

A close-up photograph of an olive branch with several green olives. The branch is in sharp focus, while the background is blurred, showing a building with a large yellow dome under a clear blue sky. The text is overlaid on the upper left portion of the image.

Two States for Two Peoples

A resource developed by *Presbyterians for Middle East Peace*

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Executive Summary



Why the Two-State Solution?

With the Palestinian-Israeli peace process seemingly stalled, the likelihood that the parties involved will come to an agreement on a two-state solution, which calls for a secure Jewish state of Israel alongside a viable and peaceful state of Palestine, is being called into question by both Israelis and Palestinians, as well as some in the international community. Palestinians point to the presence of Israeli settlements in the West Bank as the overwhelming obstacle to peace, the argument being: how can Palestinians build a viable state when Israeli settlements are scattered throughout the West Bank and the Israeli military controls borders and most of the land? Israelis, on the other hand, point to the violent takeover of Gaza by the militant group Hamas after Israeli settlements and security were removed from Gaza in 2005, and the thousands of rockets and missiles subsequently fired at Israeli civilians, which leads them to ask: why would the same dreadful result not occur if Israel withdrew from the West Bank?

In spite of these challenges, the two-state solution remains the best and most viable path towards ending the conflict and establishing sustainable peace. The two-state solution is just and recognizes the rights and aspirations of both peoples. It is the *only* plan with significant support from Israelis, Palestinians, and advocates for both peoples around the world.

For Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the two-state solution provides the dignity of genuine self-determination and nationality for the first time. The Palestinian people have been subjects of other nations for hundreds of years, including four centuries as subjects of the Ottoman Empire, followed after the First World War by British rule in the British Mandate of Palestine, then Jordanian and Egyptian rule after the establishment of Israel in 1948, and territory subject to limited self-rule and Israeli security since 1967.

The two-state solution preserves Israel as the democratic homeland of the Jewish people and recognizes the 3,000-year connection between the Jewish people and the Land of Israel. It provides Israel with security, requiring a firm commitment of peace and coexistence from the future state of Palestine.

Most Israelis recognize that Israel cannot be both a democracy and a homeland for the Jewish people without eventual establishment of a Palestinian state, and Palestinians have been vocal in their strong preference for Palestinian self-determination and statehood.

The two-state solution provides important economic benefits to both peoples. A new study from the Rand Corporation illustrates the economic benefits of the two-state solution. The study estimates an economic benefit of \$123 billion dollars for Israelis and \$50 billion for Palestinians over a ten-year period, with both peoples benefiting. It predicts a 36% increase in per capita income for Palestinians over the same time frame.¹

The two-state solution is based on both parties meeting their obligations to each other: Israel ceding land and governance to Palestinians, and Palestinians establishing the necessary governmental institutions, the rule of law, and committing to peace with Israel. At the same time it must be understood that the two-state solution will *not* be achieved by:

- an *end to occupation* through a pressured Israeli withdrawal from most of the West Bank without a Palestinian commitment to peace.
- a withdrawal from the West Bank without a Palestinian government in place ensuring rule of law and capable of maintaining security without Israeli assistance.
- an end to the military blockade of the Gaza Strip while the militant group Hamas rules Gaza and remains committed to the annihilation of Israel.
- a plan that jeopardizes Israel's security.

A belief that the Palestinian Authority (PA) is not yet capable of maintaining order and security should not be taken as rejection of the two-state solution. Similarly, a belief that an immediate Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank could lead to the same disastrous outcome as the Gaza disengagement is not a rejection of the two-state solution. Legitimate concerns about obstacles to peace that must be overcome should not be taken as opposition to eventual Palestinian statehood.

We do not quarrel with the fact that significant challenges remain before a two-state solution can become reality. Both parties have obligations to the peace process that are not yet met, and there is opposition and mistrust on both sides that must be overcome.

Palestinians have been vocal in their strong preference for Palestinian self-determination versus annexation of the Palestinian territories into Israel. Where Palestinians lack consensus is in a willingness to recognize and coexist with the Jewish State of Israel. This division is most clear when one contrasts the position of the Palestinian Authority, which governs approximately 2.7 million Palestinians in the West Bank and favors a two-state resolution to the conflict; and the position of Hamas, the Islamist group that governs approximately 1.8 million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. Hamas calls for the destruction of Israel and the establishment of a Palestinian state in what is now the Gaza Strip, West Bank, and the entire state of Israel—in other words, a single state of Palestine that extends from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River. In spite of this serious division, polls generally indicate substantial Palestinian support for a two-state solution as the best and most realistic path forward.

As Christians we are called to be peacemakers, acting as mediators and working for reconciliation among parties in conflict. We are bound by core principles of Christian ethics and justice. We must respect the rights, dignity, and aspirations of both Israelis and Palestinians. We must also act with Christian humility, and recognize that peace will come from Israelis and Palestinians reconciling with one another and a negotiated solution that cannot be imposed from the outside. Our role must be to support people of good will on both sides of the conflict.

A Land of Indigenous Peoples and Proud Descendants of Immigrants

Jews and Palestinians have had a presence in the Middle East for thousands of years, alongside other ancient peoples: Philistines, Samaritans, Assyrians and many others. At the same time, the region has been one of movement and migration of peoples seeking a better life. The land has long been a home to both the indigenous and the immigrant, and both can be proud of their heritage.

The modern State of Israel came into being in 1948 in the aftermath of the Second World War. From 1922 to 1948, the land that is now Israel, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip was part of the *British Mandate of Palestine* and governed by the British Empire. At that time, everyone who lived there (Jews, Christians, and Muslims alike) was a “Palestinian.” There were Palestinian Arabs, Palestinian Jews and Palestinian Christians. For 400 years prior to British rule, the people were subjects of the Ottoman Empire.

Both Jews and Palestinians are indigenous to the land, and both Jews and Palestinians have a history of immigration to the land. After two millennia when most Jews lived outside Palestine, the Jewish population was rebuilt by Jewish immigration in the late nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. Some came to escape oppression. Others came because the Jewish people maintained a strong connection to their homeland throughout their 1900 years of existence in the Diaspora. The period of Jewish immigration in the early twentieth century coincided with an immigration from neighboring countries of people seeking work as the local economy developed. A common Palestinian surname is “Al-Masri,” which means “the Egyptian” in Arabic. In the Gaza Strip, many Palestinians are of Egyptian descent. As a case in point, the late Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat was born in Cairo to an Egyptian mother and a father from the Gaza Strip.



Jews expelled from what is now the West Bank, 1948



Palestinians expelled from what is now Israel, 1948

The British left what was then called Palestine in 1948 and shortly thereafter the State of Israel declared its independence, triggering a war and invasion from neighboring Arab countries. As is well known, most of the Arab population of what is now Israel was either forced out or fled during the war, in what is known to Palestinians as “the *Nakba*,” or catastrophe. An estimated 700,000 Arab Palestinians became refugees.

What is less well known is that numerous Jewish communities existed in what is now East Jerusalem and the West Bank prior to 1948. These communities were attacked and wiped out by Arab mobs in 1920, 1929 and 1936 and during the wars waged by Arab militias and Arab governments between 1947 and 1949. Here are some facts:

- Until it was wiped out by Arab riots in 1929 in what is known as the Hebron Massacre, there was a large Jewish community in the center of Hebron in the West Bank. Unable to protect Jewish lives, British Mandate authorities evacuated the remaining Jewish residents.
- The Jewish population of Jerusalem (which has had a Jewish majority since at least the second half of the 19th century) was dispossessed by the Arab riots of 1929 and 1936 (when Jews fled most of what is now called the Muslim Quarter). In 1948, the Jordanian Legion expelled all of the Jews then living in what is now East Jerusalem and destroyed its Jewish holy places.
- Sizable tracts of land owned by Jews in the rural West Bank – including the Gush Etzion settlements, land between Nablus, Jenin and Tulkarm, and in Bethlehem and Hebron – were seized by the Jordanians in 1948.
- The ‘Jewish settlements’ north of Jerusalem, Atarot and Neve Yaakov were evacuated in 1948 under the declared threat of advancing Arab armies to massacre all the Jews in their path. Many settlements today consist of Jews returning to these as well as the abovementioned areas.
- Today, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians live on land in and around Jerusalem that is still owned by the Jewish National Fund, including the Kalandia refugee camp and the Deheishe refugee camp south of Bethlehem.
- In the years following the 1948 war more than 800,000 Jews were expelled or forced from many Middle Eastern and North African countries.
- In the 1967 war, Jordanian forces attacked Israel from the West Bank. In the course of this war, Israel gained control of East Jerusalem, including the Old City and the West Bank, which had been under Jordanian rule from 1948 to 1967. Israel also gained control of the Gaza Strip, which was under Egyptian control for the same period.



Jerusalem between 1948 and 1967²

Israel and the Two-State Solution

The San Remo Resolution of 1920, one of many agreements that resulted from World War I, was the first international agreement that codified a Jewish state in Palestine.³ A modern state of Israel was further supported by the League of Nations. Following World War II, the nascent United Nations approved the partition of Palestine via UN General Assembly Resolution 181 in 1947. While international law can be very confusing, it is important to point out that the self-identified enemies of Israel, such as the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement, often point to international law to support their agendas. However, Arab states never recognized the San Remo Resolution or UNGA Resolution 181. Both sides have pointed to some laws to support their ‘case’ while ignoring others. Sadly, the exercise of cherry-picking through international law is a primary obstacle to peace.

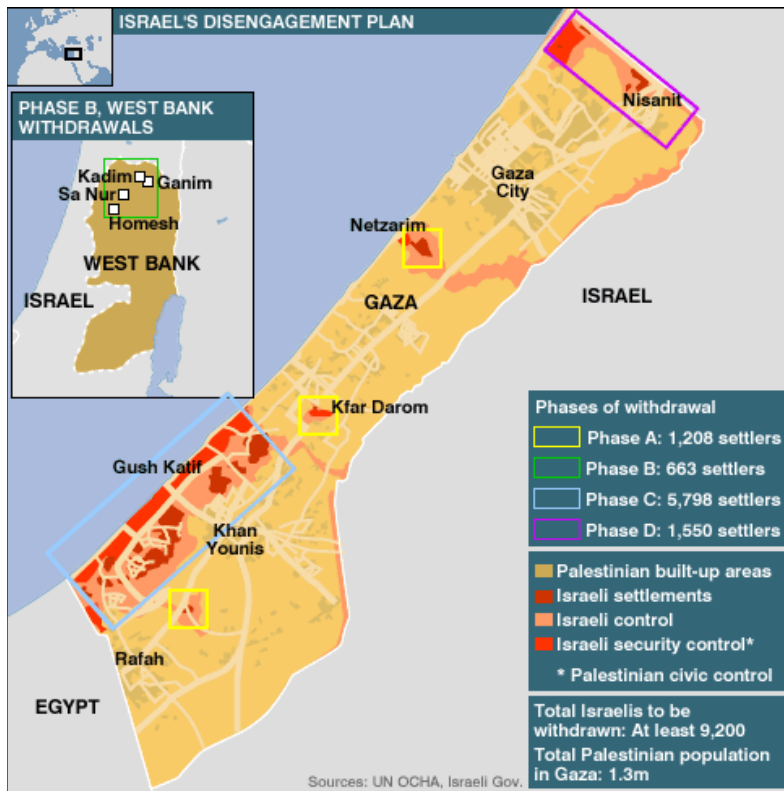
Instead of agreeing to UNGA Resolution 181 and recognizing the Israeli declaration of independence on May 14, 1948, Israel’s Arab neighbors chose to attack on the very next day, May 15. There is no way to know what may have happened if the UN partition plan *to create an Israel and a Palestine* would have been allowed to go forward. At the end of the first Arab-Israeli conflict, the land set aside for Palestine was controlled by Israel, Jordan and Egypt. There was no peace treaty when the fighting ended. Instead of peace, the Arab states involved agreed to separate ‘armistices’ with Israel. An armistice simply refers to how a ceasefire will be conducted. For example, the armistice between Israel and Jordan did not include a permanent or final agreement on their ‘border,’ or ‘armistice demarcation.’ Where soldiers stood when the guns went quiet is generally where the lines were drawn.

From 1949 to 1967, Jordan held the West Bank and half of the city of Jerusalem, including the sites most holy to Jews, which Jews were banned from visiting. From that time to the present there is yet to be a definitive and comprehensive peace agreement establishing permanent borders and finally ending the conflict. A peace treaty with Egypt in 1979 and another with Jordan in 1994 helped move in that direction, but with Israel’s other neighbors peace has remained elusive.

Support for the two-state solution among the Israeli public has varied over time but generally ranges between 50 and 65%. Most Israeli supporters of two states believe that without the eventual establishment of a Palestinian state, Israel’s future as both a democracy and the homeland of the Jewish people is at risk. The principal basis for opposition to a two-state solution is security: a belief that an Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank could lead to a takeover by Palestinian extremists intent on attacking Israel. Many of those opposed to Palestinian statehood simply do not believe that Palestinians will ever fully embrace peaceful coexistence with Israel.

Political support for a two-state solution is also strong among elected members of the Israeli Knesset. In the current Knesset, Israeli political parties representing 59% of Knesset members clearly support the two-state solution, and a strong case can be made that support is substantially greater (see the article “Who Holds Political Power in Israel?” in the supporting materials section of this document).

Polls and political platforms are one indication of Israeli support for two states and tangible actions are another. Israeli two-state solution proposals based on the Clinton parameters were both rejected by the Palestinian leadership in 2000 and 2001. In 2005 Israel embarked on a plan labeled “disengagement,” which for all practical purposes was an attempt to create two states, Israel and Palestine,



unilaterally. The first phase of disengagement was the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip in 2005, in which all Israeli security was withdrawn and all Jewish settlers in Gaza were evacuated. The hope was that if peace prevailed after the Gaza withdrawal, disengagement would continue with a systematic Israeli withdrawal from most of the West Bank. A subsequent proposal in 2007 offered by Israeli Prime Minister Olmert was also rejected by the Palestinians.

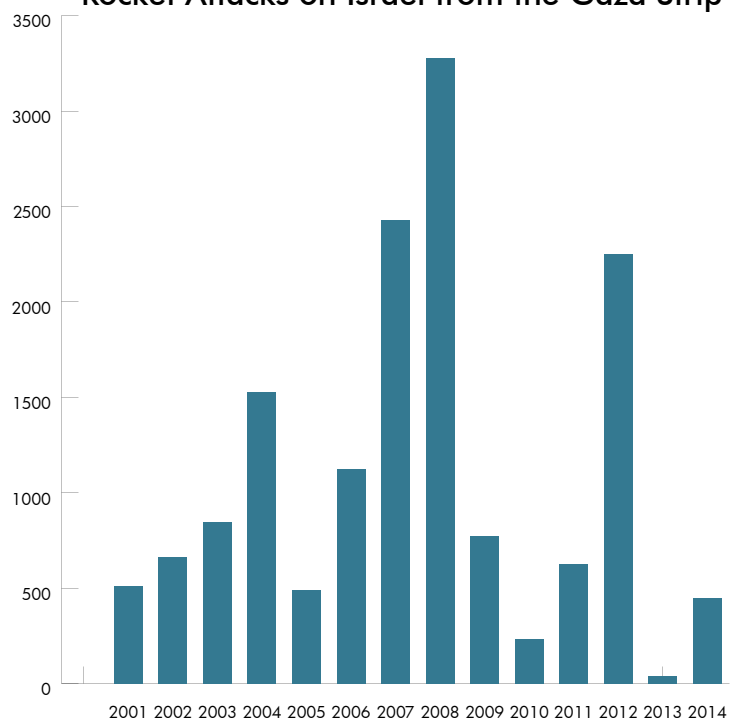
Subsequently, the Palestinian group Hamas won a majority of Palestinian legislative seats in the 2006 Palestinian elections, the last Palestinian elections to have been held.⁴ In 2007 Hamas took

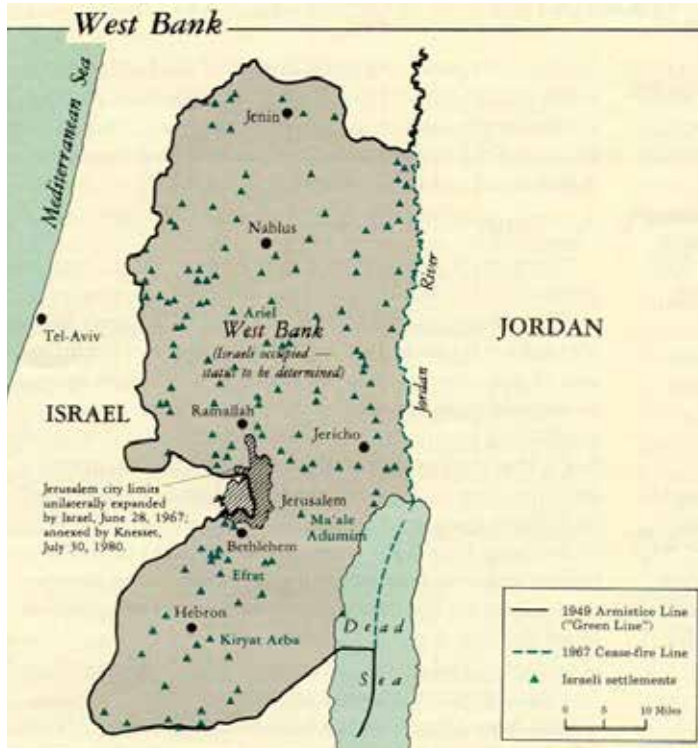
full control of Gaza with a violent takeover, and retains control of Gaza to this day. Hamas rejects the two-state solution, openly calls for the annihilation of Israel, and remains committed to violence and terrorism directed at Israeli civilians. Since the Hamas takeover, thousands of rockets and missiles have been launched at Israel from Gaza.

Israelis learned harshly that fences, like the fence between Gaza and Israel, and the security barrier between Israel and the West Bank, cannot stop rockets and missiles and cannot assure security. The Hamas takeover of Gaza ended disengagement and brought progress toward establishment of a Palestinian state to a halt.

Just as the Israeli disengagement from Gaza demonstrated to the world Israel's willingness to cede land for peace, Israel's West Bank settlement policies are seen by many as a significant obstacle to peace. As the map on the next page demonstrates, Israeli settlements are scattered throughout the West Bank.

Rocket Attacks on Israel from the Gaza Strip





Israel's detractors point to settlements as evidence of Israel's insincerity to cede land for peace, particularly the existence and expansion of settlements deep in the West Bank which rather obviously impede establishment of a Palestinian state. On the other hand, Jewish proponents of settlements deep into the West Bank point out that the future Palestinian state should be able to accommodate the presence of Jewish citizens just as Israel accommodates the presence of Arab citizens.

We believe that West Bank settlements are a challenge but not an insurmountable one. 75% of Israeli settlers reside in "settlement blocs" relatively close to the Israeli border. Borders can be set in a manner that places these blocs within

Israel, while land presently within Israel can be provided to Palestinians so that the aggregate land under Palestinian sovereignty remains close to that of the West Bank today. Most of the residents in these settlement blocs are considered non-ideological. (For a more detailed discussion of West Bank settlements, go to the "Resolving the Settlement Issue" section with the supporting materials to this document.)

The Palestinian Perspective on the Two-State Solution

Palestinians reside in two distinct geographic areas: the West Bank, with a population of approximately 2.8 million, and the Gaza Strip, with a population of 1.8 million. Each area has a separate ruling government, with the Palestinian Authority (PA) governing the West Bank and Hamas governing Gaza. The two Palestinian regions starkly illustrate the major division among Palestinians: those who support the two-state solution and favor peaceful coexistence, and those who reject the right of Israel to exist and seek its destruction.

We first address the West Bank. Substantial progress toward peace has been made in the West Bank at both the political and grassroots level. The Palestinian Authority, led by Palestinian President Abbas, is recognized by most Israelis and the international community as willing to work with Israel toward a two-state solution, although it must be said that PA leaders have at times made statements that suggest otherwise (as have Israeli leaders). During the tenure of Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad, security in the West Bank improved steadily through coordination between Palestinian and Israeli security personnel. Because of this partnership, almost all of the Israeli checkpoints in the interior of the West Bank are unmanned under normal conditions, providing much greater freedom of movement than the dark days following the height of the Israeli-Palestinian fighting that erupted in 2000.



Building a Palestinian nation: houses and apartment buildings under construction in Ramallah, 2012

Economic cooperation between Israelis and West Bank Palestinians is another demonstration of the ability to coexist peacefully. A report by the Bank of Israel estimated that in 2014, 92,000 West Bank Palestinians entered Israel for work on a typical day, double the number from four years earlier. In late 2013 a major water project was announced by Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority that will benefit all three parties.

The situation in Gaza is quite different. Gazans are governed by Hamas, the militant group formed in 1987 for the purpose of destroying Israel (as stated in the Charter of Hamas). Residents of Gaza have minimal freedom; to speak publicly against Hamas is to put one's life at risk. The lack of freedom in Gaza and the fear of Hamas makes it extremely difficult to gauge the true support for Hamas and the genuine level of support for peace through a two-state solution. The 2007 takeover of Gaza by Hamas is frequently described as a disaster for Israel. In fact, *it was a much greater disaster for Gazans seeking freedom and political rights.*

Palestinians will generally refer to the West Bank and Gaza as 'occupied territory' while many Israelis will describe the West Bank as 'disputed territory' or 'Judea and Samaria.' Why do some people use the term 'occupied territories' and others 'disputed territories'? The differing terminology reveals dif-



Rocket fired from a civilian area in Gaza towards civilian areas in Southern Israel

fering perceptions of the Arab-Israeli conflict and international law. Put most simply, 'occupation' is a legal term referring to land that has come under the control of another country during a conflict, the disposition of which is pending. A pro-Israeli position often supports the term 'disputed territory,' referring to the fact that all the Arab states, with the exception of Egypt (in 1979) and Jordan (in 1994), have refused to recognize Israel or engage in a negotiated treaty of peace and security.

What of the Palestinians who are Israeli citizens? Israel is a representative democracy in which all citizens enjoy freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly and association, labor rights, an independent judiciary and protection of racial, religious and gender minorities. Christians in Israel live and worship without persecution, and their numbers are increasing:

1945: 85,900
1948: 34,000
1967: 71,000
1995: 120,600
2007: 153,100
2013: 160,986

Recent surveys show that among non-Jewish Israelis, 83% were opposed to having their communities transferred to a Palestinian state (2000), 62% wished to remain Israeli citizens rather than become Palestinian (2007), and 77% preferred to be an Israeli than a citizen of any other Middle Eastern country (2008). In 2004, a poll conducted by the University of Haifa showed that among Arab-Israelis, 84.9% believed Israel has the right to be a sovereign state and 70% agreed that Israel should remain a Jewish democracy. This was confirmed in 2005 by the Truman Institute, which recorded 63% of Israeli Arabs supporting Israel's Jewish identity.

This does not mean to say that discrimination does not exist or that there is not much more work to be done. To the contrary, most Palestinian Israelis live in effectively segregated communities and face greater economic hardship than the majority of Israelis. Therefore, integration and genuine equality for all remains a work in process in Israel, just as is the case in the United States.

While both Israelis and Palestinians face the challenge of reaching agreement on a peaceful future, Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza face additional challenges in terms of limited freedom of expression, lack of participation in political decisions, and bifurcated, unelected government. Too little attention is being given to the need to help Palestinians favorably resolve their internal issues and move forward.

Alternatives to the Two-State Solution

With the peace process seemingly stalled, some assert that there can be no negotiated two-state solution. They say it is too late, and the facts on the ground will prevent a sovereign state of Palestine. Yet the reality is that Jewish settlements on the West Bank comprise only approximately 2% of its territory, most of it close to the pre-1967 borders. Before rejecting a two-state solution, it is important to consider the alternatives.

Alternative #1: End the Occupation Now

This is an alternative that has serious support extending beyond the international Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement and requires careful and thoughtful analysis. It is the foundation of Israel-targeted divestment proposals and the basis for boycotts of products produced in Israeli West Bank settlements.

On the surface the idea seems both plausible and appealing. Why not simply pressure Israel to withdraw from most of the West Bank? Palestinians would have freedom and self-determination. There would then be a genuine Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza. Israel would be assured its future as a democratic state with a strong Jewish majority. The international BDS campaign targeting Israel would end, and anti-Semitism linked to Israel's policies in the West Bank would dissipate. The argument seems compelling.

Beneath the surface the implications of "ending the occupation now" are hardly clear. Palestinians are deeply divided on the issue of coexistence with Israel. While many would welcome a two-state solution, there remain powerful Palestinian factions committed to the violent destruction of Israel. Israel's withdrawal from Gaza in 2005 led to the 2007 takeover of Gaza by Hamas, an entity that was formed for the sole purpose of destroying Israel.

With Hamas controlling Gaza and a third of the Palestinian population, and the West Bank governed by an unelected Palestinian Authority with questionable public support, the "worst case" scenario must be considered, in which Israel pulls out of the West Bank, the PA collapses and Hamas and aligned violent groups take over. Such an outcome would be disastrous for both peoples, just as the Gaza withdrawal was, and is the principal reason that most Israelis and the international community would not support such a withdrawal under present conditions.

Alternative #2: Make the Status Quo Permanent

In this scenario the current situation in Gaza and the West Bank is made more or less permanent, something Palestinians refer to as "normalization of the occupation." In the West Bank, Palestinians control agreed-upon areas as they do now, while Israeli settlements remain scattered throughout the West Bank and subject to Israeli security. This scenario is supported in Israel by two groups: religious Zionists who believe that none of the land of "greater Israel" should ever be given up, and those who firmly believe that Palestinians will never agree to peace with Israel.

The problem with this alternative is one of justice and dignity. While Palestinians may have access to employment in Israel and Israeli settlements, a permanent system of ethnic segregation would

prevail. Palestinians would be denied the dignity of genuine nationhood and self-determination. For that reason alone, such an alternative does not deserve support.

In addition, this scenario is an eventual threat to Israel's status as the homeland of the Jewish people. At present the Palestinian movement is a nationalist movement favoring creation of a Palestinian state. If present conditions prevail long enough, this could change. Were Palestinians to abandon their campaign for nationhood and instead seek civil rights as Israeli citizens, Israel could lose its Jewish majority and become a state which is no longer the Jewish homeland it is today.

Alternative #3: The "One-State" Solution

The third scenario is a "one-state" solution which could play out in one of two ways. The first is one in which Israel simply annexes the West Bank and offers full citizenship to West Bank Palestinians. The second involves the current state of Israel essentially dissolving itself and forming a "new state."

A "one-state solution" based on Israel annexing the West Bank would first need the support of the Israeli people, and there is little evidence of such support. For Israelis, annexation of the West Bank would seriously diminish Israel's Jewish majority and make Israel completely responsible for 2.5 million new citizens. Most of the Israeli political parties represented in the Knesset support a two-state solution (see our supporting materials on "Who Holds Political Power in Israel?"). Of those that do not support two states, only the Jewish Home Party supports a *partial* annexation of the West Bank *without* a provision for Israeli citizenship for Palestinians. The others, by default, support some form of the status quo continuing.

West Bank annexation by Israel would also require popular support from Palestinians, probably through a referendum. Without an overwhelming majority of Palestinians supporting such an action, the international community would oppose it. Palestinians show little interest in the annexation idea, and instead support for Palestinian nationalism dominates. In addition, West Bank annexation fails to address the issue of Palestinian refugees and their descendants, and fails to address the Gaza Strip.

In the second "one-state solution scenario," put forward by some of the Palestinian BDS movement leadership and supporters, the state of Israel no longer exists and a "new state" is created to take its place, encompassing all of what is now Israel and the Palestinian territories. All of the Palestinian refugees and their descendants have a right of return to the "new state" and Jews mathematically become a minority.

While there may be some limited support for this plan from Palestinians (around 15% in some recent polls), there is minimal support for it among Jewish Israelis, for fairly obvious reasons: they become a minority and lose Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people. Some would even argue that this version of a "one-state solution" is nothing more than a provocation aimed at weakening Israel and international support for the Jewish state. There is also no evidence that proponents of the "one-state solution" have made a serious effort to promote it to the Palestinian and Israeli peoples.

Christian Peacemakers

It cannot be overemphasized that as Christians we are called to be peacemakers, acting as mediators and working for reconciliation among parties in conflict. We are bound by core principles of Christian ethics and justice, and any course of action supported must be consistent with such principles. Therefore:

- The rights, dignity and aspirations of both Israelis and Palestinians *must be honored and respected*
- The course of action supported *must be consistent with principles of universal human rights*: the right of self-determination and democratic governance, the right to free expression and peaceful assembly, the right to a nationality, and the right to live in peace with neighbors

Against these essential requirements, a negotiated two-state solution stands out as the plan that most deserves Christian and international support.

The Way Forward



Advancing the two-state solution centers on three elements:

- Foundation-building through grassroots, person-to-person interaction
- Economic cooperation between Palestinians and Israelis
- Political development and policies that advance peace

Person-to-person interaction between Palestinians and Israelis helps build the trust necessary for peace. There are many organizations in Israel and the West Bank committed to this activity. The Alliance for Middle East Peace (ALLMEP) is an important example. The Alliance is a network of organizations that conduct civil society work in conflict transformation, development, coexistence and cooperative activities on the ground in the Middle East among Israelis, Palestinians, Arabs and Jews. Below are the core values from the ALLMEP mission statement:

Peace in the Middle East is not possible without the collective support of the people of the region for a just peace agreement.

People-to-people encounters are an effective and necessary strategy to create such sustainable collective public support for peaceful mutual coexistence on equal grounds and reconciliation.

Support for civil society programs in the Middle East is one crucial way that the international community, U.S. Government, and private philanthropists alike can positively move the peoples of the Middle East toward peace.

Cooperation between civil society organizations itself magnifies the impact of their work on the ground to produce a stronger movement for change.

A Commitment to Peace, Security, Coexistence, Freedom, Rights and Justice

Economic cooperation between Palestinians and Israelis is another critical element in the peace process. As mentioned previously, a new study by the Rand Corporation illustrates the economic benefits of the two-state solution. The study estimates an economic benefit of \$123 billion for Israelis and \$50 billion for Palestinians over a ten-year period, with both peoples benefiting. It predicts a 36% increase in per capita income for Palestinians over the same time frame.⁵

A second scenario analyzed in the Rand report is one that calls for economic pressure on Israel to withdraw from the West Bank without a commitment of peace from Palestinians. Under this scenario, both Israelis and Palestinians suffer economic losses, as economic cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians disintegrates. By pursuing the economic pressure strategy, the losses for the Palestinians are even greater when viewed as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product.

The third element is *political progress for peace*. Grassroots peacemaking efforts build the foundation. Economic cooperation represents the next step. The political process brings the final desired outcome.

For Israel, an established liberal democracy, this means pursuing policies that advance the peace process with Palestinians. Here the most controversial policies center on West Bank settlements, in particular the expansion of settlements. When new Israeli settlement construction is scattered throughout the West Bank, particularly in areas needed for a contiguous and viable Palestinian state, the sincerity of Israel's commitment to peace is justifiably called into question and the efforts of moderate Palestinians is hindered. As a result, the international BDS campaign to delegitimize Israel gains strength. Policies in the West Bank that recognize Palestinian rights and dignity benefit Israel and Israeli aspirations. It can and should be a win-win exercise.

For Palestinians the issue is one of overcoming division. Peace requires a Palestinian recognition of the Jewish people's right to self-determination. Accordingly, the Palestinian Authority must make an effort to promote understanding of Jewish history and to discourage hate speech against Israel and Jews, particularly in schools, the media and PA publications.

Palestinians willing to embrace a just peace must have a voice, and this is an issue of inclusion and empowerment within Palestinian society. Palestinians governed by Palestinians are not automatically free. There is limited freedom of expression and severely restricted right of assembly. While the Gaza Strip is the most desperate situation, the PA government in the West Bank is unelected with little progress in sight. Bloggers have been arrested for criticizing PA leadership, and journalists harassed (the Palestinian organization [MADA, the Palestinian Center for Development and Media Freedoms](#) reports regularly on this).

This is not about pressing democracy upon people who may not desire or choose it. It is standing in solidarity with Palestinians who want the same basic freedoms and voice in their future that we enjoy in the West. Democracy is no silver bullet, but without it how can peace advocates be heard and advance their cause?

Resources and Supporting Material



Jewish History in the Holy Land



“We ran the level up the road, and beyond the Jaffa gate, to the highest near peak, north-west of Jerusalem. There were many Jewish women and children, clothed all in white, under the olive-trees in the valley, as we passed. They were families from the city, who thus came to spend the day beneath the shade, away from the stifling air of the Jew’s quarter.” (May 17, 1848)⁶

Jewish populations have been an historical reality in the Holy Land for thousands of years. The area that became known as Palestine was a crossroads for multiple empires. The most recent, the Ottoman Empire, controlled the Holy Land for 400 years, ending with its loss in World War I. In decline for 300 years, the Ottoman Empire became known as the “Sick Man of Europe.” In the area that would become Israel, the West Bank and Gaza, conditions were among the worst in the empire. Long ignored, by the 19th century this backwater of the Ottoman Empire was known for extreme poverty, malaria-infested marshes and plague.⁷

Recordkeeping by the Ottomans throughout the empire was chaotic, epitomized by their lack of knowledge of who lived where. Overall census taking was ridden with incompetence and corruption, when the effort was made.⁸ The first real attempt at a ‘modern’ census was made between 1826 and 1831. The motivation was two-fold, taxation and military conscription, both activities exclusive to men. For non-Muslims, there was a head tax. The predominant plurality of Jews and Christians of the Holy Land were not allowed to serve in the military. All involved had reasons to remain off the official rolls, and Jews in particular had motivations to remain undercounted.⁹

While the exact numbers may be hard to determine, it is clear that Jews have lived continuously in their biblical homeland, *Eretz Yisrael*.¹⁰ One source from 1894 lists the population of Jerusalem at 40,000, including 28,000 Jews, who had built schools, hospitals and over 70 synagogues.¹¹ In Jerusalem at the turn of the 20th century, most Jews lived in the Jewish Quarter of the Old City and nearby communities that date from 1860.¹² By 1912, Jews comprised 78,000 in Palestine, which had a total population of about 700,000.¹³ In the greater Ottoman province of Jerusalem, by 1914 the total population was under 330,000.¹⁴ The Old City and some of the communities were in areas that today would be outside the 1967 borders, or ‘East Jerusalem.’

Population of City of Jerusalem in the Last Century of the Ottoman Empire¹⁵

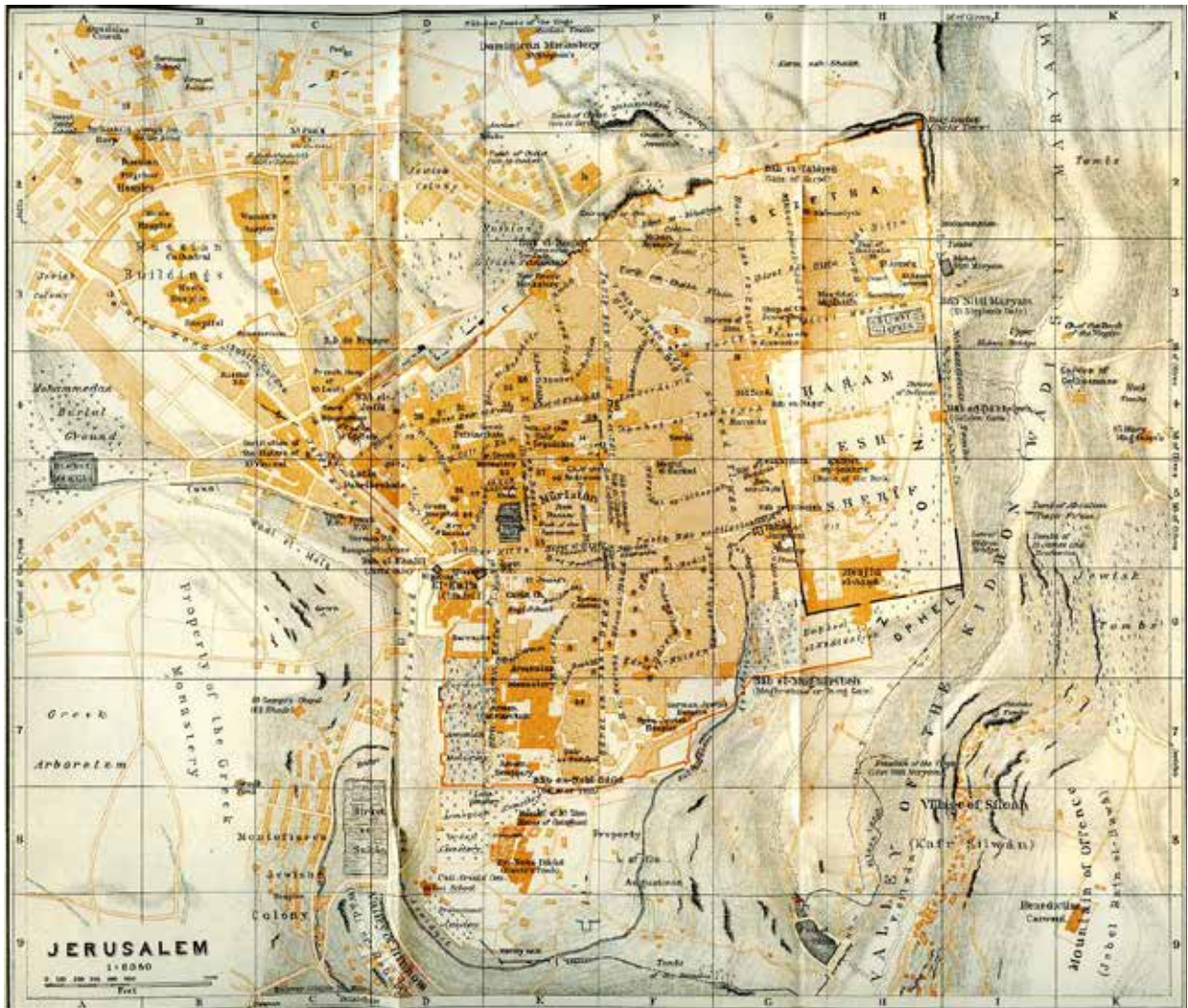
| Years | Jews | Muslims | Christians | Total |
|-------|--------|---------|------------|---------|
| 1845 | 7,120 | 5,000 | 3,390 | 16,410* |
| 1868 | 9,000 | 5,000 | 4,000 | 18,000 |
| 1889 | 25,000 | 7,000 | 7,175 | 39,175 |
| 1896 | 28,112 | 8,600 | 8,760 | 45,472 |
| 1905 | 40,000 | 8,000 | 10,900 | 58,900 |
| 1912 | 45,000 | 12,000 | 13,000 | 70,000 |

*Includes 800 Turkish soldiers and 100 Europeans

Thanks to personal travel journals, we know that Jews lived throughout Palestine, including Jaffa (today part of greater Tel Aviv) and Hebron (the location of the Tomb of the Patriarchs, Judaism’s most ancient site).¹⁶ Again, these sojourners found a land long neglected with a bleak future. Consider the single town of Tiberias, known to all Christians but also an ancient home to Jews. From as early as the 3rd century, Tiberias was a prominent center of Jewish learning. Sacked twice in the 7th and 13th centuries, a terrible earthquake in 1837 “only completed the desolation.”¹⁷ Yet Jews remained, most engaged in religious study. They were 20% of the population in 1822 before the earthquake,¹⁸ and the majority of a reduced population in 1849.¹⁹ Safed, another cherished center for Jewish biblical studies, also was devastated by the 1837 earthquake, with as many as 80% of the 5,000 who died from among the Jewish community.²⁰ Here also, the Jewish community has persisted.

There are some Jewish communities today in the West Bank where Jews lived prior to the creation of the modern state of Israel. Gush Etzion is one such place.²¹ Located just a few miles south of Jerusalem, Gush Etzion dates to the 1920s, but the Jewish connection to the land stretches back to Abraham who walked the land and King David who ruled over it. Much of the land purchased for Jewish settlement in Palestine was sold by absentee Arab owners, including the first Kibbutz at Gush Etzion. It was not an easy life, and attempts to squeeze a living off the land failed twice.

But there was eventual success, with the first settlers being Orthodox Jews from Poland, including Yitzhak Ben-Sira. When World War II ended, Ben-Sira went back to Europe, seeking his twelve brothers and sisters. Five had survived and four returned with him to build a new life in Gush Etzion. One was his brother Nahum, who had survived the Mauthausen death camp. Other Holocaust survivors included Akiva Levi, a nineteen year old Czech, and Zipora Rosenfeld, who had survived the death camp at Auschwitz.



Jerusalem in 1912.²²

Gush Etzion's location just fifteen miles south of Jerusalem meant that it was situated in a strategic location. Fighting there began shortly after the November 19, 1947, UN partition of Palestine. After months of siege, on May 13, 1948, it fell to Arab forces and was completely destroyed, but not before a massacre of 127 soldiers and civilians who had surrendered. Among them was Zipora Rosenfeld and her husband. Yitzhak and Nahum Ben-Sira were two of only four survivors. Jews began returning to Gush Etzion following the 1967 Six Day War, including 19-year-old Yosi Rosenfeld, born and evacuated a few weeks before the death of his parents and the fall of his birthplace.²³



Gush Etzion

Resolving the Settlement Issue: Understanding Jewish Presence in East Jerusalem and the West Bank Before and After 1967

Reading some descriptions of East Jerusalem and the West Bank, many would assume that there was no Jewish presence in these areas before 1967, and in fact there were no Jews in the West Bank and East Jerusalem at the onset of 1967 war.

What is not well understood is that Jews lived in East Jerusalem and the West Bank for generations before the 1948 war for Israeli independence. In fact, the only time Jews did not live in the West Bank was the period from 1948 to 1967 when the land was seized in war by Jordan contrary to UN Resolution 181.

To understand fully the presence of Jewish communities in the West Bank today, it is essential to look back to the 1967 Six Day War which was preceded by years of conflict between Jews and Arabs, much of it occurring prior the 1948 declaration of independence by Israel.²⁴ The original partition of Palestine recommended by the United Nations in 1947 was never recognized by Arab states. When Israel declared its independence on May 14, 1948, there were already some 5,000 Arab fighters in the territory designated for Israel. On May 15, 1948, forces from Egypt, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq and Transjordan invaded Israel.²⁵ In 1949 Israel signed separate armistices with its adversaries in the War of Independence, but the causes of the Arab-Israeli conflict remained unsettled.



The United Nations partition plan, 1947

Israel won a stunning military victory in 1967, but the Six Day War, as it would come to be called, would be a turning point in the history of the Middle East for reasons beyond the battlefield. The UN Security Council passed Resolution 242, known as "...a masterpiece of diplomatic ambiguity that became the key document in all attempts to arrive at a peaceful solution to the conflict."²⁶ What does that mean? It means that both sides to the conflict are able to point to the same document to support their often contradictory claims. For example, UNSC 242 called for a return of "territories," not "the territories," nor did it specify what should be returned to whom. Gaza back to Egypt? The West Bank to Jordan? Other questions just as easily could be asked but not answered in any satisfying way.

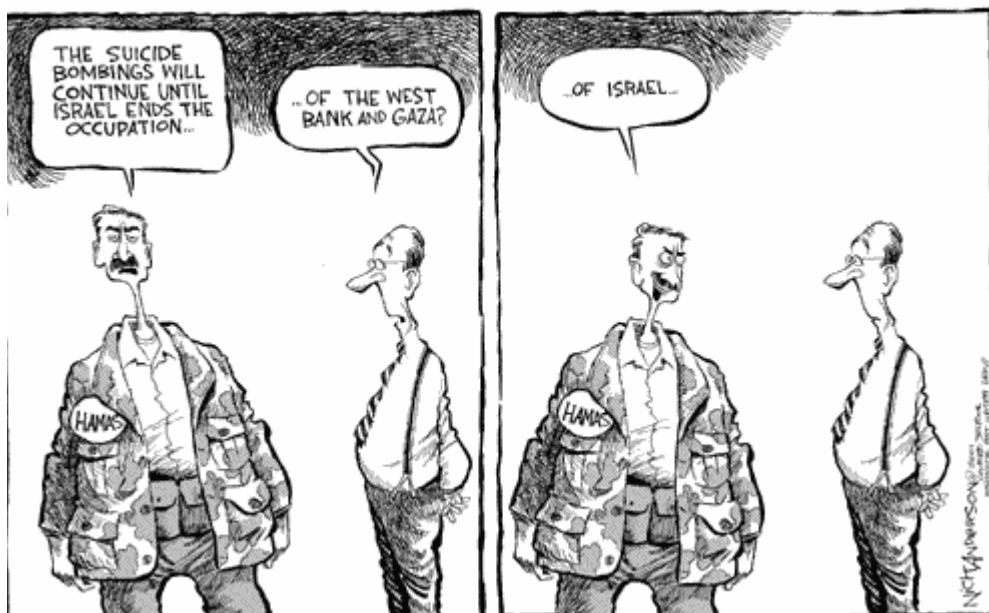
A seminal development of the 1967 conflict was the emergence of a Palestinian national movement. According to the original Palestinian National Charter of 1968, the Palestinians not only did not recognize Israel and called for its complete elimination, but asserted this could only be done through "armed struggle" and "commando action."²⁷

Just seven years after the stunning victory of 1967, Israel was attacked suddenly on Yom Kippur, 1973. The conflict involved some of the fiercest fighting in Israeli history, and this time the Jewish state feared it would be wiped out.

This history helps clarify the key motivations for Jewish presence in East Jerusalem and the West Bank, which in turn represent the challenges that must be overcome to make the two-state solution a reality:

- Religious Zionists who believed they had a God-given right to live in *Eretz Israel*
- Secular Jews who owned land and lived in Jerusalem and the West Bank before 1948 and believed they were returning to their rightfully owned property
- Israeli Jews who believed that Jewish presence in the West Bank was a security necessity

Where does that leave us today? Why won't Israel simply move its borders back to the pre-1967 lines? In a gesture of good will, Israel unilaterally withdrew from Gaza in 2005.²⁸ And shortly thereafter, in 2007, Gaza came under the control of Hamas. Hamas is a radical group that wants nothing less than the complete destruction of Israel. It has committed deadly human rights violations against its *own* population, has almost completely cleansed Gaza of any Christian presence,²⁹ and continues to use its territory and resources to attack Israel rather than properly care for its own people. Alternatively, both the Israeli government and the PA support a two-state solution with some existing agreement about West Bank settlements.³⁰



31



Distances Between Israeli Population Centers and Pre-1967 Armistice Lines

As the map to the left indicates, a further withdrawal to pre-1967 'borders' without peace would leave all of Israel utterly vulnerable to attack. Israel's security situation after 1967 has been described as both "a strategist's nightmare" as well as "a battlefield and a buffer state." It was worse prior to 1967. One prominent scholar writes, "No settlement was more than 20 miles from an Arab border except for a few in the Negev. The shortest distance from the Mediterranean to the frontier of the Kingdom of Jordan was 9-10 miles; and it was easy, in theory, for an Arab military thrust from the Jordan 'bulge' to split Israel at the waist. The Jerusalem Corridor was only 10 miles wide at points, and the Israeli half of the city was surrounded on three sides, well within Jordanian artillery range."³²

The settlement movement is sometimes portrayed as strictly a matter of ideology and religion. This is incorrect. The biggest challenge to resolving the settlement issue is security.

The settlements are primarily a result of security requirements that are a daily reality. History has ensured that Israel, the only country in the world with a majority Jewish population, conducts its policies according to a fundamental lesson: nothing is ever "too horrible to happen."³³

The Arabs of Palestine

Arabs first settled in the area known as Palestine in the 7th century, as the Islamic faith expanded from its origins on the Arabian Peninsula. Over the centuries, Jerusalem has never been an Arab capital or a center for Arab culture or learning. Its relevance to Islam does not come from the Quran, but rather the Prophet Muhammad's 'Night Journey' to Jerusalem, and Islamic scholars do not agree whether this journey was physical or spiritual.³⁴ Regardless, Jerusalem is the third holiest city to Islam after Mecca and Medina, both in Saudi Arabia. Under the Ottoman Empire Palestine became one of the most inhospitable areas of the Middle East, yet people still lived there. "But, poor and neglected though it was, to the Arabs who lived in it Palestine—or, more strictly speaking, Syria, of which Palestine had been a part since the days of Nebuchanezzar—was still their country, their home, the land in which their people for centuries past had lived and left their graves."³⁵ A two-state solution recognizes this attachment that Palestinians have for the land and provides them that homeland.

Moving forward to the British Mandate (1922-1947), Arab immigration into Palestine occurred alongside Jewish immigration, although not at the same level. In the modern era, Jews and Arabs (both Muslim and Christian) have been in a symbiotic relationship. The Jewish community, known as the *Yishuv* prior to statehood, and the British brought many improvements to Palestine, such as infrastructure. The *Yishuv* had a political system, economic institutions, a legal system, education up to the university level, and all the other elements of a modern nation-state, including taxation and a defense organization. With more clean water, more effective sewage, roads and energy, to name just a few advances, health improved dramatically alongside opportunities in education and the economy. Where a Jewish community grew, so did its Arab neighbors. Under British Mandate, the Arab population doubled, but it did not organize into the kind of pseudo-state institutions as the *Yishuv* had done.³⁶ There was little support for the increased Jewish immigration, but at the local level, troubles between Arabs and Jews were the exception, not the norm. This gradually changed for the worse. In 1921 the British appointed as Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Haj Amin al-Husseini, a vocal opponent of Zionism who sought the aid of Adolf Hitler for his cause. Growing conflict and violence ensued.

Most Arabs came from what is today Lebanon, Syria and Jordan.³⁷ Arab and Jewish immigration alike was both legal and illegal; the numbers of undocumented immigrants and day or seasonal workers can only be estimated and data at times has been manipulated. Arab immigration had two primary motivations: improvements in sanitation and health, as noted; and an end to Ottoman military conscription.³⁸ Many went to the city of Haifa, which the British had made its primary industrial port, with jobs easier to find and better pay.³⁹



Haifa, circa 1915

Haifa became one of Palestine's largest Arab communities. There were two official censuses during the Mandate Period, one in 1922 and the other in 1931. In nine years, Haifa's Jewish population had doubled, but Arab immigration was close behind.⁴⁰ 90% of Jews came from Europe; an equal percentage of Arabs came from other parts of Palestine. During the entire British Mandate, 75% of Arab immigration into Haifa came from other parts of Palestine,

many from rural areas, more likely to be unskilled and poor.⁴¹ Also, Jewish immigrants as of 1931 were younger, with 27.6% between the ages of 25 and 35 as opposed to 18.5% among the Arab population. However, between 1918 and 1939 the population more than quadrupled, going from an estimated 24,634 to 105,900. By default, it is estimated that Haifa experienced its main population explosion in the 1930s, as Jews fled anti-Semitism in Europe and the port city became “a haven of employment for Palestinians as well as for opportunity seekers from the neighboring Arab regions.”⁴²

Clearly there is more than one narrative about the refugees created during and after the first Arab-Israeli conflict, both Arab and Jewish. With reference to Haifa, it is useful to go back to the news coverage of the period, much of which is available in the original, avoiding the pitfalls of revisionism. The Arab community in Haifa had reached 60,000 by 1948, many of whom left before the fighting started. According to Time magazine, on May 12, 1948, Jewish forces took Haifa in just one day, creating chaos for anyone who had remained. Whom were the Jews fighting? Before the first Arab-Israeli war started, an estimated 5,000 hostile Arab fighters already had entered the part of Palestine set aside by the United Nations for the state of Israel. As the city fell to Jewish forces, at least 1,000 Arabs flooded the British controlled part of the port and many thousands fled inland toward Nablus.

The mass evacuation, prompted partly by fear, partly by orders of Arab leaders, left the Arab quarter of Haifa a ghost city. More than pride and defiance was behind the Arab orders. By withdrawing Arab workers, their leaders hope to paralyze Haifa. Jewish leaders said wishfully: “They’ll be back in a few days. Already some are returning.”⁴³

Two days later, the British Mandate ended and Israel declared independence. One day after that the armies of five Arab states invaded. This first Arab-Israeli War occurred two decades prior to any occupation, as did the 1956 Suez War and the 1967 Six Day War. At the end of each conflict, Israel has wanted negotiations that would produce a mutually agreed upon two-state solution that recognizes Israel’s legitimacy as a nation-state with the right to exist in peace and security. Almost 70 years later, Israel still waits.

Who Holds Political Power in Israel?

The Israeli political and foreign policymaking system is very different than that of the US. When Israeli policy is discussed in the US, headlines often read “Netanyahu said this” or “Netanyahu supports that.” As of the latest election of March 2015, Benjamin “Bibi” Netanyahu is the Prime Minister of Israel. There also is a President (a mostly non-political, often ceremonial position, held by Reuven Rivlin), the Parliament or “Knesset,” which is the legislature, as well as a court system. So, who makes policy in Israel? It rarely is just Netanyahu, the public face of Israel.

The prevalent form of democracy in the world is based on the parliamentary system, as opposed to the US system, known as a democratic representative presidential system. In the US, citizens vote directly for President and separately for members of Congress. The US President leads the executive branch of federal government, and shares a ‘balance’ of power with Congress and the judicial branch. Parliamentary systems work quite differently (and there are many forms of parliamentary democracy). On election day in Israel, voters choose a candidate to the Knesset, each representing a given political party. The party winning the largest number of seats names their leader to the position of Prime Minister (though doing so often requires the winning party to form a “coalition government”). As of 2015, the latest (20th) Knesset has members from *ten* different political parties. Though the largest party is Likud, they do not hold a majority of seats, therefore the party had to form a “coalition government” in order to name their party leader, Netanyahu, as Prime Minister.

Israel is typical of most parliamentary governments, in that a party or coalition of parties with a majority of seats must control the government. How else could anything get done? For much of the world, the US form of government which can have a legislature split between two parties, or an executive from a party separate from the party controlling Congress is a baffling guarantee of political chaos. However, a coalition government also can be very difficult to achieve and manage.

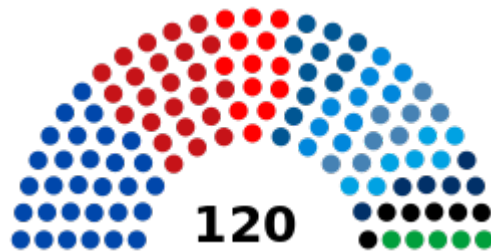
In a parliamentary system, there is no true separate executive branch, and the party with the most seats in Parliament can change its leader at any time. As a result, the Prime Minister can be replaced without an election, which is what happened to Margaret Thatcher of Great Britain. This means that a Prime Minister, known as the “first among equals,” must always keep the support and favor of other leading members of her/his party as well as the parties in the coalition. Furthermore, a single party rarely can act independently. This is quite different from the extensive policy making power of a US President.

The chart on the following page depicts the Israeli election results of 17 March 2015. In order to form a majority coalition, Netanyahu went through a complicated process which among other things included having to provide top political positions to leaders of coalition partners. It takes many ongoing political deals and concessions to hold a coalition government together. In addition, the political parties in Israel often are fluid, continually changing, forming and/or breaking up, and often over important policies. If a coalition falls apart, entirely new elections must be held. At the beginning of the 20th Knesset, the ruling coalition held only 61 out of the 120 seats.

So, who holds political power in Israel? Who makes decisions? The answer to that question often is policy-specific and often reflects party and coalition politics, as well as the platforms of the ruling

coalition parties. Some of these parties are tagged as 'right' or 'left', but that distinction applied to Israel is often incorrect, as party platforms revolve around issues that don't match the typical American-style left-right dichotomy.

Seats: 120 Total



| Party | Leader | % | Seats | +/- |
|------------------------|--------------------|--------|-------|-----|
| Likud | Benjamin Netanyahu | 23.40% | 30 | +12 |
| Zionist Union | Isaac Herzog | 18.67% | 24 | +3 |
| Joint List | Ayman Odeh | 10.54% | 13 | +2 |
| Yesh Atid | Yair Lapid | 8.81% | 11 | -8 |
| Kulanu | Moshe Kahlon | 7.49% | 10 | New |
| The Jewish Home | Naftali Bennett | 6.74% | 8 | -4 |
| Shas | Aryeh Deri | 5.73% | 7 | -4 |
| Yisrael Beiteinu | Avigdor Lieberman | 5.11% | 6 | -7 |
| United Torah Jerusalem | Yaakov Litzman | 5.03% | 6 | -1 |
| Meretz | Zehava Gal-On | 3.93% | 5 | -1 |

What Are the Views of the Ruling Coalition Parties, the Parties in Power, on a Two-State Solution?



Knesset chamber in session

The five parties that comprise the ruling coalition at the beginning of the 20th Knesset are Likud (whose leader Benjamin Netanyahu is the Prime Minister), Kulanu, The Jewish Home, Shas and United Torah Judaism. Of these five only Kulanu supports a two-state solution. The Jewish Home (8 seats) wants a single, Jewish state while Shas and United Torah Judaism (13 seats combined) are both religious, Ultra-Orthodox parties, and do not consider the two vs. one state debate as particularly important. Of the remaining five non-coalition parties, which hold a total of 59 seats, all support a two-state solution.

Below is a summary of the Israeli political parties and their position on the two-state solution, based on an article in the Jerusalem Post (For the full article [click here](#)).

Parties clearly supporting a two-state solution: 69 Knesset Seats (57.5%)

Zionist Union 24 Knesset Seats (18.7%)

Zionist Union calls for two states for two peoples and a final-status agreement for a two-state solution that would have the support of the Arab world. Israel's final borders would include the settlement blocs. Palestinian refugees could not return anywhere within Israel's final borders and should return instead to the future state of Palestine.

Joint (Arab) List 13 Knesset Seats (10.5%)

The Joint (Arab) List supports a two-state solution. It advocates a return to the pre-1967 lines with East Jerusalem as the capital of a Palestinian state.

Yesh Atid 11 Knesset Seats (8.8%)

Yesh Atid believes in a two-state solution that includes a unified Jerusalem and retention of the settlement blocs—such as Ariel, Gush Etzion and Ma'aleh Adumim—and evacuation of small and isolated settlements. It calls for the immediate halt to settlement building outside the settlement blocs during negotiations with the Palestinians.

A final-status agreement with the Palestinians for a two-state solution should occur within the context of a regional peace agreement with moderate Arab neighbors. The Palestinian state would be demilitarized and Israel would have the right to preserve its security interests.

Kulanu

10 Knesset Seats (7.5%)

Party head Moshe Kahlon, a past MK (Member of Knesset) for Likud, and his new party, Kulanu, have a centrist platform, which calls for the settlement blocs and Jewish neighborhoods of Jerusalem to be part of Israel's final borders in any final-status agreement with the Palestinians. It also opposes the return of Palestinian refugees anywhere within Israel's final borders. The platform calls for the revival of the 2004 letter in which former US President George W. Bush promised former Likud Prime Minister Ariel Sharon that these principles would be upheld in any final-status agreement.

Yisrael Beytenu

6 Knesset Seats (5.1%)

Yisrael Beytenu believes in a two-state solution that would be reached both with the Palestinians and the moderate Arab world. Its platform calls for redrawing Israel's borders to include the maximum number of Jewish citizens in Israel and the maximum number of Palestinians in Palestine, including Israeli-Arab areas within Israel's pre-1967 borders, such as the Triangle and Wadi Ara region.

Israeli Arabs should be able to decide if they want to retain Israeli citizenship.

Meretz

5 Knesset Seats (3.9%)

Meretz seeks a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through a regional peace plan based on the 2002 Arab League peace initiative that would include an agreed-upon solution to the issue of Palestinian refugees. It would also be based on the return to the pre-1967 borders with limited territorial swaps that would preserve Israel's identity as a Jewish and democratic state.

Remaining Israeli Political Parties

51 Knesset Seats (42.5%)

Likud

30 Knesset Seats (25%)

Likud does not have a formal platform on any topic. Prime Minister Netanyahu's statements regarding Palestinian statehood and Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank have appeared inconsistent and contradictory to many observers.

In 2005, under then-Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, Israel unilaterally withdrew from the Gaza Strip. Netanyahu, in 2009, during his second term as Prime Minister, imposed the first ever moratorium on housing starts in all settlements. That same year, he delivered an address at Bar-Ilan University

that supported the idea of two states for two peoples. During his last six years as Prime Minister, construction in West Bank settlements decreased, but the number of tenders issued increased, as did the amount of land the government legalized for the area's construction.

During the last political campaign he said that in light of the growing extremists threats in the Middle East from terrorist groups, it is not possible at this time to make territorial concessions to the Palestinians and has promised to stand firm in support of Judea and Samaria.

Bayit Yehudi

8 Knesset Seats (6.7%)

Bayit Yehudi does not believe in a Palestinian state in East Jerusalem, or anywhere in the West Bank, and is therefore opposed to negotiations for a two-state solution west of the Jordan River. Similarly, it opposed the return of Palestinian refugees from other countries to the West Bank.

Its party head, Naftali Bennett, and the party platform call for the immediate annexation of Area C of the West Bank, where some 350,000 Israelis live and where all settlements are located. It wants to grant Israeli citizenship to what it estimates are 50,000 Palestinians who live in Area C, and for the bulk of the Palestinians, who live in Areas A and B, grant autonomy but not citizenship. Steps should be taken to help their economy flourish. Gaza should be cut off from the West Bank and Israel, and instead should be solely connected to Egypt.

Shas

7 Knesset Seats (5.7%)

Right before the elections, Shas Chairman Aryeh Deri said, "I do not agree to the partition of Jerusalem, and I do not agree to mass evacuations for no reason, but I do support the evacuation of isolated settlements, and I do support negotiations."

United Torah Judaism

6 Knesset Seats (5.1%)

United Torah Judaism has said it did not have a formal position on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including the West Bank.⁴⁴

International Law and the Arab-Israeli Conflict

The law related to Israel and Palestine is quite contentious, in spite of the fact that many groups claim what is (or is not) clearly legal (or illegal). With the rarest of exceptions, law simply is not that black and white. Consider for example the US Constitution, a relatively short document, written in a single language. Yet since 1789, hundreds of the best American legal minds have argued—and continue to argue—vigorously about interpretations of its content.

International law is even more inexact. Known as ‘primitive law,’ international law is not based on a single constitution, but rather on treaties, customs, principles and the opinions of experts. For example, many international law experts agree that the United Nations has enormous influence on international law, but cannot pass laws. The UN is not a true legislative body in the conventional sense. For this reason, the General Assembly and Security Council pass resolutions, not laws.⁴⁵

Why are UN resolutions not automatically binding? The answer is because the UN has no true constitution. This is important because constitutions serve two primary roles—granting power and restricting power. Put most simply, a constitution controls “who gets what, when and how” when it comes to decision-making and political power.⁴⁶ It protects citizens from something known as the ‘tyranny of the majority.’ More people, or the majority, are right-handed rather than left-handed. The US Congress could pass a law mandating that left-handed people have to pay all federal taxes and right-handed people do not pay at all. That legislation, or ‘law,’ would, via judicial review, be determined unconstitutional, protecting the minority left-handed people.⁴⁷ The UN has a charter, but the charter is a treaty and not a true constitution. There also is no court system to judge the ‘constitutionality’ of UN resolutions.⁴⁸ The UN General Assembly regularly singles out Israel by passing resolutions against it while ignoring other states and their transgressions. Israel has no legal recourse as there is no judicial review or oversight.

One example of differing opinions concerning international law is the British Mandate (1922-1948). Was it legal? Not surprisingly, the British government felt that it was and acted on that basis. Based initially on the Balfour Declaration (1917), and confirmed by the League of Nations via the Treaty of Sèvres (1920) and the Treaty of San Remo (1920), the British Mandate was to include a national home for the Jewish people. In 1922, then-British Secretary of State for the Colonies Winston Churchill wrote:

During the last two or three generations the Jews have recreated in Palestine a community, now numbering 80,000, of whom about one-fourth are farmers or workers upon the land. This community has its own political organs; an elected assembly for the direction of its domestic concerns; elected councils in the towns; and an organization for the control of its schools. It has its elected Chief Rabbinate and Rabbinical Council for the direction of its religious affairs. Its business is conducted in Hebrew as a vernacular language, and a Hebrew Press serves its needs. It has its distinctive intellectual life and displays considerable economic activity. This community, then, with its town and country population, its political, religious and social organizations, its own language, its own customs, its own life has in fact ‘national’ characteristics. *When it is asked what is meant by the development of the Jewish National Home in*

Palestine, it may be answered that it is not the imposition of a Jewish nationality upon the inhabitants of Palestine as a whole, but the further development of the existing Jewish community, with the assistance of Jews in other parts of the world, in order that it may become a center in which the Jewish people as a whole may take, on grounds of religion and race, an interest and a pride. But in order that this community should have the best prospect of free development and provide a full opportunity for the Jewish people to display its capacities, *it is essential that it should know that it is in Palestine as of right and not on sufferance*. That is the reason why it is necessary that the existence of a Jewish National Home in Palestine should be internationally guaranteed, and that it should be formally recognized to rest upon ancient historic connection.⁴⁹ (*Emphasis added.*)

This was written 25 years prior to the 1947 UN partition. It was written over a decade before Adolf Hitler came to power in Germany and over 20 years before Nazi Germany enacted the 'Final Solution' that took the lives over six million Jews, (which translates to six out of seven Jews in Europe, or one third of the global population).⁵⁰ Arab states did not accept the Balfour Declaration, the Treaty of San Remo or the British Mandate including a national home for Jews, even though these measures were accepted by the League of Nations.

Another area of legal contention concerns borders. Israel often is called to return to 'pre-1967' borders, or the 1949 armistice lines, the 'Green Line,' as if they are the universally accepted, and legal, borders of Israel. Here again there are differing legal interpretations. The 1947 UN Partition of Palestine never materialized, as it was not recognized by Arab states, who invaded Israel the day after its May 14, 1948 declaration of independence. The first Arab-Israeli war did not end with a peace treaty, rather a ceasefire with each of the Arab states, including Jordan. Jordan and Israel agreed to stop fighting along an 'armistice line.' Neither Israel nor Jordan considered this a final border, rather a temporary line that would be resolved pending a negotiated, mutual peace treaty. Only Great Britain and Pakistan would recognize Jordan's 1950 annexation of the West Bank; only Pakistan recognized Jordan's claim to East Jerusalem.⁵¹

To summarize, Israel is being asked to return to the 1949-1967 ceasefire lines that never were internationally recognized borders. This controversy exemplifies international legal arguments that are heatedly debated, but also all too often depicted as simple, universally held truths. It is easy for an advocate to cherry-pick legal viewpoints to support a given agenda or vilify an opponent. This kind of debate does not move toward peace, rather "it would only add an insoluble element to what is already an extremely difficult problem."⁵² A reckless pursuit of 'justice' rather than a negotiated peace treaty between Israel and the Palestinians is actually an obstacle to peace.

The Power of Perception

Debates that involve policies such as boycotts, sanctions and divestment against countries often are put forward, or refuted, with long lists of ‘facts’ and ‘facts on the ground.’ They also are augmented with ‘narratives,’ referring to histories that represent a people’s heritage and experience, often presented through individual testimonies. This approach is reflected in an area of international relations academe known as ‘political psychology,’ or the application of cognitive psychology to political decision making. For example, how do leaders respond in times of national emergency? What makes a diplomat effective? Perceptions also affect national political cultures. What causes public opinion, and what does public opinion mean?

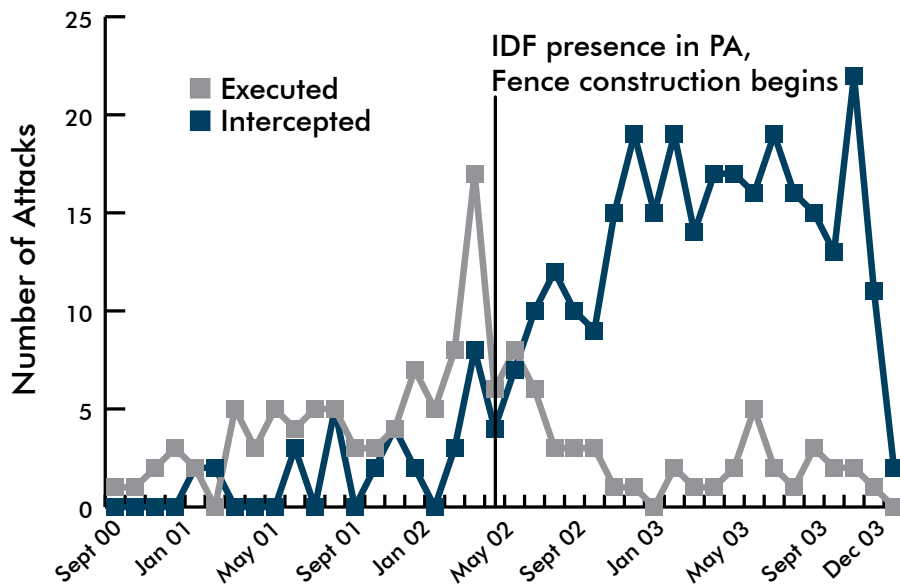
Perceptions are just as powerful, or even more powerful, than ‘reality.’⁵³ When in 2004 the PC(USA)’s General Assembly decided to enact a policy of “phased, selective divestment” from US companies doing business with Israel, the Jewish community in the US was “stunned.” The PC(USA) was “also stunned by the intensity of the Jewish reaction.”⁵⁴ The PC(USA)’s intent, in the words of Carol Hylkema, MRTI chair, was that “divestment is the last option. Once the stock is sold, the leverage is gone. The goal is engagement. We want them to change their policy.”⁵⁵ The policy in question is the *occupation*, which in itself is controversial, and is addressed more fully in this report.

Assuming that the PC(USA) did indeed wish to pressure Israel to change its policies vis-à-vis the West Bank and Gaza, the method chosen in 2004, and 2014, backfired badly. Put simply, the pro-divestment element within the PC(USA) does not understand the mainstream Israeli or Jewish ‘narrative.’ “The Presbyterians thought they were advocating balanced policies that would maximize the chances of peace for both Israelis and Palestinians but, from a Jewish perspective, they were choosing sides under the guise of a charade of evenhandedness.”⁵⁶ Yet, “... using the word “terror” in 2002 to describe Israeli actions, but not Palestinian actions, was like waving a red flag at a bull.”⁵⁷ Extreme exception also was taken to the reference of the occupation as “at the root of evil acts committed against innocent people,” insinuating the simplistic and false assertion that one side in the conflict is utterly at fault and the other utterly the innocent victim.⁵⁸

When the state of Israel was created, it was perceived, at home and abroad, as a “David” surrounded by “Goliaths.” As mentioned earlier, the Six Day War of 1967 changed that perception. Seven years later came the shock of the 1973 Yom Kippur War (or Ramadan War, depending on your loyalties) in which Israel was attacked without warning and was nearly destroyed. It went “from fear of annihilation to resounding triumph” in 1967 to “despair, self-doubt and existential fear” in 1973.⁵⁹ Israel controlled territory as a result of the 1967 War and hoped (and most Israelis still hope) that eventual control of those lands would result from negotiated, mutually achieved peace treaties that would recognize Israel’s right to exist. Relatively few settlers came into the West Bank and Gaza between 1967 and 1973, less than 3,000, but that would change.⁶⁰

Again, the role of perceptions is critical. Israel is no longer viewed by many on the outside as the David, rather the Goliath. That was the impression given by the PC(USA) in 2004. It would be naïve, and potentially dangerous, not to put things into context. Covered more fully in this document, the Second Intifada, which began in 2000, killed over 1,000 Israelis and injured many others. As part of the effort to protect its citizens, Israel began construction of the ‘separation barrier,’ coined by the BDS movement as an ‘apartheid wall.’ But regardless of the name, it has been effective in pro-

protecting both innocent Israelis and Palestinians against indiscriminate attacks. As shown in the table, the number of attacks fell precipitously as a direct result of the barrier.



From the Israeli point of view, Israel has been surrounded and walled off by its Arab neighbors since the day of its inception.

“The Palestinians and the Arab states have systematically over the decades tried every means imaginable to isolate Israel, in effect building a “wall” around

Israel in order to eventually destroy it. They have tried to do this through economic boycott and diplomatic assaults in the international arena. They have taken action in order to prevent Israel from participating in cultural and sports events. They have kept Israel from participating in Middle Eastern and Asian related events, even though Israel is part of the Middle East and the Asian continent. They have used the same kind of antisemitic diatribes against Israel that were used against the Jewish people during the times in history when Jews were forced into ghettos. If anyone is trying to build ghettos, it is the Palestinians and the Arab world that are guilty of trying to do this against Israel.”⁶¹

The Jewish community is well aware that the first steps taken against Jews by Nazi Germany was in the form of boycotts against Jewish businesses.⁶² Israelis know that Israel is the *only country in the Middle East* where the Christian community, which enjoys full freedom of worship, is actually growing.⁶³ Israelis constitute a forward presence for the US and its allies against groups such as al-Qaeda and ISIS. Today mainstream Jews and Israelis perceive that mainline churches in the US have “singled out Israel... (it has) not been treated as a normal country... (is) judged according to a separate standard” and are engaging in “negative discrimination.”⁶⁴

Rather than approving counter-productive overtures that backfire by making Israel feel unfairly targeted, more isolated and insecure, positive engagement including a successful “increase in American Jewish engagement” should be pursued.⁶⁵

The BDS movement is overly simple and not realist enough in its analysis. And by implicitly or explicitly encouraging disengagement from Israel, it precludes the work that many Israelis and Palestinians are doing on the ground to build trust and foster cooperation—work that provides some real basis for hope that their people can live and prosper side by side.”⁶⁶

The power of perception is alive and well, and just as relevant in 2016 as it was in 2004.

Land for Peace in a Two-State Solution

A mutually negotiated two-state solution, recognizing Israel, living in peace and security, will bring peace and security to the Palestinians as well. At the same time, a pressure campaign to force an Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank without a firm commitment to peace and coexistence from Palestinians would put both Israeli and Palestinian lives at risk.

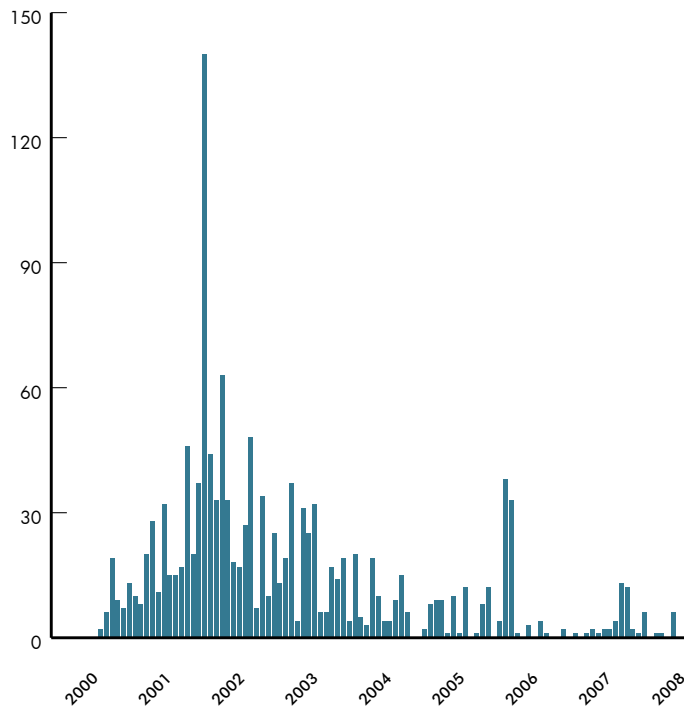
During the 1956 Suez Canal war, Israel took control of the Sinai peninsula. Believing UN and US assurances that it would be safe, in March 1957 Israel withdrew. Israel did not have a peace treaty with Egypt, and ten years later Egypt used the Sinai to prepare an invasion into Israel. In 1979, Israel and Egypt negotiated a peace treaty that did achieve recognition, peace and security. The presence of Israeli settlements in the Sinai did not prevent a successful peace process. Land for peace worked with Egypt when it was incorporated into a mutually negotiated peace treaty, as it did again with Jordan in 1994.

The lesson of Gaza is even clearer. In 2005, then Prime Minister Ariel Sharon engaged in a unilateral withdrawal from Gaza, removing all the settlements without a negotiated peace treaty. He hoped that his gesture would move the peace process forward. The opposite occurred. Hamas took control in Gaza at the expense of the more moderate Palestinian Authority.⁶⁷ Hamas wants nothing less than the complete destruction of Israel. Asking Israel to remove its presence in the West Bank without a mutually negotiated peace treaty is tantamount to completely ignoring the lesson of unilateral disengagement from Gaza.⁶⁸

Peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians came very close to fruition at the end of the Clinton Administration. Then Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat was offered 100% of Gaza, 97% of the West Bank, free passage between the two areas, Palestinian sovereignty over the Temple Mount and a Palestinian capital in East Jerusalem.⁶⁹ Arafat refused in what President Clinton would refer to as “an error of historic proportions.”⁷⁰ Some believe that Arafat preferred to be the “hero” of a struggle rather than a politician in a minor country.⁷¹

Failure to reach a peace agreement in 2000, accompanied by rising frustration among the Palestinian people, is credited as a cause of the Second Intifada.⁷² In the First Intifada (1987-1991) the Israeli Defense Forces were the primary target. This time it would be Israeli civilians. Most of the attacks were by suicide bombers, and the victims included Jews, Muslims, Christians and tourists. A short sample of the attacks is sufficient.

- May 25, 2001 - a bus in Hadera - 65 injured
- June 1, 2001 - a Tel Aviv discotheque known to be frequented by teenagers - 21 dead and 120 injured
- August 9, 2001 - a pizzeria in Jerusalem popular among tourists - 15 killed (including seven children) and 130 injured
- December 1, 2001 - Ben Yehuda pedestrian mall in Jerusalem, another popular tourist destination - 11 killed and 180 injured



**Fatalities from Terrorism in Israel
by Month, 2000-2008**

- December 2, 2001 - a bus in Haifa - 15 killed and 40 injured

In 2002 alone there were 47 attacks, including the cafeteria at Hebrew Union University in Jerusalem.⁷³

Imagine living in a place where your purse or backpack regularly is checked for explosives before you enter a shopping mall, a movie theater or the grocery store. This has been a fact of life for Israelis since *before* the Second Intifada began in 2000, continuing as well during the Second Intifada itself. In July 2003 Israel began construction of the separation barrier, also known as the ‘security fence’ (about 10 percent of which is called the ‘wall’⁷⁴) which has proven very effective in curbing the violence. Nevertheless, in the face of these realities, the 2004 PC(USA) General Assembly primarily

focused on actions against Israel, and only Israel. The perception among Israelis was incredulity at such a one-sided attack.⁷⁵

Israel has not tried to absorb the West Bank, but considering the disastrous effects of unilateral withdrawal from Gaza, Israel maintains its right to protect its people, including the 20% who are Arab Israelis.⁷⁶ Every sovereign state has the right of self-defense, as codified in the Charter of the United Nations. Ending the occupation without a two-state solution codified in a peace treaty would worsen the lives of both Israelis and Palestinians.

Is there still hope for peace? Of course. Peace talks continued even during the Second Intifada.⁷⁷ As of 2013, 70% of Palestinians in the West Bank voluntarily had left the UN refugee camps and enjoy a growing economy based upon the Israeli shekel. Many of those who have chosen to remain in the camps have become a security concern for both Israelis and Palestinian security and police forces.⁷⁸ After World War II, the bloodiest war in human history (50 million dead), countries in Europe that regularly went to war with each other for centuries came together, integrated their economies and infrastructures and removed their border crossings. The US and the Soviet Union made peace after decades of ‘Cold War.’ The Berlin Wall and the Iron Curtain came down. Even Dennis Ross, the US Envoy to the Middle East from 1988-2000, wrote in 2004, “Some may look at the Middle East and draw only one lesson: Peace is not possible. Conflict is the norm... I do not accept that.”⁷⁹ Land for peace based upon a final peace treaty between Israel and the Palestinians is possible, but nothing in international relations happens in isolation with a single easy answer, such as ‘just end the occupation.’

The Failure of Sanctions

Boycotts, divestment and sanctions are at the forefront of the debate on moving the Israeli-Palestinian peace process forward. Extensive studies on boycotts, divestment and sanctions clearly show that in most cases they have not worked, and sometimes caused more harm than good. Economic pressure, or what President Woodrow Wilson called a “peaceful, silent deadly remedy,”⁸⁰ often is considered an acceptable option because it is viewed as non-violent.

Divestment and boycotts are two kinds of economic sanctions, which sit on a spectrum between diplomacy and war. They should not be considered “a low-cost substitute for the use of military force.”⁸¹ They are a conscious move away from positive engagement in the direction of violence. Technically non-violent, sanctions are even considered unethical as they are an act of aggression that causes collateral damage to innocents.⁸²

Estimates of Iraqis who died because of years of sanctions put in place from 1991 to 2003 stand as high as hundreds of thousands.⁸³ The economic punishment against Iraq did nothing to dislodge Saddam Hussein from power. Instead, Hussein tightened his totalitarian control, using the resulting chaos from sanctions as an economic weapon more deadly than a weapon of mass destruction against his own people.⁸⁴ However, the sanctions were generally acceptable to the American public as divestment, boycotts and sanctions are viewed as a non-violent option.⁸⁵ These types of measures have done nothing to improve human rights in China and North Korea, or civil rights in Cuba.⁸⁶ We do know that economic weapons cause the most collateral damage among women, children and the elderly.⁸⁷ They undermine business, infrastructure, education and many other private and public services, including health care, as evidenced in higher maternal and child mortality rates.⁸⁸ Even ‘smart sanctions,’ such as freezing specific assets that would be used to purchase military hardware, rarely are effective.⁸⁹

The South Africa campaign against apartheid is widely perceived as the greatest ‘success story’ for divestment, boycotts and sanctions. Many have adopted rhetoric such as ‘apartheid’ and applied it to the Arab-Israeli conflict. The extreme focus on South Africa occurs, in part, because there are virtually no other success stories. In fact, in a study of economic sanctions from 1976-2001, the failure rate was found to be as high as 95%.⁹⁰ In addition, in the South Africa example, not all economists believe that the sanctions were the main reason behind the end of apartheid. Other causes include the negative effects of having the primary labor force living at a distance from their jobs, the ability of the domestic anti-apartheid movement to bring about change, and the demise of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War.⁹¹

Divestment is an economic sanction that represents a departure from diplomacy, negatively affects the wrong people and rarely makes any positive contribution, particularly in a protracted conflict of nearly 70 years.⁹² The U.S. government believes that the Arab Boycott against Israel in place since 1948 is “an impediment to peace in the region.”⁹³ Though it may have assuaged frustration over lack of progress in negotiations, it remains unethical, causing harm to the innocent.

BDS actions against Israel hurt the very people they claim to support. Bassem Eid, a Palestinian resident of East Jerusalem and human rights activist, voiced harsh criticism of the BDS movement:

“I’m opposed to the boycott because it only ends up harming the Palestinians themselves. Take, for example, the SodaStream plant in Mishor Adumim that is now moving some of its operations to Be’er Sheva. I’ve met with Palestinians who worked at the factory and were fired because of the move. They told me they were earning an average of NIS 5,000 a month there, and that today they are being offered salaries of just NIS 1,400 in the PA.

People there are deep in debt because they have taken on long-term commitments based on the understanding that their work at the plant would continue; but reality has slapped them in the face because of the pressure created by the BDS movement. Today, they are running between the courts and the bailiff offices and is anyone taking any notice of them? Do you think the boycott movement cares about them at all?”⁹⁴

Gaza



Gaza - the old town, circa 1877

The Gaza Strip was intended by the United Nations to be part of the Arab state carved out of the British Mandate of Palestine. The UN plan never materialized, as the Arab states would not agree to any part of the Mandate becoming the modern state of Israel. When the dust settled after the first Arab-Israeli war, Gaza had been conquered and was administered by Egypt. It changed hands after the 1967 Six Day War, coming under Israeli control.

In 1994, as a result of the Gaza-Jericho agreement between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO, the predecessor to the Palestinian Authority), Palestinians assumed jurisdiction in the Gaza Strip.⁹⁵ Gaza, as well as the West Bank, never enjoyed full stability, in part due to the inability of the Palestinian government to exercise control. The leading faction, al-Fatah, was epitomized by endemic corruption. There also were radical groups pursuing an agenda of violence. One of these groups, Hamas, was created in 1987. Hamas always has maintained an unshakable commitment to the annihilation of Israel.

In the summer of 2005, Israel disengaged from Gaza, voluntarily removing all of its military and civilian presence. This was unilateral. In other words, there were no reciprocal agreements or promises from the Palestinians. Then Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon intended the action to be seen as a move toward trust and peace with the Palestinians. Many in Israel feared the reaction would be quite different, that groups such as Hamas would declare victory based on the premise that 'violence pays,' and Gaza would simply become a launching area for further attacks into Israel. In the first hours after the Israelis were gone, Palestinian security forces were unable to prevent the

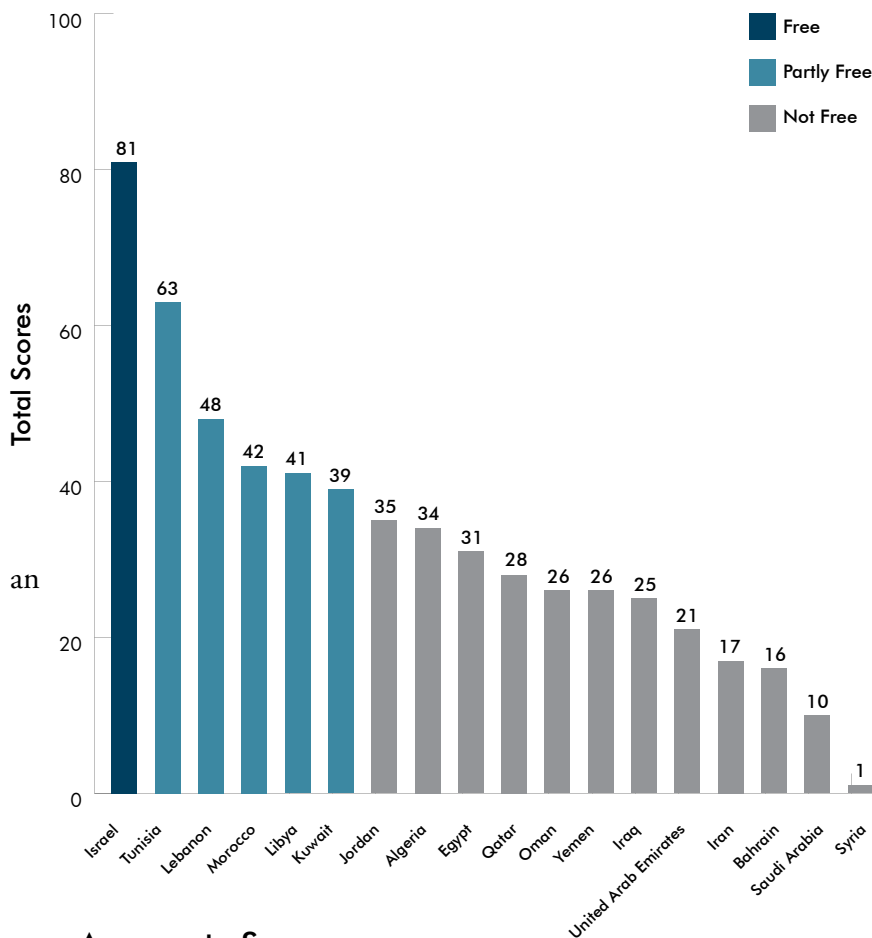


Destruction in Gaza, present day

burning of synagogues and the looting of extensive greenhouse complexes, left in order to provide thousands of jobs.⁹⁶

In January of 2006, Hamas came out ahead in parliamentary elections. Before Hamas turned its full attention against Israel, it took sole control of Gaza by June 2007, eliminating al-Fatah political opposition, predictably through bloodshed. While making gestures of joint governance with al-Fatah, Hamas had been creating a military force of over 5,000, based in Gaza, to be used in Gaza, against fellow Palestinians. Many civilians were killed in the fighting. Rather than land for peace, Hamas turned Israel's disengagement from Gaza into 'land for terror,' a 'reward for terrorism.'⁹⁷

Where is the United Nations in all this? When the United Nations was created out of the ashes of World War II, one of its primary functions was to prevent war. While the UN over the years has had many positive accomplishments, when it comes to the prevention of armed conflict the record is very poor. This is in large part due to the fact that years ago the UN lost any credibility as an external and impartial mediator in the Middle East. Israel in particular has been a target of the United Nations, as manifested in the BDS movement. What has become an apparent obsession with Israel is so out of balance in world affairs that an assumption of anti-Semitism is difficult or even impossible to disregard.



Aggregate Scores

100 = Best Score

0 = Worst Score

For example, in 1975 the UN General Assembly passed a resolution calling for the “Elimination of all forms of racial discrimination” (UNGA 3379).⁹⁸ The resolution ended with the single, separate statement, “...*Determines* that zionism is a form of racism and racial discrimination.” This was only 28 years after the same body voted to partition the British Mandate of Palestine into a Jewish and Arab state. In the interim, the nature of UN membership had changed dramatically. When the UN charter was signed in 1945, there were 51 members. By 1975 there were 144 members; today there are almost 200. What is most important is

the character of these countries. Most of the members of the UN are *not* democracies. According to Freedom House, in 2014, only 88 of 195 countries were listed as free, with 59 partially free and 48 not free.⁹⁹ For the Middle East and North Africa, only one country out of 18 is listed as free—Israel.¹⁰⁰

Freedom House seeks to protect the fundamental human and civil rights of all peoples. This was supposed to have been the primary function of the UN Commission on Human Rights, created in 1946. However, "...many of the most egregious human rights villains not only were elected to the commission but spent most of their energy protecting their own performance from scrutiny by being on the inside."¹⁰¹ Instead, as reflected in UNGA Resolution 3379, the Commission on Human Rights concentrated on Israel. Even after 2006 as the Human Rights Council (HRC), the obsession with Israel remains. In its first session, nine condemnations were made against Israel, and only Israel, supported by countries such as Cuba, China, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.¹⁰² Even the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-Moon, stated "Since the beginning of their work, they have focused almost entirely on Israel, and there are other crisis situations, like Sudan, where they have not been able to say a word about it. I think they should be encouraged to look at their mandate much more critically."¹⁰³

The disengagement from Gaza failed to bring a resolution of the conflict. In addition, the takeover of Gaza by Hamas strengthened the political position of West Bank settlement advocates who oppose establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank. Nonetheless, the Gaza disengagement demonstrated the willingness of the people of Israel to cede land for the cause of peace and provide autonomy to Palestinians.

Hamas: A Terrorist Organization

“In reality, most Palestinians would like to have a normal life, and, as long as Hamas is defined by its commitment to confrontation with Israel, Hamas will not be able to deliver what Palestinians seek.”

Ambassador Dennis Ross

U.S. Envoy to the Middle East, 1988-2000¹⁰⁴

Hamas, a faction of the Muslim Brotherhood, does not want peace with Israel. Financially supported by countries such as Iran, Syria, Libya, Sudan, Yemen and Qatar,¹⁰⁵ it is a ‘spoiler’ to peace.¹⁰⁶ The closer Israel and the Palestinians come to peace the more Hamas has increased its attacks against innocents (typical of extremist groups). Hamas promotes violence, openly glamorizing suicide bombers and martyrdom, including among their own children. This violence has intensified since Hamas took complete control in Gaza in the summer of 2007. Due to its conscious choice to place destruction of Israel over the welfare of Gazans, Hamas’s popularity has diminished.¹⁰⁷ As of June 2015, half of Gazans wanted to leave.¹⁰⁸

The dilemma in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza today revolves around nationalist movements, not civil rights. Two nations both want to be states but do not agree on where the borders should lie. The Palestinian leadership in the West Bank, the Palestinian Authority (PA), is willing to negotiate a two-state solution that includes a ‘land for peace’ approach achieved through mutual negotiation conducted by diplomats and true peacemakers, not punishment and bloodshed. However, the PA only controls the West Bank, not the Gaza Strip. Recent attempts at joint government have failed.¹⁰⁹

Hamas has attempted to disguise its terrorist ways by labeling itself a victim. For this to work, it is necessary to portray Israel as ‘Goliath’ and Hamas as ‘David,’ persecuted yet noble, and to cultivate “an increase of genocidal rhetoric against the Jewish people.”¹¹⁰ This is one of the main reasons the BDS movement seeks to delegitimize the state of Israel. It believes that Israel as a nation ultimately should not exist and that Jews have no right to live as Jews in a national home in the Holy Land. If any Jews are hurt or killed in Israel, it is their own fault simply by being there.

These beliefs are the foundation for “Zionism Unsettled: A Congregational Study Guide,” a highly controversial document published by the Israel/Palestine Mission Network (IPMN) of the PC(USA). Riddled with misinformation and untruths, the document describes Zionism as a false theology. The General Assembly formally disassociated itself from the document, which was subsequently removed from the PC(USA)’s website, but not before anti-Semites including David Duke praised its content. IPMN is chartered by the PC(USA) and claims to “speak to the church not for the church.”¹¹¹ Too little effort is made to clarify this subtle but critical distinction. The reality is that outside the church, IPMN and its support of the PC(USA) divestment measures have managed to give the PC(USA) a global reputation for being anti-Israel or worse.¹¹² The boycotts, divestments and sanctions advanced by IPMN don’t work; negative public relations supported primarily by entities external to the PC(USA) do, but not in the way the vast majority of congregants want.¹¹³

Other efforts to delegitimize Israel include making the comparison between the Arab-Israeli conflict and South African Apartheid. The Arab-Israeli conflict is neither a colonial struggle nor a domestic civil rights issue. It reflects two nationalist movements. It began before Israel declared independence,



Hamas rally, Bethlehem

much less formed a government or established government policies. In spite of the fact that Israel today is 20% Arab, and Arabs are in government, academia, the media, and other sectors of society, Israel has not known a single day since 1948 without extreme security concerns. A few words buried in resolutions to the contrary, the PC(USA)'s 2014 divestment decision was meant to target Israel, and only Israel, as a punishment. Why be so one-sided? No one should be ignorant of the fact that Hamas is a terrorist organization and a real threat to Israel's security, yet proponents for BDS rarely mention that Hamas exists, and concern themselves only with

occupation. The divestment decision contributed to a perception that the PC(USA) was questioning Israel's right to exist at the most fundamental level.

A two-state solution means living side by side in peace, interacting as trading partners, traveling and working freely across borders, promising to come to each other's aid in times of need and celebrating together respective shared heritages in the Holy Land. Two states will not just provide a solution to conflict, but a guarantee of the bright future that all the land's inhabitants deserve as a basic human right.

The PC(USA) can send another message, one of hope. Boycotts, divestments and sanctions, one-sided or otherwise, will not achieve peace or justice. The PC(USA) should support a two-state solution: two nations, Israel and Palestine, living side-by-side in peace.

Hamas does not want peace with Israel. It is a self-declared *jihadi* movement. Even though it provides some services to the Gazans, it also is a recognized terrorist group. In fact, 'social services' are often used to augment terrorist activities.¹¹⁴ Egypt's military asserts that Hamas has harbored terrorists attacking Egypt in the Sinai, "undergoing training in explosives and other military activities at Hamas military bases."¹¹⁵



House in Israel destroyed by Hamas rocket

For further reference, the following videos are available:

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/02/03/jon-stewart-takes-aim-at_n_447296.html

<http://www.memritv.org/clip/en/4265.htm>

**Terrorism is the use of violence
to achieve political goals through fear.**

Terrorist acts have the following characteristics:¹¹⁶

1. The acts involve the use of force or the threat to use force.
2. The use of force is premeditated.
3. The use of force has a political motivation.
4. The attacks are systematic, in that when and where attacks take place is not known, but the expectation is that they will happen.
5. Civilians are considered legitimate targets, and often are considered a better choice than traditional targets such as military installations or government buildings. The killing of innocents will engender more outrage and shock, getting more attention from the media, including social media.
6. Civilians may be the only targets of violence, as opposed to being classified as collateral damage. The identity of individuals under attack are of no particular significance to terrorists.
7. The violence must be publicized, for the ultimate targets are not those being killed and maimed, rather those who will react to the violence.

These all are defining characteristics of Hamas's methods.

Hamas in Action—Operation Protective Edge

In 2005 Israel unilaterally disengaged from Gaza, removing all Jewish settlements and Israeli security presence. Instead of jump-starting a lagging peace process, in June 2007 Gaza came under the complete control of a *jihadi* group, Hamas—also known as the Muslim Brotherhood in Gaza. Their attacks into Israel began just a few months later. Hamas, dedicated to the complete destruction of the State of Israel, presents an existential threat to the Israeli people.

Due to continuous threats, both Israel and Egypt enforce a blockade of Gaza. The blockade is set up to inhibit Hamas from acquiring a military capability while ensuring civilian goods can enter. Israel's concern has been to limit, for example, building materials such as cement that can be used to build a military infrastructure or items that could be used to make long-range rockets. The effects on the people of Gaza have been extreme. Commercial activity through tunnels to Egypt was developed and became highly lucrative for Hamas, which has taxed the goods coming in. However, violence came out of the tunnels as well, and in 2012 Egypt cracked down on the Gazan tunnels after the killings of Egyptian soldiers. As of May 2015, since the beginning of the year Egypt had allowed a single border crossing to be open for only five days.¹¹⁷

The blockade has been very controversial, in part due to dual use items such as cement. Cement is needed to build homes and businesses, but also can be used for tunnels.¹¹⁸ Long suspected, it has finally come to light how much Hamas was diverting badly needed supplies from its population to take its attack against Israel to a new and unforeseen level. A 2011 report described the tunnel business as bringing in \$700 million to Hamas each year, with as much as 3,000 tons of gravel and cement, each, every day, enough to have “kick-started Gaza's reconstruction.”¹¹⁹ UN officials claim that,



Israel Defense Force soldiers examine a meters-deep smuggling tunnel in Gaza

“(The UN has) mounted a campaign highlighting the humanitarian costs of a tunnel economy, which Hamas officials too often left unmentioned. In three years an estimated 130 laborers perished underground, they noted; child labor was rife. A UN survey of over 500 Gaza traders and wholesalers in April 2010 was quietly shelved after it revealed that the tunnels had alleviated “to a reasonable extent or more” the shortages resulting from Israel's restrictions.

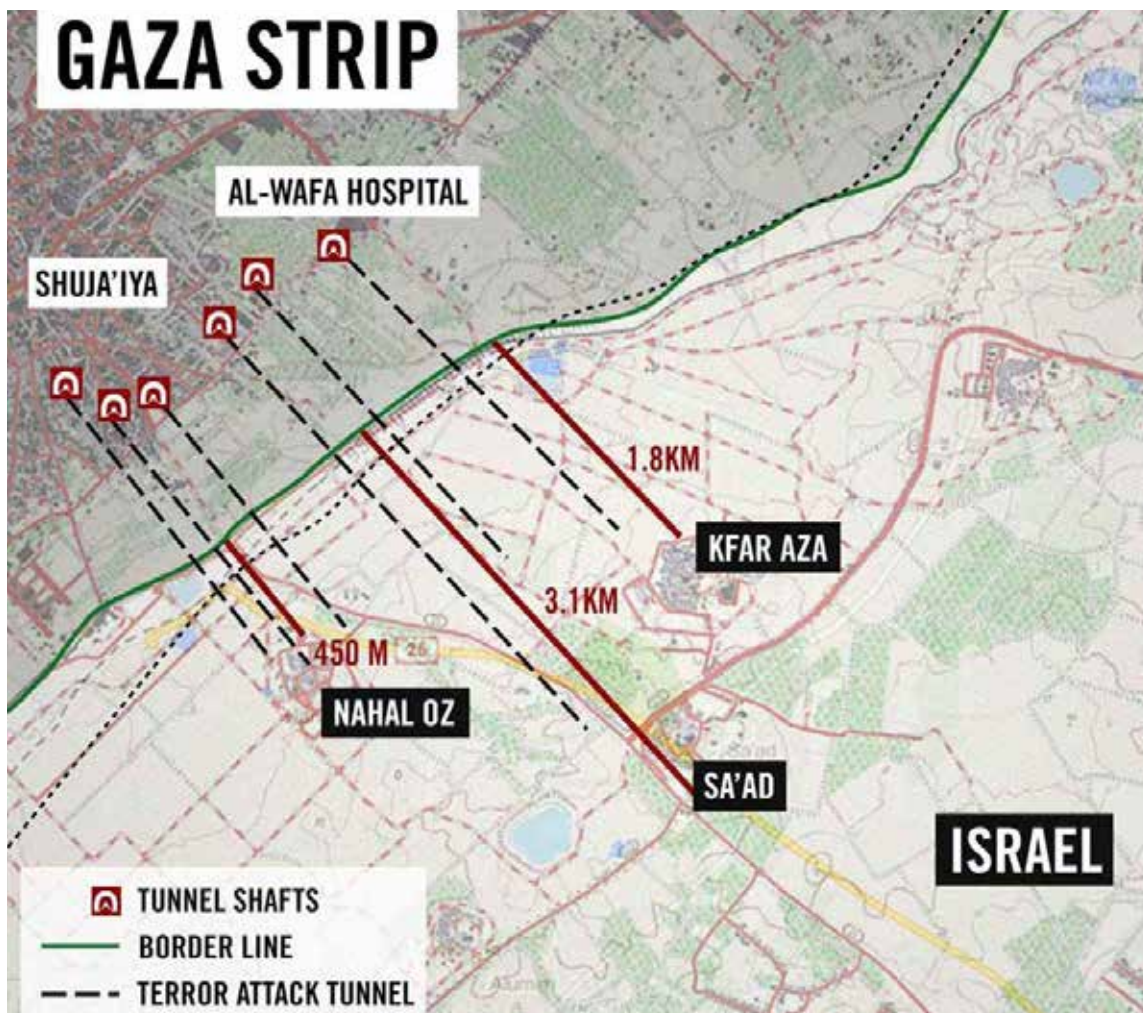
The tunnels further help the Islamists circumvent US Treasury restrictions on financial transfers from abroad. Hamas middlemen purchase laptops (including the one used to write this article) in Egypt and sell them at near cost on arrival in Gaza.”¹²⁰

For the duration of the blockade, and even during the 2014 war, Israel has augmented goods going into Gaza over and above those that have passed inspection. Palestinians from Gaza as well as the West Bank regularly receive medical care in Israel, even during times of active fighting. The State of Israel maintains a link for the public to monitor humanitarian aid going into Gaza.¹²¹

In July 2014, the perennial violence that is the Hamas-Israeli relationship turned into a full-blown war. It is often and erroneously reported the war began as a result of the murders of four teenagers, three Israeli and one Palestinian. Sadly, this kind of crime occurs all too regularly in areas of protracted conflict. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu denounced the murder of the Palestinian boy. Arrests were made quickly, and as of July 2015, three Israeli minors were standing trial for his murder. Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas also came forward to condemn the murders of the three Israeli teenage boys. Hamas at first denied, then subsequently took credit for the killings.

These were terrible events, but they did not cause the 2014 war any more than the assassination of Austro-Hungarian Archduke Ferdinand in 1914 started World War I. Both should be remembered as sparks in very dangerous neighborhoods. The 2014 Operation Protective Edge directly responded to the character and number of attack tunnels discovered going from Gaza into Israel.¹²²

In 2014 there were two critical differences from previous conflicts. First, and put most simply, Israel uses its *weapons* to protect its *people*; Hamas uses its *people* to protect its *weapons*. This was in evidence more than ever before in Operation Protective Edge, as Hamas launched attacks indiscriminately into Israel from civilian areas.¹²³



Hamas tunnels open just meters away from the center of Israeli communities near the Gaza border.¹²⁴



Israel Defense Forces - weapons found in a mosque

Second, the security threat to Israel increased exponentially. Again, the difference this time was the discovery of Hamas's attack tunnels.

Hamas continually puts its hatred of Israel over the interests of its own population. Israel had eased its restrictions on items such as building materials in both 2010 and 2013. However, rather than improving the lives of the people, Hamas built attack tunnels into Israel. Tunnels are not new, but what was discovered in 2014 shocked even a country long conditioned to living under a constant threat to its national security. Hamas had constructed 32 attack tunnels stretching collectively over 100km, large enough to facilitate hundreds of attackers, with some estimates even higher.



An IDF infographic published on July 29, 2014, explained the sources of the rockets that hit Shifa Hospital and Shati refugee camp¹²⁵

“At the heart of the plan was a sophisticated network of attack tunnels designed to run under the Israeli border, on which tens of millions of dollars had been spent. They were built with enough cement to build two multi-story hospitals, 20 schools, three apartment towers, and several other public structures, at a conservative estimate.”¹²⁶

Hamas had planned to launch “The War Israel Did Not Want” on the High Holy Day of Yom Kippur, October 3, 2014.¹²⁷ During Operation Protective Edge, July 8 to August 26, rockets fired from civilian locations in Gaza reached as far as Jerusalem and communities north of Tel Aviv. Yet, during the fighting, Israel continued to supply basic needs for the people of Gaza, including electricity, 20 million liters of fuel and 5,779 trucks of supplies. Over 4,000 people from Gaza crossed into Israel to receive medical care.¹²⁸ Thanks to Israel’s ‘Iron Dome,’ a ballistic missile defense system, 90% of the rockets fired indiscriminately into Israel were intercepted. According to the US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Israel also took “extraordinary lengths to limit collateral damage and prevent civilian casualties” in Gaza.¹²⁹ Congressman Brad Sherman (D-CA), ranking member of the United States House of Representatives Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade, made the following statement:

Keep in mind, Hamas’ strategy is to create as many civilian casualties as possible on both sides... We have to avoid the body bag count method of moral analysis. We cannot assume that whichever side loses the most civilians has morality on its side. By that analysis, Eisenhower is a war criminal, since there are far more German deaths, civilian and military, than there were American.¹³⁰

Amnesty International, who found fault on both sides, reported on human rights violations committed by Hamas against its own population. Many individuals accused of collaboration with Israel were tortured and/or summarily executed without a full legal process.

Hamas forces used the abandoned areas of al-Shifa hospital in Gaza City, including the outpatients’ clinic area, to detain, interrogate, torture and otherwise ill-treat suspects, even as other parts of the hospital continued to function as a medical center.¹³¹

Even critics of Israel recognize the lengths to which the Israeli Defense Forces go to limit civilian casualties, often at the expense of their own personnel.¹³² The Israeli government, on the other hand, was criticized heavily in its own domestic press when it was reported that 27% of Israeli homes did not have easy access to bomb shelters.¹³³

In July 2015, the UN released a report on Operation Protective Edge, based primarily on secondary sources and unidentified interviewees.¹³⁴ Skepticism preceded the release of the report due to the UN’s anti-Israel reputation. For example, when Israel fought against Hamas in Operation Cast Lead (December 27, 2008, to January 18, 2009), the UN commissioned a fact finding mission to produce what is known as the “Goldstone Report.” Richard Goldstone is a former judge from South Africa, whose appointment was questioned due to his affiliation with Human Rights Watch, another organization with a history of anti-Israel bias.¹³⁵ The report, released September 25, 2009, found violations on both sides of the conflict. However, Israel specifically was accused of intentionally targeting “the people of Gaza as a whole.”¹³⁶ On April 3, 2011, Goldstone reversed himself. He published an op-ed

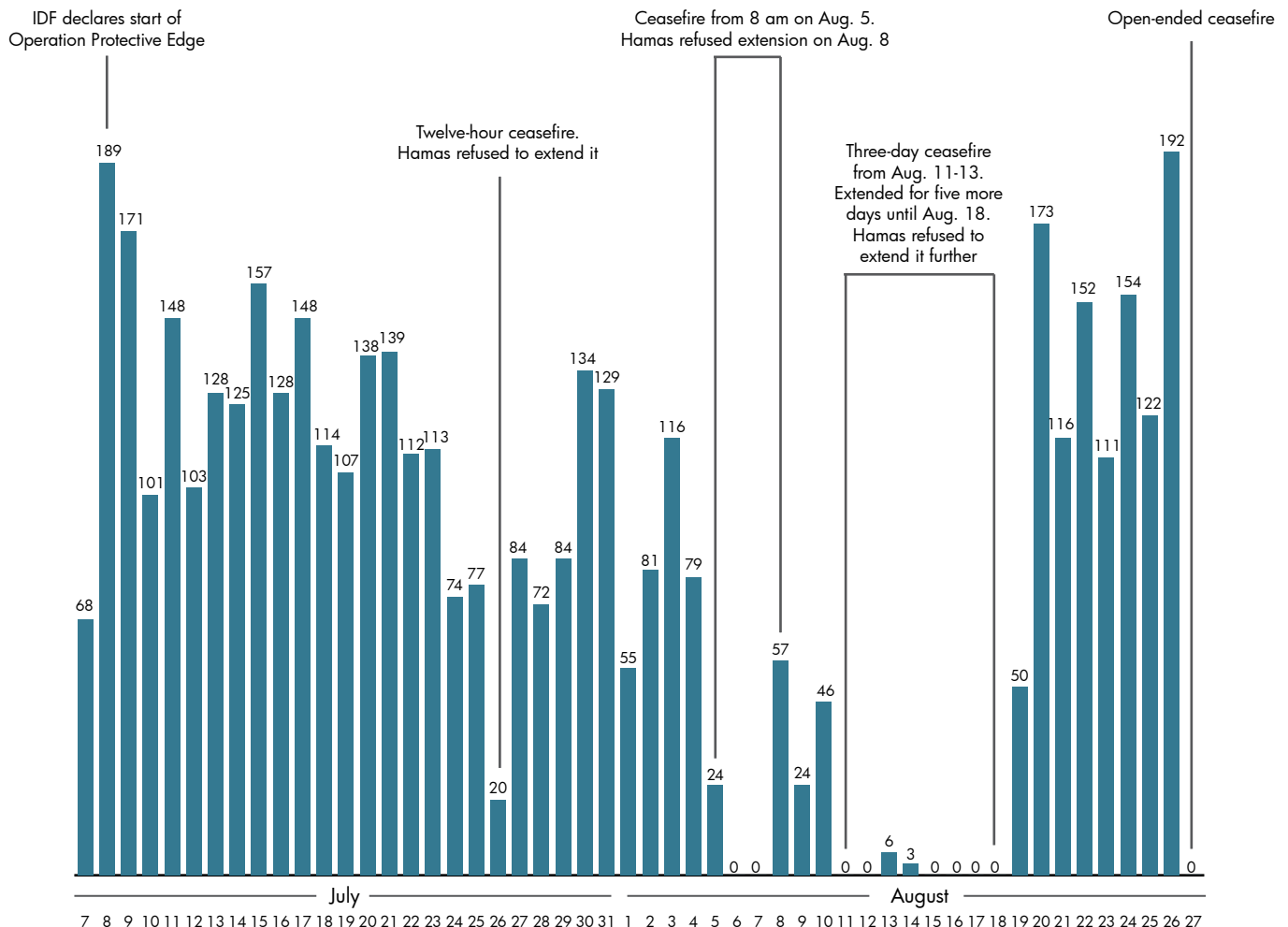
piece in the Washington Post, stating not only “that civilians were not intentionally targeted as a matter of policy,” but that the Israelis had taken action on reports of misconduct by their own forces. Hamas’s reaction to the report was the opposite. “At a minimum I hoped that in the face of a clear finding that its members were committing serious war crimes, Hamas would curtail its attacks. Sadly, that has not been the case. Hundreds more rockets and mortar rounds have been directed at civilian targets in southern Israel.”¹³⁷ Anticipating a biased report from the UN about Operation Protective Edge, the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs published its own report, “The War that Israel Did Not Want and the Disaster It Averted.”¹³⁸

Presbyterians for Middle East Peace strongly urges all members of the PC(USA) to read both reports:

“The United Nations Independent Commission of Inquiry on the 2014 Gaza Conflict”
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/CoIGazaConflict/Pages/ReportCoIGaza.aspx>

“The War that Israel Did Not Want and the Disaster It Averted”
<http://jcpa.org/pdf/The-Gaza-War-2014-Site.pdf>

Rockets Fired from Gaza During Operation Protective Edge¹³⁹



Since the war ended in August 2014, the conditions in Gaza have worsened as Hamas tries to rebuild its attack capabilities ahead of the needs of its own people. Squabbling persists between the governments of Gaza and the West Bank as they fight over \$5.5 billion in reconstruction funds. Hamas has imposed a “Solidarity Tax Act” on the people of Gaza. According to Palestinian human rights activist, Bassem Eid, in the summer of 2015,

The damage caused by Protective Edge is as follows:

- 2.5 million tons of rubble remain in Gaza to this day.
- 200,000 workers lost their means of employment.
- 80 percent of the Gazan people are surviving on welfare.
- 40% of Gazans are living below the poverty line.
- 22,000 Gazans are homeless. Only 600 caravans have been provided to the Gaza Strip since the end of the war.
- 29 Palestinians were executed by Hamas during the war.
- Several terrorist bombings by Salafist groups occurred in the Gaza Strip.¹⁴⁰

A unilateral end to the occupation will not help the Palestinian people or lead to peace as long as Hamas remains in power.



Israeli children running for shelter as an air siren sounds rockets from Gaza

Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions

The Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement has been pressuring the PC(USA) for over a decade to divest from companies doing business with Israel which relates to the West Bank and Gaza. As this report argues, this kind of economic ‘pressure’ usually hurts the wrong people and will not move towards peace. It makes a statement that might appear to be proactive, encouraging us to feel as though we are doing our small part to relieve the plight of the Palestinian people, but is likely to achieve negative consequences.

It must be remembered that in the Arab world, being anti-Israel has not translated into being pro-Palestinian. Often the Palestinian cause is put forward as lip service as a ‘cause célèbre.’ Only Jordan has allowed Palestinians displaced from Palestine the right to become citizens. Today, most Jordanians are Palestinians, including Queen Rania. The worst plight for Palestinians is in Lebanon, where they are barred even from working. Something must be done, but BDS is not the way to go about it. Seeking ‘justice’ without peace all too often is an exercise in punishment that just worsens the situation.



Irwin Cotler with South African President Jacob Zuma¹⁴²

It is instructive to learn from individuals who also have struggled for freedom, peace and self-determination and achieved remarkable goals. Meet Canadian Member of Parliament (MP) Irwin Cotler, Professor Emeritus of Law at McGill University, former Minister of Justice, as well as legal counsel for the late Nelson Mandela. MP Cotler has been described as “perhaps one of the world’s foremost advocates for the rights and freedom of political prisoners.”¹⁴¹ He believes that to be critical of Israel is not equivalent to anti-Semitism and that Israel should be “accountable for its actions.” But he also reminds us that “singling out Israel for selective opprobrium and condemnation, or

denying Israel’s right to exist and calling for its destruction, is discriminatory and hateful, and not saying so is destructive.” Cotler goes on to say “I really miss Mandela and his moral authority. He would never have called for the dismantling of Israel. He said that Israel has a right to exist. We need his wisdom in this debate.”

MP Cotler has had the honor of being detained both by South Africa’s apartheid government for trying to free Nelson Mandela as well as the Soviet Union for his role in trying to free Natan Sharansky, another human rights activist. Sharansky was born in the Soviet Union and spent nine years as a political prisoner. He was released in 1986 as part of the process of the US and Soviet Union moving toward their own peaceful resolution to the Cold War.



Natan Sharansky, left, icon of the Soviet Jewry movement, greets MP Irwin Cotler, his legal counsel during his imprisonment.¹⁴⁵

Sharansky, currently Chairman of the Executive for the Jewish Agency for Israel,¹⁴³ is no stranger to injustice. In recent years he has led an effort to counter ‘delegitimization’ efforts on college campuses. Sharansky believes that with support, young Jews in North America can, through debate, counter those who “want to destroy us as a people.”¹⁴⁴

Advocates for divestment at the PC(USA) 2014 General Assembly falsely asserted that enacting divestment would not place the PC(USA) in the “BDS movement.” They even had language to that effect placed in the overture that was adopted. However, the PC(USA) move was heralded as a victory for the BDS movement since most of the news reports and internet sites misreported the GA’s actions, stressing the message rather than the nuanced details, much to the delight of the BDS movement.¹⁴⁶ The BDS movement offers a one-sided, zero-sum solution that does not give voice to the legitimate concerns and fears of Israelis. This is what the PC(USA) has recently chosen, by a narrow margin, to support. Such a perspective does not give either the Israeli or Palestinian people the hope, peace, and security they deserve. A stance that ignores the pleas of Palestinians for autonomy is as futile as a stance that does not address the legitimate security needs of Israelis. A mutually negotiated two-state solution provides more hope for the future of the Holy Land and all its inhabitants.

Beyond Peace: The Advantages of Two-State Cooperation



Simply ending the occupation will likely lead the West Bank into the morass that is the Gaza Strip. Boycotts, divestment and sanctions will not help. In the midst of international pressure, late in 2014 Soda Stream closed its plant in Mishor Adumim, part of one of the ‘consensus blocs’ just outside Jerusalem, and moved it to southern Israel. The result was that 500 Palestinians, 450 Arab-Israelis and 350 Jewish Israelis lost their jobs. Employees at Soda Stream earned four to five times the average pay for West Bank residents.¹⁴⁷

Natan Sharansky, prior to Israel’s disengagement from Gaza in 2005, warned then-Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon that “the key to building a stable and lasting peace with our Palestinian neighbors lies in encouraging and supporting their efforts to build a democratic society.”¹⁴⁸ Through diplomacy, he recommended an interim administration of

cooperation among the Palestinians, Israel and Arab states that recognize Israel (Egypt and Jordan to date). Sharansky foresaw a three-year period ending with a Palestine that enjoyed all the rights and privileges of a stable democracy. Democracy, he believed (and still does), is a necessary component to peace. Just as a weak German government between the two world wars, the Weimar Republic, fell to the extremist Nazi party, after Israeli disengagement from Gaza the *jihadi* Hamas took hold. After World War II, Germany was part of the Marshall Plan to rebuild under a representative democracy. Rather than the punishments dumped onto Germany in the Versailles Treaty after World War I, the lesson was learned. Assistance from the outside rather than punishment helped Germany become a strong ally and trading partner whose citizens enjoy freedom and prosperity. Yet peace and prosperity in Europe could not have occurred strictly through external intervention.

History has shown us additional routes to peace. For example, what specifically was different *within* Europe after World War II? In 1946, France adopted the ‘Monnet Plan’ to integrate French and German coal and steel production. Continued in 1950 as the ‘Schuman Plan,’ the ideas of Jean Monnet and Robert Schuman evolved into the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and, ultimately, the European Union (EU). After centuries of conflict, a relatively simple strategy not only ensured peace, but an integrated continent with open borders and free exchange of labor. It all began with the reality that coal is required to produce steel and steel is required to build a military.

(The French government) proposes that Franco-German production of coal and steel as a whole be placed under a common High Authority, within the framework of an organization open to the participation of the other countries of Europe.

The pooling of coal and steel production should immediately provide for the setting up of common foundations for economic development as a first step in the federation of Europe, and will change the destinies of those regions that have long been devoted to the manufacture of munitions of war, of which they have been the most constant victims.

The solidarity in production thus established will make it plain that any war between France and Germany becomes not merely unthinkable, but materially impossible. The setting up of this powerful productive unit, open to all countries willing to take part and bound ultimately to provide all the member countries with the basic elements of industrial production on the same terms, will lay a true foundation for their economic unification.¹⁴⁹

The key to the ECSC was integration. One way forward for Israel and Palestine is integration, for example, of the infrastructure. This is not a far-fetched idea. Not many people in New York City are fully aware that their electrical power comes from a system of energy integration with Canada. If integrating power, water, communications and transportation in the Holy Land, the geopolitical situation suggests the inclusion of Jordan in a three-state arrangement akin to the origins of the European Union. The genesis of the EU began with France and Germany, extended initially to Italy and the Benelux states (Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg), and then beyond.

A recent RAND study put a price tag of \$173 billion on another decade without peace between Israel and the Palestinians. Alternately, if the same ten years were spent at peace there would be a \$123 billion benefit to Israel and \$50 billion to the Palestinians.¹⁵⁰ The benefits of an independent Palestine at peace with Israel are immense. Israel has so much to offer. Here is just a sampling.

- Israel is a world leader in research and development expenditure
- Israel has the highest per capita rate of solar collectors in the world
- Israel is the world leader in reusing wastewater - 70%
- Israel is the world leader in high-tech start-ups
- Israel is ranked the 11th most resilient economy among developed states
- Israel ranked 15th in the 2014 Global Innovation Index Report
- Israel is a world leader in venture capital investment
- Israel is a world leader in research in several fields, including physics, life sciences, psychiatry, psychology, molecular biology and economics
- Israel was home to Waze, purchased by Google for \$1.03 billion in 2013

- Israel is a pioneer in medical devices, treatments and equipment
- Israel is a world leader in drip irrigation and high-tech agriculture innovations
- Israel is the world leader in desalinization technologies
- Israel has the highest number per capita of scientists, technicians and engineers¹⁵¹

Those involved in the BDS movement often respond negatively to the concept of ‘normalization.’ In their minds, normalization means a failure to sufficiently punish previous crimes, including the creation of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, and current injustices such as the occupation. War is the most vicious act that can be committed by people and the communities they form. But war cannot be undone. France and Germany put their violent past behind them. Terrible acts committed in Serbia and Croatia after the collapse of Yugoslavia have not prevented these countries from moving forward. The 1994 massacres in Rwanda have not been forgotten, but have not prevented a new government from building a positive future for its citizens. What would a ‘normal’ life look like for Israelis and Palestinians? Few would not wish to find out. The best that people who truly want peace in the Holy Land can do is facilitate dialogue, understanding, trust and cooperation. The PC(USA) should reject divestment and engage in positive endeavors that promote peace through a two-state solution. There could be no greater legacy.

Endnotes

¹ A summary of the plan is available at “The Price of Peace.” 2015. The RAND Corporation, June 24, <http://www.rand.org/blog/rand-review/2015/06/the-price-of-peace.html>, accessed September 4, 2015. The full report is available at Anthony, C. Ross, Daniel Egel, Charles P. Ries, Craig Bond, Andrew Liepman, Jeffrey Martini, Steven Simon, Shira Efron, Bradley D. Stein, Lynsay Ayer, Mary E. Vaiana. 2015. “The Cost of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict,” *The Rand Corporation*, http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR740.html, accessed September 4, 2015.

² Gilbert, Martin. 2007. *The Routledge Atlas of the Arab-Israeli Conflict* 8th edition (New York, NY: Routledge), p. 51.

³ See the “San Remo Resolution,” Council on Foreign Relations, <http://www.cfr.org/israel/san-remo-resolution/p15248>, accessed September 4, 2015.

⁴ The 2006 elections were the last as of August 2015.

⁵ Anthony et al (2015), p. xix.

⁶ Lynch, W. F. 1849. *Narrative of the United States' Expedition to the River Jordan and Dead Sea* (Philadelphia: Lea and Blanchard), p. 401. This journal is written by the commanding officer of a US Navy exploration and surveying expedition.

⁷ Depictions of the plague in 19th century Palestine are reminiscent of the Black Death that swept through Europe in the 14th century. De Lamartine, Alphonse. 1838. *Visit to The Holy Land, or Recollections of the East*, translated from the French by Thomas Phipson (London: George Virtue).

⁸ Shaw, Stanford J. 1978. “The Ottoman Census System and Population,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 9/3:325-338.

⁹ In 1841, the official count of male Jews in Jerusalem was 500, but the actual number was estimated to be closer to 3000. Robinson, Edward and E. Smith. 1841. *Biblical Researches in Palestine, Mount Sinai and Arabia Petrea, A Journal of Travels in the Year 1838* Vol. II (Boston: Crocker and Brewster), p. 85. Eventually the Ottoman empire used a variety of methods, including threats of fines and imprisonment, to improve the quality of the population data, but it was never fully accurate. While Shaw (1978) barely mentions the government statistics of 1893, another scholar asserts that 1893 was the most reliable year, but concentrates outside the Holy Land. Karpas, Kemal H. 1978. “Ottoman Population Records and the Census of 1881/82-1893” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 9/3:237-274, p. 240. Even so, the 1881-1893 census results show 12,682 Jewish men and 33 Jewish women living in the province of Baghdad (Karpas p. 261), which intuitively is unlikely.

¹⁰ While the information for Jews was chronically underreported, communities consistently were recorded in, for example, Acre, Haifa, Safed, Nablus, Jaffa and Gaza, as well as Jerusalem (Karpas pp. 262 and 271).

¹¹ Baedeker, Karl, ed. 1894. *Palestine and Syria: Handbook for Travelers* 2nd edition (Leipsic: Karl Baedeker), pp. 33-34 (*spelling in original*).

¹² Gilbert, Martin. 2008. *The Routledge Historical Atlas of Jerusalem* 4th edition. (New York, NY: Routledge), p. 39.

¹³ Baedeker, Karl, ed. 1912. *Palestine and Syria: With Routes Through Mesopotamia and Babylonia and the Island of Cyprus: Handbook for Travelers* (Leipzig: Karl Baedeker), pp. lviii and lix).

¹⁴ Shaw (1978), p. 338.

¹⁵ Martin (2008), pp. 33, 39, 49, 51, 53 and 55.

¹⁶ De Lamartine (1838), p. 288; Robinson (1841) Vol. II, pp. 446-448.

¹⁷ Ritter, Carl. 1866. *The Comparative Geography of Palestine and the Siniatic Peninsula* Vol. II (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark), pp. 258-259.

¹⁸ Burckhardt, John Lewis. 1822. *Travels in Syria and the Holy Land* (London: J. Murray), p. 322.

¹⁹ Lynch (1849), pp. 159-160. The earthquake of 1837 reduced the town and population considerably. Lynch records about 1000 Jews, a few hundred Muslims, and a handful of Christians from Nazareth living in Tiberias in 1848.

²⁰ Robinson, Edward and E. Smith. 1841. *Biblical Researches in Palestine, Mount Sinai and Arabia Petrea, A Journal of Travels in the Year 1838* Vol. III (Boston: Crocker and Brewster), pp. 322.

²¹ Gush Etzion is also referred to as Kfar Etzion; both names are used in English.

²² Baedeker (1912), map insert.

²³ See Yitzhak, Ronen. 2011. "Transjordan's Attack on the Etzion Bloc During the 1948 War," *Israel Affairs* 17/2:194-207, p. 203; Collins, Larry and Dominique LaPierre. 1972. *O Jerusalem* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster), pp. 225-226 and 362-364.

²⁴ For a clear, concise and balanced history of the Arab-Israeli conflict, see Bickerton, Ian J. and Carla L. Klausner. 2010. *A History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict* 6th edition (Boston, MA: Prentice Hall).

²⁵ Transjordan became known as the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in 1949.

²⁶ Bickerton and Klausner (2010) p. 148. For UN views on Israel, see, for example, Weiss, Thomas G. 2009. *What's Wrong With the United Nations and How to Fix It* (Malden, MA: Polity Press), p. 37 & 41.

²⁷ 1968 Palestinian National Charter, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/plocov.asp, accessed September 4, 2015.

²⁸ There were 21 settlements that were closed, containing a total Jewish population of about 8,000.

²⁹ The population of Gaza as of July 2014 was estimated to be over 1.8 million, and the Christian population is estimated at less than 1,500. See <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gz.html>, accessed September 4, 2015.

³⁰ Most settlements have fewer than 500 residents. Most Israelis support closing these smaller settlements. There are five settlement blocs, however, that are known as “consensus settlements,” or areas that have historically been assumed in many peace negotiations to be part of Israel under a two-state solution (Ma’ale Adumim, Modi’in Illit, Ariel, Gush Etzion and Givat Ze’ev). The population of these settlements account for about 2/3s of the Jewish population on the West Bank and are near the pre-1967 border; Ma’ale Adumim is just three miles from Jerusalem. Estimates of the total population of the West Bank vary wildly according to the source. As of June 2015, the US CIA World Factbook estimated the West Bank population to be over 2.7 million, including 356,000 Jews, 200,000 of whom live in greater Jerusalem. (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html>), accessed September 4, 2015. Peace Now, an Israeli group that is critical of all the settlements, points out that there is not a “national consensus” on the whether the blocs are part of Israel. Ofran, Hagit and Lara Friedman. 2008. “West Bank “Settlement Blocs,” Peace Now, <http://peacenow.org.il/eng/content/west-bank-%E2%80%9Csettlement-blocs%E2%80%9D>, accessed September 4, 2015.

³¹ Nick Anderson, Louisville Courier-Journal, December 9, 2001.

³² The balance of this quotation reads, “Using a narrower strategic gauge, Israel comprised 7,992 square miles of territory from the 1949 Armistice Agreements until June 1967. She was surrounded by avowedly hostile states, with 600 miles of land frontier and no space for defense in depth. Three-fourths of the population were settled on the coastal plain from Haifa in the north to a point just south of Tel Aviv and in the narrow salient leading to the capital, Jerusalem... Syrian guns on the Golan Heights were able to wreak havoc on the settlements in eastern Galilee. And access to Eilat, the southern gateway to Asia and Africa, could be easily severed. Indeed all the main roads were exposed to swift and continuous incursion.” Brecher, Michael. 1972. *The Foreign Policy System of Israel: Setting, Images, Process* (New Haven: Yale University Press), pp. 65-66 (*spelling in the original*). General Moshe Dayan pointed out that “The entire country is a frontier... Not a single state, he added, had a firm unequivocal obligation to help defend Israel against aggression. Thus Israel ‘faces formidable dangers [and]... faces them in unusual solitude.’” (as quoted in Brecher, p. 66).

³³ Mahler, Gregory S. 2011. *Politics and Government in Israel: The Maturation of a Modern State* 2nd edition (Lanhan: Rowman & Littlefield), p. 34. Survival is a common theme in understanding Israeli foreign policy. “The first principle in understanding the relations of the Jewish people with its environment throughout the generations is survival.” Sandler, Schmuel. 2007. “Toward a Theory of World Jewish Politics and Jewish Foreign Policy,” *Hebraic Political Studies* 2/3:326-360, p. 331.

³⁴ Esposito, John L. 2011. *What Everyone Needs to Know About Islam* 2nd edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 188-189. Another source of information about Islam geared toward an American, non-Islamic reader is Lewis, Bernard and Buntzie Ellis Churchill. *Islam: The Religion and the People* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Wharton School Publishing, 2009).

³⁵ Peel, William Robert Wellesley, Chairman. 1937. "Palestine Royal Commission Report," Secretary of State for the Colonies, United Kingdom (London: His Majesty's Stationary Office), <http://unispal.un.org/pdfs/Cmd5479.pdf>, p.6, accessed November 23, 2015. Other members of the Commission were Egbert Laurie Lucas Hammond, William Morris Carter, Harold Morris and Reginald Coupland. This report is commonly known as the "Peel Commission Report."

³⁶ Bickerton and Klausner (2010), pp. 44-47.

³⁷ Simpson, John Hope. 1930. "Palestine: Report on Immigration, Land Settlement and Development," Presented by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to Parliament by Command of His Majesty October, 1930 (London: His Majesty's Stationary Office), Chapter X.

³⁸ Peel (1937), p. 282.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 291-292.

⁴⁰ Seikaly, May. 2001. *Haifa: Transformation of a Palestinian Arab Society 1918-1939* (London: I. B. Tauris Publishers), p. 48. These numbers include natural increase through births.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 50.

⁴² Ibid, pp. 48 and 50.

⁴³ Time Magazine. 1948. "On the Eve?", May 2, accessed July 14, 2015 through Academic Search Complete.

⁴⁴ For additional information on the Israeli political system, see Arian, Asher. 2005. *Politics in Israel: The Second Republic* (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly) and Mahler, Gregory S. 2010. *Politics and Government in Israel: The Maturation of a Modern State* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield).

⁴⁵ Von Glahn and Taulbee write,
"Can the General Assembly through its actions "legislate" international law in some instances? The short, traditional answer in looking at the Charter and 60 years of practice is "No." The Charter assigns no formal lawmaking authority to the General Assembly. Its resolutions do not enact, formulate, or alter international law. By definition, because the General Assembly resolutions are only *recommendations*, they lack the critical element of *opinion juris*." (*Emphasis in original*)
Von Glahn, Gerhard and James Larry Taulbee. 2007. *Law Among Nations: An Introduction to Public International Law* 8th edition (New York: Pearson Longman), pp. 75-76. Exceptions must adhere to strict criteria and are considered truly "exceptional". Security Council resolutions are binding on UN

members concerning the use of force and threats to use force per Article 39 of the UN Charter. Ibid. For the UN's web page for international law, see <http://www.un.org/en/globalissues/international-law/>, accessed September 4, 2015.

⁴⁶ The classic exposition in modern times on the meaning of politics is Lasswell, Harold D. 1936. *Politics: Who Gets What When and How* (New York: Whittlesey House).

⁴⁷ Buchanan, James and Gordon Tullock. 1962. *The Calculus of Consent: Logical Foundations of Constitutional Democracy* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press), another classic, addresses the issue of majority versus minority rights.

⁴⁸ The International Court of Justice does not deal with legality issues related to UN resolutions. Its primary function is to settle disputes between UN member states and its decisions have no judicial review.

⁴⁹ As cited in Peel (1937), pp. 32-33.

⁵⁰ The Peel Commission Report goes on to say "By 1936 the Jewish National Home had practically grown into something like a State within a State. The Jewish community in Palestine now numbers 400,000 persons, with its capital, Tel Aviv, the largest town in Palestine, its national flag, its anthem, its cultural system, its network of social services, and its economy divided into an agricultural and industrial branch. It is linked to World Jewry by the Jewish Agency, whilst the internal affairs of the Home are managed by a National Assembly and Council and a Rabbinical Council," (305-306). Ironically, the purpose of the Peel Report was to justify limiting Jewish immigration into Palestine as the British sought to appease Arab nations, who controlled key chokepoints such as the Suez Canal and vast oil reserves, as another world war loomed.

⁵¹ Kemp, Richard. 2014. "Understanding the Issue of Israeli Settlements and Borders," Friends of Israel Initiative, Paper No. 24, http://www.friendsofisraelinitiative.org/uploads/papers/pdf/FOI_Paper24.pdf, p.3, accessed September 4, 2015.

⁵² Rostow, Nicholas, "Are the Settlements Illegal?" *The American Interest*, <http://www.the-american-interest.com/2010/03/01/are-the-settlements-illegal/>, accessed September 4, 2015.

⁵³ See Jervis, Robert. 1976. *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press). This particular work stimulated a massive research enterprise that still is underway, with literally hundreds of publications in print.

⁵⁴ Stockton, Ronald R. 2005. "The Presbyterian Divestiture Vote and the Jewish Response," *Middle East Policy* 12/4:98-117, p. 98.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 109. Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) is a committee of the Presbyterian General Assembly. Its members are appointed by the Presbyterian Mission Agency and their views do not necessarily represent the General Assembly or the aggregate views of the parishioners of the PC(USA).

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 99.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 104.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 105.

⁵⁹ Shavit, Ari. 2013. *My Promised Land: The Triumph and Tragedy of Israel* (New York, NY: Spiegel & Grau), p. 202.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 204. Much of the activity was to re-establish pre-existing modern Jewish communities in Gush Etzion and Hebron, forced out in 1948 and 1936, respectively.

⁶¹ Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 2015. "Saving Lives: Israel's Anti-Terrorist Fence - Answers to Questions," <http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/foreignpolicy/terrorism/palestinian/pages/saving%20lives-%20israel-s%20anti-terrorist%20fence%20-%20answ.aspx>, accessed September 4, 2015.

⁶² The initial boycott of Jewish businesses was April 1-3, 1933. This was just two months after the Nazis took power in Germany. The claim at the time was that there was nothing anti-Semitic about it, rather Jews were being blamed and punished for international anti-German propaganda. Marcus, Kenneth L. 2015. "Is the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement Anti-Semitic?," in Gary Nelson and Gabriel Noah Brahm, eds., *The Case Against Academic Boycotts of Israel* (Chicago: MLA Members for Scholars' Rights), pp. 245-246.

⁶³ Naddaf, Gabriel. 2015. "Test the Spirits: A Christian Guide to the Anti-Israeli Boycott Movement (BDS)," Christian Empowerment Council, <http://www.jns.org/news-briefs/2015/7/16/israeli-christian-group-publishes-anti-bds-guide#.VbaP3fke0wp>, accessed September 4, 2015.

⁶⁴ Rynhold, Jonathan. 2015. *The Arab-Israeli Conflict in American Political Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 134.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 131.

⁶⁶ Heim, David. 2015. "Boycotting the Boycott," *The Christian Century*, July 21. <https://www.christiancentury.org/article/2015-07/boycotting-boycott>, accessed September 4, 2015.

⁶⁷ Rosenblum, Mark. 2009. "After Rabin: The Malaise of the Israeli Left," in Robert O. Freedman, ed., *Contemporary Israel: Domestic Politics, Foreign Policy, and Security Challenges* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press), pp. 47-48.

⁶⁸ Rynhold (2015), p. 132.

⁶⁹ Ibid., pp. 127-128.

⁷⁰ Clinton, William Jefferson. 2005. *My Life* (New York: Vintage Books), pp. 944-945.

⁷¹ Shapira, Anita. 2012. *Israel: A History* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press), pp. 445-446. Shapira writes, "Some argue that his years at the Palestinian Authority demonstrated to Arafat that what awaited him at the end of the road was a relatively small, poor state burdened with economic and social problems, and that he preferred the romanticism of the struggle rather than the dejecting routine of being President of the Palestinian state. So long as there was no peace, he was a national hero, a media figure at whose door the world's luminaries came calling." One of the Clinton's chief negotiators recalled "Did we come close? Yes. Were the Palestinian negotiators ready to do the deal that was available? Yes. Did we ultimately fail because of the mistakes that Barak made and the mistakes that Clinton made? No, each, regardless of his tactical mistakes, was ready to confront history and mythology. Only one leader was unable or unwilling to confront history and mythology: Yasir Arafat." Ross, Dennis. 2004. *The Missing Peace: The Inside Story of the Fight for Middle East Peace* (New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux), p. 758.

⁷² Nelson and Brahm (2015), p. 431. Another cause is put on Ariel Sharon's poor decision to make a provocative visit to the Temple Mount on September 28, 2000. This chapter of the Arab-Israeli conflict is just as complicated as the any part of the story, but the visit was a spark for violence. See also Bickerton and Klausner (2010) p. 392.

⁷³ The Israel Ministry of Affairs. 2015. "Suicide and Other Bombing Attacks in Israel Since the Declaration of Principles" (Sept. 1993), <http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/foreignpolicy/terrorism/palestinian/pages/suicide%20and%20other%20bombing%20attacks%20in%20israel%20since.aspx>, accessed September 4, 2015.

⁷⁴ About 10% is an actual wall; most of the barrier consists of fences alongside trenches and open areas. Anderson, Liam D. and Ewan W. Anderson. 2014. *An Atlas of Middle Eastern Affairs* 2nd edition (New York: Routledge), p. 283.

⁷⁵ "If the mainline discourse was primarily exercised by a benevolent neutral concern for both sides, one would expect both their opposition to Israel and their support for the Palestinians to at least be reduced in the aftermath. But the opposite is the case; their hostility towards Israel increased dramatically to an all-time high. Moreover, much of the mainline discourse was not simply characterized by criticism of Israeli politics, but by a rejection of Jewish sovereignty per se. Clearly then, the direction of Israeli policy is of limited utility in explaining the thrust of the mainline discourse and the divestment campaign." Rynhold (2015), pp. 127-128.

⁷⁶ For a discussion of Israel's "defensive conquest" of the West Bank, see Schwebel, Stephen M. 1970. "What Weight to Conquest?," *The American Journal of International Law* 64/2:344-347. Schwebel was a judge with the International Court of Justice from 1981-2000.

⁷⁷ Golan, Galia. 2004. "Plans for Israeli-Palestinian Peace: From Beirut to Geneva," *Middle East Policy* 11/1:38-51.

⁷⁸ "To the chagrin of many refugees, security chiefs under the aegis of the Palestinian Authority (PA) have joined Israel's in seeing the camps as nests of gun-runners, drug-traffickers and car thieves. The PA's security men have teamed with Israel's to step up raids on the camps." "Palestinian Refugee Camps: A New Type of Settlement," *The Economist*, October 12, 2013, <http://www.economist.com/node/21587846/print>, accessed September 4, 2015.

⁷⁹ Ross (2004), p. 759.

⁸⁰ As quoted in Foley, Hamilton, ed. 1923. *Woodrow Wilson's Case for the League of Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), p. 71.

⁸¹ Early, Brian R. 2015. *Busted Sanctions: Explaining Why Economic Sanctions Fail* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press), p. 8.

⁸² Gordon, Joy. 1999. "A Peaceful, Silent Deadly Remedy: The Ethics of Economic Sanctions," *Ethics and International Affairs* 13/1:123-142, p.124.

⁸³ Mueller, John, and Karl Mueller. 1999. "Sanctions of Mass Destruction," *Foreign Affairs* 78/3:43-53, p. 49.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 50. See also Peksen, Dursun. 2009. "Better or Worse? The Effect of Economic Sanctions on Human Rights," *Journal of Peace Research* 46/1:59-77, p. 62, and Peksen, Dursun and A. Cooper Drury. 2010. "Coercive or Corrosive: The Negative Impact of Economic Sanctions on Democracy," *International Interactions* 36:240-264.

⁸⁵ Mueller and Mueller (1999), p. 52.

⁸⁶ In the case of China, constructive engagement, a form of positive diplomacy, has been put forward as a more effective way to improve human rights. See Drury, A. Cooper and Yitan Li. 2006. "U.S. Economic Sanction Threats Against China: Failing to Leverage Better Human Rights," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 2/4:307-324, p. 321. Peksen (2009) also points to Fidel Castro's ability to depict himself as a "heroic leader fighting against the imperialist power" as a direct result of economic sanctions (p. 63).

⁸⁷ Hufbauer, Gary Clyde, Jeffrey J. Schott, Kimberly Ann Elliott and Barbara Oegg. 2007. *Economic Sanctions Reconsidered* 3rd edition (Washington DC: Peter G. Institute for International Economics), pp. 132-133.

⁸⁸ Peksen, Dursun. 2011. "Economic Sanctions and Human Security: The Public Health Effect of Economic Sanctions," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 7:237-251, pp. 238-239.

⁸⁹ Ibid. p. 239.

⁹⁰ Wood, Reed M. 2008. "'Hand upon the Throat of the Nation': Economic Sanctions and State Repression, 1976-2001," *International Studies Quarterly* 52:489-513, p. 490.

⁹¹ Levy, Philip I. 1999. "Sanctions on South Africa: What Did They Do?," *The American Economic Review* 89/2:415-420. The collapse of the Soviet Union meant that the communist-leaning elements of the domestic anti-apartheid movement were deemed less threatening.

⁹² A protracted conflict is one in which the adversaries have not resolved their underlying differences, are in continually state of tension, and periodically engage in the use of force. See Brecher, Michael and Jonathan Wilkenfeld. 1997, 2000. *A Study of Crisis* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press).

⁹³ Weiss, Martin A. 2007. "Arab League Boycott in Israel," *Congressional Research Service Report to Congress* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, Order Code RL339610), p. 4.

⁹⁴ Levy, Elinor. 2015. "The Palestinian Who Opposes the Boycott Against Israel," *Ynet News Magazine*, June 10. <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0%2c7340%2cL-4667098%2c00.html>, accessed December 11, 2015.

⁹⁵ Palestinian jurisdiction was territorial and civilian, and did not include military control or control over Jewish settlements. Butler, Linda. 2009. "Gaza at a Glance," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 38/3:93-97, p. 93.

⁹⁶ Klausner and Bickerton (2010), p. 360.

⁹⁷ Rosenblum (2009), pp. 49-50. Klausner and Bickerton (2010), pp. 351 and 372-379.

⁹⁸ United Nations General Assembly. 1975. "Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination," UNGA Resolution 3379. This resolution was later rescinded in 1991.

⁹⁹ Freedom House. 2015. "Freedom in the World 2014," <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2014#.VZ64Afke0wo>, accessed September 4, 2015.

¹⁰⁰ Freedom House. 2015. "Middle East and North Africa Fact Sheet," <https://www.freedomhouse.org/report/middle-east-and-north-africa-fact-sheet#.VZ659Pke0wr>, accessed September 4, 2015.

¹⁰¹ Weiss (2009), p. 37.

¹⁰² Ibid., pp. 37-44.

¹⁰³ Off-the-Cuff, Secretary-General's press encounter (unofficial transcript), New York, 28 November 2006, <http://www.un.org/sg/offthecuff/?nid=955>, accessed September 4, 2015.

¹⁰⁴ Ross, Dennis. 2006. "Foreword," in Matthew Levitt, *Hamas: Politics, Charity, and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad* (New Haven: Yale University Press), p. ix.

¹⁰⁵ Levitt (2006), p. 171.

¹⁰⁶ “Spoilers attack in an effort to persuade the enemy that moderates on the terrorists’ side are weak and un-trustworthy, thus undermining attempts to reach a peace settlement.” Kydd, Andrew H. and Barbara F. Walter. 2006. “The Strategies of Terrorism” *International Security* 31/1:49-80, pp. 51 and 74. See also Levitt, Matthew (2006). *Hamas: Politics, Charity, and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad* (New Haven: Yale University Press), pp. 245-246.

¹⁰⁷ Matesan, Ioana Emy. 2012. “What Makes Negative Frames Resonant? Hamas and the Appeal of Opposition to the Peace Process,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 24:671-705, pp. 671-675; Hafez, Mohammed M. 2007. “Martyrdom Mythology in Iraq: How *Jihadists* Frame Suicide Terrorism in Videos and Biographies,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 19:95-115, p. 107; and Litvak, Meir. 2010. “Martyrdom is Life: *Jihad* and Martyrdom in the Ideology of Hamas,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 33:716-734, p. 726.

¹⁰⁸ Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey, Press Release June 9, 2015, <http://pcpsr.org/sites/default/files/poll%2356%20PressRelease%20EN.pdf>, accessed September 4, 2015.

¹⁰⁹ The unity government was declared on April 23, 2014, but as of summer 2015 has “teetered on the verge of collapse.” Mitnick, Joshua and Nicholas Casey. 2015. “Palestinian Unity Effort Nears Collapse,” *The Wall Street Journal* June 17, 2015, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/palestinian-political-crisis-threatens-to-undo-unity-government-1434536692>, accessed September 4, 2015.

¹¹⁰ Gold, Dore. 2014. “The Myth of the Moderate Hamas,” Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, April 27, <http://jcpa.org/the-myth-of-the-moderate-hamas/>, accessed September 4, 2015.

¹¹¹ Israel/Palestine Mission Network of the Presbyterian Church (USA). 2015. Homepage. <http://www.israelpalestinemissionnetwork.org/main/>, accessed September 4, 2015. IPMN still advertises and sells the guide, in spite of the fact that it no longer is supported and was removed by the PC(USA) from its own website.

¹¹² “Mainline protestant churches” have been listed among those that are “singling out Israel,” yet ignore China’s abuses in Tibet, or the perennial plight of Kurds, who at 28 million are the world’s largest national group without a state. Muravchik, Joshua. 2014. *Making David Into Goliath: How the World Turned Against Israel* (New York: Encounter Books), pp. x-xi and 194.

In 2006, an article was published in the *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, the world’s leading academic, scientific outlet for the research on peace and conflict that meets the highest standards of the natural sciences, e.g. physics. The researchers addressed the question of why Israel is singled out, over and over and over, for criticism and punishment while countries such as Sudan, North Korea, and China in Tibet are ignored. This is true of the United Nations Human Rights Council as well the PC(USA). Often there is a disclaimer that anti-Israeli attacks have nothing to do with anti-Semitism. It simply is a fluke that the country being targeted obsessively happens to be the only Jewish nation on earth. It is just a coincidence. So, “what is one to think when presented with accusations such as “Israel is just like apartheid South Africa,” “Israel is responsible for the violence in the Middle East,” or “Israel deliberately targets Palestinian civilians”?

The article “Anti-Israel Sentiment Predicts Anti-Semitism in Europe” verified in the most rigorous scientific manner that “among those with the most extreme anti-Israel sentiments in our survey (anti-Israel index scores of 4), 56 percent report anti-Semitic leanings. Based on this analysis, when an individual’s criticism of Israel becomes sufficiently severe, it does become reasonable to ask whether such criticism is a mask for underlying anti-Semitism.” Kaplan, Edward H. and Charles A. Small. 2006. “Anti-Israel Sentiment Predicts Anti-Semitism in Europe,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50/4:548-561, p. 548.

¹¹³ In 2004, after the PC(USA)’s first divestment decision, over half of congregants and elders were not even aware of the issue. Presbyterian Church (USA) (Research Office). 2004. “The February 2004 Presbyterian Panel: Listening to Presbyterians Current Issues in Church and Society, The November 2004 Survey, http://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/research/pdfs/1104repfinal.pdf, access September 4, 2015, p.1. See also Rynhold (2015), p. 120.

¹¹⁴ Heger, Lindsay L. 2015. “Votes and Violence: Pursuing Terrorism While Navigating Politics”, *Journal of Peace Research* 25/1:32-45, pp. 32-33, and Levitt, Matthew. 2004. “From Cradle to Grave,” *Middle East Quarterly* 11/1:3-15.

¹¹⁵ Yaari, Ehud. 2014. “The New Triangle of Egypt, Israel, and Hamas,” The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, January 17, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/the-new-triangle-of-egypt-israel-and-hamas>, accessed September 4, 2015.

¹¹⁶ Crenshaw, Martha. 1981. “The Causes of Terrorism”, in *Comparative Politics* 13/4:379-399, p. 379; Sandler, Todd. 2004. *Global Collective Action* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 164-165.

¹¹⁷ Abu Toameh, Khaled. 2015. “Egypt’s Blockade of Gaza,” *Gatestone Institute International Policy Council*, <http://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/5847/gaza-blockade>, accessed September 4, 2015.

¹¹⁸ See, for example, The Economist. Jun 17, 2010. “Quantitative Easing: Israel Eases the Gaza Blockade,” <http://www.economist.com/node/21007615/print>, accessed September 4, 2015, Frenkel, Sheera. 2013. “Israel Eases Gaza Blockade, Allowing Construction Supplies”, NPR, January 1, 2013, <http://www.npr.org/2013/01/01/168417035/israel-eases-gaza-blockade-allowing-construction-supplies>, accessed September 4, 2015, and MacFarquhar, Neil and Ethan Bronner. 2011. “Report Finds Naval Blockade by Israel Legal but Faults Raid,” *The New York Times*, September 1, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/02/world/middleeast/02flotilla.html?pagewanted=all&r=0>, accessed September 4, 2015.

¹¹⁹ Pelham, Nicolas. 2011. “Gaza’s Tunnel Complex”, *Middle East Report* 261/30-35, p. 30.

¹²⁰ Ibid., p. 34

¹²¹ Israeli Defense Force. 2015. “Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories,” <http://www.cogat.idf.il/894-en/Matpash.aspx>, accessed September 4, 2015.

¹²² Rubenstein, Daniel. 2015. " Hamas' Tunnel Network: A Massacre in the Making," in Hirsch Goldman and Dore Gold, eds., *The Gaza War 2014: The War Israel Did Not Want and the Disaster it Averted* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs), <http://jcpa.org/pdf/The-Gaza-War-2014-Site.pdf>, accessed September 5, 2015 p. 124.

¹²³ United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East. 2014. "UNRWA Condemns Placement of Rockets, Second Time, in One of Its Schools," Press Release, July 22. <http://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/press-releases/unrwa-condemns-placement-rockets-second-time-one-its-schools>, accessed September 4, 2015.

¹²⁴ Rubenstein (2015), p.120.

¹²⁵ Ben David, Lenny. 2015. "Gazan Casualties: How Many and Who They Were," in Hirsch Goldman and Dore Gold, eds., *The Gaza War 2014: The War Israel Did Not Want and the Disaster it Averted* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs), <http://jcpa.org/pdf/The-Gaza-War-2014-Site.pdf>, p. 147, accessed September 5, 2015.

¹²⁶ Goldman, Hirsch. 2015. "Israel's Narrative- An Overview" in Hirsch Goldman and Dore Gold, eds., *The Gaza War 2014: The War Israel Did Not Want and the Disaster it Averted* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs), <http://jcpa.org/pdf/The-Gaza-War-2014-Site.pdf>, accessed September 5, 2015, p. 8.

¹²⁷ Goldman, Hirsh and Dore Gold, eds. 2015. *The Gaza War 2014: The War Israel Did Not Want and the Disaster it Averted* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs), <http://jcpa.org/pdf/The-Gaza-War-2014-Site.pdf>, accessed September 5, 2015.

¹²⁸ Goldman (2015), p. 21.

¹²⁹ Dempsey, Staff General Martin, US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. "Israel Tried to Limit Civilian Casualties in Gaza: Military Chief," November 6, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/11/06/us-israel-usa-gaza-idUSKBN0IQ2LH20141106>, accessed September 4, 2015. For a video of General Dempsey's statements, see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mhvQ_kyWyxw, accessed September 4, 2015.

¹³⁰ " Hamas's Benefactors: A Network of Terror," Joint Hearing before the Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa and the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, 113th Congress, Second Session, September 9, 2014 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office), pp. 6-7. The crux of this report was that Hamas receives significant support, financial, material, and training, coming from Iran, Turkey and Qatar, as well as Egypt when the Muslim Brotherhood was in control.

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¹³² Walzer, Michael. 2002. "The Four Wars of Israel/Palestine," *Dissent* Fall 2002, pp. 26-33, p. 31.

¹³³ Harkov, Lahav. 2014. "27% of Israelis don't have access to bomb shelters," *The Jerusalem Post* July 29. <http://www.jpost.com/Breaking-News/27-percent-of-Israelis-dont-have-access-to-bomb-shelters-369303>, accessed September 4, 2015.

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¹³⁵ Liphshiz, Cnaan. 2009. "NGO Monitor: Gaza War Probe Tainted by Anti-Israel Ideology," <http://www.haaretz.com/misc/article-print-page/ngo-monitor-gaza-war-probe-tainted-by-anti-israel-ideology-1.8242?trailingPath=2.169%2C2.216%2C>, accessed September 4, 2015.

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¹³⁹ Goldman (2015), p. 14.

¹⁴⁰ Eid, Bassem. 2015. "Gaza: From Bad to Worse," *The Jerusalem Post*, July 13, <http://www.jpost.com/landedpages/printarticle.aspx?id=408850>, accessed September 4, 2015.

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¹⁴² Cotler, Irwin. 2015. Member of Parliament for Mount Royal Irwin Cotler, <https://irwin-cotler.liberal.ca/photos/>, accessed September 4, 2015.

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¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Almost a year later, the Christian Broadcasting Network led a story with “What does the Presbyterian Church (USA) and Pink Floyd’s Roger Waters have in common? They both support boycotting Israel, a sweeping movement that’s trying to delegitimize the Jewish state.” The article also stated “The Presbyterian Church (USA) ended business connections in Israel....” Stahl, Julie and Chris Matthew. 2015. “World Campaign Seeks to Blacken Israel’s Name,” <http://www.cbn.com/cbnnews/insideisrael/2015/June/Intl-Campaign-Underway-to-Blacken-Israels-Name/>, June 6, 2015, accessed September 4, 2015.

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¹⁴⁹ Excerpt from the Schuman Declaration, May 9, 1950. Archive and Document Centre Directorate-General for the Presidency European Parliament. 2010. “From the Schuman Declaration to the birth of the ECSC: The role of Jean Monnet,” *Cardoc Journals* No. 6, May 2010, http://www.ab.gov.tr/files/ardb/evt/1_avrupa_birligi/1_1_tarihce/from_the_schuman_declaration_to_the_birth_of_ecsc.pdf, accessed September 4, 2015, p. 9.

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¹⁵¹ Bardaji, Rafael, Thomas Steiner and Elias Cohen, editors. 2015. “Israel: A Vital Asset of the West,” Friends of Israel Initiative, http://www.friendsofisraelinitiative.org/uploads/FriendsOfIsraelInitiative_Israel_AVitalAssetOfTheWest.pdf, pp. 71-72, accessed November 23, 2015.

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Acknowledgments



Bethlehem - detail of graffiti on the Separation barrier showing the symbolic ladder of peace bound to the heavens from the city of Jerusalem

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We also want to acknowledge the critical value provided by the numerous resources referenced in our project. For some subjects, the task of assessing the quality and objectivity of written material is challenging. This is particularly the case with the Arab-Israeli conflict, which has roots going back long before the creation of the modern state of Israel in 1948. For many the subject is very personal and very emotional, and narratives often, unfortunately, lack accuracy and objectivity.

We found several resources particularly helpful and recommend them to those who wish to learn more, or just follow the situation more closely. Here are some basics:

- It is crucial when getting news to use multiple news sources. Even the best and oldest newspapers or TV news outlets have some bias and may even have an agenda. For news on TV or online, there are the ‘big five’ that, used together, can provide a range of views with the ‘truth’ often discernible when cross-referenced. They are CNN, MSNBC/NBC, ABC, FOX and CBS.
- One excellent source of major events around the world is *The Economist*, bearing in mind the weekly magazine leans to the left on social issues and to the right on economic issues. For the facts about what is happening when and where, it can be relied upon to be accurate.
- For Middle East-focused English language outlets available online, Al-Jazeera offers the view from the Arab world (subscription may be required). As Israel has a fully free (and vocal) press, options are more numerous. For information and opinions with a more politically left point of view, see *Haaretz*. For a more conservative viewpoint, see the *Jerusalem Post*.
- For Palestinians, restricted freedom of expression means that material must be seen in a context of limitations. The Maan News Agency is a technically “independent” media source. Nonetheless, there is little or no criticism of Palestinian leadership, particularly the Hamas leadership of the Gaza Strip. This should not be taken as Palestinian lack of support for peace. It instead reflects the justifiable fear many Palestinians have of publicly opposing violent groups such as Hamas.
- Most of the material referenced in this resource is “academic peer-reviewed.” That means that there has been a vetting process to help ensure the information contained in a journal article or book is accurate and, as much as possible, objective. The vast majority of what is available on the Internet does not go through any kind of vetting process, and may even be intentionally misleading. It isn’t always perfect, but most of the time peer-reviewed publications are more reliable. These sources usually are academic journals and university presses. Many search engines available through libraries can add a “peer-review” filter when hunting for information.

Study Notes



For more information, please contact:

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