



BratMUN

STUDY GUIDE

SC 2018

Table of Contents

Letter from the chair.....	2
Security Council.....	3
Topic Description.....	4
The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.....	4
History.....	4
Jerusalem.....	6
Gaza.....	6
Settlements.....	7
Palestinian Government.....	8
Israeli Government.....	8
Peace processes.....	9
Outside the borders.....	11
Recent events.....	13
Questions to consider.....	14
Recommended reading.....	15
Closing remarks.....	16

Letter from the chair

Dear delegates,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to BratMUN 2018! My name is Sofia Šulek and I will be the chairperson of the Security Council. The topic I have chosen, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, is without a doubt one of the most complex security issues of today. I am very excited for the debate in our committee and the solutions you will work on together. I hope that this experience will help you better understand the workings of diplomacy, negotiation, argumentation, debate, critical thinking, public speaking and current foreign policy.

Although I don't like to brag, this is the part where I should mention all my MUN accomplishments. I have attended 10 MUN (or similar) conferences out of which I have won 7 Best Delegate awards and chaired the Security Council once. But MUN gave me so much more than just space to take up my resume. With each conference I learn multiple valuable life lessons either about myself personally, professional life, or public speaking. I have found my calling because of MUN and now I know what I want to study (or at least I am surer than I would be without this experience). I hope each and every one of you can extract as much I have from this conference and leave with memories that you will not forget.

I hope you find this study guide a useful introduction to the complex topic.

Sincerely,

Sofia Šulek

Chairperson of the Security Council

Security Council

The Security Council is one of the 6 main organs of the United Nations, established by the UN Charter. Its fundamental and primary responsibility is maintaining international peace. Meetings take place whenever peace is threatened.

According to the UN Charter, the Security Council has 4 purposes:

- To maintain international peace and security;
- To develop friendly relations among nations;
- To cooperate in solving international problems and in promoting respect for human rights;
- And to be a center for harmonizing the actions of nations.

There are 5 permanent members of the Security Council. The People's Republic of China, the French Republic, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America. These states have the power of veto in the voting process. It enables them to prevent the adoption of any "substantive" resolution, as well as to decide which resolutions and topics are "substantive".

For more information on the mandate, powers and functions of the Security Council, please visit their web-site that is linked in the recommended reading section.

Topic Description

The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is an on-going complex issue with each side trying to attain legitimacy and territory for themselves. Violations of human rights and the Fourth Geneva Convention, the increase of violent attacks, and the lack of trust between the Israeli government and the Palestinian Authority, the Palestinian Liberation Organization, Fatah and Hamas are all problems in dire need of attention from the UN Security Council. With the Trump Administration's recent decision to recognize the divided Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and the bloody protests in conflict zones such as the Gaza Strip, this Middle-Eastern struggle has become even more complex. People need their governments to come to the negotiation table, compromise and finally broker a peace deal that will last. The Security Council of BratMUN 2018 will aspire to make progress on this issue and strive to improve the lives of people living in the Israeli-Palestinian region.

History

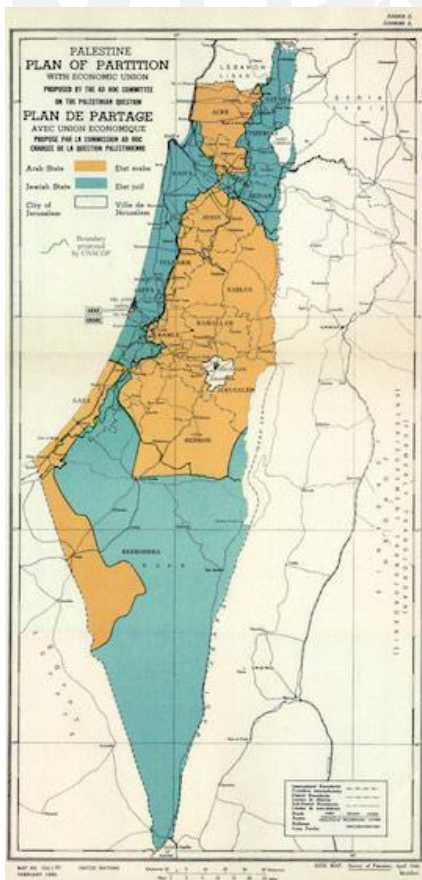


Figure 1: 1947 separation of Palestine into 2

As stated above, Jews fled from Europe to the middle east during the 20th century. At this time, the state of Palestine was controlled by the British. Jews wanted to establish their own country, so they could be safe from the political oppression. As the population of Jews grew in the region, in 1947, the United Nations voted to divide the land into 2 countries. Jews moved to the "blue" part of the map, and Palestinians went to the "orange" part of the map. The newly established state of Israel accepted this deal, but Palestine did not.

In 1948, one year after the UN partition plan, the first war between the countries occurred. Israel defeated Palestine and took control over 77% of the territory, in contrast with the 56% they were promised by the 1947 UN resolution.

Because of this war, 700 000 Palestinians were forced out of their homes, creating a refugee problem that has only continued to grow and remains unresolved to this day. This mass eviction is called Nakba – Arabic for “catastrophe”.

Another war broke out in 1967, this one dubbed The Six Day War. Israelis occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip, both territories where the Palestinian population is abundant. They also gained control over the east part of Jerusalem. United Nations Security Council Resolution 478 “condemns Israel’s decision to annex East Jerusalem and consider it their capitol”. The international community considered this action illegal and called for a compromising solution. Israel did not back down.

The region still did not achieve peace, because in 1980s the first intifada – Palestinian uprising – occurred. It was sparked mostly by spontaneous demonstrations, but the Israeli military responded with heavy, unyielding force.

The second intifada broke out as a result of failed peace negotiations between Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and PLO (Palestinian Liberation Organization) Chairman Yasser Arafat. Negotiations were unsuccessful most likely because of the lack of trust between the 2 parties, each believing the other was not serious about achieving peace, nor able to carry out the deals made at the lobby table. This intifada started when Israeli military fired into Palestinian demonstrations. The Palestinian military responded as well, and the conflict escalated into several years of suicide bombings, rocket attacks, and sniper fire. The intifada ended in 2005 with 1000 Israelis and 32000 Palestinians killed.

West Bank



The West Bank is currently controlled by the Palestinian Authority (Palestinian government), while also under Israeli occupation. Israeli troops enforce their laws which considerably limit the Palestinians, for example, they are not allowed to enter certain roads and have to pass through checkpoints when traveling. West Bank is key for Israelis because it contains many Jewish holy sites. The estimated population in West Bank is 2 785 366 Palestinians

and approximately 371 000 Israeli settlers. West Bank includes East Jerusalem, where there are approximately 212 000 Jewish settlers.

Jerusalem

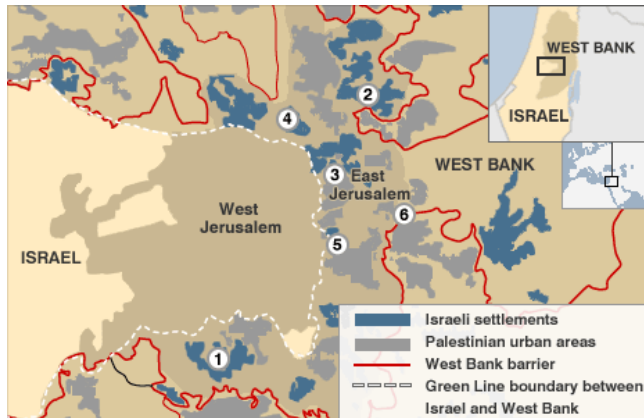


Figure 2: Population in Jerusalem

Jerusalem is on the border between West Bank and Israel. It is a very controversial city because it is “the cradle of religion” and there are many Judaist and Israeli holy sites. The Israelis are trying to “claim” the land by encouraging Jewish settlers to move to the area.

President Trump’s decision to consider Jerusalem the capitol city of Israel, instead of Tel Aviv, brought further turmoil to the situation. The United States has played a great role in mediating the peace processes between the two countries, and have, up until December of 2017, tried to stay relatively impartial. This decision revealed the current administrations opinion, favoring Israel. Jerusalem also contains one of the most important historical attractions that has been a great divisive point between the 2 nations. Its called the Temple Mount, containing the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, Jewish and Islam holy sites.

Gaza



Figure 3: Map of the Gaza Strip

Gaza is an area officially belonging to Palestinians, populated also mostly by Palestinians. Israel used to have military presence in the territory, but withdrew in 2005. Now It is currently under Israeli blockade. It is controlled by the Palestinian radical Islamist group Hamas. Israel blocked the flow of commercial goods, such as fuel, into Gaza. They claim Hamas could create weapons out of them. Currently, people in Gaza do not even have access to electricity, food or medicine. Tensions rose in the area, and violent outbreaks occurred in 2008, 2009, 2012 and

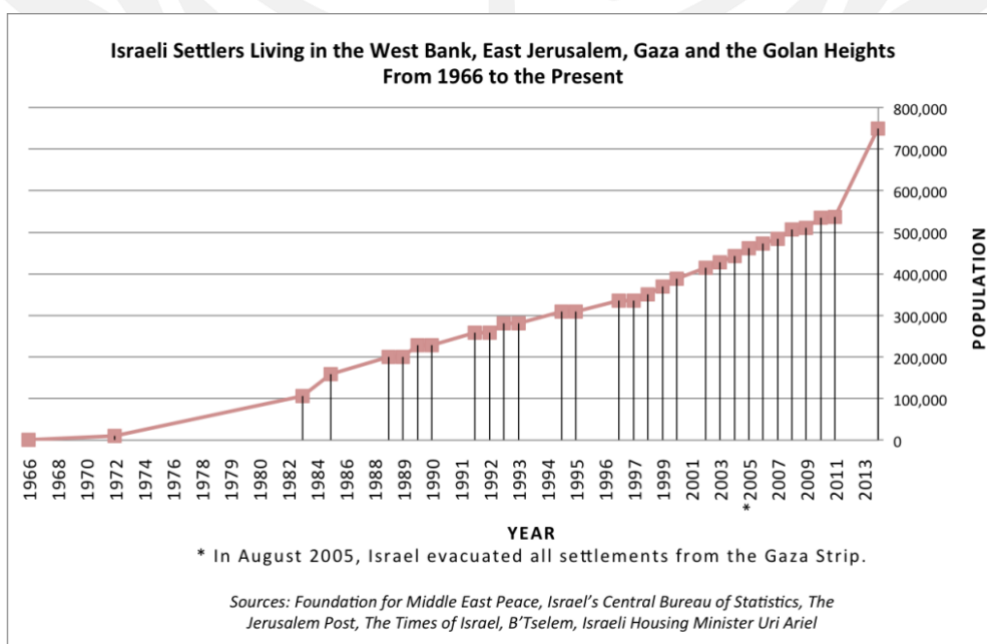
2014 between Hamas and Israel. The Israeli government claims they are afraid the Gaza Strip will be used as a launching pad for foreign attacks.

Settlements

Settlements, in the context of this topic, are Jewish communities that have been moving to Israeli-occupied territory since The Six Day War (1967). Reasons for moving include: religion, financial reliefs (subsidized housing), and to claim territory. Settlements essentially create “new facts on the ground”. When authorities want to collect data about population to divide territories, settlements will have altered the facts. In practice, Jewish settlements weaken the Palestinian claim to a certain territory. That is why, for example, there is a high rate of Israeli settlements around Jerusalem. Settlements are banned by The Fourth Geneva Convention:

Article 49 states: *“Individual or mass forcible transfers, as well as deportations of protected persons from occupied territory to the territory of the Occupying Power or to that of any other country, occupied or not, are prohibited, regardless of their motive.”*

Some scholars argue, that The Fourth Geneva Convention only prohibits forcible settlements. Regardless, in 2004, The International Court of Justice advisory ruling concluded that settlements in West Bank are illegal and the area is officially a territory occupied by Israel.



Palestinian Government

The Palestinian (National) Authority (PO) is a semi-autonomous government that runs the Palestinian territories – West Bank and Gaza – until a sufficient deal with Israel has been struck. The Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) is a national representative of the Palestinian people and runs the Palestinian Authority. Fatah is a secular nationalist party that controls both the PLO and the PO. At its creation, the PLO's goal was to destroy Israel as a state. In 1993, the PLO made the decision to recognize that Israel has a right to exist as a state in exchange for Israelis recognizing the PLO as the official representative of the Palestinian people. The current chairperson of the PLO, Mahmoud Abbas played a crucial role in de-escalating the second intifada. He also pushed for international recognition of Palestinian statehood in efforts to put pressure on Israel to work towards peace. As a result of the chairman's effort, Palestine now has a non-member status in the UN. But Mahmoud Abbas does not trust the Israeli government because he believes they are still trying to systematically weaken Palestine's claim to territories by supporting settlements.

Hamas is a radical political Palestinian Islamist organization that has waged war on Israel since its founding. It seeks a one-state-solution of only Palestine. In 2006 Hamas won the majority in democratic elections of the PO. Hamas then refused to accept previous deals that the PLO made with the Israeli government. As a result of this regression in the peace processes, the international community froze their aid, which Hamas, the PLO, West Bank and Gaza depended on. Tensions between Hamas and the PLO escalated into a war. Hamas now controls The Gaza Strip, and the PLO controls West Bank. Consequently, there is no unified Palestinian authority the Israelis can deal with. In 2017, Hamas and the PLO reached a preliminary unity agreement, although it has not yet led to the actual unification of the 2 fractions of government.

Israeli Government

Until 1970, the Israeli government was dominated by the Zionist left. They were in favor of trading Israeli land for peace with the Palestinians, they wanted more government intervention in the economy and advocated for a secular government. Currently, the Zionist right is in control. Israelis are strongly against any "land for peace" deals. Since Israel is a Jewish state, Jews enjoy certain privileges that Palestinians do not, for example, a Jew anywhere in the world can become an Israeli citizen. This could potentially worsen the

problem of Israeli settlements and Palestinian refugees. In 2009, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu froze settlements in West Bank and Gaza, excluding Jerusalem. However, Palestinians argue that this is not enough since it has not had any effect. During his campaign for re-election, Benjamin Netanyahu promised that there would be no Palestine under his watch – a statement he seems to retract when convenient.

Peace processes

Any peace agreement would have to settle the 4 main conflicts – West Bank borders/settlements, Israeli safety, Palestinian refugees and Jerusalem.

One of the most common Palestinian demands remains the “right of return” of the displaced from Nakba. This poses a problem for Israel because then there would be more Palestinians than Israelis, and they would either have to give up being a Jewish state, or a democracy. Israel is not willing to do either.

The Two-State Solution is a solution where the territory will be divided into 2 countries. Most polls suggest that both Israelis and Palestinians favor this solution in some form. It does not yet contain the details regarding borders. Both governments have backed away from this idea in recent years. The reason is the basic underlying mistrust between the parties.

The Israeli-Palestinian peace process, also called the 1993 Oslo accords is one possible solution. It is essentially an American-mediated effort to broker peace between the 2 warring nations. Their goal is to come to a final status agreement that would establish Palestine in Gaza and West Bank in exchange for Palestinians to permanently stop attack on Israelis. Such an agreement is frequently called “land for peace”. In 1995, after the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli politician who signed the 1993 Oslo accords, peace processes stopped.

In July 2000, The US President Clinton initiated the Camp David 2000 Summit. Palestinians wanted full sovereignty over West Bank and Gaza, since these territories were captured during The Six Day War, which was considered illegal by Resolution 242. Israel wanted Palestine to annex Jewish settlements within their borders. During the summit, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak offered the Palestinian President Yasser Arafat 73% of West Bank (not counting Jerusalem) and 100% of the Gaza Strip. Israel also offered to withdraw 63 settlements. West Bank would also be split in the middle by an Israeli-controlled road from

Jerusalem to the Dead Sea. In return, Israelis would allow Palestinians to freely use the highway Negev, connecting West Bank to Gaza. This highway would be elevated, ensuring safe passage for Palestinians. Palestinians also demanded the full “right of return” for refugees of Nakba. They compromised that the refugees would be returned in a timeframe that both parties would agree on. The Israeli denied that Israel was responsible for the refugees and rejected their offer. The main clashing point of the Camp David 2000 Summit was East Jerusalem. Israelis demanded full sovereignty over East Jerusalem, particularly because of the Temple Mount, containing the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, sites holy both in Islam and Judaism. Yasser Arafat stated to: “not budge on this one thing: the Haram (the Temple Mount) is more precious to me than anything else”. This became the breaking point for the peace deals and the Camp David Summit ended without a solution. The United States and Israel have refused to negotiate with the Palestinian President Yasser Arafat since.



In 2002, The Arab League proposed The Arab League Peace Initiative. Essentially, it says that Palestine will offer “normal relations” in exchange for the borders to withdraw to the 1967 Green Line borders. It also deals with the issue of Palestinian refugees.

Multiple peace talks have been initiated by the parties involved, as well as third parties, but none have succeeded. The common problem seems to be that both states promise to carry out certain good will

measures to restore trust, but this does not happen.

The BDS movement is a pro-Palestinian movement that has become internationally popular in the 21st century. The movement wants to achieve the following goals: dismantlement of Israeli settlements, Palestinians gaining equal rights in the Israeli state and the right of return for Palestinian refugees, of which there are currently 7 million.

Outside the borders

Israel has fought wars with all of their neighbors, most of which support the Palestinian cause. There are currently peace treaties between Israel & Egypt, and Israel & Jordan. The peace treaty with Egypt forbids the presence of Egyptian military on the border between the countries. Egypt is also the only country where Palestinian refugees are not mistreated.

Syria has a very hostile attitude towards Israel. Because of their common enemy, Syria-Iran relations are flourishing. Syria is interested in the territory of Golan Heights, which was seized by the Israelis in the 1967. Syria believes the area is rightfully theirs.

Lebanon is also pro-Palestinian. The anti-Islamist group Hezbollah has a majority in their government and Lebanese-Israeli relations suffer.

Although Jordan has a peace treaty with Israel, they house the largest number of Palestinian refugees. Palestinians are also allowed full citizenship rights.

Iran is a strongly anti-Islamist country. They believe Israel is fundamentally illegitimate. Iran also provides military and financial backing for Hamas and Hezbollah. Because of this, Iran is seen as a threat to Israelis.

Turkey has long held good relations with Israel, but they have recently become increasingly pro-Palestinian because of their fragile relations with Israel.

Saudi Arabia has a mixed position on the conflict. They are the main actors behind the Arab League Peace Plan. They support the PLO financially, and although they have good relations with the Israeli – because of their common foe Iran - they still have not officially recognized Israel as a state.

The United States has always had a controversial presence in the conflict. They have initiated multiple peace talks. They have been able to put pressure on the countries to come to a peace agreement. Because of their central role in the issue, they have tried to remain impartial. The Trump Administration changed this by considering Jerusalem as the capitol of Israel. President Trump has stated that they are working on a peace plan but provided minimal detail. Israel and the USA have strong relations thanks to AIPAC (American Israeli Public Affairs Committee). Partly because of this, United Nations Security Council resolutions that

are “too critical of Israel” are vetoed. The United States have donated billions of dollars to the area for aid, and other causes, seeking to resolve the issue.

The international community generally recognizes Israel as a state but is critical of how they treat Palestinians. 83% of the world’s countries recognize Israel as a state – this amounts to almost every country that is not an Arab or Muslim majority.



Recent events

Since March 2018, protests against the blockade have been taking place every Friday in Gaza along the Israeli border. The Israeli army killed 170 protesting Palestinians and injured another 18 000. Hamas leader Ismail Haniya claims the Israeli blockade along the Gaza border is coming to an end. Negotiations going on between Hamas and Israel, mediated by the UN and Egypt have mentioned easing of the blockade.

28 July – Israeli forces closed down the gates of the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound in East Jerusalem. This prevented Islamists to enter one of their holiest sites. Israeli troops fired tear gas and stun grenades at praying Muslim worshipers. 15 Palestinians were injured, including the mosque guards. The soldiers sealed the mosque with chains, which infuriated the worshipers. Custodians of the mosque said it was an Israeli invasion. Israelis defend their actions claiming people were throwing rocks and fireworks in the area. People were told to evacuate, when they refused for religious reasons, they were locked in. This occurrence happened exactly on the one-year anniversary of the Al-Aqsa protests in July of 2017, when tens of thousands of Palestinians gathered at the holy site, praying for nearly two weeks to oppose the new metal detectors installed by the Israelis.

In July, the Israeli state-nation law confirmed Israel's Jewish character. This law marginalized non-Jewish citizens, essentially making them "second class citizens". It affects 1.8 million Palestinians as well as other religious minorities in Israel. On August 11, tens of thousands of people, Palestinian, and Jewish alike protested this law. Many compared the situation to the Apartheid in South Africa. The law declares the right to national self-determination as uniquely Jewish. It also changes the official language of the nation to Hebrew, downgrading Arabic. It states that Israeli settlements in occupied Palestinian territories are a "national value".

8 August – deadly Israeli air attacks hit the Gaza Strip. This strike of violence came a couple days before an important meeting between Israel and Hamas, with the assistance of Egypt and the UN to broker a peace deal. Protesting in Gaza is a dangerous action, most people risk open fire from Israelis, but nevertheless, they still assemble every Friday.

22nd of August 2018, the Israeli government moved forward with plans to grow settlements in West Bank. The final approval for construction was given for 328 homes. These

settlements are allegedly supposed to be built in communities that would be evacuated if Israel made a peace deal with Palestine.

Questions to consider

- How to ensure trust between the governments of the 2 nations?
- What to do about the Israeli settlements?
- What to do about the 7 million displaced Palestinian?
- How to divide the territory around Jerusalem?
- How to deal with the radical government of Hamas?
- How to provide aid to people behind the blockade in Gaza?
- How to get the governments serious about starting peace negotiations?



Recommended reading

- <https://www.vox.com/cards/israel-palestine/egypt-jordan-lebanon-syria>
- <http://www.factsaboutisrael.uk/israeli-palestinian-conflict-summary/>
- <https://ifamericaknew.org/history/>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2000_Camp_David_Summit
- <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-arab-league>
- <https://www.aljazeera.com/topics/subjects/israelipalestinian-conflict.html>
- <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2018/08/hamas-israel-gaza-blockade-corner-180821134707824.html>
- <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/08/tens-thousands-protest-tel-aviv-nation-state-law-180812062047725.html>
- <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/08/gaza-protests-expected-deadly-israeli-air-strikes-180810063012409.html>
- <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2018/07/israeli-forces-storm-al-aqsa-mosque-tear-gas-stun-grenades-180727123354710.html>
- <https://www.cfr.org/interactives/global-conflict-tracker#!/conflict/israeli-palestinian-conflict>
- <http://www.un.org/en/sc/about/>
- [To find specific speeches of nations' representatives, click on this hyperlink, enter the committee, country and topic](#)
- [To learn general facts about your assigned country, click on this hyperlink, scroll down to the map, select the country and check out the available links](#)

Closing remarks

This study guide is meant to be an introduction into the topic. Please continue your research with studying the recommended reading section, familiarizing yourself with your country policy on the issue and brainstorming for possible solutions. I am aware that this is no easy topic to navigate through, that is why all of you should be responsible about your research. I have found in my MUN career that proper research is the best way to come to a sufficient resolution, and to be successful as a delegate.

Moreover, please note that the delegates are expected to send a position paper approximately in the length of 400 to 600 words no later than November 2nd to the email address sc.bratmun18@gmail.com. It should typically contain four sections: Background of Topic, Past International Actions, Country Policy, and Possible Solutions.

On a less serious note, I wish all of you luck in preparing for BratMUN 2018. I am very excited to meet you and to be your chairperson.

If you have any questions, about the topic, about the position paper, about the Rules of Procedure, or anything else, please do not hesitate to contact me on my email.

Best regards,

Sofia Šulek

Chairperson of the Security Council