

WESMUN 2021



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BACKGROUND GUIDE

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CAMP DAVID II

Chair's Welcome

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Welcome Delegates to Camp David II: A Permanent Peace. On behalf of myself and my co-chair we welcome you to what we know will be a lively, constructive, and productive summit.

My name is Hannah Barltrop and I will be serving as your Chair. I graduated from Ivey Business School in 2019 and I am currently in my second year of law school here at Western University. I have nearly ten years' experience with Model United Nations as both a delegate and committee staff member. I am looking forward to witnessing dynamic discussions on an issue that is ever changing, especially with the recent actions of United States President Donald Trump. We have characters who represent a wide range of viewpoints and I am excited to see how individuals work together to dissect and negotiate a long-standing international issue - and hopefully reach a permanent and peaceful solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict.

My name is Timothy Ma and I am super excited to be one of your co-chairs for WESMUN 2021 and this committee! A bit about myself: I am a first-year student studying political science and I started Model United Nations in graded 10, attending school conferences and international conferences hosted by University of Toronto. This committee is covering challenging topics and I am looking forward to seeing all the great ideas, discussion points, and resolution papers created during this conference.

We understand that this issue is a very sensitive topic and can be difficult to discuss. As delegates, we request that you all maintain civility and composure throughout the entire conference and respect the viewpoints of others, despite any personal beliefs and emotions you may have on the topics being debated. Ensuring a courteous and respectful environment will allow for constructive debate and create an environment where all parties feel comfortable expressing their views and contributing towards a resolution. We are looking forward to a great debate!

Warm regards,

Hannah Barltrop (Chair)

Timothy Ma (Co-Chair)

Introduction

Camp David II is taking place in February 2021, approximately twenty-one years after the original Camp David Summit in the July of 2000, which involved then American President Bill Clinton, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian Authority chairman Yasser Arafat[1]. As with its predecessor, Camp David II has the goal of brokering an agreement to end the decades of conflict in the Israel – Palestine area and achieve a lasting and just peace[2].

The modern Israel-Palestinian conflict began amongst the greater Arab-Israeli conflict in the late 1940s and has continued in different iterations ever since. As a result of the creation of the State of Israel in 1948[3], Palestinian self-determination and governance have been an ever-present debate and source of conflict in international relations. While attempts have been made at remedying the situation, lasting peace has not been achieved. The relationship between Israel and Palestine is one of hostility and violence and resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of individuals and millions more being displaced or seeking refugee from their homeland throughout the course of the ever-present conflict.

As stated above, the goal of this summit is to further the work of past agreements and discussions and to find a permanent solution to having stable and lasting peace in the area and bring hope to the peoples who live there. While this will not be an easy task, it is one of the utmost importance. There are millions of innocent civilians who are caught in the middle of this conflict.

Furthermore, the area is home to structures and locations which are considered to be sacred to several religions, and whose integrity and preservation depend on the ending of the conflict. The future relationship of Israel and Palestine will dictate whether these civilians and sacred sites are preserved or destroyed.

Background

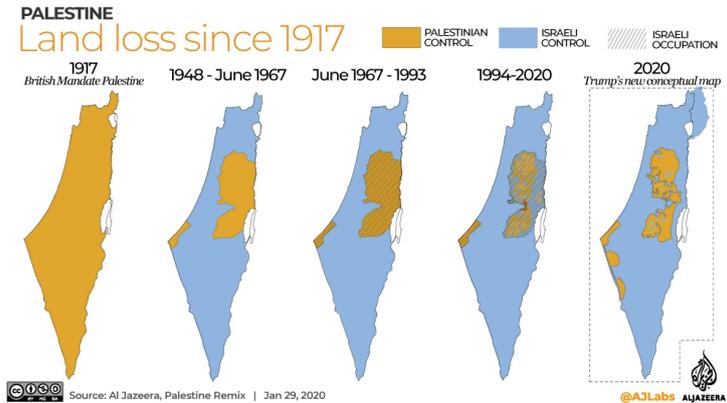
Approximant Present Day Dividing Lines between Israel (maroon) and Palestine (green)

[4]



The conflict between Israel and Palestine has a vast and rich history. It predates all modern international relations and has roots within The Roman Empire, The Crusades, and many other pivotal turning points in history. The source of conflict is both religion and cultural-based: Israel (and its predecessors) have claimed the area is the sacred homeland for those of the Jewish Faith, whereas the Palestinian people claim it as a homeland for the Palestinian peoples and a sacred religious site for those of the Islamic Faith[5]. Both groups have sought to solidify their claim to the territory through countless wars and military efforts in the past thousands of years. Jerusalem is often referred to as “The City of Religions” due to the sacred value it holds for numerous faiths and control over the area is one of most contentious points between the Israelis and Palestinians[6].

With the advent of modern international relations, the right of self-determination and statehood have become the centre of the conflict. As noted above, the State of Israel was created in 1948 and is recognized by a vast majority of other nations[7], becoming a member of the United Nations in 1949[8]. Opposingly, Palestine has yet to be recognized as a country by the majority of Western countries and was only granted observer-state status by the United Nations in 2012[9].



[10]

In 1947, the United Nations adopted Resolution 181[11], which aimed at creating Arab and Jewish states in what was then the British Mandate of Palestine[12]. However, the end of the first Arab-Israeli War, which was won by Israel, divided the territory into three parts: The State of Israel, the West Bank (of the Jordan River), and the Gaza Strip, and displaced 750, 000 Palestinians[13]. Following the 1956 Suez Crisis, the Six-Day War in 1967, and the October War in 1973 between Israel and Egypt with the support of Syria. Attempting to broker an agreement which would bring peace to the area, the Camp David Accords of 1979 were hosted by the U.S. President Jimmy Carter. While succeeding in ending the conflict between Israel and Egypt and greatly improving relations between Israel and its neighbouring countries, it did nothing to quell the conflict between Israel and Palestinian people[14].

In 1987, the first intifada broke out, when hundreds of thousands of Palestinians living under Israeli rule on the West Bank and Gaza strip rose up and war broke out. The first Oslo Accords in 1993 attempted to mediate the conflict and provided a framework for the Palestinian people to self-govern in the West Bank and Gaza, allowing for mutual recognition of the new Palestinian Authority and Israel Government[15]. This agreement was expanded upon in the 1995 Oslo II Accords, mandating Israel withdrawal from areas within the West Bank[16].

The second intifada was launched in 2000, brought on by Israel's continued control of the West bank and the visit to one of the holiest sites in Islam by a former Israeli Prime Minister, and continued until 2005[17]. It was during the second intifada that Israel approved and began construction on the wall around the West Bank, despite opposition from both the International Criminal Court and International Court of Justice and numerous other countries[18]. During this time, first Camp David Accord was held in the United States, which failed to reach a tangible solution or a cease-fire[19].

In 2013, then U.S. President Obama attempted to restart the peace process started by the first Camp David Accord, but this was brought to an abrupt end a year later when the Palestinian Authority's ruling party formed a government with a faction of Hamas, which is deemed a foreign terrorist organization by the United States[20]. While this government may have not represented the will of the Palestinian people, in nevertheless halted negotiations due to the designation by the United States.

Since then the violence has only continued to escalate, with rockets being fired by both sides on numerous occasions in the years since[21]. It is critical to note that comparatively, Israel has a much larger and more formalized military operation when compared to that of Palestine[22]. Former President Trump of the United States made it a priority to advance peace talks within the region during his time in office, however his decision to move the American embassy from Tel Aviv (where the large majority of country embassies in Israel are located) to Jerusalem brought about immense backlash from Palestine, as it also claims part of Jerusalem as its capital. It also brought about calls of concern from the majority of Western nations as this decision was a violation of long standing American and Western policy[23].

Topics for Discussion 6

Topic 1: Self-Determination

Surrounded by unending, constant conflict, tensions between Israel and Palestine continue to grow and draw international and national attention. With Palestinian nationalists pushing for their right to freely choose their sovereignty without external interference, government officials need to make decisive choices to address these concerns.

What is Self-Determination?

The United Nations enshrines the right of all peoples to self-determination (UN Charter, Article 1.2). It entails that the international community ought to respect the will of people to seek national autonomy in a free and democratic manner. Historically, the right to self-determination has been used to assert the sovereignty of many nations, including the State of Israel.

On May 14, 1948, David Ben-Gurion declared the independence of Israel from Tel Aviv. In justifying its establishment, he proclaimed that self-determination represents the “natural right of the Jewish people to be masters of their own fate, like all other nations, in their own sovereign state”. Having been exiled for millennia, the Jews were to finally return to their homeland (“Right of Return”) and build an independent, Jewish, and democratic country. From this, the State of Israel was born. Over the next few decades, Israel would continue to defend its right to exist through several wars, strengthening the idea that it was the staunch guardian of the Jewish people. Its neighbouring countries - the Arab nations of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, among others, posed the greatest threat to that idea. The country would see itself as an island of hope surrounded by a sea of danger, in which Jewish peoples fleeing persecution from all throughout the Muslim world would be able to seek refuge. This marks a key basis of the Arab-Israeli conflict; deepening mistrust due to history and conflicting interests due to the desire to inhabit the same lands.

Palestine & Self Determination

With failed negotiations made by the former U.S. President Donald Trump furthering Palestinian distrust in international mediation, Palestine currently remains wary of external interference in their affairs. To them, the former President’s most recent proposal strongly indicates a preference for the United States to stand by Israel amidst heated conflict. With this in mind, the national sentiment in favour of self-determination grows stronger day-by-day as the Palestinians continue to fight for their right to choose their sovereignty. This idea is likely to be strongly contended by Israeli officials due to their core belief that the Palestinians are the ones intruding upon their rightful land. The divergent beliefs are a challenging topic that will have to be overcome through discussion.

The contention of territory within Israel brings discourse surrounding access to religious sites, allocation of resources, and ownership of land. Currently, regions such as the West Bank are under heavy contention by both Israel and Palestine. Another focal point of the ongoing discussion is the ownership of Jerusalem and the implications it has on Israel as a nation.

Religious Sites:

The lands claimed by Israel and Palestine are some of the most historically significant in the world due to their deep religious connections. Settled by humanity thousands of years ago, the three major Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) all hold a deep spiritual relationship to the region. The Kingdom of Judea and the first two Jewish temples, the Gardens of Gethsemane and the site of Jesus' crucifixion, and Muhammad's (peace be upon him) Night Journey are all rooted in the ancient city of Jerusalem (or Al-Quds to the Palestinians). The complexity of the interwoven religious network here complicates the relationship between those of the Jewish and Muslim faiths, and Israelis and Palestinians in turn.

Allocation of Resources:

Another point of contention is the use and sharing of resources and trade. The Sea of Galilee and the Jordan River provide vital fresh water to both the Israeli and Palestinian controlled territories but are controlled by Israel alone. Israel also controls nearly all of the electricity used by the Palestinians, as well as having dominance over the airspace of the region. International trade bound for Palestine from the Mediterranean must deal with Israeli authorities, and the Gaza Strip in particular has undergone a difficult situation regarding the entry and exit of goods.

Ownership of Land:

Currently, the West Bank is separated into three different sectors: Area A, B, and C. Area A is fully under Palestinian control, Area B is a joint-ownership under Israel-Palestine, and Area C is completely controlled by Israel. The segmentation of land within the West Bank is an area of concern for both Israel and Palestine. With the already limited land available to Palestinians, Palestine wishes to take complete control of the West Bank while Israel works towards keeping their position within the region in the hopes of not disrupting the Israeli settlers already inhabiting the land. The map below shows the above areas, as well as areas which have been annexed by Israel (yellow in colour).

Topic 3: Future Relationship

With long-standing disagreements and hostility, both Israel and Palestine look onto the future with hopes that their relationship is still amendable. With sights set on a brighter tomorrow, both nations understand the necessity of compromise in order to form and nurture a healthy connection free of war and other conflict. In order to achieve this, several key questions still remain to be answered. What will be the status of Jerusalem? Will Palestinians get the right of return? What security arrangements can be made with the cooperation of both sides, and how will they ensure the safety of the marginalized in the region? There are two sides to every story and in-depth discussion is needed for these difficult questions to be answered.

Possible Solutions:

On the Israeli side, a balance will have to be struck between maintaining the country's identity as a Jewish state and its guarantees to respect the rights of its minorities in a pluralistic setting. It must also deal with its increasingly radical religious population, who have been tired of decades of failed peace agreements and see a solution in fervent nationalism. On the Palestinian side, a new generation of free and independent minds must learn to live with the fact that their former oppressors are here to stay. It also needs to reconcile its leadership disputes between Hamas and Fatah and establish a lasting democratic regime. Both sides must learn the meaning of coexistence or any peace will be a cold one.

Committee Structure

Camp David II is a specialized agency committee. While it was not created by the United Nations, it and any outcomes created by the committee are incorporated via Articles 57 and 63 of the United Nations Charter. As such, delegates are expected to follow the General Rules of Procedure of the United Nations during the entirety of the conference. It is critical to note this is NOT a crisis committee, and therefore there are no individual directives nor will there be frequent updates from the dais as to the impact of discussions happening with committee or events happening outside of Camp David.

However, due to the special nature of Camp David II, some exceptions are being incorporated. They are as follows:

1. Delegates can expect an occasional update from the dais regarding the current status in the area and the outcome of any resolutions based by the committee.

2. Delegates can work with other individuals to pass joint directives in order to further peace talks or deescalate the current situation. Please note these should be used seldomly and only for the purpose of moving the committee forward.

a. For example, a directive to “launch missiles at the West Bank in response to a threat by the Palestine President made during committee” will not be permitted.

b. A directive which would be permissible, for example, may state that the United States wishes to “relocate the American Embassy in Israel back to Tel Aviv”. If this was written and signed by American leaders, this directive would be accepted and incorporated into the committee.

Delegates are expected to act within the powers held by the role, including the coordination with other delegates from their nation. Actions and commitments deemed to be outside the purview of a character will be deemed void by the dais and will have no impact on the committee. Delegates are expected to thoroughly research their role to determine these powers and are encouraged to ask the dais for clarification prior to taking any actions that may fall outside of their purview.

Given the sensitive nature of the topic being discussed, any usage of a derogatory, slang, or otherwise non-diplomatic term to refer to the countries and people involved is strictly prohibited, even if a delegate believes it would be “in character” for them. Any usage of such terms will result in the delegate immediately being removed from the committee and the issue will be brought to the Secretary General’s for further discussion and disciplinary action.

Characters

Character	Description
Joseph R. Biden - President of the United States	Biden is the current president of the United States, having previously served as Vice-President under former President Obama, and is part of the Democratic Party of the United States.
Kamala Harris - Vice President of the United States	Harris is the current vice-president of the United States, previously serving as Attorney General of California and a U.S. Senator for California.
Antony Blinken - Secretary of State for the United States	Blinken, as Secretary of State, is responsible for the overseeing of the foreign relations of the United States. He previously served as Deputy National Security Advisor and Deputy Secretary of State under the Obama administration, and was involved in previous Israel-Palestine peace talks.
Lloyd Austin - Secretary of Defence for the United States	Austin is a retired four-star Army general and a veteran of both the Afghan and Iraq wars. As Secretary of Defence, he has control and authority over the entire United States military, second in command only to President Biden.
Linda Thomas-Greenfield - United States Ambassador to the United Nations	Thomas-Greenfield has served numerous roles representing the United States on the international stage. As the United Nations Ambassador, she represents and furthers American interests at all UN meetings
Donald Trump - Former United States President, Advisor for the United States	President of the United States from 2017 to 2021. Trump has been invited to Camp David in an advisor capacity to provide guidance on policies implemented during his time as U.S. President and because of amicable relationship with the Israeli leaders.
Benjamin Netanyahu - Prime Minister of Israel	Netanyahu has served as Prime Minister of Israel since 2009, having previously served from 1996 to 1999. He was indicted on charges of breach of trust, bribery, and fraud in 2019 and was forced to relinquish all other ministry posts other than his position as Prime Minister.
Benny Gantz - Alternate Prime Minister and Minister of Defence of Israel	Gantz has served as Minister of Defence and Alternate Prime Minister of Israel since May of 2020. He is responsible for defending Israel from external and internal threats and oversees the Israeli security forces.
Gabi Ashenazi - Minister of Foreign Affairs for Israel	Ashenazi has served as Minister of Foreign Affairs since May 2020. His role is to implement the foreign policy of Israel and to promote cultural, economic, and scientific relations with other countries.
Gilad Erdan - Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations	Erdan also came into his role in the May of 2020 and serves as the Israel representative to the United Nations. His goal is to further the ambitions and goals of the Israeli people within the outcomes of the United Nations. He is also the Israeli ambassador to the United States

Riyad al-Maliki - Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Palestinian National Authority	al-Maliki is responsible for the foreign affairs of Palestine and the establishment of relations with Palestine with foreign nations including the further recognition of Palestine as a country within the international sphere.
Riyad Mansour - Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations	Mansour has served as Permanent Observer to the United Nations since 2005 and presents Palestine's views during discussions. His abilities are limited when compared to his ambassador counterparts also in attendance due to Palestine's observer-nation status.
Omar Shakir - Israel and Palestine Director, Human Rights Watch	Human Rights Watch is an NGO with investigates and reports on human rights abuses happening around the world. Shakir investigates and reports on human rights abuses in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza.
Sir Christopher Greenwood - Master of Magdalene College and former Judge at the International Court of Justice	Greenwood served as Judge at the International Court of Justice from 2009 to 2018. He is well known for appearing as counsel before the International Court of Justice and the European Court of Human Rights. He delivered the advisory opinion to the British Government on the legality of using force in Iraq in 2002.
Mahmoud Abbas - President of the State of Palestine and Commander-in-Chief of the Palestinian Security Services	Abbas is the head of state for Palestine and the leader of their security forces. He has held the office for over fifteen years. Abbas is also the chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which was previously designated a terrorist organization by the United States (designation revoked in 1991).
Mohammad Shtayyeh - Prime Minister of the State of Palestine	Shtayyeh manages the day-to-day activities of the Palestinian government and he serves directly under Abbas. His appointment is made independently by the president and he is not an elected official. He is a published professor in economics, politics, and history.
Representative - International Committee of the Red Cross	The International Committee of the Red Cross is a humanitarian organization focused on helping the victims of war and other violent situations. They operate world-wide and operate as a neutral organization. They also aim to promote respect for international humanitarian law and its implementation in national law.

Closing Remarks

Welcome again to WESMUN 2021 and Camp David II. We are looking forward to hearing your ideas and the in-depth discussion of the issue and possible resolutions. While delegates are encouraged to fully research their roles, the below resources provide an excellent starting point for background on the issues being discussed:

BBC News, "What Makes Jerusalem so Holy?", 21 October 2013 online:
<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-26934435>

Global Conflict Tracker, "Israeli-Palestinian Conflict" online: <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/israeli-palestinian-conflict>

United Nations General Assembly Resolution 181(11), "Future Government of Palestine" online:
<https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/0/7F0AF2BD897689B785256C330061D253>

For international law on self-determination, please see:

- United Nations Charter ss 1(2) and 55
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966)
- Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (1993)
- African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights (1986)

Any comments, questions, or concerns can be directed to the following individuals:

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Warm regards,

Hannah Barltrop and Timothy Ma

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- [10] https://www.aljazeera.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/34008a8c7d3446789674bc79f59d9477_18.jpeg
- [11] <https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/0/7F0AF2BD897689B785256C330061D253>
- [12] <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/israeli-palestinian-conflict>
- [13] <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/israeli-palestinian-conflict>
- [14] <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/israeli-palestinian-conflict>
- [15] <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/israeli-palestinian-conflict>
- [16] <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/israeli-palestinian-conflict>
- [17] <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/israeli-palestinian-conflict>
- [18] <https://www.icj-cij.org/en/case/131>
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