	Hamas kidnaps and kills an Israeli soldier
October 14, 1994	Rabin, Peres, and Arafat awarded Nobel Peace Prize
October 19, 1994	Tel Aviv bus bombing
October 26, 1994	Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty
December 1, 1994	Transfer of West Bank administrative control to Palestinians
December 11, 1994	Jordan and Israel open embassies
January 22, 1995	Beit Lid suicide bombing
April 9, 1995	Gaza suicide bombings
September 28, 1995	Signing of Oslo II agreement
November 4, 1995	Assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin
November 13, 1995	Israel redeploys from Palestinian population centers
December 27, 1995	Israel-Syria negotiations at Wye Plantation begin
January 20, 1996	First Palestinian elections
February 25, 1996	Jerusalem/Ashkelon suicide bombings
March 1996	Sharm-el-Sheikh "Summit of Peacemakers"
March 4, 1996	Tel Aviv suicide bombing
May 29, 1996	Benjamin Netanyahu elected Prime Minister
September 24, 1996	Palestinian "Tunnel Riots" erupt
January 17, 1997	Israel withdraws from Hebron

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March 13, 1997	Jordanian soldier kills 7 Israeli schoolgirls
June 10, 1997	United States Congress recognizes Jerusalem as Israel's "United Capital"
July 30, 1997	Hamas suicide bomber explodes in a Jerusalem market, killing 16
October 23, 1998	Israel-Palestinian "Wye Memorandum"
December 10, 1998	Palestinians vote to change PLO charter in presence of President Clinton
May 17, 1999	Ehud Barak elected Prime Minister
May 24, 2000	Israel withdraws from southern Lebanon
July 11-25, 2000	Camp David Summit
September 28, 2000	Ariel Sharon visits Temple Mount
September 29, 2000	Outbreak of widespread Palestinian violence, "Second (al-Aqsa) Intifada" begins
October 7, 2000	Hezbollah kidnaps 3 Israeli soldiers from Lebanon border
October 12, 2000	Two Israeli soldiers lynched by Palestinian mob in Ramallah
October 16-17, 2000	Sharm el-Sheikh Summit
November 21, 2000	Egypt recalls Ambassador from Israel
November 22, 2000	Suicide bomb in Hadera
February 6, 2001	Ariel Sharon elected Prime Minister
May 18, 2001	Suicide attack at Netanya shopping mall, 5 killed
May 20, 2001	Mitchell Report published
June 1, 2001	Suicide bombing of Tel Aviv night club kills 21 youths
August 9, 2001	Suicide bombing at pizzeria in Jerusalem, 15 killed
November 29, 2001	Bombing of inter-city bus, 3 killed

December 1, 2001	Suicide bombing in pedestrian mall in central Jerusalem, 11 youths killed
December 2, 2001	A suicide bomber of a bus in Haifa, 15 killed
January 4, 2002	Israel stops massive Palestinian arms shipment on Karine A ship
March 2, 2002	Suicide bombing outside a bar mitzvah party in Jerusalem, 11 killed
March 5, 2002	Gunman opens fire at a Tel-Aviv restaurant, 3 killed
March 9, 2002	Suicide bombing of Jerusalem cafe, 11 killed
March 12, 2002	Hezbollah operatives open fire on Israeli vehicles in Kibbutz Metzuba, killing 6
March 21, 2002	Suicide bombing in downtown Jerusalem, 5 killed
March 27, 2002	Suicide bomber kills 30 at Passover seder at Netanya hotel
March 29, 2002	Female suicide bomber attacks Jerusalem supermarket
March 29, 2002	IDF begins Operation Defensive Shield to Uproot Terrorist Infrastructure in West Bank
March 31, 2002	Suicide bombing in Haifa restaurant, kills 15
April 10, 2002	Suicide bombing of bus traveling from Haifa to Jerusalem, kills 8
April 12, 2002	Female suicide bomber attacks Jerusalem market, kills 6
May 7, 2002	Suicide bombing of Rishon Le-Zion billiards hall, kills 15
June 5, 2002	Suicide bombing of bus in Meggiddo Junction, kills 17
June 18, 2002	Suicide bus bombing in Jerusalem, kills 18, including children
June 19, 2002	Suicide bombing at bus stop in Jerusalem, kills 7
June 24, 2002	U.S. President George W. Bush's speech calls for replacement of Palestinian Authority leadership to crack down on terrorism, to be followed by interim Palestinian state (basis of future Roadmap plan)
July 17, 2002	Suicide bombing of Tel-Aviv market, kills 5
July 31, 2002	Suicide bombing of cafeteria at Hebrew University, kills 9

August 4, 2002	Suicide bombing of bus in Meron Junction, kills 9
September 19, 2002	Suicide bus bombing in Tel Aviv, kills 6
October 21, 2002	Car bomb kills 14 people on a bus at Karkur Junction
November 10, 2002	An Al-Aqsa gunman kills 5 at Kibbutz Metzger
November 21, 2002	Suicide bombing of Jerusalem bus, kills 11
November 28, 2002	Gunman attacks Likud Party headquarters in Beit Shean as party members gather to vote in the primaries, kills 6
January 5, 2003	Two simultaneous suicide bombings in Tel Aviv, kills 23
March 5, 2003	Suicide bombing of Haifa bus, kills 17
April 20, 2003	Suicide bombing at Mike's Place, a popular Tel-Aviv blues bar, kills 3
April 30, 2003	The "Road Map for Peace" is presented by the Quartet to the Israelis and Palestinians
May 18, 2003	Suicide bombing of Jerusalem bus, kills 7
June 11, 2003	Suicide bombing of Jerusalem bus, kills 17
August 19, 2003	Suicide bombing of Jerusalem bus, kills 24
September 8, 2003	Suicide bombing on Jerusalem bus, kills 9
September 8, 2003	Suicide bombing of Jerusalem cafe, kills 8
October 4, 2003	Suicide bombing at Haifa cafe, kills 21
December 18, 2003	Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon first makes reference to "Unilateral Disengagement" at a conference in Herzliya
January 29, 2004	Suicide bombing on Jerusalem bus, kills 11
January 29, 2004	Israel swaps prisoners with the terrorist group Hezbollah; releases 435 Arab prisoners in return for the remains of murdered soldiers and a kidnapped Israeli businessman
February 22, 2004	Suicide bombing of Jerusalem bus kills 8

March 14, 2004	Double suicide bombing at an Ashdod port, kills 8
April 14, 2004	President Bush writes a letter to PM Sharon expressing support for disengagement and pledging that Israel will not be expected to return to the pre-1967 borders in any final status agreement
May 4, 2004	Sharon holds a Likud party referendum, where the Disengagement Plan is rejected by a sound margin
June 6, 2004	Sharon's cabinet approves the "Amended Disengagement Plan," which calls for a separate vote on the dismantling of each settlement. Effi Eitam and Yitzhak Levy (both National Religious Party members) resign from the cabinet as a result of the decision. Later, the entire NRP withdraws from the Government, leaving Sharon with a minority coalition.
July 25, 2004	Tens of thousands of Israelis form a "human chain" from the Erez Crossing at Gaza to the Western Wall in Jerusalem to demonstrate opposition to the disengagement.
August 31, 2004	Two simultaneous suicide bombings in Beersheba kill 16
September 14, 2004	The cabinet approves plans to compensate the evacuated settlers
October 26, 2004	Knesset preliminarily approves the Disengagement Plan
November 11, 2004	Yasir Arafat dies in a Paris hospital
December 14, 2004	Israel, Egypt, and the US sign a partial free trade deal
December 23, 2004	The first phase of PA municipal elections are held; Hamas secures nearly half the seats
January 2005	Sharon forms a National Unity Government with the Labor Party. Shimon Peres is granted the title of "Vice-Premier"
January 9, 2005	Mahmoud Abbas is elected PA president by a wide margin
February 8, 2005	PA President Abbas and Israeli PM Sharon meet at Sharm-el-Sheikh, Egypt, and declare an "end to the fighting."
February 25, 2005	Suicide bombing at Tel Aviv nightclub, kills 5
February 26, 2005	The Knesset gives final approval to the Disengagement Plan, and rejects calls by some ministers for a national referendum

May 5, 2005	The second phase of the Palestinian municipal elections are held; Fatah improves showing, Hamas wins around 1/3 of the contested seats
May 26, 2005	Bush hosts Palestinian President Abbas; Bush reaffirms his commitment to the creation of a Palestinian state
July 12, 2005	Suicide bombing of Netanya mall kills 3
July 13, 2005	The Gaza Strip is declared a “closed military zone,” meaning that non-resident Israelis can no longer enter the area.
July 18-19, 2005	Tens of thousands of Israelis gather in the western Negev town of Netivot and plan to march on Gush Katif (Gaza). The IDF prevents the mass march from reaching Gaza
August 17, 2005	The evacuation of settlers from the Gaza Strip begins.
August 22, 2005	Evacuation of settlers from the Gaza Strip is completed.
August 23, 2005	Evacuation of four settlements in the northern West Bank completed.
September 12, 2005	The Israeli military completes its withdrawal from the Gaza Strip
December 5, 2005	Suicide bombing at the entrance of a shopping mall in Netanya kills 5
January 4, 2006	Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has a massive stroke that incapacitates him; Deputy Prime Minister Ehud Olmert is appointed Acting Prime Minister and assumes Sharon's responsibilities
January 26, 2006	Palestinian parliamentary elections; Hamas wins 74 seats in the 132-seat legislature
March 28, 2006	Israeli elections; Kadima wins 29 of the Knesset's 120 seats
March 30, 2006	Suicide bombing outside Kedumim in the northern West Bank kills 4
April 13, 2006	Ehud Olmert officially assumes the post of Prime Minister of Israel
April 17, 2006	Suicide bombing near the old central bus station in Tel Aviv kills 9
June 25, 2006	IDF Corporal Gilad Shalit is kidnapped by Palestinian terrorists who crossed the border into Israel from Gaza and attacked an IDF army post; Israel responds with expanded military operations in Gaza

aimed at rescuing Shalit and stopping the firing of Qassam rockets from Gaza into Israel

July 12, 2006

Hezbollah terrorists spark the second Lebanon War when they cross the border into Israel and attack an Israeli military patrol, killing eight soldiers and kidnapping two others

August 11, 2006

The United Nations Security Council unanimously adopts the U.S.-France authored Resolution 1701, which calls for the cessation of hostilities and the implementation of an armed international force comprised of 15,000 U.N. troops along with an additional 15,000 Lebanese troops to secure south Lebanon. The resolution mandates the disarming of Hezbollah.

August 14, 2006

The cessation of hostilities goes into effect, and Israeli troops begin a phased withdrawal from Lebanon.

# Select Online Resources For More Information About Israel and the Conflict

## Israeli Government Resources

Israel Defense Forces: [www.idf.il](http://www.idf.il)

Ministry of Foreign Affairs: [www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/home.asp](http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/home.asp)

## Israel News Sources

Ha'aretz: [www.haaretz.com](http://www.haaretz.com)

Jerusalem Post: [www.jpost.com](http://www.jpost.com)

Kol-Israel Radio: [www.kol-israel.com](http://www.kol-israel.com)

Yedioth Ahronot: [www.ynetnews.com](http://www.ynetnews.com)

## Arab News Sources

Al-Ahram (Egypt): [www.ahram.org.eg/weekly/](http://www.ahram.org.eg/weekly/)

Arab News (Saudi Arabia): [www.arabnews.com](http://www.arabnews.com)

Islamic Republic News Agency (Iran): [www.irna.ir/en/](http://www.irna.ir/en/)

Jordan Times: [www.jordantimes.com](http://www.jordantimes.com)

Daily Star (Lebanon): [www.dailystar.com.lb](http://www.dailystar.com.lb)

Wafa News Agency (Palestinian Authority): <http://english.wafa.ps>

Tehran Times: [www.tehrantimes.com](http://www.tehrantimes.com)

Syria Times: <http://syriatimes.tishreen.info/>

## Think Tanks/ Research Institutes

BESA Center for Strategic Studies: [www.biu.ac.il/SOC/besa/](http://www.biu.ac.il/SOC/besa/)

Harry S. Truman Institute for Peace: <http://truman.huji.ac.il>

Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies: [www.tau.ac.il/jcss/](http://www.tau.ac.il/jcss/)

Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs: [www.jcpa.org](http://www.jcpa.org)

Saban Center for Middle East Policy/Brookings Institution:

[www.brookings.edu/fp/saban/sabancenter\\_hp.htm](http://www.brookings.edu/fp/saban/sabancenter_hp.htm)

Washington Institute for Near East Policy: [www.washingtoninstitute.org](http://www.washingtoninstitute.org)