

Presidium Model United Nations

13th-14th August 2021

The United Nations Human Rights Council



Agenda: The Israel-Palestine Conflict

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Executive Board of Presidium Model United Nations welcomes each one of you. For many it may be the first ever MUN conference in your educational experience, and we strongly encourage you to go through the study guide that has been prepared for you as a part of the conference in order to get an in depth understanding of the issue that will be discussed in the committee. However, there is lot of content available beyond the study guides too. You are expected to research, collate, list down possible points of discussions, questions and plausible responses and be prepared to enjoy the intellectual energy in the group. At the same time it is not only about speaking and presenting, but very importantly it is also about the ability to listen, understand view points and learn from each one's perspectives.

Wishing all of you a great learning experience. Looking forward to having you all with us.

Best wishes The Executive Board

1. Akul Halan

(President)

2. Vansham Mudgil

(Vice-President)

3. Sonal Gupta

(Substantial Director)

The United Nations Security Council

The Human Rights Council is an intergovernmental body of the United Nations, through which States discuss human rights conditions in the UN Member States. The Council's mandate is to promote "universal respect for the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all" and "address situations of violations of human rights, including gross and systematic violations, and make recommendations thereon."

The Human Rights Council was established in 2006 by Resolution 60/251 as a subsidiary body to the UN General Assembly. It replaced the former Commission on Human Rights, which operated from 1946 to 2006.

COMPOSITION

The Council is composed of 47 Member States elected from the UN General Assembly to staggered three-year terms, with a specified number of seats going to each major geographic region. General Assembly Resolution 60/251 provides that Members States should be elected considering "the contribution of candidates to the promotion and protection of human rights" and "members elected to the Council shall uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights." In practice, these standards are open to interpretation and the human rights records of States seeking election to the Council have been the subject of significant controversy.

FUNCTIONS

The Council serves as a forum for dialogue among States, with input from other stakeholders. As a result of its discussions, the Council may issue resolutions calling on States to take specific actions or uphold certain principles, or it may create mechanisms to investigate or monitor questions of concern.

The Human Rights Council has created or renewed the mandates of various "special procedures." The special procedures are experts appointed to monitor human rights around priority themes or in specific countries with serious human rights problems. The special procedures may be individual experts ("special rapporteurs" or "independent experts") or working groups.

The Council also manages the Universal Periodic Review, a process through which each UN Member State's overall human rights record is reviewed.

In addition, the Council receives complaints alleging patterns of human rights violations, which are considered by the Working Group on Communications and may be referred to the Working Group on Situations. The Working Group on Situations reports substantiated claims of consistent patterns of gross violations to the Council and makes recommendations for action.

SESSIONS

The Council conducts its substantive work primarily in Regular Sessions and Special Sessions. Regular Sessions are held no fewer than three times a year, usually in March, June, and September. The agenda and program of work for each Session are established with respect to any adopted Council resolutions and in consultation with Member States. Regular Sessions include the presentation of human rights reports and interactive dialogues with Special Procedure mandate holders or Member States, panel discussions and debates on a wide range of human rights issues, and consideration of Universal Periodic Review reports.

Council Special Sessions address urgent human rights situations arising between Regular Sessions and may be called at the request of any Council Member State with the support of at least one third of the Council membership. Having a more narrow remit than Regular Sessions, Special Sessions usually occupy a few days, with programs of work focused on the discussion of the urgent human rights situation raised and deliberations around the concluding resolution to be adopted by the Council.

CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION

General Assembly Resolution 60/251 explicitly acknowledges that “non-governmental organizations play an important role at the national, regional and international levels, in the promotion and protection of human rights” and further determines that the Council should work “in close cooperation in the field of human rights with Governments, regional organizations, national human rights institutions and civil society.”

Israel-Palestine Conflict

The Israeli–Palestinian conflict is one of the world’s most enduring hostilities, with the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip reaching 53 years. Various attempts have been made to resolve the conflict as part of the Israeli–Palestinian peace process.

British Palestine & Jew Migration

- The British, after the First World War, established a colony in Palestine maintaining that they would rule the area until the Palestinians were ready to govern themselves. This was called Mandatory Palestine as it was according to the League of Nations mandate.
- Even before this time, there was a massive influx of Jews from Europe into Palestine in the hope of creating their homeland after being expelled from it for centuries.
- Meanwhile, in the 1920s and 1930s, the Jewish population in Palestine increased by hundreds of thousands, facilitated by the British (who were honouring the Balfour Declaration).
- During this time, tensions between the growing Jewish communities and the Arabs were increasing.
- In 1936, the Palestinian Arabs revolted against the British as a result of the Palestinian Arabs viewing themselves increasingly as a nation.
- This revolt was suppressed by the British with help from Jewish militias.
- After the revolt, however, the British issued a white paper that limited Jewish immigration into Palestine and called for the establishment of a joint Jewish-Arab state in Palestine within ten years.
- During the course of World War II, many Jews escaping Europe from the Holocaust were brought to Palestine illegally (because of the immigration limit) by Jewish organisations.
Tensions escalated and the British handed over the problem to the newly established United Nations.
- In 1947, the UN voted to establish separate Palestinian and Jewish states in the region dividing Palestine. This plan was rejected by the Arabs.

Background of the Israel Palestine conflict

Following the Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel on 14 May 1948, the Arab League decided to intervene on behalf of Palestinian Arabs, marching their forces into former British Palestine, beginning the main phase of the 1948 Arab–Israeli War.

1967 Six day War

- The 1967 Six-Day War exerted a significant effect upon Palestinian nationalism, as Israel gained military control of the West Bank from Jordan and the Gaza Strip from Egypt.
- The PLO was unable to establish any control on the ground and established its headquarters in Jordan, home to hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, and supported the Jordanian army during the War of Attrition, which included the Battle of Karameh.
- However, the Palestinian base in Jordan collapsed with the Jordanian–Palestinian civil war in 1970. The PLO defeat by the Jordanians caused most of the Palestinian militants to relocate to South Lebanon, where they soon took over large areas, creating the so-called “Fatah land”.

Camp David Accords 1978

1) The Camp David Accords were a pair of political agreements signed by Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin on 17 September 1978.

2) The Camp David Accords established the so framework for peace in the Middle East and brought about the end of simmering conflict between Egypt and Israel.

3) They also called for the creation of Palestinian state in the area known as Gaza and on the West Bank of river Jordan.

4) However since the Palestinians were not represented at the talks, the resulting agreement was not formally recognized by the United Nations.

- In 1982, following an assassination attempt on one of its diplomats by Palestinians, the Israeli government decided to take sides in the Lebanese Civil War and the 1982 Lebanon War commenced. The initial results for Israel were successful. Most Palestinian militants were defeated within several weeks, Beirut was captured, and the PLO headquarters were evacuated to Tunisia in June by Yasser Arafat’s decision.
- **First Intifada:** The tension between Israel and Palestine escalated with Israel’s increased settlement in West Bank and Gaza Strip. Palestinians living in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip fomented the riots begun in 1987, known as the first intifada.
- **Second Intifada (2000-05):** In 2000, a more violent Palestine Uprising started and a large number of civilians died on both sides. This is known

as the second intifada. As a defensive measure, Israel constructed a **West Bank Barrier** along West Bank to separate Israel and Palestine settlements.

Road Map for Peace

- **1993 OSLO Accord:** The Oslo Accords are a pair of peace agreements between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)

1) Oslo 1 Accord: It was officially called the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements. It was signed in Washington, D.C., in 1993.

- The accords called for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from parts of the Gaza Strip and West Bank, and affirmed a Palestinian right of self-government within those areas through the creation of a Palestinian Interim Self-Government Authority.
- Palestinian rule was to last for a five-year interim period during which “permanent status negotiations” would commence in order to reach a final agreement.
- Israel was to grant interim self-government to the Palestinians in phases.
- Along with the principles, the two groups signed Letters of Mutual Recognition—the Israeli government recognized the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, while the PLO recognized the right of the state of Israel to exist and renounced terrorism as well as other violence, and its desire for the destruction of the Israeli state.
- In order that the Palestinians govern themselves according to democratic principles, free and general political elections would be held for the council.
- Jurisdiction of the Palestinian Council would cover the West Bank and Gaza Strip, except for issues that would be finalized in the permanent status negotiations. The two sides viewed the West Bank and Gaza as a single territorial unit.
- The five-year transitional period would commence with Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho area. There would be a transfer of authority from the Israel Defence Forces to the authorized Palestinians, concerning education and culture, health, social welfare, direct taxation, and tourism. The council would establish a strong police force, while Israel would continue to carry the responsibility for defending against external threats.

2) Oslo 2 Accord: It was called The Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and was signed on the 28th September, 1995 in Taba (Egypt).

- Oslo I also set the agenda for the follow-up agreement that became known as Oslo II, which would include discussion of the future governance of the city of Jerusalem (both sides claim it as their respective capital) as well as issues concerning borders, security and the rights, if any, of Israeli settlers in the West Bank.
- A protocol for free elections for Palestinian Authority leadership was also established.
- Oslo II, which was signed two years later, gave the Palestinian Authority, which oversees Gaza and the West Bank, limited control over part of the region, while allowing Israel to annex much of the West Bank, and established parameters for economic and political cooperation between the two sides.
- As part of the treaty, both sides were prohibited from inciting violence or conflict against the other.
- Israel was to collect taxes from Palestinians who work in Israel but live in the Occupied Territories, distributing the revenue to the Palestinian Authority.
- Israel was also to oversee the trade of goods and services into and out of Gaza and the West Bank.

3) Aftermath of the Oslo Accords

- Unfortunately, any momentum gained from the ratification of the Oslo Accords was short-lived.
- In 1998, Palestinian officials accused Israel of not following through on the troop withdrawals from Gaza and Hebron called for in the Oslo Accords.
- After initially slowing down settlement construction in the West Bank, at the request of the United States, the building of new Israeli housing in the region began in earnest again in the early 2000s.
- Conversely, critics of the Accords said that Palestinian violence against Israeli citizens increased in their aftermath, coinciding with the increasing power of the Palestinian Authority.
- These critics felt that the Palestinian Authority was failing to adequately police Gaza and the West Bank, and identify and prosecute suspected terrorists.
- With these disagreements providing the backdrop, negotiators from both sides reconvened, once again at Camp David, with the hope of following up on the Oslo Accords with a comprehensive peace treaty.

- In September 2000, Palestinian militants declared a “Second Intifada,” calling for increased violence against Israelis after Sharon, who as prime minister visited the Temple Mount—a site sacred to both Jews and Muslims.

Camp David Accord 2000

- The 2000 Camp David Summit was a summit meeting at Camp David between United States president Bill Clinton, Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian Authority chairman Yasser Arafat. The summit took place between 11 and 25 July 2000.
- Barak put forward the following as “bases for negotiation”, a non-militarized Palestinian state split into 3–4 parts containing 87–92% of the West Bank including only parts of East Jerusalem, and the entire Gaza Strip.
- The offer also included that 69 Jewish settlements (which comprise 85% of the West Bank’s Jewish settlers) would be ceded to Israel, no right of return to Israel, no sovereignty over the Temple Mount or any core East Jerusalem neighbourhoods, and continued Israel control over the Jordan Valley.
- Arafat rejected this offer. According to the Palestinian negotiators the offer did not remove many of the elements of the Israeli occupation regarding land, security, settlements, and Jerusalem.

Taba Summit (2001)

- The Israeli negotiation team presented a new map at the Taba Summit in Taba, Egypt in January 2001. The proposition removed the “temporarily Israeli controlled” areas, and the Palestinian side accepted this as a basis for further negotiation.
- The sides declare that they have never been closer to reaching an agreement and it is thus our shared belief that the remaining gaps could be bridged with the resumption of negotiations following the Israeli elections.
- The following month the Likud party candidate Ariel Sharon defeated Ehud Barak in the Israeli elections and was elected as Israeli prime minister on 7 February 2001. Sharon’s new government chose not to resume the high-level talks.

Arab Peace Initiative

- The Arab Peace Initiative was first proposed by Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia at the Beirut Summit (2002). The peace initiative is a

proposed solution to the Arab–Israeli conflict as a whole, and the Israeli–Palestinian conflict in particular.

- The initiative was initially published on 28 March 2002, at the Beirut Summit, and agreed upon again in 2007 in the Riyadh Summit.
- Unlike the Road Map for Peace, it spelled out “final-solution” borders based explicitly on the UN borders established before the 1967 Six-Day War. It offered full normalization of relations with Israel, in exchange for the withdrawal of its forces from all the occupied territories, including the Golan Heights, to recognize “an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital” in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, as well as a “just solution” for the Palestinian refugees.
- The Israeli government has expressed reservations on ‘red line,’ issues such as the Palestinian refugee problem, homeland security concerns, and the nature of Jerusalem.

What led to Recent Crash

- In October 2020, an Israeli court ruled that several Palestinian families living in Sheikh Jarrah—a neighbourhood in East Jerusalem—were to be evicted by May 2021 with their land handed over to Jewish families.
- In February 2021, several Palestinian families from Sheikh Jarrah filed an appeal to the court ruling and prompted protests around the appeal hearings, the ongoing legal battle around property ownership, and demanding an end to the forcible displacement of Palestinians from their homes in Jerusalem.
- In late April 2021, Palestinians began demonstrating in the streets of Jerusalem to protest the pending evictions and residents of Sheikh Jarrah—along with other activists—began to host nightly sit-ins. In early May, after a court ruled in favor of the evictions, the protests expanded with Israeli police deploying force against demonstrators.
- On May 7, following weeks of daily demonstrations and rising tensions between protesters, Israeli settlers, and police during the month of Ramadan, violence broke out at the al-Aqsa Mosque compound in Jerusalem, with Israeli police using stun grenades, rubber bullets, and water cannons in a clash with protestors that left hundreds of Palestinians wounded.
- On May 10, after several consecutive days of violence throughout Jerusalem and the use of lethal and nonlethal force by Israeli police, Hamas, the militant group which governs Gaza, and other Palestinian militant groups launched hundreds of rockets into Israeli territory.

- Israel responded with air strikes and later artillery bombardments against targets in Gaza, including launching several air strikes that killed more than twenty Palestinians. While claiming to target Hamas, other militants, and their infrastructure—including tunnels and rocket launchers—Israel has expanded its aerial campaign and struck targets including residential buildings, media headquarters, and refugee and healthcare facilities.

Rival claims over Jerusalem

- Both Israel and Palestine have declared Jerusalem their capital.
- In July 1980, the Israeli Parliament passed the Jerusalem Law declaring it the country's capital.
- Palestinians declared Jerusalem the capital of the putative state of Palestine by a law passed by the Palestinian Authority in 2000.
- The 1988 Palestinian Declaration of Independence also declared Jerusalem as the capital.
- For the present, the Palestinian Authority has its headquarters in Ramallah.

Hamas and Fatah

- In 1987, Hamas (Islamic Militant group) for the liberation of Palestine through Jihad came into existence. It refused to recognize Israel as a country. It has received support from Iran and Syria.
- On the other hand, Fatah, a faction of PLO under Yasser Arafat received support from Western nations.

What is happening in GAZA

- Gaza is a densely populated strip of land that is mostly surrounded by Israel and peopled almost exclusively by Palestinians. Israel used to have a military presence, but withdrew unilaterally in 2005. It's currently under Israeli blockade.
- Egypt controlled Gaza until 1967, when Israel occupied it (along with the West Bank) in the Six-Day War.
- Until 2005, Israeli military authorities controlled Gaza in the same way they control the West Bank, and Jews were permitted to settle there. In 2005, then-Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon pulled out Israeli troops and settlers unilaterally.
- Gaza is governed by the Islamist group Hamas, which formed in 1987 as a militant "resistance" group against Israel and won political power in a 2006 US-based election.

- Hamas's takeover of Gaza prompted an Israeli blockade of the flow of commercial goods into Gaza, on the grounds that Hamas could use those goods to make weapons to be used against Israel.
- Israel has eased the blockade over time, but the cutoff of basic supplies like fuel still does significant humanitarian harm by cutting off access to electricity, food, and medicine.
- Hamas and other Gaza-based militants have fired thousands of rockets from the territory at Israeli targets.
- Israel has launched a number of military operations in Gaza, including an air campaign and ground invasion in late 2008 and early 2009, a major bombing campaign in 2012, and another air/ground assault in the summer of 2014.

International Scenario

1) Stand of USA

- For decades, the U.S. has played a partisan role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- It became involved shortly after World War II, joining the United Kingdom in a 1946 inquiry that recommended one hundred thousand Holocaust survivors relocate to Palestine, which would be neither a Jewish nor an Arab state.
- The United States then became the first country to recognize Israel as a sovereign nation in 1948.
- Shortly after the 1967 war, Israel began building settlements in some of the territories it had seized. For years, the United States officially condemned these settlements—branding them an obstacle to peace—but avoided outright calling them illegal to avoid the possibility that Israel would face international sanctions.
- After the failed 2000 Camp David summit, Washington never made any meaningful attempt to push the Israelis to accept the two-state proposal.
- The 2007 Annapolis conference was a failure too. The previous U.S. administration launched a peace bid which also collapsed at an early stage.
- In 2018, the Trump administration canceled funding for the UN Relief and Works Agency, which provides aid to Palestinian refugees, and relocated the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, a reversal of a longstanding U.S. policy. The decision to move the U.S. embassy was met with applause from the Israeli leadership but was condemned by Palestinian leaders and others in the Middle East and Europe.
- Biden has said he will continue the nearly two decades of , which calls for separate Israeli and Palestinian states with borders resembling those

that existed before the 1967 war; this territory includes the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and parts of East Jerusalem.

2) Stand of Arab Countries

a) EGYPT

- Egypt wants a unified Palestinian leadership. Therefore, it invests a lot in supporting a Palestinian reconciliation.
- Egypt wants Gaza, the branches of Hamas and Fatah in Gaza, and other forces in Gaza, to have a bigger say in the Palestinian decision-making process.
- Egypt wants to eradicate terror cells in Sinai.
- Egypt wants Hamas to be less dependent (at least) on Iran, Turkey and Qatar. The Saudis and the Emiratis concur, and they can fund Gaza.

b) Turkey

- In December 1987, Turkey had already declared support for the Palestinians' right to self-determination. It described Israeli policy in the Gaza Strip as "state-sponsored terrorism"
- The Turkish government's condemnation of the 2008–2009 Israel–Gaza conflict strained relations between the two countries.

c) Syria

- Syria announced its complete support to Palestine after the 1948 Arab–Israeli War broke out, and had sent troops to fight against newly-formed Israel Defense Forces
- Syria also joined the Six-Day War hoping to expel Israeli Army in order to restore Palestinian state, in which ended with a complete failure.

d) Lebanon

- Lebanon did take a formal part in the 1948 Arab-Israeli War against Israel, but Lebanon was the first Arab league nation to signal a desire for an armistice treaty with Israel in 1949.
- Israel also supported the secessionist Free Lebanon State during 1979-1984 and its successor South Lebanon Army.
- In all Lebanon has maintained a pro Israeli stance.

e) Jordan

- Jordan was not a member of the United Nations when the vote on the United Nations Partition Plan for Palestine was taken in November 1947, but following the establishment of the state of Israel on 14 May 1948, Jordan, then known as Transjordan, was one of the Arab League countries that invaded the former Palestinian Mandate territory precipitating the 1948 Arab–Israeli War.
- By war's end, Jordan was in control of the West Bank and East Jerusalem (including the Old City). It expelled its Jewish population, and formally annexed the territories in 1950.
- Promoting peace between Israel and the Palestinian Authority is a major priority for Jordan. It supports U.S. efforts to mediate a final settlement, which it believes should be based on the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative, proposed by Saudi Arabia.

f) Saudi Arabia

- Israel and Saudi Arabia do not have any official diplomatic relations.
- Saudi Arabia played an active role in attempting to bring the Palestinians towards a self-governing condition which would permit negotiations with Israel. It has done so primarily by trying to mend the schism between Fatah and Hamas, most notably when King Abdullah invited the two factions to negotiations in Mecca resulting in the Mecca Agreement of 7 February 2007. The agreement soon failed, but Saudi Arabia has continued to support a national unity government for the Palestinians, and strongly opposed the war in Gaza in early 2009.

3) Stand of India

- India was one of the few countries to oppose the UN's partition plan in November 1947, echoing its own experience during independence a Few Months Earlier.
- In the decades that followed, the Indian political leadership actively supported the Palestinian cause and withheld full diplomatic relations with Israel.
- India recognised Israel in 1950 but it is also the first non-Arab country to recognise Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) as the sole representative of the Palestinian. India is also one of the first countries to recognise the statehood of Palestine in 1988.
- In 2014, India favoured UNHRC's resolution to probe Israel's human rights violations in Gaza. Despite supporting the probe, India abstained from voting against Israel in UNHRC IN 2015.

- As a part of Link West Policy, India has de-hyphenated its relationship with Israel and Palestine in 2018 to treat both the countries mutually independent and exclusive.
- In June 2019, India voted in favour of a decision introduced by Israel in the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) that objected to granting consultative status to a Palestinian non-governmental organization

Types of Documents Accepted in the Committee

1. Analysis Paper
2. Thematic Paper
3. Consultative Paper
4. Recommendation Paper
5. Policy Paper
6. Plan of Action