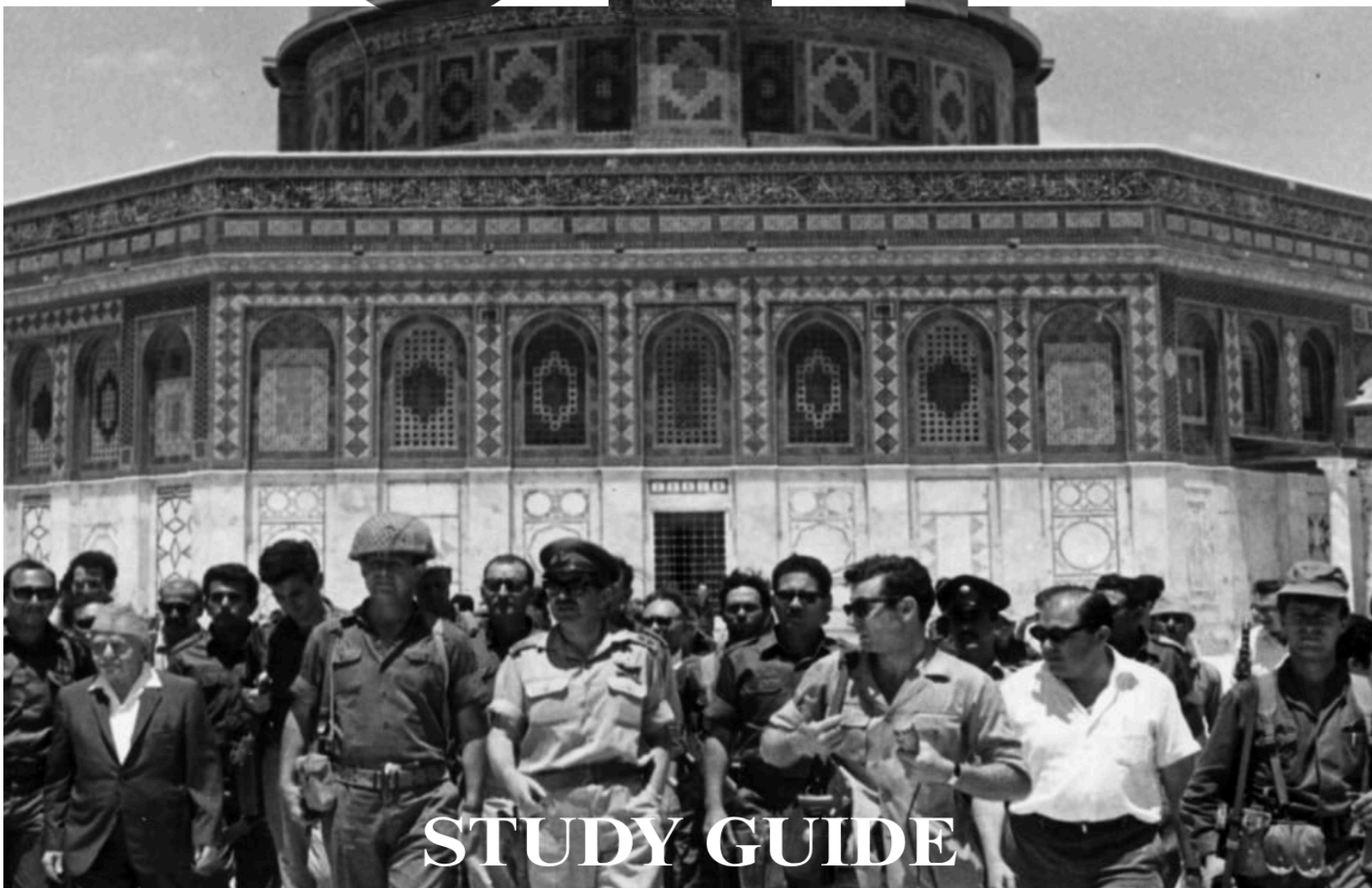# C - 24

AGENDA:

Deliberating the Prospects of Palestinian Statehood in the Aftermath of the 1967 Arab-Israeli War

C 24

STUDY GUIDE

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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Dear delegates,

We are delighted to welcome you all to the tenth iteration of the Shishukunj Model United Nations 2025. This year, the Special Committee on Decolonization shall be focusing on the agenda - **'Deliberating the Prospects of Palestinian Statehood in the Aftermath of the 1967 Arab-Israeli War**. The committee aims to discuss the rightfulness of Palestinian statehood by delving into the very origins of the issue, an issue that has sparked continental collapse almost 6 decades later in 2025.

Throughout the course of these 3 days, we shall first be discussing the very 'possibility' of a sovereign Palestine by analyzing the war crimes committed during the Six-Day war and overlooked foreign influences. Since the committee is expected to be debating on the opposite sides of the same coin, lobbying shall play a major role in how the committee unfolds. The Executive Board anticipates some sort of negotiations and compromises on both the Israeli and the Arab front, the failure of which may continue to deny the innocent lives of Palestine their right to livelihood for centuries to come. Post this, the committee shall assess foreign interventions in the region and potentially establish norms to limit them. Lastly, the committee shall look to present implementable measures to deal with the complexities of the creation of a new nation. This should be done keeping in mind the disaster the sudden independence of Israel had created, which should not be replicated in a region so volatile to conflicts. The overall objective of the committee is NOT to portray one side as the victor, but rather to recognize the shared, inseparable values that humanity truly possesses. It should be a merger of the legalities of the United Nations and the sensitivities of ethnic disparities.

While it can be challenging to research within a historic timeline, delegates must ensure that their statements and actions align with the history and foreign policy of their portfolio. Original thinking without retrospective bias from the present is encouraged, and no sort of plagiarism will be tolerated.

The guide is only a point of inception for your research. Delegates are urged not to limit their preparation to the contents of the guide, and explore the underlying reasons and national interests for the larger conflict. Looking forward to meeting you all in August!

Lux et Veritas
Feel free to reach out to us with any questions you may have.
Aryan Sharma, Chairperson
Kritika Khandelwal, Vice Chairperson
Anaya Dhariwal, Rapporteur

INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE

The Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, also known as the Special Committee on Decolonization, or C-24, was established in 1961. It serves as a subsidiary organ to the General Assembly and is dedicated exclusively to the issue of decolonization. It was established under GA resolution 1654 (XVI) of November 27, 1961.

The C-24 is mandated to:
(i) examine political, economic and other developments in Non-Self-Governing Territories

(ii) examine the application of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

(iii) make suggestions and recommendations on the progress and extent of the implementation of the Declaration to the General Assembly

In essence, the C-24 is responsible for reviewing the progress of the Declaration and providing recommendations on transitional issues as territories realise self-governance. Since 1963, it has been responsible for reviewing the yearly updates from administering Powers required under Article 73 (e) and reporting on them to the General Assembly Fourth Committee.

While the C-24 presently comprises 29 members, its simulation in Shishukunj MUN 2025 will be more expansive, open to over 40 portfolios across the globe. The committee is set in the past, deliberating over the key issue of granting the Palestinians a statehood.

The freeze date for the committee stands as June 12, 1967, which is one day post the final ceasefire in the 6-day Arab-Israeli War. A freeze date serves as a historical cut-point for all information, events and diplomatic positions. Nothing beyond 12 June 1967 shall be taken into consideration. Delegates must act with the mindset, knowledge, and context of that moment in time to maintain historical realism and avoid retroactive bias from future developments.

In hindsight, the Special Committee on Decolonisation can be considered a specialised precursor to SPECPOL, which was established in its present state 36 years post the freeze date, in 1993. It is important to note that in the timeline of the committee, the C-24 remains a suggestive body. However, being the only committee specialised for discussing decolonisation at the time, its resolutions will have a major impact on the decisions of the General Assembly, and global geopolitics.

https://www.un.org/dppa/decolonization/en/c24/about
https://www.un.org/dppa/decolonization/en

TIMELINE

November 2, 1917 – Britain issues the Balfour Declaration

1920 – League of Nations grants Britain the Palestine Mandate (San Remo Conference)

1936–1939 – Arab Revolt in Palestine

November 29, 1947 – UN adopts Partition Plan (Resolution 181)

May 14, 1948 – Israel declares independence

May 15, 1948 – First Arab-Israeli War begins

February 24 – July 20, 1949 – Armistice Agreements signed by Israel with Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria

October 29, 1956 – Suez Crisis begins

May 28, 1964 – Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) is founded

April 7, 1967: Syrian artillery strikes Israeli positions in the Golan Heights; Israel retaliates with airstrikes.

May 16, 1967: Egypt begins deploying forces into Sinai.

May 18, 1967: Egypt expels UNEF from Sinai.

May 22-23, 1967: Egypt closes the Strait of Tiran to Israeli shipping.

June 5–10, 1967 – Six-Day War; Israel captures Gaza, West Bank, East Jerusalem, Sinai, and Golan Heights

June 12, 1967 – Freeze date of the C-24

KEY TERMS

1. **Zionism**: a political movement that previously aimed to create a separate country for the Jews, and that now supports the state of Israel.

2. **Antisemitism**: a feeling of hatred, prejudice, or discrimination against Jewish people.

3. **Ethnicity**: a group of people who share a common culture, often associated with their national origin.

4. **Arab League**: a regional organization of Arab states in the Middle East and parts of Africa, formed in Cairo on March 22, 1945. Its founding members are Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Transjordan, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen.

5. **Paramilitary**: organizations that aren't official military forces, but are in a similar organisation, with a hierarchical structure. They usually use violence and force to achieve their goals, and can be both state or non-state actors..

6. **Armistice Agreement**: a formal agreement of opposing parties to stop fighting. It is not necessarily the end of a war, as it may constitute only a cessation of hostilities while an attempt is made to negotiate a lasting peace.

7. **Allied Powers**: coalition of countries (Great Britain, The Soviet Union, The United States of America, and France) that opposed the Axis powers (The Central powers in WWI) during the World Wars.

8. **Ottoman Empire**: Part of the Central powers during World War I, the Ottoman Empire was a vast and influential state that dominated much of Southeastern Europe, West Asia, and North Africa from the 14th to the early 20th centuries. It reached its peak in the 17th century, but eventually declined and was dissolved in 1922 after its defeat in World War I. The countries part of this empire were then either put in control of the major Allied powers (Britain and France) or were given independent status.

9. **Palestinian National Council**: It is the legislative authority within the PLO, and is responsible for formulating the organisation's policies. It acts as a parliament that represents all Palestinians, except for Palestinian citizens of Israel.

INTRODUCTION TO THE AGENDA

Geographical Context

As a direct consequence of the Six-Day War from June 5-12, 1967, the Middle-East has witnessed one of the most drastic shifts in its territorial landscape.

The West Bank had all throughout been under Jordanian control and is home to a major Palestinian population. It is situated to the west of the Jordan River.

The Gaza Strip, a long coastal territory bordering Egypt and the Mediterranean Sea had historically been under Egyptian control. Owing to the inherent unity between the Palestinians and the Arabs, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip had traditionally been seen as the home of the Palestinians, alongside the territories under present-day Israel.

To the northeast lies the Golan Heights, a strategically elevated region along the Israeli-Syrian border. Towards the south is situated the Sinai Peninsula, a vast desert territory which connects Africa and Asia. It has also traditionally been controlled by Egypt. At its southern tip is situated the Strait of Tiran, which is a narrow yet important maritime passage granting access to the Red Sea.

In the heart of Israel lies Jerusalem, a holy city of profound religious significance. Formerly, it had been divided into East and West Jerusalem.

Following the 1967 war, all of these territories now lie under Israeli control. This is the central geographical basis for international deliberation on occupation, sovereignty, and the right to self-determination in the Palestinian context.

Mandate System under the League of Nations

The mandate system was established by the League of Nations post World War I. It was an authorization granted to a member nation to govern former colonies of the defeated Central Powers (Ottoman Empire and Germany). This territory was called a mandated territory, or mandate. The colonies, not deemed suited to be self-governed, were distributed among the victorious Allied powers under the authority of Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations. During World War I, the allied powers made decisions for Palestine with little regard for its inhabitants.

March 1920: Palestinian delegates at Syrian Congress rejected the Balfour Declaration and elected King Faisal I as king of United Syria, showing the first Arab attempt at self-determination.

April 1920: A peace conference was held in San Remo, Italy which resulted in the Allied powers dividing the former Ottoman territories.

April 25, 1920: The British were granted the Mandate for Palestine. Hence, European control was finally established, bypassing Arab aspirations.

July 1920: French forces removed Faisal I from the Syrian throne, leading to the end of the Arab-led united Syrian state.

July 24, 1922: The League of Nations approved the British Mandate. The Northern region (Syria/Lebanon) was given to France and the Southern region (Palestine) to Britain; Palestinians refer to 1920 as "ām al-nakbah" (the year of catastrophe).

The British Mandate for Palestine

A "dual mandate" was given to the British, on behalf of Palestine's inhabitants on the one hand, and on behalf of the 'international society' on the other. The preamble and the second article of the Mandate for Palestine incorporated The Balfour Declaration, and Britain thus also had a 'dual obligation' towards both Arabs and Jews. Palestine was a distinct political entity for the first time in centuries. This created challenges for Palestinian Arabs and Zionists alike.

The communities soon realised that the future of the region would be determined by the size of the population and ownership of land. The main issues in Palestine during the British Mandate period revolved around Jewish immigration and land purchases. The Jewish population aimed to increase both, while the Arab population tried to halt them. This resulted in conflicts which often escalated into violence, and the British were forced to take action. Despite the challenges, British rule in Palestine was generally marked by conscientious and efficient governance. The mandate government developed administrative institutions, municipal services, public works, and transport. Though the government tediously worked for the development of the area, it was hampered due to continuous violent resistance movements by both the ethnic groups.

1948 Arab-Israeli War

Britain had announced that they would be ending their Mandate of Palestine on May 15, 1948. Eight hours earlier to this, David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first prime minister, declared Israeli independence in Tel Aviv. As an immediate consequence of this groundbreaking declaration, the Arab forces - Egypt, Transjordan (Jordan), Syria, Lebanon and Iraq invaded and attacked Jewish paramilitary forces, commencing the Israeli War of Independence.

Though Israeli paramilitary forces lacked manpower, they managed to control the Arab forces, especially around Jerusalem, and opened new supply routes. Transjordan's Arab regiment captured the Jewish Quarter of the Old City on May 28. In the south, Egypt surrounded the Negev, a region allocated to Israel by the UN.

During the first truce (June 11–July 8 1948), Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion unified Jewish forces under the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). Through the next few days, Israel secured new arms from Czechoslovakia, and launched counter-offensives after the truce. They managed to capture major towns including Lod, Ramla, and Nazareth. A second truce began on July 18 and lasted for three months, though occasional violations kept taking place.

In October, Israel launched Operations Yoav and Hiram, which helped them regain the Negev and Galilee. A final campaign, Operation Horev, expelled Egyptian forces from the south. A ceasefire took effect on January 7, 1949. By the war's end, Israel had secured territory much beyond those allocated under the UN Partition Plan.

Reasons for Israel's Victory:

1. The able leadership of David Ben-Gurion helped Israel unify Jewish paramilitary forces under the Israel Defense Forces (IDF).
2. The outcome of the war would influence the very existence of an independent Jewish state in the Middle-East. This translated into unprecedented motivation and resilience among the soldiers and civilians alike.
3. It is also probable that Israel had diplomatically secured arms through the Allied Powers during WWII, strengthening its artillery.

   The armistice agreements signed during the war essentially established de facto borders for Israel and delineated the West Bank under Jordanian control, and the Gaza Strip under Egyptian control.

NAKBA AND CREATION OF ISRAEL

Nakba:

The Nakba directly translates to 'catastrophe' in Arabic, and is the forced displacement of more than 700,000 Palestinians in the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, after the British Mandate in Palestine ended. Throughout the 1948 war, over 400 Palestinian villages and cities were emptied out or destroyed and hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were driven out from their homes. The resulting refugee crisis is still unresolved as of the freeze date of the committee. The Palestinian refugees were located mainly in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank (under Jordanian administration), and the Gaza Strip (under Egyptian administration). Israel enacted legislation, including the Absentees' Property Law (1950), which excluded Palestinian refugees from returning to their homes or retrieving property.

Creation of Israel and Regional Reactions:

For Jewish people, particularly in light of the Holocaust, the founding of Israel represented a historic and existential victory that gave Jews their homeland and protection across the world. Conversely, for Palestinians, it was a loss of ancient homeland, statelessness, and dispossession with a profound perception of injustice implanted that still conditions political identity and claims. The Arab League and the surrounding Arab states condemned the formation of Israel and supported the Palestinian cause. But no independent Palestinian state was established after the 1948 war. The West Bank, including East Jerusalem, was annexed by Jordan, and the Gaza Strip was put under Egyptian rule, and Palestinians were left without sovereignty and under foreign occupation.

During the years since the 1948 war, Palestinians were still largely stateless and politically divided. The Arab states, although harboring refugees and making symbolic support for Palestinian freedom, frequently followed their own national agendas. Palestinian resistance forces called the fedayeen started carrying out raids into Israeli-occupied territory from surrounding countries, with brutal Israeli military reactions and regional instability as consequences. The Arab League created the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1964 as a unity organization to express Palestinian aspirations and to coordinate activity for the liberation of Palestine. The PLO's charter at the time focused on an armed struggle to recover historic Palestine. Simultaneously, Israel promoted mass immigration of Jews from Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa. Immigrants were accorded full citizenship rights and assimilated into the new state, compared to Palestinian refugees who were left displaced and disfranchised.

CAUSES OF DISPUTE

Spark of Anti Semitism

Throughout the mid 20th century, Antisemitism spread across Europe under Adolf Hitler's Nazi regime, leading to the Holocaust, in which around six million Jews were killed. After World War II, many Jewish survivors lacked refuge and owing to the historic significance of Jerusalem as the Israeli homeland, Palestine emerged as a natural region for their migration.

This surge in Jewish immigration caused fear and anger among many Palestinians, who were worried about losing their land and political rights. Tensions grew, and violence began even before 1948. Some Arab leaders started blaming all Jews, not just Zionist groups, and antisemitic messages spread through speeches, newspapers, and schools.

A surge in Jewish immigration naturally sparked fear and anger among the Palestinians, who feared losing their land and political rights. As tensions grew, words turned into violence much before 1948. Antisemitic messages, similar to those under the Nazi regime spread like wildfire, worsening the already sensitive communal intolerance in the Middle-East.

Following the 1948 war, Jews in many Arab countries faced discrimination, violence, and even expulsion. Antisemitic tendencies continued to grow, especially after the 1967 war, making the situation more tense. For Israeli Jews, especially Holocaust survivors, the memory of persecution led to a strong belief in defending their state. On both sides, deep fears and past trauma made it hard to trust or compromise.

Although antisemitism is not the main cause of the conflict over Palestinian statehood, it has worsened the divide. It has made peace more difficult by increasing fear and reducing the chances of mutual understanding.

Closure of the Strait of Tiran

The 1956 Suez Crisis had left Israel in possession of the Sinai Peninsula, though it was pressured in 1957 to withdraw from the region. A United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) was stationed there to protect Israel's right of passage through the Straits of Tiran (a narrow waterway connecting the Gulf of Aqaba with the Red Sea, located between the Sinai Peninsula and the Arabian Peninsula) and to prevent Sinai from being remilitarized. Resultantly, the port of Eilat became Israel's second busiest seaport and its main source of oil imported from Iran. The Strait is strategically important because it provides access to the Israeli port of Eilat and the Jordanian port of Aqaba. It is vital to Israel not only for oil imports and trade with Asia and East Africa, but also essential for military security in the region.

On the other hand, Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser had sensed humility after the 1956 defeat. In early May 1967, misinformation was being spread by the Soviet Union regarding

Israeli attacks. Fearing these, Nasser, who was also compelled to uphold the mutual defence pact he had signed with Syria, began to close the Straits. On 23 May 1967, Egypt announced the closure of the Straits of Tiran, warning Israeli shipping that it would be fired upon if it attempted to break the blockade. The following day, it was announced that the Straits had been mined.

Countries such as the United States opposed the action, stating that the Gulf of Aqaba "comprehends", that is, includes or embraces international waters and that there is a right of free and innocent passage through the Strait of Tiran and in the Gulf of Aqaba. They believed that closing the Straits would violate the Armistice Agreement or other international obligations.

On the other hand, Egypt claimed this as an affirmation of its rights and the sovereignty of the Gulf of Aqaba. They believed that the straits are not international waters, they're the territorial waters of Egypt. The relevant treaty that would otherwise establish the right was not signed onto by Egypt (in part because of this very issue). They believed that Israel's claim to have a port on the Gulf was considered invalid, as Israel was alleged to have occupied several miles of coastline on the Gulfline, in violation of Security Council resolutions of 1948 and the Egyptian–Israel General Armistice Agreement. To some, it was an act against Israel's 'policy' of bragging and arrogance.

The closure of the Strait of Tiran forced Israel's hand, making war inevitable. As diplomatic efforts failed, and the economic pressure mounted, Israel deemed the blockade an existential threat. This final provocation prompted Israel's decision to launch the preemptive strike that began the Six-Day War.
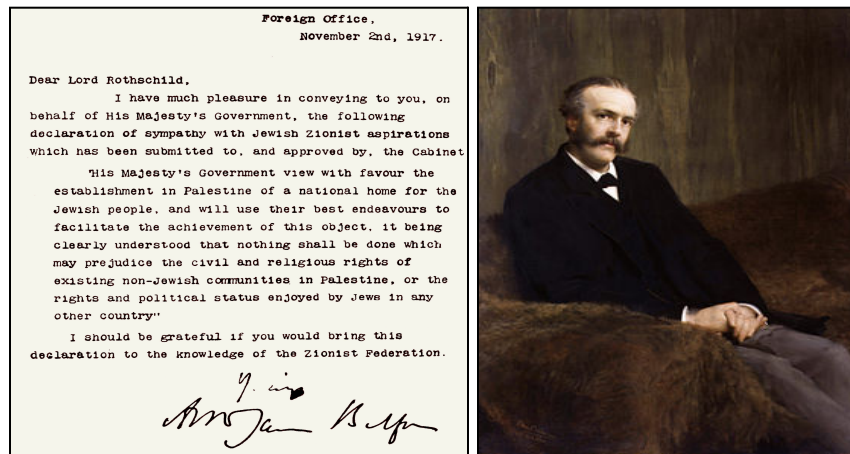
PAST DECLARATIONS

Balfour Declaration

In the concluding years of WWI, the United Kingdom issued a statement, called the 'Balfour Declaration'. This mere 67-word declaration is predominantly considered the impetus for the much larger Middle-Eastern conflict. The statement came in the form of a letter from Britain's then-foreign secretary, Arthur Balfour, addressed to Lionel Walter Rothschild, a figurehead of the British Jewish community on November 2, 1917. The declaration proclaimed British support for the establishment of a Jewish "national home" in Palestine – a region where Jews constituted less than 10 percent of the population at the time. Though the Balfour Declaration included the caveat that "nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine", the British mandate was structured in a way that favoured Jewish self-governance, at the expense of the Palestinian Arabs.

The declaration is widely criticised for the fact that a European power (Britain) regarded a non-European territory (Palestine), without consulting the native Arab majority, who made up 90% of the population. Moreover it conflicted with Britain's prior wartime commitments:

1. The 1915 Hussein-McMahon Correspondence promised the Arabs independence from the Ottoman Empire,
2. The 1916 Sykes-Picot Agreement sought to divide Palestine between Britain and France.

Now, the Balfour Declaration presented a third promise - a Jewish national home in Palestine under British administration. The document was so meticulously formulated that the term 'national home' had never been used in major international documents earlier. This 'word-play' can be seen as a deliberate attempt to leave the interpretation of the statement open to contradictions. The statement was predominantly vague in its declaration and implementation, yet such a statement by a major global power had the potential to shift geopolitical tensions drastically.
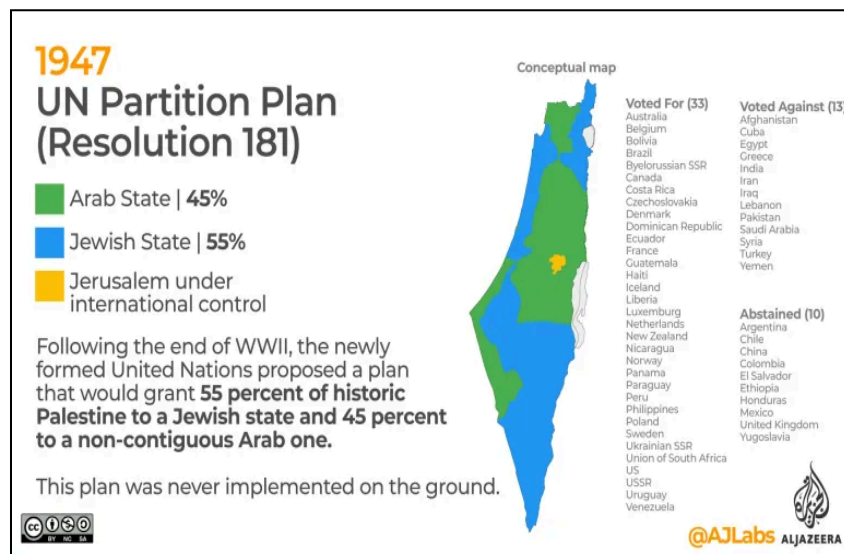
UN RESOLUTION 181

The United Nations Partition Plan (Resolution 181), which was passed in November 1947, suggested dividing Palestine into two independent Jewish and Arab states, with Jerusalem placed under international control. Although Jewish leaders accepted the plan, it was turned down by Arab states and Palestinian leadership, who believed that it disregarded the rights of the Arab majority within the land. The execution of the plan resulted in mounting violence between Arab and Jewish communities and the break-out of full-scale war following the declaration of the State of Israel on 14 May 1948.

Resolution 181 is still up for dispute as of 1967. While some contend it was the first genuine international attempt to establish a Palestinian state, others claim it was doomed from the start because it disregarded the desires of Palestine's Arab majority.

Under the Partition Plan, about 55 percent of the land was to be given for Jewish settlements while the Arabs were to be granted 45 percent of the land. Jerusalem was to be declared a separate internationalised territory.

UN GA RESOLUTION 273

The UNGA Resolution 273, passed in 1949, allowed Israel to join the United Nations. But this was only allowed if Israel followed two promises: to accept the plan to divide the land (Resolution 181) and to let Palestinian refugees return home or pay them for their losses (Resolution 194). However, in 1967, many Palestinian refugees have still not returned, and most of them have not been provided the reparations they were entitled to.

This was yet under strategic tactic by Israel to secure global recognition under the UN, while keeping the promises to the Palestinians unfulfilled.

EVENTS LEADING TO THE 1967 WAR

Palestine Liberation Organization:

1964 saw the creation of what largely became the face of the Palestinians, alongside the Arabs - the Palestine Liberation Organization. It was established in the first meeting of the Palestinian National Council and conceived at an Arab League Conference in Cairo, Egypt. It acted as the sole Palestinian spokesperson for the Palestinian right to self-determination and return of refugees created from the 1948 conflict. Unlike the Palestinian National Council, which acted as the supreme executive parliament of the Palestinians, the PLO sought to achieve its ambitions by endorsing an armed struggle. Ahmed Shuqeiri assumed the position of its first chairman on May 28, 1964. The PLO gained prominence post the 1967 war, where it led the guerrilla warfare against Israel. However, this led to instabilities in the region, attracting negative international attention to the Arab nations. There was also the fear of Israeli retaliation due to guerrilla raids, which is why Arab states often arrested PLO activists, and sought to redirect the organization into diplomatic channels.

Suez Crisis

The Suez Canal is a waterway in Egypt that connects the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea, and this facilitates the transport of ships between Europe and Asia without going around Africa. British and French companies ran the canal, but then Egypt's President Nasser surprised almost all by taking control of the canal, nationalising it, and ending British and French dominance.

Nationalising the Suez Canal meant Egypt taking away full control of the canal from French and British companies who had owned and operated it for many years. Now the Egyptian government took fees from ships passing through, made a profit and managed the canal instead of the foreign companies. This was a tactical master plan by Egypt with a dual purpose.

1. To use the money earned from the canal tolls from Egypt's projects, like building the Aswan High Dam

2. To limit the influence of France and Britain in the region

Tensions grew between Egypt and Israel. Egypt closed the Straits of Tiran to block Israel's access to the Red Sea and supported raids against Israeli territory. Israel invaded Egypt's Sinai Peninsula in late October 1956. Britain and France gave a final warning, but when Egypt refused to withdraw, they launched their military attacks, seizing parts of the canal. The three countries were forced to withdraw due to pressure from the USSR and the United States, as heightened tensions during the Cold War escalated. As a result, it ended with Egypt having control over the Suez Canal.

Expulsion of the UNEF:

Following the false report given by the Soviet Union, on May 14, the Egyptian President mobilised his army, and, three days later, he asked the United Nations Secretary General to remove the United Nations Emergency Forces that had been stationed on the Sinai Peninsula since the end of the Suez Canal Crisis of 1956. The Secretary General agreed to a full withdrawal.

The timing of this withdrawal was directly linked to escalating tensions between Israel and Syria along their northern border. Egypt had recently signed a mutual defence pact with Syria (November 1966), and Egyptian intelligence had received false reports from Soviet sources. This was the signal for the launching of a major worldwide campaign, led by America, Britain and Canada, opposing the withdrawal of the Emergency Force from Egypt. Egypt believed that these attempts were to convert the United Nations Emergency Force into a force serving neo-imperialism.

The withdrawal of UNEF had immediate and profound negative consequences:, which led to a lot of criticism of UN Secretary General U Thant for his immature decision, although he was praised by the Egyptian President for his impartial stance.
The speed and manner of the UNEF's removal created a power vacuum that accelerated the slide toward war. Without neutral observers in place, on June 5, Israel pre-emptively struck against Egypt and the June 1967 Six-Day War began.

Guerilla Warfare backed by Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan

Israel had started suffering attacks before the 1967 arab Arab-Israeli War from Palestinian fighter groups like Fatah and the PLO. They attacked from arab countries like Syria, Lebanon and Jordan. They used bombs and ambushes to target both Israeli soldiers and civilians.
Syria took a very aggressive approach by providing weapons as well as training to the guerrilla fighters. It supported and allowed them to attack from its land. Although Jordan and Lebanon tried to stop Syria, these cross-border attacks continued to happen. Many of these raids came from the West Bank, controlled by Jordan at that time. Israel was against the guerrilla raids and retaliated, which increased tensions and killed civilians on both sides.
This retaliation served to heighten the tensions between them. To oppose Israel's existence and support Palestine, Arab countries supported the guerrilla campaign. However, this also compelled them to be active in war intensification, which led to the full-fledged conflict in 1967.

DISSEMINATION OF MISINFORMATION

The 1956 war ended with Israel required by the US to withdraw from the Sinai, and that meant that in 1967, it was focused on territorial gains, and the political leverage they might provide. On the Palestinian side, there was an evident determination to forge more of a united front to defeat Israel, as tensions escalated over Palestinian guerrilla activity. Another critical factor in the background was the Soviet Union seeking to strengthen its position in the Middle East.
During the early months of 1967, it was natural for Egypt and the Soviet Union to be in close consultation. Since 1955, Egypt had relied on Soviet arms and training while adopting many of its war doctrines. The Soviet Union also partnered with Egypt on industrialization projects, though their relationship faced tensions over some issues. The Soviet influence in the middle is taken as a probable cause for the start of the war. It was only the Soviet Union that set events in motion when, on 13 May 1967, it informed Egypt that Israel had massed 10-12 brigades on the Syrian border and was preparing for an imminent invasion. Under an Egyptian-Syrian defence treaty signed in 1955, the two countries were obliged to protect one another in the case of an attack on either, owing to which the Egyptian President decided to move troops into Sinai. This was combined with two provocative steps, which included a demand that the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) withdraw from the Sinai and Gaza Strip and the closure of the Strait of Tiran.

Another instance of the spread of misinformation comes in the early hours of the Six Day War itself. Egyptian state media, primarily Radio Cairo broadcasted the news of a sweeping victory against Israel's Operation Focus, including the downing of several aircrafts. The news also claimed that Tel Aviv was under siege and Arab forces were overwhelming Israel. These reports soon turned out to be false because Israel's Operation Focus had utterly decimated the Egyptian forces to the foreground. While the misinformation is speculated to have been an attempt to curb public distress and improve regional solidarity against the Jewish cause, the plan backfired terribly.
Throughout the straining tensions, Israel had warned Jordan that - *"If you do not attack us, we will not fight you."* However, once the news of this supposed 'victory' reached King Hussein (the King of Jordan), he felt pressure to join the fight to avoid being left out of a 'historic Arab victory', and to secure a role in any post war regional settlement. Within days, Israel counterattacked and swiftly captured East Jerusalem and the entire West Bank, territories previously under Jordanian control.
This particular instance raises two major questions on the Arab front:
1. Was Jordan so blinded by its trust for a fellow Arab nation that it entered the war without pausing to question the validity of the information?
2. Did Egypt deliberately spread misinformation to mask its own early struggles and prevent the collapse of Arab morale before the war even truly began?

THE SIX DAY WAR

Operation Focus By Israel

The Six Day War formally began with Israel launching a surprise attack called Operation Focus on the morning of June 5, 1967. This attack is considered one of the most successful surprise attacks in history and it also gave Israel a huge military advantage.

With Syrian artillery threatening Israeli villages from the Golan Heights and Egyptian troops mobilizing in the Sinai, Israeli intelligence had concluded that Arab states were getting ready for war. Israel chose to launch the initial attack with the goal of destroying Arab air forces before they could take off. Israel sent nearly all of its air force (excluding just a few planes left for defense) to strike Egyptian air bases. Within a few hours, Israel destroyed around 90% of Egypt's air force while it was still on the ground. Egypt's air force was essentially grounded after Israel destroyed more than 300 Egyptian aircraft in less than four hours.

Israeli aircraft later that day achieved total air superiority by hitting airfields in Syria, Iraq, and Jordan. The war ended with Israel in control of the Gaza Strip, the Sinai Peninsula, the West Bank, and Jerusalem.

This single operation changed the outcome of the war, making it nearly impossible for the Arab states to respond effectively. It is still studied in military academies as a textbook example of a successful preemptive strike.

Casualties of the War

On the evening of the first day of war, half of the Arab aviation was destroyed. On the evening of the sixth day, the Egyptian, Syrian and Jordanian armies were defeated, with the Jordanian Air Force completely destroyed. This was a major defeat for the Arab States, and their losses in the conflict were disastrous.

Egypt's casualties numbered more than 11,000, with 6,000 for Jordan and 1,000 for Syria, amounting to 18,000 compared to only 766 for Israel. The Arab armies also suffered crippling losses of weaponry and equipment. The lopsidedness of the defeat demoralised both the Arab public and the political elite.

There was euphoria in Israel, which had proved beyond question that it was the region's preeminent military power.

PRESENT SITUATION

On May 22, 1967, Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser, while addressing his pilots at the Bir Gafgafa air base in Sinai Peninsula, said, "The Jews are threatening war. We say to them *ahlan wa-sahlan* (you are welcome)." Little did he know that June 9, would supposedly be his 'final day' as the President of Egypt. Following the unforeseen setback Egypt had to face during the war, President Gamal Abdel Nasser announced his resignation in a televised address, taking "full responsibility" for the military failure and named Vice President Zakariya Mohieddine as his successor. Within hours, tens of thousands of Egyptians flooded Cairo's streets, chanting "Nasser! Nasser!" in spontaneous demonstrations demanding his return. The National Assembly and the Cabinet too both rejected his resignation. His resignation was ultimately not accepted, and Nasser continued as President.

Israeli Captures of Territories

Israel's stunning victory in the Six-Day War had reshaped the Middle East. Within the six days of the war, Israel had pushed Arab armies back and gained control of East Jerusalem, the West Bank, the Golan Heights, the Gaza Strip, and the Sinai Peninsula. With this new territory, Israel tripled its size practically overnight, gaining control of strategic, religious and historically important lands.

Territory	Pre-War Status	Post-War Status
Pre-1967 Israel (Galilee, Coastal Plain, Negev Desert)	Israel's sovereign territory claimed in the 1948 Arab Israel War	Remained under Israeli Control
East Jerusalem	Under Jordanian Control since 1948	Captured by Israel on the 7th of June, 1967
West Bank	Under Jordanian Control after it annexed the West bank in 1950	Captured by Israel in the first few days of the war
Gaza Strip	Administered by Egypt	Captured by Israel on the 7th of June
Sinai Peninsula	Under Egyptian Control	Captured by Israel in the first few days by the surprise air strikes, followed by armoured offensive
Golan Heights	Under Syrian Control	Captured by Israel in the last days of the war.

Before and after the Six Day War, 1967
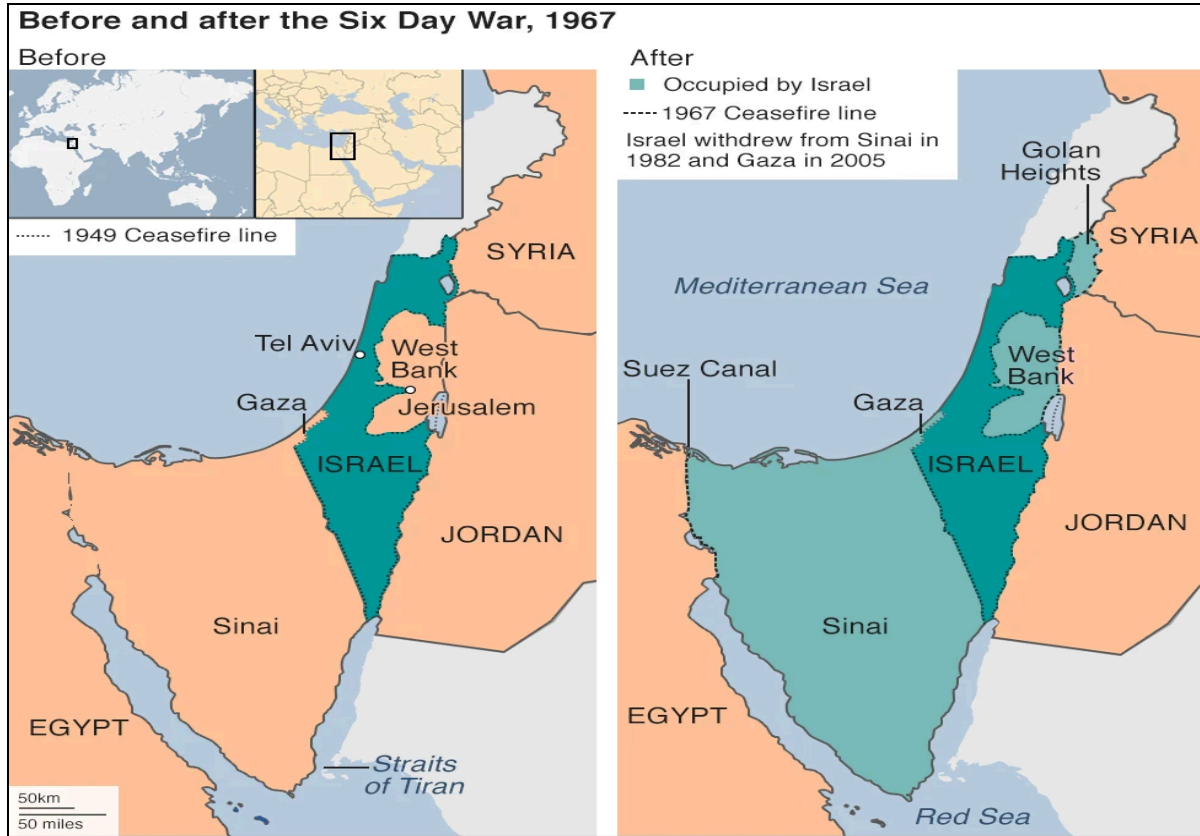
Refugees

By June 12, 1967, the Palestinian refugee crisis grew worse due to the six-day war. But this wasn't the beginning of the crisis as over 700,000 Palestinians had already become refugees during the 1948 Nakba. The 1967 Arab-Israeli War, known as the Naksa, meaning "setback", led to the displacement of some 430,000 Palestinians, half of which originated from the areas occupied in 1948 and were thus twice refugees. As in the Nakba, Israeli forces used military tactics that violated basic international rights law such as attacks on civilians and expulsion. Over 300,000 more Palestinians fled or forcefully had to leave the West Bank and Gaza Strip as Israeli forces advanced. This was the second wave of displacement and many of them were a part of the first Wave and were again uprooted.

Refugees fled to neighbouring Arab countries like Jordan, Syria and Lebanon straining their resources. Refugee camps were overflowing and increasing at the same time. There was no plan for return, remuneration or resettlement for the Palestinians, creating anger among them.

The refugee crisis became more critical than ever after 1967. It became one of the main obstacles and cost the Palestinian people their future independent state.

Therefore without resolving the refugee crisis through the plan for return, remuneration or resettlement the desired peace and significant statehood would remain out of reach.

CASE STUDIES

Egypt

A horrifying defeat in the Six-Day War for the de-facto leaders from the Arab front had raised questions on the competence of their political leadership. The Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser announced his resignation on June 9 but quickly yielded to mass demonstrations calling for him to remain in office on June 11. At present, there remains the question of whether the Egyptian President is truly willing, or rather, competent enough to lead the Arab struggle against a surging Jewish power in the Middle-East.

While the cause that Egypt strived for might be considered a 'decent' argument for their extensive policing on major geopolitical grounds - be it the Suez Crisis, the Expulsion of the UNEF Forces or the Closure of the Strait of Tiran, the ultimate failure of its actions presents a humiliating picture of the nation before the entire world.

All in all, it remains a question of whether Egypt and its people shall continue to count on the political leadership of Nasser, or whether they may adopt a defensive stance post this humiliation.

United Kingdom

A nation characterized by its colonial history has once again caused widespread disaster. The Balfour Declaration, also implicated in the British Mandate for Palestine, explicitly endorsed the establishment of a "national home for the Jewish people" while stating that "nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine." This everlasting contradiction, which attempted to accommodate the national interests of two distinct groups within a limited territory, led to the escalation of the crisis that the committee presently witnesses. The decision by the United Kingdom to hand over the responsibility of Palestine to the UN, after three decades of making false promises, appears less like a solution and more like an abandonment of a duty. Some do argue that Britain created functioning civil service systems, legal frameworks, and public institutions in Israel that continued after independence. They even developed the infrastructure of the mandated area. They also made several attempts to find peaceful solutions to the escalating conflict between the two ethnic groups.

The 1956 Suez Crisis also marked a pivotal moment in British Middle Eastern policy. Britain's collusion with France and Israel to attack Egypt after the nationalisation of the Suez Canal later led to a humiliating withdrawal due to international condemnation. This failure accelerated Britain's decline and changed its approach to the region.

In assessing Britain's part in the origins and consequences of the June 1967 War, it is useful to bear in mind a contemporary comment by a shrewd Israeli observer: "Britain's strength is not negligible, but it is greater in causing harm than in being beneficial." Arabs as well as Israelis

would have agreed. To the British, the lack of power came as a revelation, though in an unexpected way. During the crisis's initial phase, the Cabinet assumed a sufficiency of military resources and debated the possibility of another Suez expedition – this time without the mistakes of 1956. The motives for possible intervention were to prevent an Israeli preemptive attack that would have profound consequences for the Middle East, above all for Israel. A potential war may even destroy the United Nations by bringing the international organization into a conflict of cataclysmic proportions beyond its capacity to resolve. The British, in their 'agonizing' choice to intervene or not to intervene, were overtaken by events. The Arabs universally blamed them for colluding with Israelis when they hadn't. The dual theme of saving the Israelis from themselves and preserving the United Nations runs through British thought at the time.

Palestine:

Palestine, as a political entity, stands unassured. Before 1948, it was not in any case an independent state, living under the British mandate established formally in 1922, after the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. The areas covered under the Mandate were Israel, the West Bank and Gaza. Palestinian Arabs constituted the majority population in the territory, comprising roughly two-thirds of the population in the 1940s.

Following the 1947 UN Partition Plan and the 1948 War, what was envisioned as an Arab state in Palestine did not materialize. Instead, Gaza came under Egyptian administration and the West Bank under Jordanian control until 1967.

The actions of the Palestinian Arabs, both before and after 1948, remain questioned throughout the world. Some view Palestinian resistance movements as legitimate struggles against colonization and occupation, while others consider many of these actions as terrorism targeting civilians.

Meanwhile, the Arab League states rejected the legitimacy of Israel, refused negotiations, and supported continued armed resistance. They view the establishment of Israel as an injustice. After the Arabs had fought for decades for self-determination in Palestine and protested the high volume of immigration allowed by the British, the UN partition plan placed many Palestinian Arab villages under a future Jewish state.

After the 1948 War, many Arabs who considered the territories their home became a site for the rise of another ethnicity. After being promised 'no infringement of rights', the Palestinian people stood stateless. Approximately 700,000 Palestinians were displaced from their homes, and lost their properties. They were denied the right to return after the hostilities ended, and those who remained in Israel suffered strict military administration. The Palestinians living in Gaza under Egyptian control, faced restrictions on movement, while those living in the West Bank under Jordanian control had limited political autonomy.

As a consequence of the 1967 War, with almost 300,000 Palestinian Arabs under the military occupation of Israel, Israel now controls thousands of non-Jewish civilians with an uncertain tomorrow. Many of these were second-time refugees from the first (1948 Arab-Israeli war). The Palestinians live under occupation, uncertain of their rights, their future, and their very identity. In the Sinai Peninsula, tens of thousands of Egyptians and Bedouin communities find themselves displaced, as Israeli forces push to the banks of the Suez Canal. In the Golan Heights, Syrian Arabs and Druze minorities grapple with the sudden loss of homeland, sovereignty, and protection. In all of these territories, there are almost no Jewish civilians at this moment.

Israel

Against all odds, an emerging nation has defeated the face of the Arab World, not once, but twice within a span of 20 years. By the end of the 1967 war, Israel has conquered enough territory to more than triple the size of the area it controlled, from 8,000 to 26,000 square miles. The victory has enabled Israel to unify Jerusalem. Israeli forces have also captured the Sinai, Golan Heights, Gaza Strip and West Bank. The Jews have had historical ties to the ancient city of Jerusalem, which can most likely be considered the cause for the drive that inspired the Israeli soldiers. Throughout the past 20 years, Israel has meticulously paved its way to to establish undisputed military power in the Middle-East. From securing the UN membership to strategically demolishing Arab forces, Israel's victory is a testament to the disunity of the Arabs and how historic discrimination can spark widespread change.

However, the Israeli military occupation of the Palestinian territories remains a grave violation of the International Humanitarian Law.

Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention states that it is illegal for an occupying power to "deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies", hence all such Israeli settlements are thus war crimes. This poses direct questions to the very validity of Israel as a nation in the first place, and how it received UN membership. Followers of a particular religion occupying a city (Jerusalem) out of the sole reason that they consider it of 'religious importance', and then occupying that city by brute force is in its literal sense, **colonialism with ethnic cleansing.**

Moreover, between 1947 and 1949 Jewish-Israeli military forces ethnically cleansed at least 750,000 Palestinians from what became the state of Israel, representing some 85% of the indigenous Palestinian population. In 1967, Israel forced around 300,000 people (around half of them already refugees from 1948) from their homeland.

Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention also states that "forcible transfers, as well as deportations of protected persons from occupied territory to the territory of the Occupying Power or to that of any other country, occupied or not, are prohibited, regardless of their motive."

Under Article 147 of the 1949 Geneva Convention IV, "unlawful deportation or transfer … of a protected person" constitutes a grave breach of the Convention.

While the Israeli cause can be partly justified, the manner in which the state was established was far from just. In the process of securing its own independence, it has denied a population of over 1 million their right to statehood.

Presently, because of the vast territories that Israel has under its control, it can be quite a task to systematically manage these territories, especially when most of them are Palestinian-dominated regions. Therefore, Israel and allies must think of a way to address the refugee crisis at hand, which may come at the cost of giving up some territories captured in the 1967 War.

Non-Aligned Countries

In the backdrop of the Cold War, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) established in 1961 stood as a third-bloc that decided not to side with NATO, nor the Warsaw Pact (the Soviet Alliance). However, anti-imperialism and support for national liberation movements was the general ideology of most of these nations.

It is interesting to note that most of these major NAM nations, including Egypt, India, Yugoslavia, Indonesia, Algeria, Cuba, Ghana, Afghanistan and Sudan sided with the Palestinians for the most part. This was because the British involvement in securing Israeli statehood was widely seen as a colonial measure, something that the Non-Aligned Countries did not appreciate. However, barring a few exceptions like Egypt and Indonesia, this does not mean that the NAM countries did not establish diplomatic ties with Israel. In fact, nations, like India, Yugoslavia and Cuba recognized the independence of Israel. They were merely critical of the colonial roots that this independence possessed.

Hence, for the most part, Israel lacked international support from Non-Aligned nations, which can hold great implications for the overall outcome of the committee.

The way that these nations push for Palestinian independence, may vary from the legalistic and peaceful methods historically followed by India and Yugoslavia to the militant approach advocated by Algeria and Cuba.

Certain nations like Iran, which were one of the few Islamic countries to side with the United States in the Cold War, also maintained covert ties with Israel. Iran's limited participation in the war can be attributed to the regional sensitivities of the Middle-East.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

It is imperative to understand the gravity of the situation, of two major communal groups under the threat of losing their very home. Similar to the Holocaust led by the Nazis during World War II, Israel might have somewhat replicated what the Nazis did to the Jews. The only difference remains that the Nazi attempt was driven by their expansionist ideologies, however Israel's struggle was driven by a desperate pursuit of survival. Whether this outcome can be attributed to Israeli defense policy, expansionist objectives, or a failure of the Arab states to safeguard Palestinian interests is one of the many questions delegates must scrutinize. Delegates must not overlook the role of external powers and assess whether the Arab nations, who essentially represented the Palestinian people in the war, were responsible for the refugee crisis and the ultimate failure of peaceful resolution.

Remember, the objective of the committee is not merely to 'recognize' Palestine, but give them a fair share of what belonged to them before the war. It is to establish peace negotiations on the future of the Golan Heights and the Sinai Peninsula before Israeli settlements spread to an extent from where change is impossible.

In brief, the following are the possible steps that the committee may endorse as part of the resolution:

1. Complete delegitimization of Israeli control over the Gaza Strip and the West Bank
2. Internationalisation of Jerusalem as a city under UN control
3. Two State Framework

These are mere suggestions that the committee may adopt. However, original thinking will be much-appreciated as long as it is rational and in accordance with the situation of 1967.

It is also important to acknowledge that the failure of a resolution can spark hostilities between Israel and the nascent Palestine Liberation Organization. Owing to the widespread criticism the Western powers had to face due to their unwelcomed involvement in this Middle-Eastern issue, there is also a possibility that Israel may lack international support, should such a conflict re-arise in the future. Therefore, it is in the larger interest of both the groups to come to a consensus, facilitating it by compensations.

56 years later in 2023, the world saw the horrors of the October 7 attack by Hamas. The lasting statelessness of Palestine, the increased involvement of nations like Iran into the issue and the expansion of hostile policies against Israel have all shown that hatred against Judaism is truly the most unifying of all agents in the Middle-East. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the committee to not only act in the name of history, but to act for the sake of a future that does not mirror the past.

QUESTIONS A RESOLUTION MUST ANSWER

1. Are international legal frameworks (e.g. UN Charter, Geneva Conventions) still universally legitimate in postcolonial contexts, or do they require decolonization themselves?

2. How can durable peace be achieved on a land religiously claimed by both Israel and the Palestinians? What shall be the geopolitical borders established?

3. What shall be the fate of Jerusalem, ensuring that it does not detach from both its Jewish and Arab roots?

4. Who shall determine the legitimacy of sovereignty of Palestine in this context: the affected population, international law, or geopolitical power structures?

5. Should the recognition of Palestine by the international community be followed by the recognition of Israel by the Arabs too?

6. Should Israel be penalized for its violation of the International Humanitarian Law (IHL) during the Six-Day War? If yes, how and should the Arabs be forgiven for doing the same in 1948?

7. Is there a need for a more inclusive Arab League?

8. If norms against foreign intervention are established, how can the security of a Jewish nation, Israel be ensured when it is surrounded by hostile Arab nations?

9. What enforcement mechanisms shall be endorsed on the signatory states, should they violate the provisions of the resolution?

10. How should the resolution define citizenship in contested territories: by blood, by birth, by borders, by personal will or by belonging?

11. In the future, should an entity like the Palestine Liberation Organization, representing a stateless population possess political legitimacy without deriving authority from a state? If not, what shall be the fate of other stateless populations who lack an internationally recognized entity to voice their concerns?

12. In what aspects can the resolution set a precedent for the existing kinetic conflicts at the time, those primarily disputed over territory?

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