

Israel-Palestine Border: Historical Conflicts, Geopolitical Tensions, and Security Implications

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Abstract

The Israel-Palestine border has been a major conflict zone for decades, shaped by historical, political, and territorial disputes. The conflict traces back to the British Mandate period, where Britain made conflicting promises to Arabs and Jews, leading to tensions. Several boundary commissions attempted to resolve disputes, but disagreements persisted. The 1947 UN Partition Plan aimed to divide the land into Jewish and Arab states, but its implementation resulted in war, the creation of Israel in 1948, and the displacement of many Palestinians. The study also explores the role of cartography in shaping national identities and territorial claims, as well as the long-term consequences of partition, which led to violence, forced migrations, and continued struggles over land and identity. Additionally, it discusses Israel's Iron Dome missile defense system, which plays a crucial role in countering rocket attacks from Gaza. This research highlights the historical complexities of the Israel-Palestine border, the lasting impact of partition, and the role of modern military technology in shaping security and geopolitical tensions in the region.

INTRODUCTION:

The Israel-Palestine border stands as a geopolitical flashpoint, a boundary laden with historical complexities, political disputes, and human struggles. The creation of the State of Israel in 1948 was a pivotal event that resulted in the displacement of Palestinian populations and the establishment of a border that remains influential in determining the future of the region.

The Israel-Palestine border is at the center of long-lasting conflicts and intense geopolitical tensions, reflecting a complex history of political disputes. Established after the 1948 Arab Israeli War, this border not only sets the geographical limits between the two areas but also represents the ongoing and sometimes violent struggle between the two groups, each with deep historical and cultural claims to the land.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

Post World War I, Britain controlled Palestine following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the League of Nations assigned Britain a mandate, instructing them to create a Jewish national homeland and to promote self-governance while safeguarding the rights of all residents. However, Britain's wartime promises to both Arab and Zionist leaders, such as Sir Henry McMahon's assurance of backing for an independent Arab state, were contradictory. The ambiguous nature of the state's borders left many Arabs, including Hussein ibn Ali, with the impression that Palestine would be included.¹

The mandate required Britain to administer Palestine for the benefit of its inhabitants but competing

promises to Arab and Zionist leaders created complications. Between 1915 - 1916, Sir Henry McMahon promised to support the creation of an independent Arab state.² Then, in 1917, Britain openly endorsed the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine through the Balfour Declaration.³ The ambiguous language in both commitments underpinned British policy in the Middle East, making it difficult to balance these conflicting obligations.⁴

¹ Lucy Chester, *Boundary commissions as tools to safeguard British interests at the end of the empire*.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid

Throughout the British Mandate, conflicts between Arabs and Jews intensified leading to violent riots in 1929 and a sustained Arab uprising in 1936. Consideration of dividing Palestine into Arab and Jewish states arose, but as European relations deteriorated, British officials hesitated due to the need to maintain Arab alliances. By 1938, many opposed partition, and wartime pressures further delayed resolution. In 1946, British officials, including Prime Minister Attlee, chose to hand over the Palestine Mandate to the United Nations, a decision that was officially announced in February 1947. UN recommendations for withdrawal and termination of the mandate were accepted in 1948, as the Arab-Jewish conflict intensified. British troops stayed until the Mandate officially ended on May 14, 1948.⁵

The events of 1948 marked the disintegration of Palestinian society and its national project. The 1949 Rhodes Armistice Agreement formalized this process, with Israel annexing 78 percent of historical Palestine, including areas like Wadi A'ra and the Triangle. Jordan annexed East Jerusalem and the West Bank, while Egypt temporarily controlled the coastal plain around Gaza, later known as the Gaza Strip. The 'green line,' drawn during the agreement, divided Palestinian villages—those 'inside' under Israeli control and 'outside' under Jordan's. Around 170,000 Palestinians (10% of the population) found themselves 'inside' the green line. The armistice created a de facto border, and for Israelis, the green line became synonymous with the controlled border.⁶

Commissions for boundary determinations within the Palestine Mandate:

In the late 1930s, British leaders employed boundary commissions to safeguard their interests while addressing unrest in Palestine. Amid the 1936-1937 Arab uprising, the Colonial Office promised to establish a commission led by Lord Peel to examine the causes. Some officials sought politically advantageous recommendations, with a suggestion to suspend Jewish immigration. Despite claims of the Commission's independence, there were hopes among British leaders that it could be influenced.⁷

The Peel Commission, tasked with resolving the challenges posed by Britain's conflicting promises in Palestine, determined that partition was the only viable solution. The commission's plan suggested splitting Palestine into three

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Smita Tewari Jassal, *The Partition Motif in Contemporary Conflicts*.

⁷ Lucy Chester, *Boundary commissions as tools to safeguard British interests at the end of the empire*.

sections: one for a Jewish state, another for an Arab state, and British-administered enclave. While not initially conceived as a boundary commission, the Peel Commission saw partitioning as the resolution to the Arab uprising

dilemma. The Colonial Office agreed to the proposal to maintain British control and meet international responsibilities. However, the plan was met with dissatisfaction from both Zionist and Arab leaders, and the British were wary of potential reactions from the Muslim community, especially in India, where criticism of the partition was widespread. British observers were skeptical of Indian protests, seeing them as opportunistic attacks on British imperialism.⁸

The Peel Commission's recommendations highlighted internal conflicts within the British government about its future involvement in Palestine. The Foreign Office, which valued maintaining good relations with Arab leaders, was against partition. The British government regarded partition as a way to honor commitments to both Arabs and Jews and as a potential solution to ongoing difficulties. The Foreign Office, worried about preserving alliances with Arab nations, viewed the Peel Commission's proposal as disastrous. To counter partition, the Foreign Office established another commission led by Sir John Woodhead, ostensibly to assess the feasibility of the Peel plan. In truth, the Foreign Office anticipated that the commission would reveal the impracticality of partition, thereby offering a convenient way to abandon the commitment.⁹

Zionist leaders, such as Moshe Shertok and Chaim Weizmann, suspected that the British government intended the Woodhead Commission to discredit the Peel Commission's partition plan for Palestine. They were convinced that the commission, influenced by external pressures, aimed to discredit the partition proposal. Despite skepticism from various quarters, the Woodhead Commission, developing other plans as alternatives to the Peel Commission's recommendation, ultimately concluded that none of the proposed partition plans were practicable due to financial and economic challenges. In 1938, the British government, drawing on the commission's findings as justification, renounced the idea of partitioning Palestine, citing significant political and administrative difficulties.¹⁰

Upon referring Palestine to the United Nations, a new boundary commission, the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine, proposed a partition plan in

⁸ Ibid

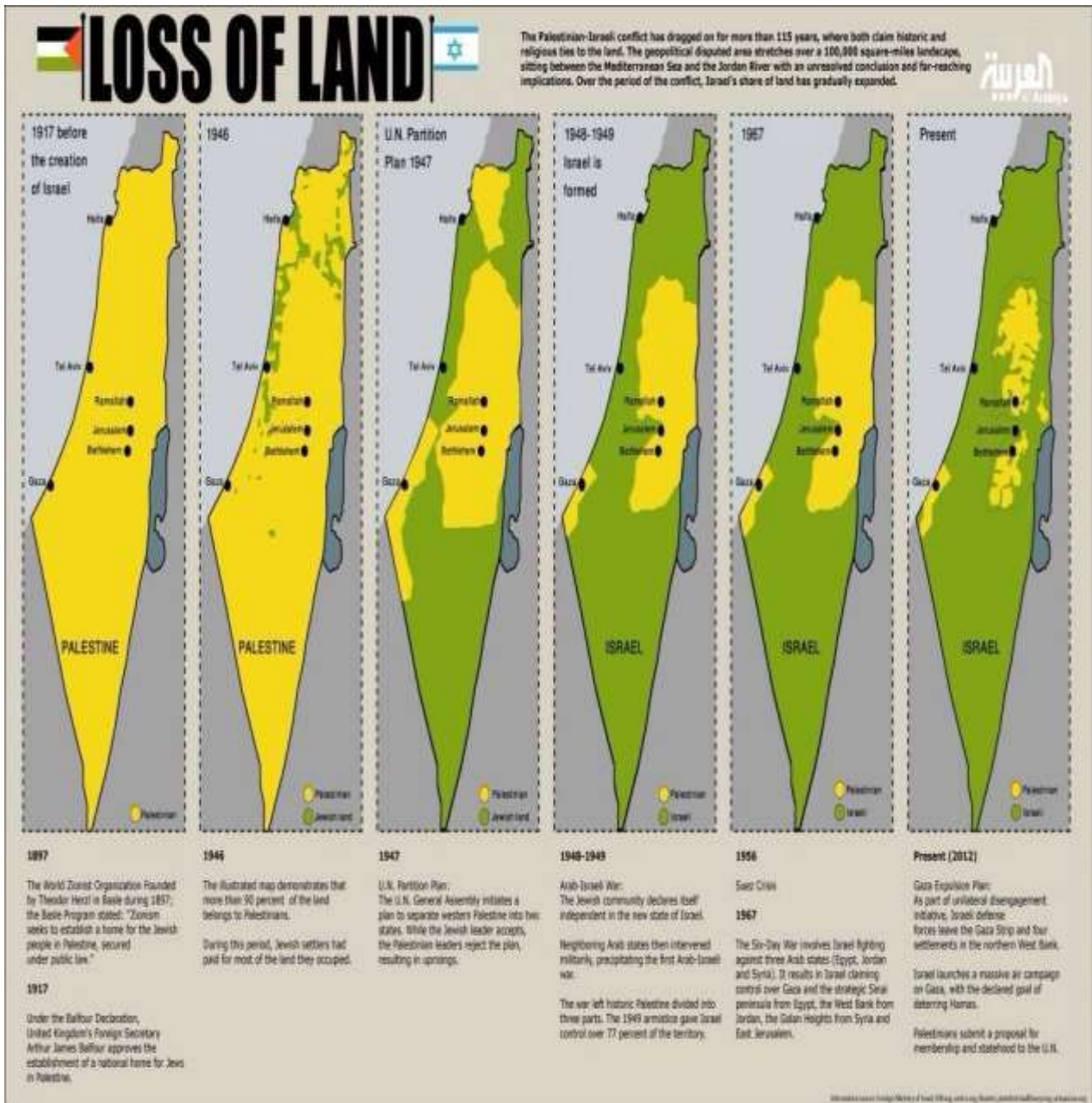
⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Lucy Chester, *Boundary commissions as tools to safeguard British interests at the end of the Empire*.

1947. The proposal recommended the creation of an Arab state, a Jewish state, and an international trusteeship encompassing Jerusalem. Despite Britain's preference to avoid partition and maintain alliances with Arab leaders, the United Nations endorsed UNSCOP's plan. Britain abstained from voting, expressing impartiality but was disappointed when the plan collapsed due to British and later American non-cooperation. As the British withdrew in May 1948, civil war broke out, resulting in the proclamation of the independent state of Israel on May 15, 1948. The conflict resulted in casualties, displacement of Palestinian Arabs, and ongoing tension in the region. Britain's withdrawal elevated the Palestine dispute to the global stage.¹¹

British boundary commissions aimed at safeguarding Britain's interests, recognizing that the empire's survival required shedding financial and military responsibilities, maintaining alliances, and preserving

international reputation. British leaders sought to distance themselves from the violence that might follow, portraying it as the fault of local actors. Despite these commissions, the end of the Mandate in Palestine was marked by failure and ignominy.¹²



¹¹ Ibid

¹² Ibid



Great Britain's Division of the Mandated Area, 1921-1923

British Mandate and Cartographic Transformations:

The British Mandate Government extensively invested in mapping Palestine, viewing cartography as crucial for state control. Maps served military, bureaucratic, and ethnic categorization purposes, facilitating efficient administration. The British maps emphasized Biblical and Crusader imagery, downplaying the long Muslim history of Palestine. They incorporated English landscape terms, highlighting post offices, railways, and schools while anglicizing Palestine through the binary opposition of cityscape and villages cape. The cartography applied unified categories to maps, contributing to the creation of a new geo-body that influenced both Israeli and Palestinian nation-building. Cartography, a fraction of the broader enlightenment project, systematized and standardized spatial representation, making maps powerful tools in shaping perceptions of borders, names, categories, and lacunas.¹³

In the 19th century, cartography underwent a transition from ornamental to scientific maps, notably seen in the British Mandate's mapping project, the Survey of Western Palestine by the Palestine Exploration Fund (PEF). Published between 1880 and 1884, these maps, led by army officers Lt. Claude Conder and

Lt. Horatio Kitchener, introduced advanced methods like a grid system and trigonometry. Influenced by political, military, and imperial motives, the maps also reflected the British fascination with Biblical Palestine, portraying ruins and associating local inhabitants with Biblical figures. The PEF maps, serving both military and interpretive purposes, continued to influence the British perspective of Palestine, shaping landscape representations.¹⁴

The Palestine Exploration Fund aimed to map all of Palestine, but the eastern part was never fully mapped, shaping Western Palestine as a distinct entity. Boundaries were along the Mediterranean (west) and the river Jordan (east), with less obvious northern and southern limits. The British Mandate extended the southern border, and the Israeli Department of Surveys mapped the southern region (al-Naqab) after Jewish forces captured it in 1948. The northern boundary, established after World War I and the Sykes–Picot agreement, was significant for British and French interests. Mapping in colonial contexts, linked to the rise of nationalism, created a historical narrative emphasizing territorial antiquity. Despite being a colonial project, local nationalists, including Zionists in

¹³ Smita Tewari Jassal, *The Partition Motif in Contemporary Conflicts*. Chapter 3: The Cartographic Imagination: British Mandate Palestine.

¹⁴ Smita Tewari Jassal, *The Partition Motif in Contemporary Conflicts*. Chapter 3: The Cartographic Imagination: British Mandate Palestine.

Palestine, adopted these mappings. Zionists' participation in the British land survey inadvertently served their interests, impacting youth movements, hikers, and the Hagana. The British mapping project had a more direct influence on the Zionist population than on the Arab.¹⁵

Aftermath of Partition:

Partition experiences have perpetually extended conflicts by delineating borders around diverse populations, resulting in ethnic cleansing. This frequently leaves contested enclaves and fuels longstanding animosities instead of resolving them. In Palestine, the idea of partition emerged in 1937 with the Peel Commission and was revisited by the UN in 1948. However, this period is marked by wars and significant displacement of Palestinians from what is now Israel. The enduring state of flux has resulted in recurrent conflicts and ongoing instability, at times paving the way for the establishment of undemocratic regimes. Partition is widely recognized as the violent separation of groups, involving forced eviction and population migration, along with the communal and personal toll on those experiencing these events. It extends beyond mere forced separation, influencing enduring practices such as identity, work, memory, and inspiration, shaping the foundations of diverse societies.¹⁶

While partition is a historical event, its sociological implications persist, impacting community trends, generational shifts, and personal life trajectories.

IRON DOME:

Israel has credited its Iron Dome missile defense system with protecting the nation from rockets launched by Hamas from Gaza. Designed to counter short- range projectiles, Iron Dome functions in all weather conditions and uses radar technology to monitor incoming rockets. The system can differentiate

between rockets that will strike populated areas and those that will not, deploying interceptor missiles only, when necessary, against threats headed for built-up areas.¹⁷

The Iron Dome system includes multiple batteries spread throughout Israel, each equipped with more than three launchers capable of firing twenty interceptor missiles.¹⁸ The system, which is available in both fixed and mobile configurations,

¹⁵ Ibid.

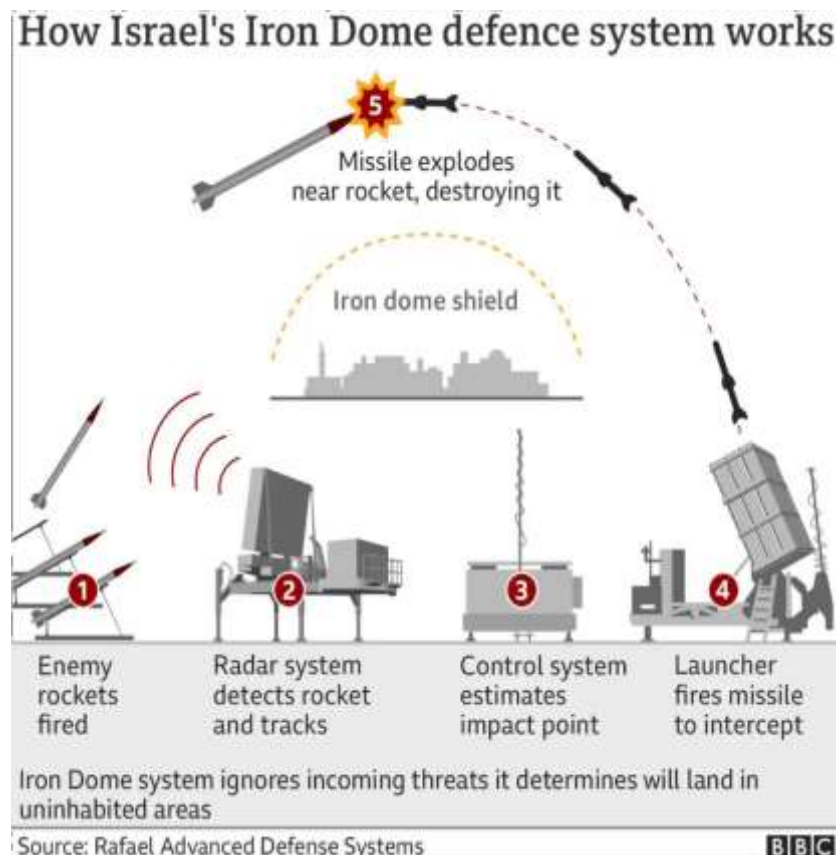
¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ BBC News, "What is Israel's Iron Dome missile system and how does it work?" November 6, 2023.

¹⁸ Ibid.

was developed in response to the 2006 conflict with Hezbollah. During that conflict, Hezbollah fired thousands of rockets into Israel, resulting in substantial destruction and loss of life.¹⁹

Developed by Rafael Advanced Defense Systems and Israel Aerospace Industries, with Iron Dome was specifically designed to counter basic weapons such as those launched from Gaza.²⁰ This system first saw combat use in 2011 when it intercepted a missile from the Gaza Strip. According to Israel's military, the Iron Dome has a success rate of up to 90%.²¹



¹⁹ BBC News, "What is Israel's Iron Dome missile system and how does it work?" November 6, 2023.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

IMPACTS:**Impact of Partition on Israel's Social Fabric**

Partition profoundly shapes Israel's organization, permeating aspects like constant war preparation, internal exclusions, and societal divisions. The society is segregated, impacting residents' living places, education, and marriage patterns. State surveillance logic, monitoring Palestinians' movements and statistics, links those within the state boundaries to Palestinians outside. Israel is part of a partitioned societies, where partition constitutes social organization, and groups define themselves in relation to each other. Boundaries extend beyond border areas, manifesting in education, media, memorials, ceremonies, and spectacles. This understanding is relevant to various cases. Partition organizes resource allocation, benefiting Christians, defined as less of an 'enemy,' with preferential treatment from authorities. However, partition also restricts their marriage opportunities by limiting access to specific groups within and outside the Israeli state border. Overall, partition intricately influences societal dynamics and structures in Israel.²²

Impact of the 1948 Partition on Palestinian Identity and Landscape:

The events of 1948, referred to as the Naqba (catastrophe), deeply resonate in the Palestinian collective memory. This pivotal period marked the displacement of Palestinians from their homeland, casting them into a perpetual state of being viewed as a national and political 'ISSUE.' Between 1947 and 1949, during the Israeli state-building process, around 85 percent of Palestinians within present-day Israel were forcibly uprooted, seeking refuge in areas such as the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and beyond.²³ This displacement resulted in the destruction of approximately 450 Palestinian villages, accompanied by a symbolic reappropriation of the physical space through the adoption of Zionist and Biblical names, erasing Arabic ones. The alteration of the Palestinian

²² Smita Tewari Jassal and Eyal Ben Ari, *Introduction: The Partition Motif: Concepts, Comparisons, Considerations*.

²³ Smita Tewari Jassal, *The Partition Motif in Contemporary Conflicts*.

landscape transformed it into a historical relic, stripped of its original inhabitants.²⁴

Social Fragmentation and Struggles post partition:

The 1948 partition of Israel-Palestine has significantly impacted the Palestinian homeland, causing fragmentation due to deprivation, violence, and occupation. This division resulted in social fractures, scattered villages, and increased tensions among different groups. The term "al-Naqba" symbolizes the tragedy of losing social connections and loved ones during this tumultuous period. Despite ongoing attempts to rebuild a unified nation, the consequences of partition have given rise to fragmented kin groups. Ongoing efforts to address this fragmentation include supporting dispersed family members.²⁵

Partition: Redefining Palestinian Identities and Solidarity across Borders.

Following the 1967 war, Palestinian citizens of Israel and their relatives in Jordan and Egypt underwent processes of discovery and reinterpretation. Notably, during the two Intifadas, Palestinian citizens of Israel actively supported their counterparts in the West Bank and Gaza by collecting funds and goods. These tangible contributions can be viewed as efforts to forge imagined communities, using kinship metaphors to bridge boundaries. The impact of partition is evident in the non-neutral classifications that

create socially defined grades and hierarchies. The legitimacy of being considered a 'true' Palestinian and an authentic victim of partition largely depends on one's (or their family's) direct connection to the forced migration events of 1948. ²⁶This illustrates how the partition of Israel and Palestine continues to shape identities, relationships, and perceptions within the Palestinian community.²⁷

²⁴ Smita Tewari Jassal, *The Partition Motif in Contemporary Conflicts*.

²⁵ Smita Tewari Jassal, *The Partition Motif in Contemporary Conflicts: A Homeland Torn Apart: Partition in a Palestinian Refugee Camp*.

²⁶ Smita Tewari Jassal and Eyal Ben Ari, *Introduction: The Partition Motif: Concepts, Comparisons, Considerations*.

²⁷ Ibid.

Exploring Concepts of Time and Waiting Through the Palestinian Experience.

The ideas of time and waiting are usually linked to clocks and calendars, but for Palestinians, these concepts have a deeper meaning because of their long history of displacement and longing for a homeland. This endless waiting has become a central part of their national identity.²⁸

In areas affected by conflict, Palestinians experience time differently from the rest of the world. Their daily struggles and cultural expressions show that for them, time involves more endurance and resilience, where pain is eventually left behind. Their strong desire to return to their homeland and to be free from occupation has changed the way they express themselves in arts and literature, making their experience of time, waiting, and exile unique.²⁹

Identity for Palestinians is about more than just where they are from; it's about a shared feeling and memory of what home means, even for those who have never been there. This collective identity is influenced by everyday experiences like waiting for basic needs, for loved ones to be released from jail, or simply to move freely. These moments of waiting have turned into a significant part of who they are.³⁰

Time and waiting are interpreted differently across cultures, but for Palestinians, these concepts are deeply entwined with their historical and ongoing struggle over land described as "promised" in Zionist narratives. This prolonged conflict has entrenched a perpetual state of waiting into Palestinian national consciousness, transforming it from a passive experience into an active form of resistance known as *sumud* (steadfastness). This resistance challenges the structured, imposed timelines of Zionism.³¹

Following the establishment of Israel, Zionist intentions to make Palestinian waiting seem futile hoped to force a capitulation to their timeframes. Instead, Palestinians have embraced this waiting as a form of steadfast resistance, a theme that permeates their artistic and cultural expressions. Everyday life for Palestinians is characterized by constant interruptions—lengthy waits at checkpoints, delays in transportation due to security checks, routine searches by

²⁸ Ashutosh Singh, "Time and Waiting: The Fulcrum of Palestinian Identity," *Arab Studies Quarterly* 41, no. 4 (Fall 2019).

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

31 Ibid.

soldiers—illustrating a rhythm of life where conventional timekeeping falls short.³²

When waiting persists without leading to change, time can seem surreal and endless for those who live through it. Palestinians have responded by humanizing time and waiting, embedding these experiences in their stories and memories.³³

PRESENT SCENARIO:

On October 7, Hamas-led gunmen from Gaza attacked southern Israel, killing civilians, shooting into crowds, and taking hostages, including children and the elderly—actions labeled as war crimes by Israeli authorities.³⁴ In response, Israel severed essential services to Gaza, imposed a tight blockade, and conducted airstrikes that hit schools, hospitals, and residential areas, also considered war crimes.³⁵

GAZA STRIP:

Since October 7, Israeli military operations had resulted in the destruction of over 46,000 homes and damage to 234,000 others, affecting 60% of Gaza's housing. Additionally, 342 schools and 24 hospitals had been damaged due to airstrikes and attacks on healthcare facilities. The blockade had severely impacted hospital operations, electricity, water supply, and telecommunications, leading to widespread shutdowns and a public health crisis.³⁶

Israeli Closure Policy:

Since Hamas took control of Gaza in 2007, Israel had significantly restricted travel through the Erez Crossing, the primary exit for Palestinians from Gaza to Israel, the West Bank, and abroad, citing security concerns. These restrictions broadly

³² Ashutosh Singh, "Time and Waiting: The Fulcrum of Palestinian Identity," *Arab Studies Quarterly* 41, no. 4 (Fall 2019).

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Human Rights Watch, "Israel and Palestine: Events of 2023."

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

banned travel except for cases deemed exceptional humanitarian circumstances, such as urgent medical needs.

From 2008 to 2021, delays in permit approvals resulted in 839 Palestinians dying while waiting for responses, according to WHO. Although there was a slight increase in exits via Erez for work permits in 2023, the numbers remained well below pre-Second Intifada levels.

Additionally, Gaza's exports decreased, and Israel restricted the entry of various goods, including construction materials and medical equipment, labeling them as potential dual-use items for military purposes. These measures further tightened restrictions, impacting basic services and worsening the humanitarian situation. Frequent power outages and a severe water crisis affected daily life and health in Gaza, where most of the population relied on humanitarian aid.

Egypt also imposed strict controls at the Rafah crossing, further limiting the flow of people and goods entering and leaving Gaza.³⁷

MAJOR INTERNATIONAL PLAYERS:

Numerous countries denounced the Hamas-led attacks on October 7. However, fewer states criticized the severe actions taken by Israeli authorities. The United States and some Western nations continued to supply arms and military assistance to Israel, while other nations also supplied military aid to Palestinian armed groups.³⁸ President Biden and other U.S. officials made several visits to Israel to promote the protection of civilians and to encourage Israeli officials to permit humanitarian aid into Gaza. Despite these efforts, the U.S. did not make its military support to Israel conditional on these demands being met. Following the attacks, the Biden administration requested an additional \$14.3 billion for arms for Israel.³⁹ This support included various munitions and weaponry, although the U.S. stopped shipments of small arms amid concerns that they might be given to settlers.⁴⁰

The U.S. recently allowed Israeli citizens to enter its visa-waiver program, granting them visa-free access despite ongoing issues with discrimination against U.S. citizens of Palestinian, Arab, or Muslim background journeying to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Concurrently, the U.S. and the United Kingdom implemented travel bans targeting violent settlers in the West

³⁷ Human Rights Watch, "Israel and Palestine: Events of 2023."

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

Bank. In international diplomacy, the U.S. vetoed a United Nations resolution that sought humanitarian pauses in Gaza yet abstained from voting on another similar subsequent resolution.⁴¹ This resolution, which was ultimately adopted by the UN Security Council, marked the first resolution on Israel and Palestine that the Council has passed since 2016. It called for the protection of civilians and compliance with international humanitarian law by both Israeli military forces and Palestinian militant groups. Despite this, the U.S. vetoed another resolution calling for a ceasefire between the two groups. Meanwhile, the General Assembly adopted two resolutions advocating for a ceasefire.⁴²

Divisions within the European Union prevented it from unanimously adopting strong positions and measures against Israeli actions, especially noticeable after the attacks on October 7. EU member states showed varied voting patterns at the UN and, while condemning Hamas, they did not uniformly condemn alleged Israeli war crimes.⁴³

The International Criminal Court's (ICC) investigation into Palestine had included visits to the Rafah Crossing and other areas in Israel and Palestine by the ICC prosecutor, who reaffirmed the ICC's jurisdiction over atrocities committed during the conflict.⁴⁴

In July, 54 countries and three intergovernmental organizations had submitted opinions to the ICJ in response to the UN Assembly's request for an advisory opinion on the legal implications of Israel's extended occupation and actions against Palestinians. Public hearings at the ICJ were scheduled to begin on February 19, 2024.⁴⁵

In December, South Africa filed a lawsuit with the ICJ, alleging that Israel had violated the Genocide

Convention in its military operations in Gaza. South Africa called on the World Court to implement immediate actions to safeguard Palestinians and ensure Israel's adherence with the Convention.⁴⁶

⁴¹ Human Rights Watch, "Israel and Palestine: Events of 2023."

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Human Rights Watch, "Israel and Palestine: Events of 2023."

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

Ceasefire deal between Israel and Hamas.

The ceasefire was initiated on January 15, with its implementation starting four days later, as a result of months-long diplomatic efforts by the US, Qatar, and Egypt. This agreement, which was based on a proposal by former President Joe Biden in May 2024, is structured to unfold in three stages. The initial stage spans 42 days and includes a comprehensive ceasefire, the phased release of 33 hostages by Hamas—comprising women, children, some elderly men, and the sick—and the release of about 1,900 Palestinian prisoners by Israel. Additionally, Israeli forces will withdraw from populated areas in Gaza, allowing displaced civilians to return and facilitating the daily entry of numerous aid trucks. Israeli troops, however, will continue to be stationed in strategic border areas of Gaza like the southern Philadelphi Corridor, while withdrawing from the Netzarim Corridor.⁴⁷ The second stage will start sixteen days after the first, focusing on securing a permanent ceasefire and initiating further negotiations. This phase will also include the exchange of any remaining living hostages for more Palestinian prisoners and the full withdrawal of Israeli forces.⁴⁸ The third and final stage will deal with returning the bodies of deceased hostages and embarking on the long-term reconstruction of Gaza, which is expected to take several years.⁴⁹

The agreement stipulates the release of hostages taken during October 2023, along with three Israelis captured prior to the conflict. According to Israeli authorities, Hamas currently holds 55 living hostages and possesses the remains of 35 deceased individuals. To date, 24 hostages, including Israeli female soldiers, Israeli male and female civilians, and Thai nationals, have been released. These releases were orchestrated by Hamas at various locations across Gaza and involved handing over the hostages to the Red Cross. After receiving the hostages, the Red Cross facilitated their transfer to Israeli forces in Gaza, from where they were transported across the border back to Israel and reunited with their families. Upon their return, the released hostages were taken to hospitals for medical evaluations.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Raffi Berg, "What We Know About the Gaza Ceasefire Deal," BBC News, February 2, 2025.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

The Ongoing Exchange in the Israel-Palestine Conflict:

Approximately 1,900 Palestinian prisoners and detainees from Gaza are set to be released in the initial phase of the agreement. However, the exact number of prisoners exchanged with each hostage release remains unclear. As of February 15, a total of 1,135 prisoners have been freed. Many of those released in the early exchanges, particularly in the first few rounds, had not been formally charged and were detained without trial under Israel's controversial "administrative detention" policy, which has been widely condemned by human rights organizations. Others had been convicted of serious offenses, including multiple murders, and some had been serving life sentences.⁵¹

The freed prisoners have returned to the occupied West Bank, East Jerusalem, and, in some cases, Gaza. However, due to the severity of their crimes, several individuals were deported. Israel has emphasized that no individuals directly involved in the October 7 attacks will be among those released.

These prisoners are part of the more than 10,000 Palestinians currently held by Israel for either being convicted of or suspected of "security-related" offenses, which range from attacks and bombings to affiliation with banned militant groups. Reports indicate that over 3,000 of these detainees are being held under administrative detention.⁵²

Humanitarian Aid and the Challenges of Reconstruction in Gaza

Under the terms of the ceasefire agreement, 600 lorries, including 50 loaded with fuel, are permitted to enter Gaza daily, a target that was achieved or surpassed in the initial three days following the ceasefire. Specifically, half of these lorries are directed towards northern Gaza, an area severely affected by the conflict and at risk of famine, as noted by food security specialists. This is a significant increase from December 2024, when the average was 90 lorries per day, and from the pre-war daily allowance of about 500 lorries.⁵³

Gaza, with a population of approximately 2.3 million Palestinians, saw nearly all its residents displaced due to ongoing Israeli military actions and mass evacuation orders. Many residents have started returning to their homes, only to find extensive destruction, with an estimated 60% to 70% of buildings damaged or destroyed. The return is perilous due to the ongoing military

⁵¹ Raffi Berg, "What We Know About the Gaza Ceasefire Deal," BBC News, February 2, 2025.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Raffi Berg, "What We Know About the Gaza Ceasefire Deal," BBC News, February 2, 2025.

tensions, the danger of unexploded ordnance, and advisories from the Israeli military urging civilians to avoid military zones.⁵⁴

Those displaced from the northern regions are allowed to return via designated routes, with vehicle screenings required. The reconstruction of Gaza, as estimated by the UN midway through the conflict, could cost up to \$40 billion and will likely take years, if not decades. The aftermath of the conflict will also have a long-lasting human impact, with thousands suffering from physical injuries and psychological trauma.⁵⁵

CONCLUSION:

The Israel-Palestine conflict, marked by the 1948 partition and subsequent events, has had a lasting

influence on the socio-political dynamics of the region. and the delineation of borders have resulted in complex and enduring consequences that extend beyond mere territorial division.

The partition, viewed through historical lenses, has perpetually fueled conflicts rather than providing definitive solutions. The series of events, from British mandates to UN proposals and the subsequent establishment of Israel, have led to recurrent conflicts, displacement, and ongoing instability. The partition has given rise to contested enclaves, social fractures, and a tragic loss of social connections for Palestinians.

The impacts of partition on Israel's social fabric are reflected in its organization, with societal divisions and constant war preparation ingrained in its structure. The intricate dynamics of partition extend beyond border areas, influencing various aspects of life.

Israel-Palestine partition, while attempting to offer a solution, has not provided a definitive answer to the complexities of the region. The enduring impacts underscore the need for nuanced approaches, dialogue, and efforts to bridge divides, emphasizing commonalities over historical grievances. The evolving narratives and ongoing struggles demonstrate the profound and multifaceted nature of the challenges that persist in the aftermath of partition.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

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