

# **FOREWORD**

# **HISTORY of PALESTINE and ISRAEL**

**By Jack and Mark White**

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## TIMELINE

Part of a series on

### [Aliyah](#)



First Aliyah ([Hebrew](#): העלייה הראשונה, [romanized](#): HaAliyah HaRishona), also known as the agriculture Aliyah, was a major wave of Jewish immigration ([aliyah](#)) to [Ottoman Palestine](#) between 1881 and 1903.<sup>[1][2]</sup> Jews who migrated in this wave came mostly from [Eastern Europe](#), stimulated by [pogroms](#) and violence against the Jewish communities there. A smaller number came from other areas such as Yemen, and were primarily motivated by religious purposes.<sup>[3][4][5]</sup> Estimates of the numbers of Jews who immigrated range from 25,000<sup>[6]</sup> to a total 60,000, with between 50-70% who later immigrated elsewhere.<sup>[7]</sup> Many of the European Jewish immigrants during the late 19th-early 20th century period gave up after a few months and went back to their country of origin, often suffering from hunger and disease.<sup>[8]</sup>

During the first Aliyah, agricultural settlements called [Moshava](#) were established.<sup>[9]</sup> The immigrants engaged almost exclusively in agriculture.<sup>[10]</sup>

At the beginning of the period, the Jewish population in Ottoman Palestine was around 26,000. Over the course of the First Aliyah, many immigrants arrived from different countries in Europe, Africa, and Asia. By the end of this period, the Jewish population in Ottoman Palestine had grown to approximately 55,000.

The use of the term "First Aliyah" is controversial because there had been a previous wave of immigration to [Ottoman Syria](#) starting in the mid-19th century (between 1840 and 1880, the Jewish population in Ottoman Syria rose from 9,000 to 23,000).<sup>[11][12]</sup> However, nearly all of the Jews from Eastern Europe before the First Aliyah came from traditional Jewish families who were inspired by traditional ideas of the holiness of the land combined with practical/economic considerations, rather than by modern [Zionist](#) ideology.<sup>[11]</sup> Thus the First Aliyah represents the beginning of organized Zionism in the [Land of Israel](#), differentiating it from earlier immigration.<sup>[13]</sup>

## BACKGROUND

The migration to Ottoman Palestine at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century took place during a period of mass global emigration from Eastern Europe to the Western World. From the early 19th century until [World War II](#), approximately 65 million people, including around 4.5 million Jews, migrated to countries in Central and Western Europe and the Americas, including North and South America, Australia, and South Africa. The majority of Jewish emigrants went from Eastern Europe to the United States, with additional destinations in North and South America, Western Europe, Australia, and South Africa. A small minority of the Jewish emigrants moved to Palestine during the early waves of migration, and some of them settled there.

Among the reasons for the mass migration from Eastern Europe were economic hardships resulting from rapid population growth.<sup>[14]</sup> The Jewish community from the [Pale of Settlement](#) in western Russia, Galicia, and [Romania](#), in particular, suffered from economic difficulties. Most of the Jewish emigrants (who mainly migrated to America) were families seeking to escape persecution and aiming to improve their personal and economic security.<sup>[15]</sup> [Antisemitic](#) persecution both by authorities and by the local population in Eastern Europe, primarily in the Russian Empire, intensified the Jewish migration. Prominent antisemitic incidents in this context included the "[Kiev pogrom](#)" in 1881, the "[May Laws](#)" in 1882, and the [expulsion of Moscow's Jews](#) in 1890.

## REASONING AND MOTIVES

This migration to Ottoman Palestine was influenced by extensive Zionist activity in Eastern Europe, which inspired a sense of historical and religious connection between the Jewish people and the ancient land, despite its difficult political and economic environment compared to other migration destinations.

After widespread pogroms in the Russian Empire, known as the "[Kiev Pogrom](#)" (1881), the pamphlet "[Auto-Emancipation!](#)" by Leon Pinsker was published and the organization "[Hibbat](#)

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[Zion](#)" (Lovers of Zion) was established. Its members opened branches in many cities and towns, leading to a national awakening among part of the Jewish population in the [Pale of Settlement](#) areas, extending beyond the borders of Russia. The rise in antisemitism made the Zionist movement popular, replacing the attitude of integration into European societies.<sup>[16]</sup> On January 11, 1882, the first Lovers of Zion congress, the [Focșani](#) Zionist Congress, was held. Its participants represented around 70,000 activists, which accounted for one third of Romanian Jews at the time.<sup>[16]</sup> [Mosheh Halevy Goldrin](#), a leader and visionary, called the convention 'the Union for the Agricultural Settlement' and presented a bold plan to organize group emigration to Palestine and Syria and establish farming communities there.<sup>[17]</sup>

There, the Central Committee for Settling the Land of Israel and Syria was established. It was the first organization dealing with organized immigrant groups to the Land of Israel. The committee organized expeditions from [Galati](#) on the [Danube](#) to the Land of Israel, bringing emigrants from Jewish communities in Romania. Through the committee's activities, about 600 people, out of approximately 1,000 early immigrants, settled in nine Moshava, including [Rosh Pina](#) and [Zichron Yaakov](#). In 1883, the committee ran into financial difficulties and transferred the assets of Zichron Yaakov to [Baron Rothschild](#).<sup>[18]</sup>

Many of the immigrants were simply seeking what any other immigrants were seeking: a better life away from pogroms.<sup>[19]</sup>

## HISTORY



Settlers from [Bessarabia](#) c. 1888 in the [colony](#) of Castina, near the Palestinian village of [Qastina](#). The colony was later re-established as [Be'er Tuvia](#) in 1896.

The First Aliyah occurred from 1881 to 1903 and did not go as planned as Zionists ran out of funds.<sup>[20]</sup> The [Rothschild](#) organization helped the Zionist movement by funding Zionists and by purchasing large settlements and by creating new settlements.<sup>[21]</sup>

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After the first wave in the early 1880s, there was another spike in 1890. The [Russian Empire](#) officially approved the activity of [Hovevei Zion](#) in 1890. The same year, the "[Odessa Committee](#)" began its operation in [Jaffa](#). The purpose of this organization was to absorb immigrants to Ottoman Syria who came as a result of the activities of Hovevei Zion in Russia. Also Russian Jewry's situation deteriorated as the authorities continued to push Jews out of business and trade and Moscow was almost entirely cleansed of Jews.<sup>[22]</sup>

The Ottoman authorities recognized the Jewish immigration wave to the land as early as November 1882. They understood from the beginning of the 1880s that it was part of a larger Jewish national plan. Consequently, they took steps to limit the entry options for Jews into the country. Restrictions were imposed, despite the Sultan's permit for Jewish settlement given during a meeting with two Jewish representatives from Romania in May 1882. The scope of the immigration diminished due to these restrictions and the difficulties faced by the immigrants.<sup>[23]</sup>

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## FROM EASTERN EUROPE

Jewish immigration to Ottoman Palestine from Eastern Europe occurred as part of mass emigrations of approximately 2.5 million people<sup>[24]</sup> that took place towards the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century. A rapid increase in population had created economic problems that affected Jewish societies in the [Pale of Settlement](#) in Russia, [Galicia](#), and [Romania](#).<sup>[20]</sup>

[Persecution of Jews in Russia](#) was also a factor. In 1881, Tsar [Alexander II of Russia](#) was assassinated, and the authorities blamed the Jews for the assassination. Consequently, in addition to the [May Laws](#), major anti-Jewish [pogroms](#) swept the Pale of Settlement. A movement called [Hibbat Zion](#) (lovers of Zion) spread across the Pale (helped by [Leon Pinsker](#)'s pamphlet [Auto-Emancipation](#)), as did the similar [Bilu](#) movement. Both movements encouraged Jews to emigrate to Ottoman Palestine.<sup>[25]</sup>

In 1882, many Jews who were preparing to immigrate, and several organizations that were on the verge of finalizing land purchases for establishing settlements were thrown into disarray and decided not to immigrate because of the Ottoman's restriction.

The immigration renewed in 1890 for several reasons, the prominent among them were:

1. The [Russian](#) government granted official approval for the activities of the "[Hibbat Zion](#)" movement in 1890. Starting from this year, the "[Odessa Committee](#)" began operating in the Land, aiming to give home to immigrants who arrived in the country legally due to the Zionist activity in Russia. The Jews arrived to the land as Russian citizens.<sup>[26]</sup>
2. The economic situation of Russian Jews worsened, as the authorities continued to push Jews out of trade and industry. In 1891, Jews were expelled from Moscow. This difficult situation increased immigration from Russia.<sup>[27]</sup>
3. The economic condition of the settlements from the first wave of immigration improved during the period of the first Aliyah, thanks to the assistance of [Baron Rothschild](#) (through planting orchards, establishing vineyards, etc.). This phenomenon attracted the second wave of the first Aliyah to the Land of Israel.

## FROM YEMEN

The first group of immigrants from [Yemen](#) came approximately seven months before most of the Eastern European Jews arrived in Palestine.<sup>[citation needed]</sup>

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Due to the changes in the [Ottoman Empire](#), citizens could move more freely, and in 1869, travel was improved with the opening of the [Suez Canal](#), which reduced the travel time from Yemen to Ottoman Syria. Certain [Yemenite Jews](#) interpreted these changes and the new developments in the "Holy Land" as heavenly signs that the time of redemption was near. By settling in Ottoman Syria, they would play a part in what they believed could precipitate the anticipated messianic era. Emigration from Yemen to the [Mutasarrifate of Jerusalem \(Ottoman Syria\)](#) began in early 1881 and continued almost without interruption until 1914. It was during this time that about 10% of the Yemenite Jews left. From 1881 to 1882, a few hundred Jews left [Sanaa](#) and several nearby settlements. This wave was followed by other Jews from central Yemen who continued to move into [Ottoman Syrian](#) provinces until 1914. The majority of these groups moved into [Jerusalem](#) and [Jaffa](#). In 1884, some families settled into a new-built neighborhood called Yemenite Village Kfar Hashiloach ([Hebrew](#): כפר השילוח) in the Jerusalem district of [Silwan](#), and built the [Old Yemenite Synagogue](#).<sup>[28][29]</sup>

Before [World War I](#), there was another wave that began in 1906 and continued until 1914. Hundreds of Yemenite Jews made their way to Ottoman Syria and chose to settle in the agricultural settlements. It was after these movements that the [World Zionist Organization](#) sent Shmuel Yavne'eli to Yemen to encourage Jews to emigrate to the Land of Israel. Yavne'eli reached Yemen at the beginning of 1911 and returned to Ottoman Syria in April 1912. Due to Yavne'eli's efforts, about 1,000 Jews left central and southern Yemen, with several hundred more arriving before 1914.<sup>[30]</sup>

## SETTLEMENT



Kindergarten in Rishon Lezion, c.1898

The First Aliyah laid the cornerstone for Jewish settlement in Israel and created several settlements – [Rishon LeZion](#), [Rosh Pinna](#), [Zikhron Ya'akov](#), [Gedera](#), among others. Immigrants of the First Aliyah also contributed to existing Jewish towns and settlements, notably [Petah Tikva](#). The first neighbourhoods of Tel Aviv ([Neve Tzedek](#), 1887; and [Neve](#)

[Shalom](#), 1890) were also built by members of the aliyah, although it was not until the [Second Aliyah](#) that [Tel Aviv](#) was officially founded. <sup>[citation needed]</sup>

The settlements established by the First Aliyah, known in Hebrew as [moshavot](#) are:

- [Rishon LeZion](#) (1882)
- [Rosh Pinna](#) (1882, taking over and renaming the colony of Gei Oni established in 1878 and down to three families by 1882)
- [Zikhron Ya'akov](#) (1882)
- [Petah Tikva](#) (1882; reestablished after first attempt in 1878)
- [Mazkeret Batya](#) (1883 established as "Ekron")
- [Ness Ziona](#) (1883; began as "Nahalat Reuven")
- [Yesud HaMa'ala](#) (1883)
- [Gedera](#) (1884)
- [Bat Shlomo](#) (1889)
- [Meir Shfeya](#) (1889)
- [Rehovot](#) (1890)
- [Mishmar HaYarden](#) (1890)
- [Hadera](#) (1891)
- [Ein Zeitim](#) (1892)
- [Motza](#) (1894)
- [Hartuv](#) (1895)
- [Metula](#) (1896)
- [Be'er Tuvia](#) (1896 reestablished and renamed by [Hovevei Zion](#); first settled in 1887 under the name Castina)
- Bnei Yehuda (1898; not identical with the new [Bnei Yehuda](#), Golan Heights)
- [Mahanayim](#) (1898–1912)
- [Sejera](#) (1899)
- Mas'ha (1901), renamed [Kfar Tavor](#) in 1903
- [Yavne'el](#) (1901)
- [Menahemia](#) (1901)
- [Beit Gan](#) (1903; next to [Yavne'el](#))
- [Atlit](#) (1903)
- [Giv'at Ada](#) (1903)

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- [Kfar Saba](#) (1904)

## HISTORY OF JERUSALEM FROM 10TH CENTURY BCE

CAMERA Ricki Hollander December 6, 2017

**Jerusalem is considered a holy city by three major faiths—Judaism, Christianity and Islam—and figures prominently in the Arab-Israeli conflict.**

Since 1004 BCE, when King David established Jerusalem as the capital of his kingdom, there has been a continuous Jewish presence in Jerusalem, the holiest city in Judaism. Following the building of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the designation of other holy sites by Constantine the Great in 333 CE, Jerusalem became a destination of Christian pilgrimages. During Umayyad rule from 661 to 750 CE, the Dome of the Rock and the Al Aqsa Mosque were built on the site where the Jewish Temples had once stood, and Jerusalem became the third holiest city in Islam.

Jews have constituted the largest ethnic group in Jerusalem since 1820. According to Yehoshua Ben-Arieh, “In the second half of the nineteenth century and at the end of that century, Jews comprised the majority of the population of the Old City ...” (Jerusalem in the Nineteenth Century). Martin Gilbert reports that 6,000 Jews resided in Jerusalem in 1838, compared to 5,000 Muslims and 3,000 Christians (Jerusalem: Rebirth of a City). Encyclopaedia Britannica of 1853 “assessed the Jewish population of Jerusalem in 1844 at 7,120, making them the biggest single religious group in the city.” (Terence Prittie, Whose Jerusalem?). And [others](#) estimated the number of Jewish residents of Jerusalem at the time as even higher. Until about 1860, Jerusalem residents lived almost exclusively within the walls of the Old City, in east Jerusalem. Between 1860 and 1948, Jews lived in both eastern and western Jerusalem.

During the 19 years when Jordan occupied eastern Jerusalem and its holy sites (1948-1967), Jerusalem was divided. Jews were expelled from eastern Jerusalem and barred from visiting their holy places.

As a result of the Six Day War, the entire city of Jerusalem and its holy sites came under Jewish control. Israel reunified the city, extending Israeli law, jurisdiction and administration to the parts previously occupied by Jordan. The Israeli Knesset passed laws to protect holy sites and ensure freedom of worship to all, gave Jerusalem’s Arab residents permanent residency status and formally invited them to apply for Israeli citizenship, although most declined.

Since 1967, Jerusalem has become a focal point of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. In 1980, Israel passed the Basic Law: Jerusalem Capital of Israel, reaffirming the unified Jerusalem

as its eternal, undivided capital. Palestinians insist Jerusalem must be the capital of their intended state.

## JERUSALEM IN JEWISH TRADITION

Jerusalem, Judaism's holiest city, is mentioned hundreds of times in the Hebrew Bible. It was the capital city of ancient Jewish kingdoms and home to Judaism's holiest Temple (Beit HaMikdash). Jews from all over the ancient world would make pilgrimages to the Beit HaMikdash three times a year to participate in worship and festivities, as commanded in the Torah. Jerusalem and the Beit HaMikdash have remained the focus of Jewish longing, aspiration, and prayers. Daily prayers (said while facing Jerusalem and the Temple Mount) and grace after meals include multiple supplications for the restoration of Jerusalem and the Beit HaMikdash. Jews still maintain the 9th day of the Hebrew month of Av, the date on which both the First and Second Temples were destroyed, as a day of mourning. The Jewish wedding ceremony concludes with the chanting of the biblical phrase, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its cunning," and the breaking of a glass by the groom to commemorate the destruction of the Temples. And Yom Kippur services and the Passover Seder conclude each year with the phrase "Next Year in Jerusalem."



**Model of Second Jewish Temple**

The Temple Mount is the holiest site in Judaism. The Temple was built, according to Jewish tradition, on the Even Hashtiya, the foundation stone upon which the world was created. This is considered the epicenter of Judaism, where the Divine Presence (Shechina) rests, where the biblical Isaac was brought for sacrifice, where the Holy of Holies and Ark of the Covenant housing the Ten Commandments once stood, and where the Temple was again rebuilt in 515 BCE before being destroyed by the Romans in 70 CE. The Temple Mount is also known as Mount Moriah (Har HaMoriah), mentioned frequently in the Bible.

The Western Wall (Kotel Hama'aravi, known simply as the Wall or Kotel) is the remnant of the outer retaining wall built by Herod to level the ground and expand the area housing the

Second Jewish Temple. Its holiness derives from its proximity to the Temple site and specifically its proximity to the Western Wall of the Temple's Holy of Holies (Kodesh Hakodashim—the inner sanctuary that housed the Ark of the Covenant—the Aron HaBrit—and where the High Priest—Kohen Gadol—alone was permitted to enter on Yom Kippur).

According to Midrashic sources, the Divine Presence never departed from the Western Wall of the Temple's Holy of Holies. For the last several hundred years, Jews have prayed at Herod's Western Wall because it was the closest accessible place to Judaism's holiest site.

## **JERUSALEM IN MUSLIM TRADITION**

Jerusalem assumed significance as an Islamic holy site during the rule of the Umayyads (661-750 CE). Facing challenge to his power from Ibn al-Zubayr, a rebel who controlled Mecca, the Syrian-based Caliph Abd al Malik sought to consolidate his leadership by establishing a place of worship for his followers in Jerusalem in place of Mecca. He built the Dome of the Rock (Masjid Qubbat As Sakhrah) in 688-691 CE on the spot where the Jewish Temples had stood.

Two decades later, in 715 CE, the Umayyads built another mosque on the Temple Mount which they named the Furthest Mosque (Masjid al Aqsa ) to connote the “furthest mosque” alluded to in the Quran (17:1). This was the metaphorical spot from which Mohammed was said to have ascended to heaven in a vision (referred to in Arabic as the Mi'raj) after a night journey from Mecca (the Isra) on a winged steed named Al Buraq.

## **DOMES OF THE ROCK**

Although the Quran does not mention Jerusalem or the Temple Mount, the designation of a concrete site to what had been until then just a figurative name provided Muslims with a new religious focus. Several Qur'anic verses were subsequently construed to be obliquely referring to Jerusalem. The Temple Mount was renamed by Muslims the Noble Sanctuary (al Haram al Sharif).

Over the years, Jerusalem's stature as an Islamic holy city has waxed and waned. During the period between 1948 and 1967 when under Jordanian control, Jerusalem and its holy sites were largely neglected by the Muslim world. Since Israel gained control of East Jerusalem and reunified the city, however, there has been a growing attempt by Palestinians to marshal the religious fervor of the Arab and Muslim world in order to wrest Jerusalem from Israel.

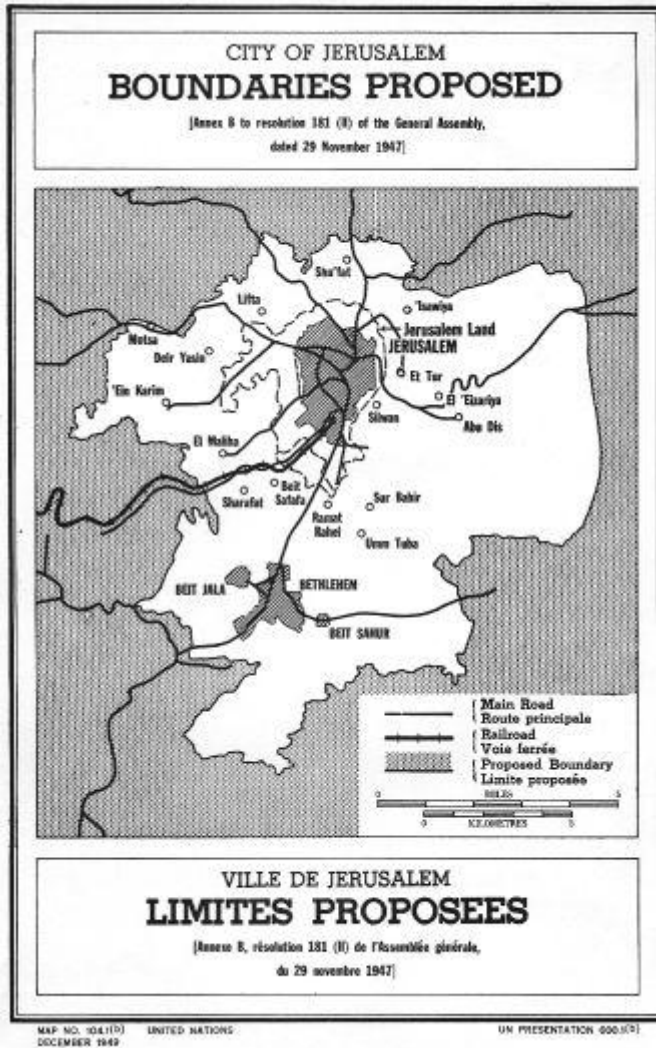
## JERUSALEM IN CHRISTIAN TRADITION



Church of the Holy Sepulchre

According to Christian tradition, many of the events in Jesus’s life and ministry took place in the Holy City. The Last Supper, referring to the final meal shared by Jesus with his disciples before his death, is believed to have taken place in the “Upper Room” or Coenaculum, on the second floor of a building over King David’s tomb on Mount Zion. The Garden of Gethsemane — according to the New Testament, the place where Jesus suffered for the sins of the world the night before he was crucified — is located at the bottom of the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. On the Mount of Olives is the Shrine of the Ascension, where Jesus is believed to have ascended to heaven. (It is now run by Muslims and a dome covers the structure.) The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, built by Constantine the Great to mark the site of the Resurrection, stands within the walls of the Old City. The remains of Golgotha, the hill upon which Jesus was crucified, is believed to lie inside the church. The church houses priests from the Roman Catholic Church and from numerous Eastern Orthodox traditions. The Via Dolorosa, or “Way of Sorrows,” leading to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, is the traditional path taken by Christians pilgrims to symbolically relive the events of Jesus’ passion. Because of Jesus’s historical connection to these and other locations, Jerusalem is venerated by Christians throughout the world.

On November 29, 1947, the United Nations General Assembly recommended Palestine be partitioned into two states—Arab and Jewish. The plan called for Jerusalem to become a *corpus separatum*, an international city administered by the UN, for an interval of 10 years, after which the city’s status was to be redetermined in a referendum. While Jewish leaders reluctantly accepted this, Arab leaders rejected the entire plan, including Jerusalem’s internationalization. Arab delegates to the UN declared the partition invalid. Deadly Arab attacks on Jewish residents of Palestine increased, and Arab forces blockaded the road to Jerusalem. When Israel declared Independence in May 1948, five neighboring Arab countries invaded the new state.



## 1948 ARAB-ISRAELI WAR

During the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, Transjordan's Arab Legion attempted to capture the entire city of Jerusalem, shelling it and cutting off its Jewish residents from the coastal plain. Western portions of Jerusalem came under Israel's control only after Israeli forces broke the Arab siege of the city. In the first four weeks of Arab attacks, 200 Jewish civilians were killed and over 1,000 were wounded in Jerusalem. But, defending themselves, Israeli forces managed to capture some suburbs and villages from the Arabs.

The Israeli defenders were not as successful in protecting the Jewish community of eastern Jerusalem. On May 28, 1948, the Jewish Quarter of the Old City fell to the Arab Legion. After 10 months of fighting, an armistice agreement was signed on April 3, 1949, dividing Jerusalem along the November 1948 ceasefire lines of Israeli and Transjordanian forces, with several areas of no-man's land. The armistice line served as a temporary border between what had formerly been two mixed communities. Western Jerusalem became Israel's capital city, while eastern Jerusalem, including the holy sites, was occupied by

Transjordan, which in 1949 became the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The city was essentially divided between two armed camps separated by barbed wire, concrete walls, minefields and bunkers.

## 1948-1967: JORDANIAN OCCUPATION OF EASTERN JERUSALEM

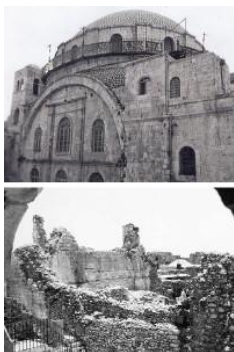
### Destruction and Desecration of Religious Sites



Expulsion of Jews from  
Jerusalem's Old City, 1948

Upon its capture by the Arab Legion, the Jewish Quarter of the Old City was destroyed and its residents expelled. Fifty-eight synagogues—some hundreds of years old—were destroyed, their contents looted and desecrated. Some Jewish religious sites were turned into chicken coops or animal stalls. The Jewish cemetery on the Mount of Olives, where Jews had been burying their dead for over 2500 years, was ransacked; graves were desecrated; thousands of tombstones were smashed and used as building material, paving stones or for latrines in Arab Legion army camps. The Intercontinental Hotel was built on top of the cemetery and graves were demolished to make way for a highway to the hotel. The Western Wall became a slum area.

### JORDAN'S ILLEGAL ANNEXATION



Hurva synagogue before (top) and after (bottom) Jordanian occupation. The Jordanians destroyed 58 synagogues—some hundreds of years old—when they illegally occupied eastern Jerusalem.

In 1950, Jordan annexed the territories it had captured in the 1948 war—eastern Jerusalem and the West Bank. The April 24th resolution declared “its support for complete unity

between the two sides of the Jordan and their union into one State, which is the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, at whose head reigns King Abdullah Ibn al Husain...”

Great Britain and Pakistan were the only countries that recognized Jordan’s annexation of the West Bank – all other nations, including the Arab states, rejected it. However, Great Britain never recognized Jordan’s annexation of eastern Jerusalem. It viewed both Jordan’s 1950 annexation and Israel’s annexation of west Jerusalem as illegal.

## **RELIGIOUS RESTRICTIONS AND DENIAL OF ACCESS TO HOLY SITES**

In direct contravention of the 1949 armistice agreements, Jordan did not permit Jews access to their holy sites or to the Jewish cemetery on the Mount of Olives.

Article VIII of the Israel Jordan Armistice Agreement (April 3, 1949) established a special committee which would “direct its attention to the formulation of agreed plans and arrangements” including “free access to the Holy Places and cultural institutions and use of the cemetery on the Mount of Olives.” Nevertheless, and despite numerous requests by Israeli officials and Jewish groups to the UN, the U.S., and others to attempt to enforce the armistice agreement, Jews were denied access to the Western Wall, the Jewish cemetery and all religious sites in eastern Jerusalem. The armistice lines were sealed as Jordanian snipers would perch on the walls of the Old City and shoot at Israelis across the lines.

Israeli Arabs, too, were denied access to the Al Aqsa mosque and the Dome of the Rock, but their Muslim sites in eastern Jerusalem were respected.

While Christians, unlike Jews, were allowed access to their holy sites, they too were subject to restrictions under Jordanian law. There were limits on the numbers of Christian pilgrims permitted into the Old City and Bethlehem during Christmas and Easter. Christian charities and religious institutions were prohibited from buying real estate in Jerusalem or owning property near holy sites. And Christian schools were subject to strict controls. They were required to teach in Arabic, close on Friday, the Muslim holy day, and teach all students the Koran. At the same time, they were not allowed to teach Christian religious material to non-Christians.

## **1967: REUNIFICATION OF JERUSALEM**

During the 1967 war, Israel appealed to Jordan to stay out of the war, but despite this appeal, Jordanian forces fired artillery barrages from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Although Israeli forces did not respond initially, not wanting to open up a Jordanian front in the war, Jordan continued to attack and occupied UN headquarters in Jerusalem. Israeli forces fought back

and within two days managed to repulse the Jordanian forces and retake eastern Jerusalem. (For more details, see [Six Day War: Jordanian Front](#))



l-r: Generals Uzi Narkiss, Moshe Dayan, Yitzchak Rabin entering Old City June 1967

On June 7, 1967, IDF paratroopers advanced through the Old City toward the Temple Mount and the Western Wall, bringing Jerusalem’s holiest site under Jewish control for the first time in 2000 years. There are sound recordings of the scene, as the commander of the brigade, Lt. General Mordechai (Motta) Gur, approaches the Old City and announces to his company commanders:

“Right now, we’re sitting on the ridge and we see the Old City. Shortly, we will enter the Old City of Jerusalem that all generations have dreamed of. We will be the first to enter the Old City...”

and shortly afterwards:

“The Temple Mount is in our hands! I repeat, the Temple Mount is in our hands!”

General Rabbi Shlomo Goren, chief chaplain of the IDF, sounded the Shofar at the Western Wall to signify its liberation. To Israelis and Jews all over the world, this was a joyous and momentous occasion. Many considered it a gift from God.

Israeli Reaction to the Recapture of the Western Wall and the Old City of Jerusalem

“For some two thousand years the Temple Mount was forbidden to the Jews. Until you came — you, the paratroopers — and returned it to the bosom of the nation. The Western Wall, for which every heart beats, is ours once again. Many Jews have taken their lives into their hands throughout our long history, in order to reach Jerusalem and live here. Endless words of longing have expressed the deep yearning for Jerusalem that beats within the Jewish heart..You have been given the great privilege of completing the circle, of returning to the nation its capital and its holy center...Jerusalem is yours forever.”

–Commander Motta Gur to his brigade upon their recapture of Jerusalem’s Old City and holy sites

“We have returned to all that is holy in our land. We have returned never to be parted from it again.”

–Defense Minister Moshe Dayan, upon reaching the Western Wall

“The Wall was before us. I trembled. There it was as I had known it—immense, mighty, in all its splendor...overcome, I bowed my head in silence.”

–General Uzi Narkiss, Head of Central Command during the Six Day War

“I felt truly shaken and stood there murmuring a prayer for peace. Motta Gur’s paratroopers were struggling to reach the Wall and touch it. We stood among a tangle of rugged, battle-weary men who were unable to believe their eyes or restrain their emotions. Their eyes were moist with tears, their speech incoherent. The overwhelming desire was to cling to the Wall, to hold on to that great moment as long as possible.”

–Chief of Staff Yitzchak Rabin

“I am speaking to you from the plaza of the Western Wall, the remnant of our Holy Temple. ‘Comfort my people, comfort them, says the Lord your God.’ This is the day we have hoped for, let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation. The vision of all generations is being realized before our eyes: The city of God, the site of the Temple, the Temple Mount and the Western Wall, the symbol of the nation’s redemption, have been redeemed today by you, heroes of the Israel Defense Forces. By doing so you have fulfilled the oath of generations, ‘If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, may my right hand forget its cunning.’ Indeed, we have not forgotten you, Jerusalem, our holy city, our glory. In the name of the entire Jewish people in Israel and the Diaspora, I hereby recite with supreme joy, Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has kept us in life, who has preserved us, and enabled us to reach this day. This year in Jerusalem – rebuilt! “

–General Rabbi Shlomo Goren, Chaplain of the Israeli Defense Forces, at the Western Wall

In a statement at the Western Wall, Minister of Defense Moshe Dayan indicated Israel’s peaceful intent and pledged to preserve religious freedom for all faiths in Jerusalem:

To our Arab neighbors we extend, especially at this hour, the hand of peace. To members of the other religions, Christians and Muslims, I hereby promise faithfully that their full freedom and all their religious rights will be preserved. We did not come to Jerusalem to conquer the Holy Places of others.

Before visiting the Western Wall, Prime Minister Levi Eshkol met with the spiritual leaders of different faiths in his office and issued a declaration of peace, assuring that all holy sites

would be protected and that all faiths would be free to worship at their holy sites in Jerusalem. He declared his intention to give the spiritual leaders of the various religions internal management of their own Holy Sites. Defense Minister Dayan immediately ceded internal administrative control of the Temple Mount compound to the Jordanian Waqf (Islamic trust) while overall security control of the area was maintained by Israel. Dayan announced that Jews would be allowed to visit the Temple Mount, but not to hold religious services there.

Dayan also gave immediate orders to demolish the anti-sniping walls, clear the minefields and removed the barbed-wire barriers which marked the partition of Jerusalem. Within weeks, free movement through Jerusalem became possible and hundreds of thousands of Israeli Jews flocked to the Old City to glimpse the Western Wall and touch its stones. Israeli Muslims were permitted to pray at the Al Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock for the first time since 1948. And Israeli Christians came to visit the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

On June 27, 1967, the Israeli Knesset extended Israel's legal and administrative jurisdiction to all of Jerusalem, and expanded the city's municipal borders. Eshkol again assured the spiritual leaders of all faiths that Israel was determined to protect the Holy Places. The Knesset passed the Protection of Holy Places Law granting special legal status to the Holy Sites and making it a criminal offence to desecrate or violate them, or to impede freedom of access to them. Jerusalem became a reunified city that ensured freedom of religion and access to holy sites for all.

The religious freedoms enjoyed by Jews, Christians, and Muslims in the reunified Jerusalem had been unheard of during Jordanian occupation of the city, prompting even a former Jordanian ambassador to the United Nations, Adnan Abu Odeh, to acknowledge that “the situation in Jerusalem prior to 1967 [under Jordanian rule] was one of ... religious exclusion” whereas post-1967, Israel seeks “to reach a point of religious inclusion ...” (The Catholic University of America Law Review, Spring 1996).



Photo © David Rubinger

1980:  
*Basic Law: Jerusalem Capital of  
Israel*

Since 1958, 14 basic laws were passed by the Israeli Knesset. These laws, pertaining to the government, president, army, economy, judiciary, land, human rights, and more are intended to form the essence of the constitution of the State of Israel. In 1980, the Israeli Knesset passed a basic law declaring reunified Jerusalem the eternal capital of Israel. The law provides for protection of and freedom of access to each religion's holy sites. Below is the text of the law, which can be [accessed on the Israeli Knesset Web site](#).

## ***JERUSALEM, CAPITAL OF ISRAEL***

### **1. Jerusalem, complete and united, is the capital of Israel.**

*Seat of the President, the Knesset, the Government and the Supreme Court*

### **2. Jerusalem is the seat of the President of the State, the Knesset, the Government and the Supreme Court.**

*Protection of Holy Places*

### **3. The Holy Places shall be protected from desecration and any other violation and from anything likely to violate the freedom of access of the members of the different religions**

**to the places sacred to them or their feelings towards those places.**

## *Development of Jerusalem*

- 4. (a) The Government shall provide for the development and prosperity of Jerusalem and the well-being of its inhabitants by allocating special funds, including a special annual grant to the Municipality of Jerusalem (Capital City Grant) with the approval of the Finance Committee of the Knesset.**
- (b) Jerusalem shall be given special priority in the activities of the authorities of the State so as to further its development in economic and other matters.**
- (c) The Government shall set up a special body or special bodies for the implementation of this section.**

## ISRAEL WARS

Since the modern State of Israel was established in 1948, it has been involved in several major regional wars and numerous smaller-scale conflicts.

Before 1948, during the British Mandate period, the region saw significant intercommunal violence and revolts.

The famous 1920 battle in Israel (then the British Mandate of Palestine) is the Battle of Tel Hai.

It took place on March 1, 1920, when a Shiite Arab militia and Bedouins attacked the Jewish agricultural settlement of Tel Hai in the upper Galilee. The battle is famously remembered for the defense led by Russian-Jewish independence fighter Joseph Trumpeldor, who was among the eight Jews killed in the clash.

See “HAJ AMIN AL-HUSSEINI” section below for more details.

### [AI MODE](#)

## MAJOR ARAB–ISRAELI WARS

These large-scale conflicts involved the standing armies of neighbouring Arab states:

- **1948 Arab–Israeli War (War of Independence):** Began following Israel’s Declaration of Independence and an invasion by Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon.
- **1956 Suez Crisis (Sinai War):** Israel, in coalition with Britain and France, invaded the Sinai Peninsula after Egypt nationalised the Suez Canal.
- **1967 Six-Day War:** A preemptive Israeli strike against Egypt and Syria, also involving Jordan. Israel captured the Gaza Strip, West Bank, Sinai Peninsula, and Golan Heights.

- **1973 Yom Kippur War:** A surprise attack by Egypt and Syria on the Jewish holy day, leading to heavy casualties before a ceasefire was reached.
- **1982 Lebanon War:** Israel invaded Lebanon to expel the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), leading to a long-term occupation of a southern "security belt" until 2000.

## Post-2000 Conflicts and Gaza Wars

**Recent conflicts have shifted toward asymmetric warfare against non-state actors like Hezbollah and Hamas:**

- **2006 Lebanon War:** A 34-day conflict between Israel and Hezbollah.
- **Gaza Wars (2008–2021):** A series of military operations in the Gaza Strip, including Operation Cast Lead (2008–09), Operation Pillar of Defence (2012), Operation Protective Edge (2014), and the 2021 Israel–Palestine crisis.
- **2023–Present Israel–Hamas War: Triggered by the October 7 attacks,** this is the deadliest conflict in the region's recent history, involving ground invasions of Gaza and significant escalation with Hezbollah in Lebanon.

## Pre-State Conflicts (1900–1948)

**Before 1948, the region experienced several major waves of violence:**

- **1920–1921 & 1929 Riots:** Violent intercommunal clashes between Jewish and Arab populations.
- **1936–1939 Arab Revolt:** A nationalist uprising by Palestinian Arabs against British administration and Jewish immigration.
- **1947–1948 Civil War:** The initial phase of conflict following the UN Partition Plan, preceding the official entry of Arab state armies.

## WAR AGAINST IRAN AND ALLIES

As of April 2026, the conflict between Israel and Iran's "Axis of Resistance" has escalated into a direct and multi-front war.

Following the breakdown of high-level negotiations, the region is currently in a state of high military alert with active combat in several theatres.

### Direct War with Iran (2026)

On **28 February 2026**, a massive military operation was launched by the **United States and Israel** against Iran.

- **Primary Objectives:** The strikes targeted Iran's nuclear and ballistic missile programmes, and government infrastructure, aiming to degrade Tehran's strategic reach.
- **Iranian Retaliation:** Iran responded with large-scale missile and drone barrages targeting **Israel**, US bases in the region, and several Arab states, including [Bahrain](#), Qatar, and Saudi Arabia.
- **Current Status:** A fragile, short-term ceasefire was attempted in early April but is reportedly on "shaky ground" as of **12 April 2026**. Talks in Islamabad and Geneva have largely collapsed, leading to a stalemate.

### The Multi-Front Conflict (Allies)

The war is being fought simultaneously against several Iranian-backed groups:

- **Hezbollah (Lebanon):**
  - Hezbollah officially joined the war on **2 March 2026** in retaliation for the killing of Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei.
  - Israel has rejected a separate ceasefire with Hezbollah, stating it will not stop striking the group's infrastructure until it is disarmed.

- Ground operations are ongoing in **southern Lebanon**, with Israeli forces pushing deeper into territory south of the Litani River.
- **Houthis (Yemen):**
  - The Houthis resumed ballistic missile and drone attacks on **southern Israel** in late March 2026, specifically targeting military sites in **Eilat**.
  - While they have recently avoided attacking international shipping to prevent further US escalation, they remain a significant threat to Israel's southern flank.
- **Iraqi Militias:**
  - The **Islamic Resistance in Iraq** has claimed dozens of drone and missile attacks on US and Israeli targets within the region since the start of the 2026 war.

## Economic and Strategic Impact

- **Strait of Hormuz:** Iran has attempted to blockade this vital shipping lane, causing global oil and gas prices to soar. US President Trump has issued a deadline for Iran to reopen the strait or face "extensive attacks" on its energy sites.
- **Internal Unrest:** Mass anti-government protests broke out across Iran in early 2026, with reports of over **30,000 deaths** during a severe state crackdown in January.

## RESETTLING JEWISH GAZA SETTLERS

The 2005 expulsion of Jews from Gaza, officially known as the Israeli disengagement from Gaza, of all 21 Jewish settlements and withdraw its military forces.

### AI

#### The Disengagement Plan

- **Proposed by:** Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in 2003.
- **Timeline:** The forced evacuation of residents began on 15 August 2005, and the final Israeli soldier left on 12 September 2005.
- **Scale:** Approximately 8,000 to 9,000 Jewish residents were removed from 21 settlements, primarily in the Gush Katif bloc.
- **West Bank Inclusion:** The plan also included the dismantling of four small settlements in the northern West Bank (Ganim, Kadim, Sa-Nur, and Homesh).

#### Execution and Resistance

- **Method:** While about two-thirds of settlers accepted government compensation to leave voluntarily, thousands refused. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and police carried out forced removals, often going house-to-house to drag out protesters.
- **Trauma:** The process was highly emotional, with widespread scenes of settlers and soldiers sobbing together. Some settlers wore orange stars (referencing the Holocaust) or barricaded themselves in synagogues to protest the evacuation.
- **Destruction of Property:** Israel demolished all residential buildings in the settlements to prevent their use, though some public infrastructure and greenhouses were left behind (many of which were later looted or destroyed).

#### Motivations and Controversy

- **Security & Demographics:** Sharon argued the occupation was unsustainable due to the high cost of defending a small number of settlers among 1.3 million Palestinians and long-term demographic trends.
- **"Formaldehyde" Strategy:** Top Sharon advisor Dov Weisglass later stated the move was intended to "freeze" the peace process and prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state by alleviating international pressure.
- **Political Fallout:** The plan caused a massive rift in Israeli society. Benjamin Netanyahu resigned from the cabinet in protest, and Sharon eventually left the Likud party to form the centrist Kadima party.

## Post-Withdrawal Outcomes

- **Hamas Takeover:** Following the withdrawal, Hamas won Palestinian legislative elections in 2006 and seized full control of Gaza in 2007 after a violent conflict with Fatah.
- **Continuing Status:** While Israel removed its internal presence, international bodies like the [United Nations](#) and Human Rights Watch maintain that Gaza remains under Israeli occupation because Israel retains control over its borders, airspace, and coastline.
- **Legacy:** Critics of the disengagement point to the subsequent increase in rocket fire and the October 7 attacks as proof that the withdrawal was a strategic failure, leading to current calls by some groups for resettlement.
- **As of April 2026,** the legal status of [Gaza](#) remains a subject of significant international judicial scrutiny and debate, particularly following a series of landmark rulings by the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

## Current Legal Status (2026)

**1ICJ Ruling (July 2024):** The Court issued a landmark advisory opinion stating that Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories (West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza) is illegal under international law. The Court explicitly noted that the 2005 withdrawal did not end the occupation because Israel maintained "effective control" over Gaza's borders, airspace, and territorial waters.

- **ICJ Obligations Ruling (October 2025):** The Court reaffirmed that Israel, as an occupying power, has a legal obligation to ensure the basic needs of the Gazan population are met.
- **UN Position:** The United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) maintain that Gaza is part of a single territorial unit under occupation. In early 2026, UN Secretary-General António Guterres reiterated that the "occupation must end" as affirmed by the ICJ.
- **Israeli & US Position:** Israel and the United States have historically argued that the 2005 disengagement ended the occupation of Gaza, as Israel no longer maintains a permanent military presence inside the territory.

**The 2005 disengagement involved the removal of approximately 8,000 to 9,000 residents from 21 settlements. Most were part of the Gush Katif bloc in southern Gaza**

Region	Settlement Names
Gush Katif (South)	Neve Dekalim (administrative center), Morag, Gadid, Gan Or, Bedolah, Bnei Atzmona, Kerem Atzmona, Slav, Pe'at Sadeh, Rafiach Yam, Shirat HaYam, Tel Katifa, Ganei Tal, Katif
Northern Gaza	Dugit, Elei Sinai, Nisanit
Central Gaza	Netzarim, Kfar Darom
Isolated	Kissufim, Rafah Yam

- **Property & Infrastructure:** While residential homes were demolished by the IDF to prevent immediate re-occupation, some public buildings and the extensive greenhouse complexes were initially left intact for Palestinian use.
- **Northern West Bank:** As part of the same 2005 plan, four settlements in the northern West Bank

## WEST BANK - AREA A, B AND AREA C ADMINISTRATIVE ZONES

Originally established as a temporary arrangement  
under the 1995 Oslo II Accord.

While intended to full Palestinian Authority (PA) jurisdiction,  
these divisions remain the framework for control today.

[AI](#)

### SUMMARY OF CONTROL AND GEOGRAPHY

Region	% of WestBank	Civil Administration	Security Control	Population Centers
<b>Area A</b>	~18%	Palestinian Authority	Palestinian Authority	Major cities (e.g., Ramallah, Nablus, Bethlehem)
<b>Area B</b>	~22%	Palestinian Authority	Joint (PA & Israel)	Hundreds of towns and villages
<b>Area C</b>	~60%	Israel	Israel	All Israeli settlements and rural/military zones

- **Area A (Full PA Control):** This zone includes the major Palestinian population centers like **Ramallah, Nablus, Jenin, and Bethlehem**. The PA manages both internal security and civil affairs. However, the Israeli military retains a right to enter for security operations.
- **Area B Joint Control):** In this zone, the PA handles civil issues like education and health, while security is a joint responsibility, with Israel holding overriding military authority. It consists of hundreds of non-contiguous "islands" surrounded by
- **Area C (Full Israeli Control):** The largest region, encompassing the Jordan Valley and all Israeli settlements. Israel holds exclusive authority over security,

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planning, and land registration. It is the only contiguous territory of the three, connecting Areas A and B.

## FAILURE OF THE OSLO PROCESS

The failure of Oslo Process, initial in 1993, is attributed to a structural flaws in the agreements and a lack of political will from Israeli and Palestinian leadership to implement difficult compromises.

Intended as an interim path to a permanent peace treaty by 1999, it instead collapsed due to mutual mistrust, escalating violence and transition

[AI Mode](#) 12 April 2026

**Vague "Interim" Nature & Lack of End Goal:** The accords established a five-year interim period for self-rule but notably never explicitly mentioned the creation of a Palestinian state. This ambiguity allowed both sides to maintain contradictory visions for the final outcome.

- **Continued Settlement Expansion:** During the peace talks, the number of Jewish settlers in the West Bank and Gaza increased from approximately 250,000 in 1993 to 400,000 by 2003. Palestinians viewed this as "gobbling up the pizza" while negotiating its partition, which severely eroded trust.
- **Escalating Violence and Terrorism:**
  - **External Spoilers:** Extremist groups on both sides actively sought to derail the process. The 1994 [Hebron massacre](#) by a Jewish settler and subsequent suicide bombings by Hamas and Islamic Jihad undermined public support for peace.
  - **Assassination of Yitzhak Rabin:** The 1995 assassination of Prime Minister Rabin by a right-wing Israeli extremist removed the primary Israeli architect of the deal.
- **Power Imbalance & Mediator Role:** Critics point out that the U.S. failed to act as a neutral mediator, often coordinating with Israel before presenting proposals to Palestinians. The fundamental asymmetry between a powerful state and a stateless people meant Israel remained the primary enforcer and interpreter of the agreements.

- **Failure of "Final Status" Talks:** Critical issues like the status of Jerusalem, the right of return for refugees, and final borders were deferred to the end of the process. When these were finally addressed at the 2000 Camp David Summit, the gaps remained too wide to bridge.

## Economic & Institutional Collapse

The economic benefits promised by Oslo—meant to build a "New Middle East"—failed to materialize. Instead, frequent Israeli closures of Palestinian areas choked off trade and job opportunities. Internally, the Palestinian Authority faced accusations of corruption and authoritarianism, which further delegitimised the process in the eyes of the Palestinian public.

Today, the legacy of Oslo is often described as a "strategic cul-de-sac," leaving the West Bank divided into Area A, B, and C with no clear path back to a negotiated two-state solution.

Would you like to explore the specific details of the 2000 Camp David Summit or the current territorial divisions (Areas A, B, and C) in the West Bank?

## TODAY

[AI MODE](#)



## Contemporary Map Changes (2024–2026)

As of April 2026, new military realities have further altered the map on the ground:

- **Gaza "Yellow Line" & Buffer Zones:** Under ceasefire terms discussed in 2025, Israel established a "Yellow Line" security zone. In early 2026, this has evolved into a fixed separation zone, with the Israeli military reportedly occupying more than 50% of Gaza's land to create buffer areas between 700 metres and 1 kilometre deep along the perimeter.
- **West Bank Annexation Efforts:** Throughout 2025 and into 2026, the Israeli government has authorized dozens of new settlement outposts and bypass roads (such as those for the E1 project) that effectively cleave the West Bank in two, isolating Palestinian population centres from one another.
- **Administrative Shifts: In February 2026,** the Israeli security cabinet approved measures increasing its authority over land acquisition in Areas A and B, which were previously under Palestinian Authority control.

## Regional Context (2026)

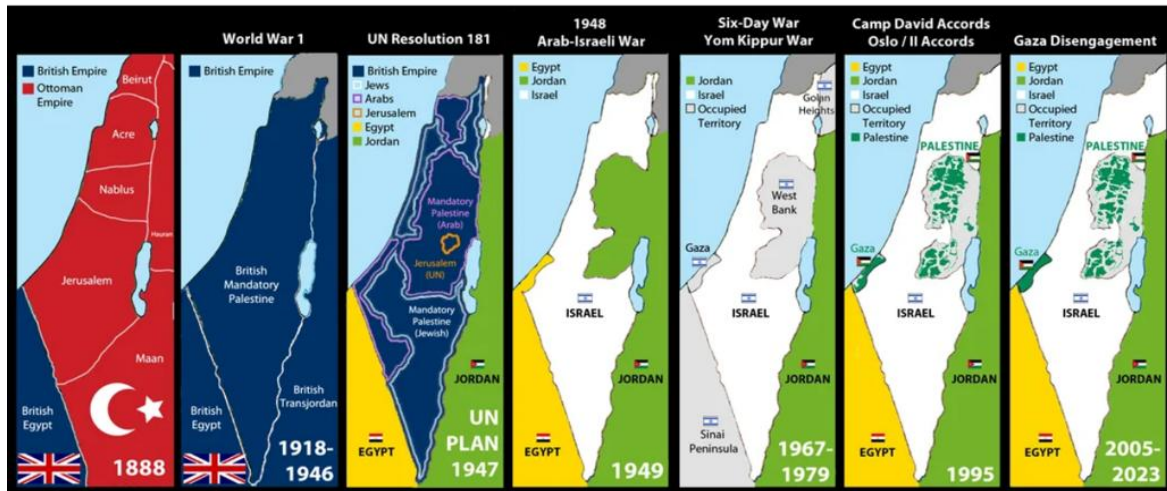
Beyond the Palestinian territories, Israel has expanded its military "Gaza model" to other frontiers. By **March 2026**, Israel announced a security buffer zone in southern Lebanon extending to the Litani River, and indicated it would remain in newly occupied territories in [Syria](#) following the fall of the previous regime in late 2024. **See also**

**[MAP OF THE WEEK: UNRAVELING THE BORDERS OF ISRAEL AND PALESTINE THROUGH TIME](#)**

Posted on [December 18, 2023](#) by [Owen Goss](#) Richmond University

## CHANGING BORDERS OF ISRAEL/PALESTINE

[1888 - 2023] Changing borders of Israel / Palestine

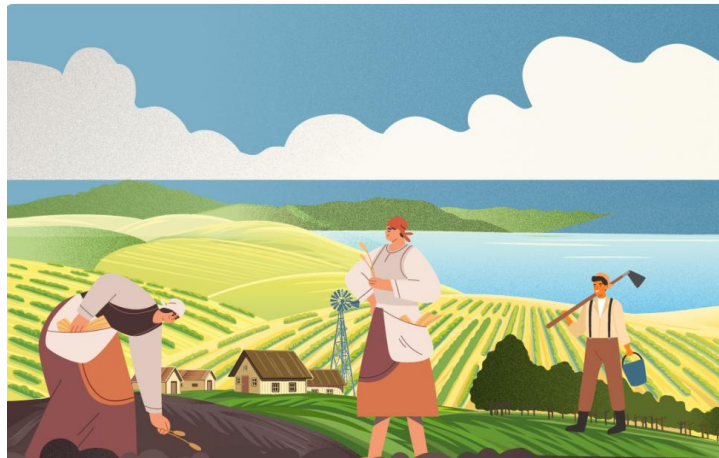


GO TO

[https://www.reddit.com/r/MapPorn/comments/17jzvju/1888\\_2023\\_changing\\_borders\\_of\\_israel\\_palestine/](https://www.reddit.com/r/MapPorn/comments/17jzvju/1888_2023_changing_borders_of_israel_palestine/)

## THE FIRST ALIYAH (1882- 1903)

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**The influx of immigrants into the Land of Israel during the years 1882-1903 is known as “The First Aliyah.”**

**This was the first large wave of immigrants that were motivated by nationalism.**

**During these years some 25,000 Jews emigrated from Russia and Rumania, and 2,500 arrived from Yemen.**

### Primary Motivations

Immigrants of the First Aliyah arrived in two waves, stimulated by pogroms and violence against the Jews. The first influx followed pogroms in Russia in 1881-1882, and the second mass influx from Russia took place during 1890-1891 as a result of anti-Jewish legislation and the expulsion of Jews from Moscow. Immigration from Yemen was primarily motivated by messianic expectations.

### The Immigrants

The majority of Jews that left Russia and Rumania during this period chose to immigrate to the United States. Those that came to the Land of Israel were mainly middle class people with families. Among them were also emissaries from different cities, organizations, and communities, who came to investigate the possibilities for settlement on behalf of their constituents. Because of their middle-class backgrounds and lack of familiarity with rural life, most of these immigrants chose to settle in cities, primarily Jaffa and Jerusalem. Only one quarter chose agricultural settlements. Despite their small numbers, these original farmers became the foundation of the later pioneering agricultural settlements.

During the First Aliyah period some 2500 Jews also emigrated from Yemen. The majority settled in Jerusalem, where many of them encountered economic difficulties as well as a

lack of housing, and unfriendly treatment by other residents of the city. As a result, they created separate housing, community, and financial organizations for themselves.

## Main Enterprises

During the time of the First Aliyah, numerous communities were established, from Metulla in the north to Gadera in the south. These communities were mainly agricultural settlements that were based on private farms. Among these communities are Rishon LeTzion, Zichron Yaakov, and Yesod HaMa'aleh. The immigrants also stimulated the development of older communities such as Petach Tikva and Rosh Pinna. Despite their ambitions and pioneering vision, many of the farming communities experienced severe economic hardship due mainly to the lack of farming experience of most of their members. They were rescued from collapse by Baron Edmond DeRothschild, who aided the settlements financially, helping them to survive until the 1900's.

The resurrection of the Hebrew language under the leadership of Eliezer Ben Yehuda at the time of the First Aliyah brought about revolutionary changes in education and culture, THE especially due to the establishment of Hebrew-language schools. [gov.il](http://gov.il)

## THE SECOND ALIYAH (1904-1915)

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**The Second Aliyah** refers to the massive influx of immigrants during the years 1904-1914.

Between these years approximately 35 thousand Jews arrived, mainly from Russia and Poland.

### Primary Motivations

Like the First Aliyah, the Second Aliyah was motivated by a combination of ideology coupled with anti-Jewish violence and pogroms. It was brought to a halt by the outbreak of the First World War in 1914.

### The Immigrants

Unlike the immigrants of the First Aliyah, the majority of immigrants during the Second Aliyah were single young people, many with a socialist ideology coupled with a belief in the national redemption of the Jewish People in the Land of Israel. While some of the immigrants were established adults with families, who settled in the cities, the majority, being young and single, tended to find employment as laborers in the agricultural settlements. During the Second Aliyah more immigrants also arrived from Yemen. Some of these immigrants came on their own initiative while others arrived as a result of the efforts of emissaries from the HaPoel HaTzair movement. Some of the Yemenite immigrants settled among the earlier immigrants in Jerusalem and Jaffa, while others chose to join the agricultural settlements. While the Yemenites of the Second Aliyah also encountered many difficulties, most of them eventually succeeded integrating fully into life in the Jewish Yishuv.

### Main Enterprises

The immigrants of the Second Aliyah founded many of the institutions and social and political organizations of the Jewish Yishuv. They established several kibbutzim, the city of Tel Aviv, and HaShomer, the first organization to undertake the defense of the Jews in the Land of

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Israel. They also established the Histadrut, as well as the first health and welfare organizations. Second Aliyah immigrants continued to strengthen the revived Hebrew language. They promoted and improved education on the primary and intermediate levels, and paved the way for the development of higher education, as well as the arts, literature, and journalism.

## THE THIRD ALIYAH (1919-1923)

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**The Third Aliyah was in many ways a continuation of the Second Aliyah,**

which was halted by the outbreak of the First World War.

During the Third Aliyah some 35,000 Jews arrived,

the majority from Russia and Poland,

with a smaller number from Lithuania and Rumania.

### **Primary Motivations**

The Third Aliyah was spurred both by the hardships of the Jews in their countries of origin, and by the boosting of nationalist aspirations by the Balfour Declaration and establishment of the British Mandate. Social and political upheavals in Europe also contributed to the motivation; the emergence of new nations following the First World War reinforced the aspirations for national revival among young Jews, who were encouraged by the relative successful integration of the immigrants of the Second Aliyah.

### **Main Enterprises**

Immigrants of the Third Aliyah continued the efforts of the Second Aliyah, establishing new institutions and organizations, as well as new forms of settlement. Among others, they established the General Federation of Workers and contributed to the founding of the Hagana. The ideal of “Hebrew Labor” was expressed by the construction of buildings and roads. Immigrants from the Third Aliyah continued to strengthen the existing agricultural infrastructure and even developed new forms of settlement which became kibbutzim and the moshavim ovdim.

## THE FOURTH ALIYAH (1924-1928)

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The fourth major influx of immigrants began in 1924. More than 67,000 immigrants arrived, mainly from Poland, Russia, Romania, and Lithuania.

Other groups arrived from Yemen and Iraq.

### Primary Motivations

Many Jews from Poland, who made up a large proportion of the Fourth Aliyah, wanted to leave Poland because of an economic crisis in that country, coupled with heavy taxation imposed upon the Jews. Also during these years, anti-semitism increased throughout Europe, motivating Jews from European countries to immigrate. Many chose to come to the Land of Israel because of the United State's restrictive immigration laws and quotas from 1924.

### The Immigrants

The population makeup of the Fourth Aliyah differed from the Third Aliyah, which is why a distinction is made between these waves of immigration. Most of the immigrants were not associated with the pioneering movements, and were largely middle-class individuals who had engaged in business, industry, and trade in their native countries.

### Main Enterprises

Due to their economic and social backgrounds, most immigrants of the Fourth Aliyah chose to settle in the cities, especially Tel Aviv. As a result, the cities experience rapid development during this period. The immigrants established light industry, workshops, small businesses, and construction. At the same time, their contribution could be felt in the agricultural settlements, including the establishment of new moshavim as well as new agricultural undertakings, such as citrus cultivation. The Fourth Aliyah contributed greatly to reinforcing the Jewish Yishuv during the period of financial crisis beginning in 1926, at which point many people left the country

## THE FIFTH ALIYAH (1929-1939)

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**The year 1929 began with signs of economical revival,**

which stimulated a new influx of immigrants known as the Fifth Aliyah.

During the period of the Fifth Aliyah, which continued until the outbreak of the Second World War,

more than a quarter of a million immigrants arrived from all parts of Europe, including Western and Central Europe.

### Primary Motivations

The Fifth Aliyah began in 1929 with small numbers of immigrants who chose to immigrate for nationalistic reasons. However, **beginning with the rise of Hitler** in 1933, greater numbers began to immigrate. Between 1933 and 1936 more than 160,000 immigrants arrived legally. Thousands more, unable to immigrate legally due to British restrictions, arrived clandestinely.

### The Immigrants

The majority of the Fifth Aliyah immigrants **settled in the cities**, mainly in Tel Aviv, stimulating further urban development. There were large numbers of academics, doctors, and other professionals, as well as musicians who founded the Philharmonic Orchestra. **A small number chose agricultural settlement and founded new moshavim and kibbutzim.**

### Main Enterprises

There is no question that along with the contributions of the immigrants of the Fifth Aliyah in stimulating urban development, the establishment of new agricultural settlements, and their contributions to the professions, the Fifth Aliyah also helped to significantly increase the size

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of the Jewish population, bringing it to 475,000 persons and 40% of the total number of inhabitants on the eve of the Second World War.

## THE KIBBUTZ MOVEMENT

The Kibbutz Movement is a network of intentional collective communities in Israel that began as a radical social experiment combining Zionism and socialism.

Founded on the principle of "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs," the movement has evolved from small, Spartan agricultural communes into a diverse network of modern settlements that play a critical role in Israel's economy and culture.



### Historical Foundations

- **Origins (1910):** The first kibbutz, Degania, was founded in 1910 by Eastern European pioneers seeking to "redeem the land" through physical labour and communal living.
- **Early Ideology:** Traditional kibbutzim practiced total economic equality. Members had no private property, ate in communal dining halls, and raised children in separate "children's houses" to promote gender equality and collective identity.
- **National Role:** Before and after the 1948 establishment of the State of Israel, kibbutzim served as strategic frontier outposts and produced a disproportionate share of the nation's military and political leadership.

### Modern Evolution and Models

Today, the vast majority of Israel's roughly **270 kibbutzim** have moved away from pure socialism toward a "privatised" or "renewed" model. There are three primary types of kibbutzim today:

1. **Renewed Kibbutz (Kibbutz Mithadesh):** The most common model (~75%). Members earn differential salaries, pay for their own services, and often own their homes, but the community maintains a social safety net for the elderly and vulnerable.

2. **Collective Kibbutz (Kibbutz Shitufi):** A small minority (~10–15%) that retains the traditional model of equal income and communal consumption.
3. **Urban Kibbutz:** Small intentional communities located within larger cities, focusing on social activism and education rather than agriculture.

## Current Statistics and Impact

- **Population:** Approximately **130,000 people** live on kibbutzim, representing about **2.5%** of Israel's population.
- **Economic Power:** Despite their small numbers, they contribute roughly **34% of Israel's agricultural output** and **9% of its industrial output**.
- **Recent Events:** Following the **October 7, 2023** attacks, many kibbutzim in the Gaza envelope and northern border were evacuated. The movement is currently focused on the **rehabilitation and rebuilding** of these communities.

Would you like to learn more about **volunteering opportunities** on a kibbutz today or the specific **economic industries** they operate?

## THE MOSHAV

[\(AI Mode\)](#)

The Moshav (Hebrew: מושב, meaning "settlement") refers to a unique type of cooperative agricultural village in Israel. It serves as an intermediate model between the fully communal kibbutz and private agricultural towns (moshavot).

### Key Features of a Moshav

- **Individual Ownership:** Unlike a kibbutz, families on a moshav own and manage their own farms and households.
- **Cooperative Support:** Members cooperate in marketing, purchasing expensive equipment, and maintaining communal services to benefit from economies of scale.
- **Land Use:** Plots are generally equal in size, and the land is often leased from the Jewish National Fund or the state.
- **Mutual Aid:** While households are independent, there is a strong system of mutual assistance between members.



### Different Types of Moshavim

1. **Moshav Ovdim (Workers' Settlement):** The most common form, where families farm their own individual plots.
2. **Moshav Shitufi (Collective Moshav):** A rarer hybrid where the land is farmed collectively (like a kibbutz), but households remain independent.

Between 1920 and 1940, [Mandatory Palestine](#) experienced a series of escalating riots and revolts by the Arab population, primarily driven by opposition to British rule and increasing Jewish immigration.

## TIMELINE OF MAJOR ARAB RIOTS (1920–1940)

- **1920 (April): Nebi Musa Riots**

Violence broke out in the Old City of Jerusalem during the Muslim festival of Nebi Musa. Following inflammatory speeches by Arab nationalist leaders, including [Haji Amin al-Husseini](#), mobs attacked Jewish residents.

- **1921 (May): Jaffa Riots**

Sparked by a May Day clash between rival Jewish leftist groups, the unrest quickly escalated when Arab residents attacked Jews in Jaffa. The violence spread to nearby towns like Petah Tikva and resulted in nearly 100 deaths.

- **1929 (August): Palestine Riots (Western Wall Uprising)**

Tensions over access to the Western Wall in Jerusalem culminated in widespread massacres across Palestine.

- **Hebron Massacre:** 67 Jews were killed, leading to the total evacuation of the city's ancient Jewish community.

- **Safed Massacre:** 18–20 Jewish residents were killed during attacks on the Jewish quarter.

- **1936–1939: The Great Arab Revolt**

**This was a sustained nationalistic uprising against the British Mandate and Zionist movement.**

- **1936:** Began with a general strike and evolved into an armed insurrection.

- **1937–1938:** Following the rejection of the Peel Commission's partition plan, the revolt became more violent and targeted both British forces and Jewish settlements.

- **1939:** The revolt was suppressed by the British Army, but led to the White Paper of 1939, which severely restricted Jewish immigration.

## KEY CASUALTIES AND IMPACTS

Event	Date	Jewish Deaths	Arab Deaths
Nebi Musa Riots	April 1920	5	4
Jaffa Riots	May 1921	47	48
1929 Riots	August 1929	133	116
Great Arab Revolt	1936–1939	~400+	~5,000+

This period of instability was a direct precursor to the 1947–1948 Civil War and the subsequent Arab-Israeli War.

- Pogroms in Palestine before the creation of the state of Israel (1830- ...

**1936: the beginning of the “Great Arab Revolt”  
against the British Mandate and the Zionist movement.**

**\* Proposal of the Peel Commission .**

**The British Commissions of Inquiry that followed these events,  
such as the Shaw Commission or the Peel Commission?**

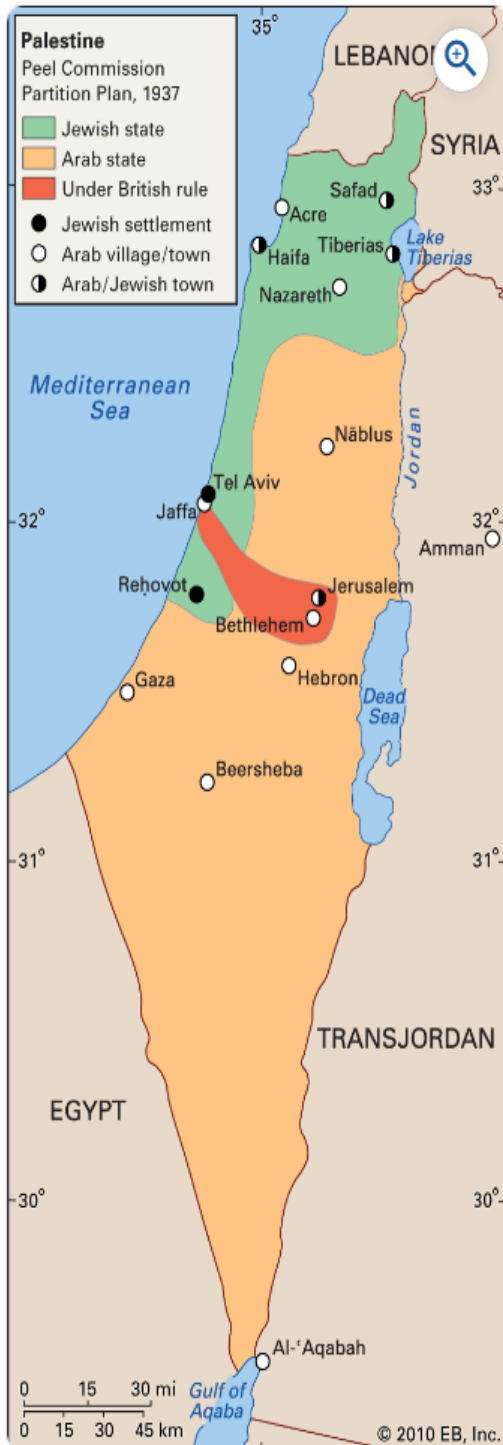
During the British Mandate in Palestine, the British government established several Commissions of Inquiry following major outbreaks of violence.

These commissions were designed to investigate the "unrest" and provide policy recommendations to prevent future conflict.

## Primary Commissions and Findings

Commission	Year	Context	Key Findings & Impact
<b>Palin Commission</b>	1920	1920 Nebi Musa riots	Blamed Arab disappointment over unfulfilled independence promises and fear of Zionist domination. Its report was never published to avoid Zionist backlash.
<b>Haycraft Commission</b>	1921	1921 Jaffa riots	Concluded that Arab discontent stemmed from the political and economic consequences of Jewish immigration. Led to the 1922 Churchill White Paper, which limited immigration to "economic absorptive capacity".
<b>Shaw Commission</b>	1929	1929 Palestine riots	Determined the direct cause was Arab animosity toward Jews, fueled by fears of economic and political subjugation. Recommended reviewing immigration and land policies.
<b>Peel Commission</b>	1937	1936–39 Arab Revolt	Declared the Mandate unworkable due to "mutually irreconcilable" obligations. Proposed the first partition plan of Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states.  <i>(for detail go to <a href="#">'Interactive Encyclopedia of the Palestine Question'</a>)</i>

The Peel Commission proposed that Palestine be partitioned into three zones: an Arab state, a Jewish state, and a neutral territory containing the holy places. Although the British government initially accepted these proposals, by 1938 it had recognized that such partitioning would be infeasible, and it ultimately rejected the commission's report.



**Peel Commission** Partition plan proposed by the Peel Commission report, 1937.

## Quick Facts

**In full:** Royal Commission of Inquiry to Palestine

**Date:** 1936 - July 1937

[See all related content](#)

The Peel Commission published its report in July 1937. The report admitted that the mandate was unworkable because Jewish and Arab objectives in Palestine were incompatible, and it proposed that Palestine be partitioned into three zones: an Arab state, a Jewish state, and a neutral territory containing the holy places. Although the British government initially accepted these proposals, by 1938 it had recognized that such partitioning would be infeasible, and it ultimately rejected the commission's report.

[The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica](#)

This article was most recently revised and updated by [Mindy Johnston](#).

## WHERE WE ARE TODAY FROM ISRAEL (CHATGPT 22.5.2026)

**As of today, the situation involving Israel remains highly unstable, with several overlapping conflicts and diplomatic efforts underway.**

### MAIN DEVELOPMENTS RIGHT NOW

- The war in Gaza between Israel and Hamas is still unresolved. Negotiations over ceasefires, hostages, governance of Gaza, and reconstruction remain stalled.
- Regional tensions with Iran continue despite fragile ceasefire discussions. Diplomatic talks involving Qatar, Pakistan, and the United States are active, but major disputes remain unresolved, especially over Iran's nuclear program and regional security.
- Israel has also remained militarily active along the Lebanon border, where tensions with Hezbollah continue despite temporary ceasefire arrangements earlier this year.
- Israel's economy has taken a hit from the prolonged regional conflict, though analysts expect some recovery if fighting decreases.

### HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

**Conditions in Gaza remain severe:**

- Millions displaced
- Infrastructure heavily damaged
- Food, water, and medical shortages ongoing
- Reconstruction plans largely stalled

### INTERNATIONAL POSITION

**Many countries and international organizations are calling for:**

- A permanent ceasefire
- Release of hostages
- More humanitarian aid
- Renewed negotiations toward a two-state solution

### BIGGER PICTURE

**The conflict has expanded beyond Gaza into a broader regional confrontation involving:**

- Israel
- Iran
- Hezbollah in Lebanon

- Houthi activity in the Red Sea
- U.S. military involvement and diplomacy

The current situation around Israel is no longer just a single war. It has evolved into a multi-front regional crisis involving Gaza, Iran, Lebanon, maritime routes, international diplomacy, and global economic pressures.

## 1. Gaza War — Still the Core Conflict

**The war that began after the October 7, 2023 Hamas attack remains the center of the crisis.**

### **Military situation**

Israel still maintains military operations inside parts of Gaza. Israeli officials say Hamas continues to regroup, rebuild tunnels, and launch attacks against Israeli troops.

Israeli airstrikes and ground operations have intensified again in recent weeks after a temporary reduction during the Iran confrontation.

### **Humanitarian crisis**

Conditions in Gaza remain catastrophic:

- Severe shortages of food and medicine
- Destroyed infrastructure
- Massive displacement
- Hospitals functioning at limited capacity
- Continuing civilian casualties

Human Rights Watch warned this week that famine risks are rising again because aid flows remain insufficient and crossings are restricted.

### **Aid flotilla confrontation**

An international flotilla attempting to break Israel's naval blockade of Gaza was intercepted by Israeli forces near Cyprus. The incident triggered international criticism and accusations of abuse by detainees.

## 2. Israel–Iran Conflict — The Biggest Strategic Shift

**What was once mostly a shadow war between Israel and Iran has become much more direct.**

### What changed

Earlier this year, Israel and the United States conducted strikes connected to Iran’s military and nuclear infrastructure. Iran responded with missile and drone attacks across the region.

Although open warfare has temporarily cooled, tensions remain extremely high:

- Iran continues uranium-related activities
- Proxy groups remain active
- Regional governments fear another escalation
- Strait of Hormuz shipping risks continue

### Regional spillover

The conflict has widened beyond Israel and Iran:

- Iranian-backed militias in Iraq are increasingly active
- Gulf states fear attacks on infrastructure
- Saudi Arabia and UAE involvement is now openly discussed in international reporting

This represents one of the largest geopolitical realignments in the Middle East in decades.

## 3. Lebanon and Hezbollah

**The northern front with Hezbollah remains dangerous.**

### Current state

There is no full-scale war at the moment, but:

- Cross-border exchanges continue
- Hezbollah retains major missile capabilities
- Israel continues military pressure near the border
- Iran wants Hezbollah included in any broader ceasefire arrangement

Many analysts believe this remains the most likely trigger for another sudden escalation.

## 4. International Pressure on Israel

International criticism of Israeli policy has increased sharply in 2026.

Today, several Western governments

— including Britain, France, Germany, Canada, Australia, Italy, and New Zealand

— jointly criticized Israeli settlement expansion and settler violence in the West Bank.

**Key concerns include:**

- Settlement growth
- Violence in the West Bank
- Humanitarian access in Gaza
- Long-term collapse of the two-state solution

**At the same time:**

- The U.S. continues military and diplomatic support for Israel
- European governments are increasingly divided
- Arab states are balancing opposition to Iran with pressure over Gaza

## 5. U.S. Role

The United States remains deeply involved.

**According to Pentagon assessments reported this week:**

- The U.S. used large portions of its missile defense inventory defending Israel during Iranian attacks
- American interceptor stockpiles were significantly reduced
- Some U.S. officials are concerned about readiness elsewhere, especially Asia

This shows how the Israel conflict is now directly affecting global military planning.

## 6. Economic and Global Impact

**The conflict is affecting:**

- Oil prices
- Shipping routes
- Currency markets
- Inflation concerns
- Global energy security

**Markets remain nervous about:**

- Possible closure or disruption of the Strait of Hormuz
- Expanded Gulf conflict

- Energy supply shocks

## 7. Inside Israel

### Inside Israel itself:

- Political divisions remain severe
- Debate continues over hostages, military strategy, and Gaza governance
- Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu remains under heavy domestic and international pressure
- Security concerns dominate public life

### Israel also continues adapting to:

- Long-term reserve mobilization
- Economic strain
- International diplomatic isolation in some forums
- Growing cybersecurity and missile defense demands

## 8. Where Things Could Go Next

**Several scenarios are being discussed internationally:**

### Possible de-escalation

- Temporary ceasefires
- Hostage agreements
- Expanded humanitarian access
- U.S.-brokered regional diplomacy

### Possible escalation

- Direct Israel–Hezbollah war
- Renewed Iran missile exchanges
- Attacks on Gulf energy infrastructure
- Wider regional coalition conflict

**At the moment, the region is in a fragile pause rather than a stable peace.**

## **THE ISRAEL CRISIS IN 2026 — A FULL STRATEGIC PICTURE**

**The current Middle East crisis centered Israeli War around Israel is now one of the most complex geopolitical confrontations since the 1973 Arab–**

**It is no longer:**

- only an Israel– Hamas war,
- only a Gaza conflict,
- or only a terrorism/security issue.

**It has evolved into a layered regional confrontation involving:**

- Israel,
- Hamas,
- Iran,
- Hezbollah,
- the United States,
- Gulf Arab states,
- global shipping routes,
- energy markets,
- and major-power diplomacy.

**The conflict now combines:**

- conventional warfare,
- proxy warfare,
- cyber operations,
- missile defense,
- economic pressure,
- humanitarian catastrophe,
- and global strategic competition.

## POST OCTOBER 7 2023 ATTACK

### October 7 Changed the Entire Region

The turning point was the Hamas attack on Israel on October 7, 2023.

Thousands of Hamas militants crossed from Gaza into southern Israel, attacking military bases and civilian communities.

Hundreds were taken hostage into Gaza.

**For Israelis, this was viewed as:**

- the deadliest attack on Jews since World War II,
- a massive intelligence failure,
- and proof that containment of Hamas had collapsed.

**Israel responded with:**

- large-scale airstrikes,
- a full military mobilization,
- and eventually a ground invasion of Gaza.

This transformed the political and military landscape of the Middle East.

## 2. GAZA — THE CENTRAL BATTLEFIELD

### 2.1 Destruction and Urban Warfare

**Gaza has become one of the most devastated urban war zones in modern history.**

**Large sections of:**

- Gaza City,
- Khan Younis,
- Rafah,
- and surrounding areas

have suffered extensive destruction.

**The conflict is unusually difficult because Hamas operates through:**

- underground tunnel networks,
- dense civilian areas,
- decentralized cells,
- and guerrilla-style tactics.

Israel argues this makes civilian casualties difficult to avoid.

Critics argue Israel's military campaign has been disproportionate and has caused massive humanitarian suffering.

## 2.2 The Tunnel War

**One of the defining features of the war is Hamas's underground tunnel infrastructure.**

**These tunnels are used for:**

- weapons storage,
- command centers,
- troop movement,
- hostage holding,
- surprise attacks,
- and avoiding Israeli air superiority.

**Israeli operations increasingly resemble:**

- counterinsurgency,
- tunnel warfare,
- and long-duration urban occupation.

**Military analysts compare parts of the fighting to:**

- Mosul (Iraq),
- Fallujah,
- Grozny,
- and parts of World War II urban combat.

## 2.3 Humanitarian Collapse

**The humanitarian dimension has become central internationally.**

**Major issues include:**

- shortages of food,
- water scarcity,
- disease outbreaks,
- damaged hospitals,
- limited electricity,
- displaced civilians,
- and collapsing sanitation systems.

**International agencies warn that rebuilding Gaza could take decades.**

**This humanitarian crisis has become one of the biggest drivers of:**

- anti-war protests globally,
- diplomatic pressure on Israel,
- and growing divisions between Western allies.

### **3. The Hostage Crisis**

**The hostage issue remains emotionally and politically central inside Israel.**

**Families of hostages continue pressuring the Israeli government to:**

- prioritize negotiations,
- secure exchanges,
- or pause military operations.

**This has created deep internal divisions:**

- some prioritize destroying Hamas militarily,
- others prioritize recovering hostages immediately.

**The Israeli government faces constant pressure from both sides.**

### **4. Iran — The Strategic Backbone Behind the Regional Conflict**

#### **Iran's Long-Term Strategy**

**Iran's regional strategy for decades has been based on building a network of allied militias and proxy groups.**

**This is often called the “Axis of Resistance.”**

**It includes:**

- Hamas in Gaza,
- Hezbollah in Lebanon,
- militias in Iraq,
- the Houthis in Yemen,
- and Syrian allied forces.

**Iran's objective is partly to:**

- deter attacks on itself,
- expand regional influence,
- pressure Israel,
- and challenge U.S. dominance in the Middle East.

## Why Iran Matters So Much

**Iran is strategically important because it combines:**

- missile programs,
- drone technology,
- proxy warfare,
- cyber capabilities,
- and nuclear-related infrastructure.

**Israeli leaders increasingly view Iran — not Hamas — as the core long-term threat.**

**This is why:**

- Israeli intelligence operations,
- cyberattacks,
- assassinations,
- and military planning

**have focused heavily on Iran for years.**

## 5. THE NUCLEAR ISSUE

**The nuclear issue remains one of the most dangerous aspects of the crisis.**

**Israel fears Iran could eventually achieve:**

- weapons-grade uranium capability,
- or rapid “breakout” nuclear capacity.

**Iran insists its nuclear program is civilian.**

**The collapse of earlier nuclear agreements increased tensions significantly.**

**Now, the nuclear issue intersects directly with:**

- regional war,
- missile exchanges,
- and international diplomacy.

**Many analysts fear:**

- miscalculation,
- accidental escalation,
- or a preventive strike scenario.

## **6. HEZBOLLAH — ISRAEL’S MOST DANGEROUS IMMEDIATE MILITARY THREAT**

### **Why Hezbollah Is Different From Hamas**

**Many military experts consider Hezbollah significantly more powerful than Hamas.**

#### **Hezbollah possesses:**

- larger missile stockpiles,
- longer-range rockets,
- more combat experience,
- stronger Iranian support,
- and better military organization.

#### **A full Israel–Hezbollah war could involve:**

- massive missile barrages on Israeli cities,
- large-scale Israeli air campaigns,
- severe destruction in Lebanon,
- and direct Iranian involvement.

**This is why the northern border remains extremely sensitive.**

## **7. THE RED SEA AND GLOBAL SHIPPING CRISIS**

**The conflict expanded into maritime warfare through Houthi attacks linked to Yemen.**

#### **The Houthis have targeted:**

- commercial shipping,
- naval vessels,
- and maritime routes tied to Israel or Western allies.

#### **This matters because:**

- the Red Sea is one of the world’s most important shipping corridors,
- disruption affects global trade,
- shipping costs rise,
- and energy prices become unstable.

**The U.S. and allied navies increased deployments to protect shipping routes.**

## 8. THE UNITED STATES — ISRAEL'S KEY STRATEGIC PARTNER

### Military Support

**The U.S. remains Israel's most important ally.**

#### **Support includes:**

- missile defense systems,
- intelligence cooperation,
- military aid,
- diplomatic backing,
- and naval deployments.

#### **American systems helped intercept:**

- drones,
- ballistic missiles,
- and long-range attacks against Israel.

#### **Strategic Tensions Inside the U.S.**

**However, the conflict has created major divisions inside American politics.**

#### **Debates include:**

- civilian casualties,
- military aid,
- humanitarian policy,
- campus protests,
- and long-term Middle East strategy.

**This is one of the most politically polarizing foreign policy issues in the United States today.**

## 9. EUROPE AND THE GLOBAL DIPLOMATIC SHIFT

#### **European governments increasingly face competing pressures:**

- supporting Israel's security,
- while criticizing humanitarian consequences in Gaza.

#### **Some countries are:**

- recognizing Palestinian statehood,
- sanctioning violent settlers,
- or increasing diplomatic pressure on Israel.

## Meanwhile:

- Russia and China are using the crisis to criticize U.S. influence,
- Arab governments are balancing public anger with strategic interests,
- and global South countries often frame the conflict through anti-colonial or human-rights perspectives.

## 10. INSIDE ISRAEL — POLITICAL AND SOCIAL STRAIN

**Israel itself is under enormous strain.**

### Key internal pressures:

- long reserve mobilizations,
- economic disruption,
- political polarization,
- trauma from October 7,
- and debates over Netanyahu's leadership.

### There are also ongoing arguments about:

- postwar governance of Gaza,
- settlement expansion,
- judicial reforms,
- and relations with Palestinians.

## 11. TECHNOLOGY AND MODERN WARFARE

**This conflict has become a laboratory for modern warfare technologies.**

### It involves:

- drones,
- AI-assisted targeting,
- missile interception systems,
- cyberwarfare,
- satellite intelligence,
- social media influence campaigns,
- and information warfare.

**Israel's missile defense systems — including Iron Dome and related layers — remain central to global military analysis.**

## 12. ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES

### The conflict affects:

- oil markets,
- insurance costs,
- shipping lanes,
- tourism,
- defense spending,
- and inflation risks.

### Countries worldwide monitor:

- the Strait of Hormuz,
- Red Sea shipping,
- and energy infrastructure vulnerabilities.

**Even limited escalation can affect global markets quickly.**

## ISRAEL AND ARAB CHRONOLOGY OF PEACE TREATIES AND AGREEMENTS (AI)

Since its founding in 1948, Israel has signed official peace treaties or normalization agreements with six Arab nations, as well as one central Asian country. While some were full peace treaties following major wars, others were "normalization" agreements focused on establishing diplomatic and economic ties.

### CHRONOLOGY OF PEACE TREATIES AND AGREEMENTS

[Egypt](#) (1979): Following the **Camp David Accords (1978)** Egypt became the first Arab state to sign a formal [Peace Treaty](#) with Israel. Israel withdrew from the Sinai Peninsula, and both nations established full diplomatic relations.

[Jordan](#) (1994): The [Wadi Araba Treaty](#) ended the state of war that had existed since 1948. It settled land and water disputes and recognized Jordan's special role in overseeing Muslim holy shrines in Jerusalem.

[United Arab Emirates](#) (2020): Part of the US-brokered **Abraham Accords**, this [Treaty of Peace](#) established full normalization, leading to direct flights and significant trade.

[Bahrain](#) (2020): Signed alongside the [UAE](#) as part of the Abraham Accords, this Declaration of Peace committed both nations to establishing diplomatic relations and cooperation in trade and security.

[Morocco](#) (2020) agreed to normalize ties with Israel in exchange for US recognition of its sovereignty over Western Sahara.

[Sudan](#) (2021): signed the [Abraham Accords Declaration](#) after being removed from the US list of state sponsors of terrorism. However, full bilateral ratification has been delayed by internal instability.

[Kazakhstan](#) (2026): In early 2026, officially joined the Abraham Accords, becoming the first Central Asian country to formalize a [strategic partnership](#) within this framework.

## RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN OCTOBER 2025, A MULTILATERAL GAZA PEACE PLAN

(the "Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict")

was signed between Israel and Hamas. Brokered by the US and several Arab nations, it established a ceasefire and a framework for the return of hostages and reconstruction, though it did not constitute a full state-to-state peace treaty.

### CURRENT STATUS AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

- [Saudi Arabia](#) Despite years of [clandestine cooperation](#), official normalization remains on hold as the kingdom insists on a viable pathway to a Palestinian state.

**Syria and Lebanon** Both nations have historically [rejected normalization](#) while territorial disputes remain unresolved, though recent leadership changes in Syria (late 2024) have led to tentative discussions.

### EDUCATIONAL TOURS

For those interested in the geostrategic and historical context of these relations, various guided tours are available:

- **Line of Fire Geostrategy Private Tour:** A tour of the northern border with Lebanon focusing on defense and civilian resilience.
- **Jerusalem Political Full-Day Guided Tour:** Explores the heart of the conflict and the impact of the West Bank wall.
- **Hebron Alternative Tour:** Led by peace activists, this tour examines the historical and theological significance of Hebron.

## HAJ AMIN AL-HUSSEINI (C. 1895–1974, THE GRAND MUFTI OF JERUSALEM)

He was the leading Palestinian Arab nationalist during the British Mandate period. As both a religious and political leader, he profoundly influenced early Palestinian politics and the Arab response to Zionism.

His collaboration with Axis powers during World War II made him a controversial figure.

### KEY FACTS

- **Born:** c. 1895–1897, Jerusalem, Ottoman Empire
- **Died:** July 4–5, 1974, Beirut, Lebanon
- **Grand Mufti of Jerusalem:** 1921–1948
- **Head of Arab Higher Committee:** from 1936
- **Affiliations:** Supreme Muslim Council, All-Palestine Government

### RISE TO PROMINENCE

Appointed Grand Mufti in 1921 by British High Commissioner Herbert Samuel, al-Husseini gained control over the Supreme Muslim Council, which managed Islamic courts and religious endowments. He used this position to consolidate political power and promote opposition to Jewish immigration and land sales in Palestine, seeing them as threats to Arab and Islamic identity. His leadership in protests, including the 1929 riots, entrenched his authority among Palestinian Arabs.

### POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND REVOLT

In 1936, he chaired the Arab Higher Committee, leading the Arab Revolt against British rule and Jewish immigration. Though exiled in 1937, he continued to direct nationalist activities from abroad. His insistence on Arab unity and rejection of compromise with the British or Zionists shaped the trajectory of Palestinian politics.

### WARTIME EXILE AND AXIS COLLABORATION

During World War II, al-Husseini lived in Germany and Italy, where he sought Axis support for Arab independence and made radio broadcasts urging Muslims to oppose the Allies. He met Adolf Hitler in 1941 and associated with senior Nazi officials, including Heinrich Himmler.

Historians agree his influence on Nazi policy was limited, though his wartime propaganda and recruitment efforts for Muslim SS units remain deeply controversial.

## LATER YEARS AND LEGACY

After 1945, al-Husseini lived mainly in Egypt and Lebanon, briefly presiding over the All-Palestine Government established in 1948. His power waned as newer leaders, such as Yasser Arafat, emerged. He died in exile in Beirut in 1974. Al-Husseini's legacy is polarizing—revered by some Palestinians as a symbol of resistance, condemned by others for his autocratic rule and wartime alliances.



## ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

[cfer](#) Global Conflict Tracker

By the

[Center for Preventive Action](#) Updated April 14, 2026



Israel and Hamas have begun to implement U.S. President Donald Trump’s [twenty-point peace deal](#). Under the agreement’s terms, Hamas has released all living hostages and promised to release the remains of others it holds, while Israel has freed [about two thousand Palestinian prisoners](#) held in Israel and [withdrawn its forces](#) to a predetermined line, leaving it in control of 53 percent of the Gaza Strip. The United Nations has also drastically [scaled up aid](#) to the territory. The status of other challenging issues, however, including the [disarmament of Hamas](#) and Gaza’s future governance structure, remains unclear.

## BACKGROUND ON THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

The movement for a Jewish state gained traction in the nineteenth century, as Jews increasingly migrated to Ottoman Palestine to escape antisemitism in Europe and return to a land intimately linked to Jewish religion, culture, and history. That trend developed new urgency in the 1930s due to Nazi persecution and after [the Holocaust](#) during World War II, in which Nazi Germany killed six million Jews. In 1947, the United Nations adopted [Resolution 181](#), known as the Partition Plan, which sought to divide what had become British-controlled Palestine into Arab and Jewish states, with [areas of religious significance](#) in Jerusalem remaining under international control. The Jewish Agency accepted Resolution 181, but the Arab League and Palestinian leaders rejected it. Leaders of the Jewish community in Palestine declared the State of Israel's independence on May 14, 1948. A day later, Israel was attacked by five Arab states, sparking the [first Arab-Israeli War](#). The war ended in 1949 with Israel's victory and 750,000 Palestinians displaced, in what is referred to as [the Nakba](#), meaning “the catastrophe” in Arabic. Egypt maintained control of the Gaza Strip, Jordan took over the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and roughly 750,000 Jews from across the region were forced out of their own countries and moved to Israel.

Over the following years, tensions rose in the region, particularly between Israel and Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. In the years following the [1956 Suez Crisis](#) and Britain, France, and Israel's joint invasion of the Sinai Peninsula, Egypt, Jordan, and Syria signed mutual defense pacts in anticipation of a possible mobilization of Israeli troops. After Egyptian President Abdel Gamal Nasser [ordered the withdrawal](#) of UN peacekeepers from the Sinai Peninsula, closed the Strait of Tiran to

Israeli shipping, and threatened war, Israel preemptively attacked Egyptian and Syrian air forces, starting the Six Day War in June 1967. Israel gained territorial control over the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip from Egypt, the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan, and the Golan Heights from Syria. Later that year, the UN Security Council passed [Resolution 242](#), calling for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from territories occupied during the war and affirming the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence of every state in the region, referring primarily to Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. Although the resolution was never fully implemented, the [land-for-peace principle](#) became the basis for later efforts to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict.



A Palestinian woman carries a prayer mat at the site of an overnight Israeli strike

on a tent in Gaza City, on September 8, 2025

Six years later, in what is referred to as the Yom Kippur War or the October War, Egypt and Syria launched a [surprise two-front attack](#) on Israel to regain their lost territory. The conflict did not result in significant gains for Egypt, Israel, or Syria. Still, Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat

declared the war a victory, as it enabled Egypt and Syria to [negotiate over previously lost territory](#). In 1979, following a series of ceasefires and peace negotiations, representatives from Egypt and Israel signed the U.S.-brokered [Camp David Accords](#), which culminated in a peace treaty that ended the thirty-year conflict between the two countries.

Although the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel was intended to initiate negotiations over Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the question of Palestinian self-determination and self-governance remained unresolved. In 1987, tens of thousands of Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip rose up against the Israeli government in what is now commonly called the first intifada or “uprising.” The 1993 [Oslo I Accords](#) established the Palestinian Authority (PA), setting up a framework for the Palestinians to govern themselves in the West Bank and Gaza, and also enabled mutual recognition between the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Israeli government. In 1995, the [Oslo II Accords](#) expanded on the first agreement, adding provisions that mandated the complete withdrawal of Israel from six cities and four hundred fifty towns in the West Bank.

In September 2000, fueled in part by the collapse of U.S. President Bill Clinton’s effort to reach a final political resolution of the conflict, Palestinian grievances over Israel’s control of the West Bank, and former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon’s [visit to the al-Aqsa mosque](#)—the third-holiest site in Islam—Palestinians [launched the second intifada](#), which lasted until 2005. The second intifada was characterized by an [escalation in terrorist attacks](#), including suicide bombings carried out by Hamas and other Palestinian militant groups targeting Israeli civilians. In response, the Israeli government approved the [construction of a barrier wall](#) around the West Bank in 2002, [despite opposition](#) from the

International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court. Israel [unilaterally withdrew](#) from the Gaza Strip in 2005.

Factionalism among the Palestinians intensified when Hamas won the PA's parliamentary elections in 2006, gaining a plurality over Fatah, the political party that had dominated the PA since its establishment. The United States and European Union, among others, refused to work with Hamas after its electoral victory, as Western governments designated the group a terrorist organization in the late 1990s. Violence [broke out](#) between Hamas and Fatah after their leaders failed to establish a joint governing arrangement. The primary disagreements stemmed from the groups' stances toward Israel and their competing claims to lead the Palestinian national movement. Fatah recognizes the State of Israel, whereas Hamas's [1988 covenant](#) calls for the destruction of Israel and rejects a negotiated settlement to the conflict. Hamas violently [seized control](#) of Gaza in June 2007, and Israel and Egypt subsequently placed a blockade on the territory.

A cycle of escalatory violence between Hamas and Israel ensued in the following years, leading to worsening humanitarian conditions in Gaza. After Hamas refused to renew a six-month ceasefire and increased rocket fire toward southern Israel, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) launched a three-week [ground invasion](#) of Gaza in December 2008. The operation marked Israel's first military engagement in Gaza since its 2005 withdrawal. Sparked by an increase in rocket fire, an anti-tank missile attack on an Israeli patrol, and Israel's targeted killing of Hamas military chief Ahmad al-Jabari, Israel launched [intensive air strikes](#) in Gaza in 2012.

In the summer of 2014, Hamas kidnapped and murdered three Israeli teenagers in the West Bank, [setting off clashes](#) between Palestinians

and Israeli police. Hamas then fired nearly three thousand rockets at Israel, and Israel retaliated with a major offensive in Gaza; 2,251 Palestinians and 73 Israelis were [killed](#). In March of 2018, Israeli troops [killed 183 Palestinians](#) and wounded 6,000 others after some demonstrators breached the perimeter fence between the Gaza Strip and Israel and threw rocks during an otherwise peaceful protest. Just months later, Hamas militants fired more than one hundred rockets into Israel, and Israel [responded with strikes](#) on more than fifty targets in Gaza during a twenty-four-hour flare-up.

The Trump administration helped broker the 2020 [Abraham Accords](#), under which Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates normalized relations with Israel, becoming only the third and fourth countries in the region—following Egypt in 1979 and Jordan in 1994—to do so. [Morocco](#) [PDF] later joined. PA leader Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah [rejected the accords](#) because they did not condition regional normalization on progress toward Palestinian statehood. Hamas [also condemned](#) the accords.

In early May 2021, after a court [ruled in favor](#) of the eviction of several Palestinian families from East Jerusalem properties, protests erupted, with Israeli police [employing force](#) against demonstrators. After several consecutive days of violence, Hamas and other Palestinian [militant groups](#) launched [hundreds of rockets](#) into Israeli territory, including Jerusalem, and Israel responded with artillery bombardments and air strikes. The fighting [killed more than 250 Palestinians](#) and at least 13 Israelis, wounded nearly 2,000 others, and [displaced 72,000 Palestinians](#).

## CLASHES IN THE WEST BANK

In late December 2022, a [coalition government](#) including three far-right parties led by then-opposition leader Benjamin “Bibi” Netanyahu was inaugurated. The coalition government [has prioritized](#) expanding and developing Israeli settlements in the West Bank, fueling violence between Israeli settlers and Palestinians. The United Nations estimated that in the first fourteen months of the Israel-Hamas war, there were at least [1,860 recorded incidents of violence](#) in the West Bank, mostly concentrated in Nablus, Ramallah, and Hebron. In January, Israel launched Operation Iron Wall, a major military action employing air strikes and ground force operations against militant groups in the northern West Bank. The United Nations reported that the operation has caused the [longest and largest displacement crisis](#) in the West Bank since 1967, with 30,000 Palestinians displaced and 126 killed.

## ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR IN GAZA

On October 7, 2023, Iran-backed Hamas fighters [fired rockets](#) into Israel and stormed southern Israeli communities across the border of the Gaza Strip in a surprise attack, [killing more than 1,300 people](#), injuring 3,300, and [taking hundreds of hostages](#). One day after the attack, the Israeli cabinet formally [declared war](#) against Hamas, followed by [a directive](#) from the defense minister to the IDF to carry out a “complete siege” of Gaza. It has been the most significant escalation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in several decades.

Israel launched a full-scale invasion of the Gaza Strip on October 27 to return all the hostages and dismantle Hamas. A [weeklong ceasefire agreement](#) was reached in late November 2023, during which Israel and Hamas exchanged hostages and prisoners. Israeli forces then [launched](#)

[a ground offensive](#) targeting Hamas in the city of Khan Younis, which ultimately became a siege. Israel launched an [offensive in Rafah](#) from May to July 2024 to gain control of the Philadelphi Corridor along the Egyptian border, further isolating Gaza. Israel's next major offensive was in October 2024 in northern Gaza, specifically in the [Jabalia refugee camp and Beit Lahiya](#), where Israel imposed a siege to establish a deeper security buffer along the northern border. Israeli forces [expanded their operations](#) to Beit Hanoun in November 2024.

Israel has cited military successes, including the [June 2024 rescue](#) of four living hostages in central Gaza and the elimination of Hamas's [top leadership](#), including the group's leaders Ismail Haniyeh and Yahya Sinwar, military chief Mohammed Deif, and Deif's deputy Marwan Issa. In January 2025, the United States, Egypt, and Qatar announced that they had [mediated a ceasefire](#) between Israel and Hamas. Israel later broke the ceasefire, citing Hamas's [refusal to release](#) more hostages, and [renewed its offensive](#) in March 2025, launching a major military campaign across the territory, including in Gaza City, Khan Younis, and Rafah.

The war has led to more than [seventy thousand Gazan deaths](#), according to the Hamas-controlled Gaza Health Ministry. Israel has argued in many cases that its actions were necessary because Hamas's guerrilla warfare tactics often involve fighters [embedding themselves](#) in civilian areas. Since the start of Israeli operations in 2023, numerous reports have documented the targeting of [journalists](#), [schools](#), and [Israeli-designated humanitarian zones](#). Israel maintains that Hamas continues to [use civilian buildings](#), notably hospitals, for military purposes, including storing weapons and accessing its extensive, miles-long tunnel network. At least [94 percent](#) of Gaza's hospitals are

damaged or destroyed, and there are only two thousand available hospital beds across the Gaza Strip. Similarly, Israel's [two-month total blockade of humanitarian aid](#), justified by Israeli officials as necessary to prevent Hamas from controlling its distribution, has led to [famine-like conditions](#) and a deepening [humanitarian crisis](#) in Gaza, according to the United Nations. In August 2025, [1.9 million Gazans](#)—about 90 percent of Gaza's population—were displaced and facing acute or catastrophic food shortages.

In October 2025, U.S. President [Donald Trump announced](#) that Israel and Hamas had agreed to a ceasefire agreement as part of a broader twenty-point peace framework that [aims to end the war](#), disarm Hamas, and reconstruct Gaza under a new civilian government. As part of the truce, Hamas agreed to release all Israeli hostages still held in Gaza [within three days](#), though it has yet to return the bodies of several slain hostages. Israel, meanwhile, [eased restrictions](#) on aid convoys entering the strip, leading to a surge in humanitarian deliveries. Since Trump's announcement, both Israel and Hamas have [traded accusations](#) of ceasefire violations, causing skirmishes that have led to over two hundred casualties. Despite periodic flare-ups, the ceasefire has [largely held](#).

Since the start of the ceasefire, mediators, including the United States, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey, have [pushed for talks](#) on implementing the second phase of the twenty-point framework to bring a formal end to the war and address postwar reconstruction. In early November, [Turkey convened](#) several Muslim-majority states to [discuss a draft](#) UN resolution that would grant the United States and partner countries a mandate to govern Gaza and provide security through an international force.

Following the expiration of the mandate in 2027, the draft resolution proposes granting a reformed Palestinian Authority control over Gaza.

The conflict has exacerbated regional tensions across the Middle East. The IDF launched a [ground invasion](#) of Lebanon following months of cross-border skirmishes with Hezbollah, which began striking northern Israel following Hamas's October 7 attack. Yemen's Houthi rebels have [fired missiles](#) at Israel, and commercial ships in the Red Sea, and other Iran-backed groups have [launched dozens of attacks](#) on U.S. military positions in Iraq and Syria. Iran's support for Hamas and other regional militant groups threatening Israel, combined with concerns over the regime's nuclear program, culminated in Israel's decision to preemptively strike Iran in June 2025, initiating a twelve-day conflict that also led to the United States bombing the most hardened Iranian nuclear facilities. (For more on the direct confrontation between Israel and Hezbollah, visit the "[Conflict With Hezbollah in Lebanon](#)" page. For more on Iran, visit the "[Iran's Conflict With Israel and the United States](#)" page.)

### [More on Israeli-Palestinian Conflict](#)

Israel has targeted top Hamas officials since the movement was founded in the late 1980s. Israeli forces killed Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, Hamas's founder, in 2004. Since October 2023, the war in Gaza has thrown the group's leadership into disarray, as many of its high-ranking members have been killed. Marwan Issa, deputy commander of Hamas's military wing, was killed in an air strike in March 2024. Ismail Haniyeh, who served as political chief since 2017, was killed months later in a [suspected Israeli bombing](#) in Tehran in July. Israel also killed Hamas's military leader, [Mohammed Deif](#), in a strike on the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis.

In October 2024, Israel conducted a strike that killed several Hamas militants, including Yahya Sinwar, who replaced Haniyeh as political chief. Sinwar was believed to be an architect of the October 7 attack, along with Deif and Issa, and military analysts say his killing marked a major symbolic and operational success for Israeli forces. Following Sinwar's death, a five-person senior leadership council based in Doha, Qatar, was appointed to replace him pending elections for a new political chief, which were scheduled for March 2025 but have still not occurred. The council is composed of Khaled Meshaal, Khalil al-Hayya, Zaher Jabarin, Muhammad Ismail Darwish, and a fifth unnamed member, believed to be Mousa Abu Marzouk. Hamas leaders notably established a presence in Qatar—where Meshal, Abu Marzouk, al-Hayya, and Darwish are all believed to be—after falling out with their previous host, Syria, when Palestinian refugees participated in the 2011 uprising that preceded the Syrian Civil War. Some senior Hamas figures, including Jabarin, also reportedly operate out of the group's offices in Turkey.

Meshaal led Hamas's political arm in exile from 2004–2017, when he handed it off to Haniyeh, and is reportedly a top contender to replace Sinwar. Al-Hayya, who has led the group's mediated negotiations with Israel in Qatar, is also reportedly a possible replacement. Jabarin is the head of Hamas in the West Bank. Darwish is the head of Hamas's religious advisory body, known as the Shura Council.

Other prominent Hamas leaders include Issam al-Da'alis, Gaza's de facto prime minister since 2021, who was killed by Israeli forces in March, alongside several other senior Hamas officials. In May, Israel eliminated Sinwar's brother, Mohammed Sinwar, who had become the head of Hamas's armed wing and was one of the group's last prominent leaders in the enclave. Currently, the highest-ranking military

commander in Gaza is believed to be Izz al-Din al-Haddad or Abu Suhaib.

### HOW IS HAMAS FUNDED?

Historically, Palestinian expatriates and private donors in the Persian Gulf provided much of the movement's funding. Today, Iran is one of Hamas's biggest benefactors, contributing funds, weapons, and training. Though Iran and Hamas briefly fell out after backing opposing sides in Syria's civil war, Iran provides some \$100 million annually [PDF] to Hamas, PIJ, and other Palestinian groups designated as terrorist organizations by the United States, according to 2021 U.S. State Department estimates. Iran was quick to praise Hamas's assault on Israel in late 2023 and pledge its continuing support for the Palestinian group.

Turkey has been another stalwart backer of Hamas—and a critic of Israel—following President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's rise to power in 2002. Though Ankara insists it only supports Hamas politically, it has been accused of funding Hamas's terrorism, including through aid diverted from the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency.

Egypt and Israel closed their borders with Gaza in 2006–07, restricting the movement of goods and people into and out of the territory. For years after the blockade began, Hamas collected revenue by taxing goods moving through a sophisticated network of tunnels that circumvented the Egyptian crossing into Gaza; this brought staples such as food, medicine, and cheap gas for electricity production into the territory, as well as construction materials, cash, and arms. Egypt shut down most of the tunnels breaching its territory but began to allow some commercial goods to enter Gaza through its Salah al-Din border

crossing in 2018. As of 2021, Hamas reportedly collected upward of \$12 million per month from taxes on Egyptian goods imported into Gaza.

### DOES FOREIGN AID FOR GAZA GO THROUGH HAMAS?

Before the current war, Israel allowed Qatar to provide Gaza with hundreds of millions of dollars in annual assistance through Hamas. But foreign aid generally reaches Gaza via the PA and UN agencies, namely the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), though Hamas has reportedly diverted some of this aid. As a designated terrorist entity, Hamas and its government are cut off from official assistance that the United States and European Union (EU) provide to the West Bank. Some Islamic charities in Western countries have channeled money to Hamas-backed social service groups, prompting the U.S. Treasury to freeze their assets.

The latest Israel-Hamas war has devastated the Gaza Strip, exacerbating the already extreme poverty that existed there before October 7. More than one million people needed aid before the fighting broke out; as a result of the war, about 90 percent of Gaza's more than two million residents have been displaced, and famine conditions are setting in. The Egyptian-Israeli blockade keeps Gaza mostly cut off from the world, reliant on the little international assistance allowed past Israeli inspectors. UNRWA remains the primary aid distributor, but it suffered a massive funding cut following accusations that it employed Hamas members involved in the October 7 massacre. Its top donor, the United States, paused funding for a year in March 2024, while around a dozen other countries issued their own, open-ended pauses or announced that future UNRWA funding would depend on the results of investigations into the allegations.

## HOW HAS HAMAS GOVERNED GAZA?

The Hamas-controlled government has no effective or independent mechanisms for ensuring transparency in its funding, procurements, or operations.

### Freedom House

Hamas became the de facto authority in Gaza shortly after Israel withdrew from the territory in 2005. The following year, Hamas won a majority of seats in the PA's legislature and formed a government. It earned votes for the social services it provided and as a rejection of the incumbent Fatah, which many voters perceived as having grown corrupt at the helm of the PLO and delivering little to Palestinians through its negotiations with Israel. The outcome was unacceptable to Fatah and its Western backers, and the party ousted Hamas from power in the West Bank. In Gaza, Hamas routed Fatah's militias in a week of fighting, resulting in a political schism between the two Palestinian territories. Palestinians have not voted for a legislature since 2006, nor a president since 2008.

As Hamas took over the remnants of PA institutions in the strip, it established a judiciary and put in place authoritarian institutions. In theory, Hamas has governed in accordance with the PA's sharia-based Palestinian Basic Law; but it has generally been more restrictive than the law requires, including by controlling how women dress and enforcing gender segregation in public. The watchdog group Freedom House found in 2020 that the "Hamas-controlled government has no effective or independent mechanisms for ensuring transparency in its funding, procurements, or operations." Hamas also represses the Gazan media, civilian activism on social media, the political opposition,

and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), leaving it without mechanisms for accountability.

### HOW HAS HAMAS CHALLENGED ISRAEL?

For decades, Hamas's attacks on Israel mostly involved rocket and mortar strikes, mass shootings, and suicide bombings. Iranian security officials say that Tehran has provided Hamas with some weapons, but that Hamas gained the ability to build its own missiles after training with Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and proxies. Israeli security officials estimate that Hamas had about twenty thousand rockets and mortars in its arsenal at the start of its current war with Israel. The group has also carried out incursions into Israeli territory, killing and kidnapping soldiers and civilians.

Prior to the 2023 conflict, Hamas and Israel had their deadliest fighting in years in 2021, when Hamas fired rockets into Israel following weeks of tensions between Palestinians and Israelis in Jerusalem. Some analysts say that Hamas wanted to bolster its reputation as the defender of the Palestinian cause after the PA postponed the 2021 elections. During the eleven-day conflict, Hamas and PIJ fired more than four thousand rockets from Gaza, killing ten Israeli civilians and injuring more than three hundred others. The United States and Egypt brokered a cease-fire to the conflict.

### HOW WAS HAMAS'S ATTACK ON ISRAEL IN 2023 DIFFERENT?

Hamas's 2023 assault on southern Israel, "Operation al-Aqsa Storm," was extraordinary in its strategy, scale, and secrecy, analysts say. It began early on October 7, the Jewish Sabbath and an important Jewish holiday, with Hamas launching several thousand rockets into southern

and central Israel, hitting cities as far north as Tel Aviv. Hamas militants also breached the heavily fortified Gaza border and infiltrated many southern Israeli towns and villages, killing nearly 1,200 people and wounding and kidnapping scores more. Fighters livestreamed videos of their actions, showing that the attack was especially brutal, with some militants appearing to perpetrate what experts say could be ruled war crimes; in March 2024, UN investigators said there were “reasonable grounds to believe” some Hamas members committed sexual violence against hostages and those killed on October 7. Military leader Mohammed Deif said Hamas undertook its assault in response to Israel’s occupation of Palestinian lands and its various “crimes” against the Palestinian people.

The October 7 attack is the deadliest in Israel’s seventy-five-year history and has inflicted a deep psychological trauma on its people, with some analysts drawing comparisons to the surprise Pearl Harbor and September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States. “It is completely unprecedented that a terrorist organization would have the capacity or the wherewithal to mount coordinated, simultaneous assaults from the air, sea, and land,” writes CFR Senior Fellow Bruce Hoffman.

The operation and the ensuing war have also drawn greater Western and international scrutiny of the military and intelligence ties between Hamas and Iran, as well as between Iran and its other “axis of resistance” allies in the region, including Lebanon’s Hezbollah and Yemen’s Houthis. While it’s unclear how much coordination there is among them, all have launched attacks on Israel or Israel-linked targets in the ongoing war, including Iran’s first-ever attack on Israeli soil in April 2024. Meanwhile, the Houthis have launched missile and drone attacks at Israel as well as frequent strikes on

shipping in the Red Sea and surrounding waters, trade routes that the U.S. Navy has been tasked with defending. These extraordinary attacks have raised fears that the war in Gaza will balloon into a regional conflagration.

### HOW DO PALESTINIANS VIEW HAMAS?

Palestinian opinions of Hamas are mixed. Before October 7, the group had been unpopular [PDF] in the Gaza Strip and West Bank, though Palestinians in both territories preferred Hamas to other political factions. Many experts say that PA President Mahmoud Abbas canceled the 2021 Palestinian national elections to prevent a likely Hamas victory.

After October 7, support for Hamas in Gaza rose four percentage points and nearly quadrupled in the West Bank, according to a December 2023 survey, though this was not enough for it to gain majority support in either territory. Gaining accurate insight into Palestinians' views of Hamas can be difficult since open criticism of the group is often met with hostility or retribution. Still, a September 2024 poll [PDF] by the Ramallah-based Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PSR) found that support for Hamas's offensive against Israel stood at 39 percent—18 points lower than just six months prior.

“It is important to note that support for this attack does not necessarily mean support for Hamas and does not mean support for any killings or atrocities committed against civilians. Indeed, almost 90 percent of the public believes Hamas men did not commit the atrocities depicted in videos taken on that day,” PSR noted.

What's next for Hamas?

Israel is seeking to completely eliminate the threat that Hamas poses to Israel, with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu saying that “total victory”

is the objective. Israeli officials have said that Hamas no longer constitutes an organized fighting force in northern Gaza, while its Gaza-based leaders are thought to be hiding below ground in the south.

The Biden administration, with the help of the incoming Trump administration, brokered a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas that took effect in January 2025 and held for two months, before fighting resumed in March. Subsequent efforts to reach a new ceasefire agreement have proven unsuccessful. Trump announced a new peace plan in late September, with both Israel and Hamas signaling their agreement on some elements in early October, including exchanging the remaining hostages in Gaza for Palestinian prisoners. Representatives from Israel, Hamas, and the United States are set to take part in talks in Cairo to finalize the agreement, as Israeli military operations in Gaza continue in the meantime.

Hamas and PA negotiators have held talks on cooperating in a technocratic government that administers Gaza once the fighting ends, per a joint statement issued in Beijing in July 2024. But some experts say that the Israeli government is unlikely to accept such an outcome, having so far rejected temporary ceasefires that could have given Hamas time to regroup. It also remains to be seen whether Hamas would agree to the entirety of Trump's peace plan, which calls for the group to be disarmed and stripped of governing power.

“It is highly possible that Israel and Hamas make progress on the first points of the plan—a cessation in fighting and the exchange of hostages and prisoners—only to see the long-term components crumble and the war resume, once again,” CFR President Michael Froman wrote in early October.

## RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Two years after Hamas’s October 7 attack, it’s clear that early choices by Israel, Biden, and Hamas set the region on a devastating trajectory that might have been avoided, CFR Senior Fellow Steven A. Cook writes for Foreign Policy.

CFR President Mike Froman and CFR Senior Fellow Steven A. Cook discuss the implications of the January Israel-Hamas ceasefire for The World This Week.

These Backgrounders by CFR’s Kali Robinson explain what to know about Palestinian governance beyond Gaza and about U.S. policy on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The European Council on Foreign Relations maps Palestinian politics.

## VIDEOS

### EDITORS NOTE

*The Institute for the Study of War (ISW) and The Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute are publishing daily updates to provide analysis on the war with Iran. The updates focus on US and Israeli strikes on Iran and Iran and the Axis of Resistance's response to the strikes. The updates cover events from the past 24-hour period.*

*For Example*

[Iran Update Special Report, April 15, 2026](#)

<https://camera-uk.org/>



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**CAMERA ON CAMPUS**

**CAMERA EDUCATION INSTITUTE**

**THE SIX-DAY WAR**

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## IRAN'S 1979 REVOLUTION EXPLAINED: FROM THE SHAH TO KHOMEINI – AND TODAY'S WAR (2026)

[DW History and Culture](#) 14 Dec 2025 39min 12sec

Following the death of Ayatollah Khamenei and the outbreak of war in Iran in February 2026, understanding the country's turbulent history is more vital than ever. Iran's Revolution in 1978/79 changed the Middle East forever. Discover how Iran went from a modern, pro-Western country led by Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi to the strict Islamic Republic ruled by Ayatollah Khomeini. In this documentary, we trace the journey from the CIA-backed coup in 1953, through the mass protests and uprising of 1978/1979, to the Mullahs' takeover after the fall of the Shah.

Why do millions of Iranians still protest today? Why has the name of exiled Crown Prince Reza Pahlavi resurfaced as a symbol of resistance against the regime of today? Why does modern Iran still have to fight for democracy?

This documentary also touches upon women's rights, hijab laws, and the tragic death of Mahsa Amini. Hear firsthand stories from Iranian-American writer [@HakakianRoya](#) who grew up in Tehran, and historian Ali Ansari from [@universityofstandrews](#) whose family directly experienced the Shah's fall.

We explain:

- The role of the CIA and MI6 in shaping Iranian history
- How Ayatollah Khomeini outmanoeuvred secular revolutionaries, leftists, and moderate voices
- What the 444-day US embassy hostage crisis meant for Iran-US relations
- How Iranian women lost rights their grandmothers once had and why they're fighting for them again

Credits: SCRIPT & PRODUCER: Ricarda Otte HOST: David Levitz EDIT: Mariano Ramírez Gisbert SUPERVISING EDITOR: Susanne Spröer EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Sarah Hofmann, Melanie von Marschalck Chapters: [0:00](#) Intro [4:54](#) A Short-Lived Dynasty: The two Pahlavis [7:39](#) Oil: A Blessing or a Curse? [9:42](#) Kermit's Coup [13:06](#) The White Revolution and its Discontents [15:35](#) Enter the Ayatollah [19:11](#) The Shah's Napoleon Moment [21:54](#) The Beginning of the End [27:10](#) The Tipping Point [29:52](#) Hostages for 444 Days [35:24](#) The Revolutions's Broken Promises

## INSIDE IRAN'S POWER STRUGGLE THAT COULD CRASH OIL PRICES

[Market Insider](#) 21 March 2026 37min 50sec

As tensions around Iran continue to influence oil markets and global risk sentiment, the real story may lie beneath the surface. Much of the uncertainty comes from how power, capital, and control are evolving inside the country rather than from the conflict alone. In this episode, we speak with Bijan Kian, former senior U.S. official and international finance expert, to examine how internal dynamics could shape market outcomes and why understanding these shifts may matter more than the headlines suggest.

[04:31](#) – Iran's Military Structure [07:16](#) – Inside Iran's Corrupt Economy [12:18](#) – Is the U.S. Losing Ground [13:26](#) – China's Role in Iran [15:58](#) – Why Iran Targets Neighbors [18:42](#) – Disruption vs Military Strategy [21:02](#) – Will the Regime Collapse [23:09](#) – Will Forces Join the People [24:35](#) – Could Iran Be Divided [28:36](#) – Can Iran Close Hormuz [31:16](#) – Future U.S.–Iran Relations [33:11](#) – Iran's Economic Potential

## OIL PRICE SPIKES AFTER REPORTS IRAN HAS CLOSED STRAIT OF HORMUZ

[ABC News \(Australia\)](#) 1 Mar 2026 5min 36sec

The price of oil has spiked on global markets in the wake of the ongoing war in the Middle East. It's been reported that Iran has closed the Strait of Hormuz.

About 20-25 per cent of global oil and gas supply travels through the Strait of Hormuz.

## WHY THE WORLD CAN'T BYPASS THE STRAIT OF HORMUZ — EVEN WITH PIPELINES AND \$200B PLANS

[NextGen Production](#) 26 Mar 2026 14min 59sec



The Strait of Hormuz is the most critical chokepoint in global trade, handling nearly a fifth of the world's oil supply. But with rising tensions and increasing risks, countries have invested over \$200 billion in pipelines, alternative routes, and mega projects to bypass it.

So why hasn't anything worked?

In this video, we break down:

Why the Strait of Hormuz is so important to global energy

The billion-dollar pipeline projects designed to replace it

Why geography, politics, and economics make it nearly impossible to bypass

What would happen if the Strait suddenly closed

This is not just about oil — it's about global power, اقتصاد, and survival.

Watch till the end to understand why the world still depends on one narrow strip of water.

Your gateway to the world's most mind-blowing manufacturing processes, automated factories, and next-level industrial innovations.

Here, we take you inside the machines, engineering systems, and futuristic production lines that power our modern world. From mega factories to robotic automation — we show you how the impossible gets made.

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## **U.S. NAVAL BLOCKADE OF IRANIAN PORTS GOES INTO EFFECT**

[NBC News](#) 13 April 2026 8min 12sec

A U.S. naval blockade of Iranian ports and coastal areas came into effect after President Trump posted that the Navy would prevent ships from passing through the Strait of Hormuz. NBC News' Matt Bradley and Garrett Haake have details on the president's decision and what consequences it could have for the ongoing conflict.

## **THE U.S. MOVES IN THE STRAIT OF HORMUZ... WHAT HAPPENS NEXT CHANGES EVERYTHING**

[World Brief Daily](#) 14 April 2026 26min 19sec

In this episode of World Brief Daily, we examine the rapidly evolving situation in the Strait of Hormuz, one of the most strategically important maritime chokepoints in the global energy system.

Recent reports indicate that U.S. naval forces have begun mine-clearance operations in the Strait of Hormuz, a critical step aimed at restoring safe navigation through one of the world's busiest oil shipping routes. Roughly 20% of global oil supplies normally pass through this narrow waterway, meaning any disruption can have immediate consequences for global energy markets and international trade.

In this analysis, we explore the broader geopolitical context surrounding the crisis, the technologies involved in maritime mine-clearing operations, and the potential implications for global shipping, energy markets, and international security.

Our goal is to provide clear, contextualized geopolitical analysis based on publicly available information from major international news organizations and official sources.

AI DISCLOSURE: This video uses artificial intelligence technologies for the visual presentation (digital avatar). However, the geopolitical analysis, original script writing, and editing were entirely produced by the team at World Brief Daily. We use AI as a creative tool to make complex global events easier to understand and more accessible to a wider audience. Sources & References (Fact-Checking):



## **SOMETHING UNTHINKABLE JUST ENTERED THE GULF TO BYPASS HORMUZ... TEHRAN IS NOW SURROUNDED**

[The Geo Network](#) 14 April 2026 16min 30sec

The Strait of Hormuz, the world's most critical energy chokepoint, has just been completely bypassed. In a revolutionary geopolitical maneuver. Saudi Arabia and the UAE have activated massive desert pipelines, effectively neutralizing Iran's ultimate blackmail tool. But the real shockwave is what just entered the Gulf: a historic, unthinkable deployment of 13,000 elite Pakistani troops, JF-17 fighter jets, and AWACS to Saudi Arabia, right on Iran's doorstep.

Tehran is now facing the ultimate conventional siege. A multi-layered, unprecedented defense shield combining Gulf states, the Pakistan military, and U.S. F-35s, Patriot, and THAAD batteries has created an impenetrable wall against Iranian proxies, missile strikes, and drones. The ultimate irony? China, Iran's biggest ally, built the very UAE pipelines that saved the Gulf Arabs from Tehran's trap.

With Russia distracted by its own war and China prioritizing its energy security, Iran is completely isolated. Its asymmetric warfare doctrine using proxies like the Houthis and Hezbollah is proving useless against this massive, coordinated conventional military wall. Watch this exclusive OSINT military breakdown by The Geo Network to understand how the Gulf just executed the ultimate geopolitical checkmate and completely surrounded Tehran!

 Topics Covered in This Geopolitical Analysis: The Hormuz Bypass: How Saudi and UAE desert pipelines broke Iran's trap. Pakistan's Massive Deployment: 13,000 elite troops and JF-17s arrive in Saudi Arabia. The China Irony: Why Beijing built the pipeline that crippled Tehran's leverage. The Unprecedented Gulf Shield: U.S. THAAD, Patriot, and F-35s caging Iran. Tehran's Isolation: Why Iran's proxy warfare is completely failing.  With the Gulf States and Pakistan forming this massive military alliance, do you think Iran's proxy network in the Middle East will finally collapse? Let us know your thoughts in the comments!

## **1 MIN AGO: U.S. ESCALATES PRESSURE IN HORMUZ — IRAN'S STRATEGY FACES MAJOR SETBACK**

[Dr Elena Harris](#) 15 Apr 2026 25min 40sec

It is 10 o'clock in the morning, Eastern time. A tanker loaded with Iranian crude oil is moving through one of the most important waterways on the planet. The captain receives a warning broadcast over the radio. US naval forces are ordering the vessel to turn back. Not a drill, not a threat. An actual live enforced naval blockade—the first of its kind by the United States in decades. And just like that, the world changed. This morning, the blockade officially began. Iran stands to lose roughly \$8 billion every single month. \$270 million daily exports

frozen. Oil storage capacity full in two weeks, forcing permanent well shutdowns. 📢

Subscribe:  / [@dr.elena.harris](https://www.youtube.com/@dr.elena.harris)  X (Twitter): <https://x.com/DrElenaHarris>

In this video, we break down:

-Why US blockade freezes \$270M daily Iranian exports—\$140M oil, \$80M petrochemicals, \$160M imports daily stopped. -How Iran's oil storage fills in two weeks—50-60 million barrel capacity, 1.5M barrels produced daily, forces well shutdowns. -Why well shutdowns cause permanent damage—each shutdown loses 5-10% extraction capacity forever, billions in lost revenue.

-How 21-hour Islamabad talks failed—VP Vance's six red lines include ending uranium enrichment, dismantling facilities, no Hormuz tolls. -Why China pressures Iran to negotiate—50% of Chinese oil supply depends on Strait of Hormuz, needs conflict to deescalate.

Dr.Elena.Harris does not aim to incite, glorify, or promote conflict. Its mission is to provide responsible analysis, contextual understanding, and thoughtful discussion of global defense, military operations, and international security issues. Viewer discretion and critical thinking are advised.

⚠️ Disclaimer: The content presented on Dr.Elena.Harris analyses military, geopolitical, and security developments using publicly available news, reports, and media sources. All material is intended for educational and informational purposes only

## **U.S. NAVY LAUNCHES MAJOR BLOCKADE IN THE STRAIT OF HORMUZ**

[World Brief Daily](#) 15 April 2026 27min 22sec

In this episode of World Brief Daily, we examine the escalating geopolitical tensions surrounding the Strait of Hormuz, one of the most strategically important maritime chokepoints in the world.

Recent developments have placed global attention on the region as military deployments, diplomatic negotiations, and economic pressures continue to shape the situation between the United States, Iran, and the broader international community.

The Strait of Hormuz plays a vital role in the global economy, with a large share of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas shipments passing through this narrow waterway every day. Any disruption in this region has the potential to affect global energy markets, supply chains, and geopolitical stability.

In this analysis, we break down the key events that led to the current situation, the strategic importance of the strait, the military and economic implications, and the possible scenarios that could unfold in the coming weeks.

Our goal is to provide clear, fact-based geopolitical analysis using publicly available information from recognized international media sources. If you want in-depth breakdowns of global conflicts, economic shifts, and international power dynamics, subscribe to World Brief Daily and turn on notifications so you never miss a major development.

AI DISCLAIMER: This video uses artificial intelligence technology for visual presentation (digital avatar). However, the geopolitical analysis, original script writing, research, and editing were fully produced by the World Brief Daily team. We use AI strictly as a creative tool to help make complex global events more accessible and easier to understand.

## **SOMETHING UNTHINKABLE JUST ENTERED THE GULF TO BYPASS HORMUZ ... IRAN DIDN'T EXPECT THIS**

[World Brief Daily](#) 15 April 2026 12 min 34sec

In this episode of World Brief Daily, we examine the rapidly evolving geopolitical situation in the Persian Gulf, where new military deployments, energy infrastructure developments, and diplomatic negotiations are reshaping the strategic balance of the Middle East.

Recent reports indicate that Pakistan has deployed military aircraft and personnel to Saudi Arabia, following the signing of the Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement (SMDA) between the two countries in 2025. At the same time, Islamabad has been hosting diplomatic discussions involving the United States and Iran, highlighting Pakistan's increasingly complex role in regional security.

Meanwhile, energy infrastructure has become a key element in the geopolitical equation. Saudi Arabia recently confirmed the restoration of the East-West oil pipeline to full capacity, allowing crude exports to bypass the Strait of Hormuz and reach the Red Sea. This development, along with similar pipeline routes in the United Arab Emirates, could significantly influence global energy logistics and regional strategic calculations.

In this analysis, we break down the military, diplomatic, and economic dimensions of these developments and explore how they could impact the future stability of the Gulf region.

This video provides context and geopolitical analysis based on publicly available information and international reporting.

# Forward – History of Israel and Palestine

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## **IRAN DECLARES STRAIT OF HORMUZ OPEN BUT FEW SHIPS ARE PASSING THROUGH VITAL SEA LANE**

[BBC News](#) 17 Apr 2026 9min 2sec

**Commercial shipping is not flowing freely once again through the Strait of Hormuz, despite Iran declared that the vital shipping lane is open again.**

**Shipping companies are still said to be concerned about mines, as well as new rules Iran has imposed on them using the Strait.**

While the markets have rallied, there remains a lot of uncertainty over the status of the strait, which normally carries around a fifth of the world's oil and gas supplies.

Iran declared it was reopening the shipping channel after a truce agreed in the war between Israel and the Iranian backed militia group, Hezbollah. However Donald Trump has insisted that the US blockade of Iranian ports will continue, until a permanent peace deal is agreed, in America's own war, with Iran.

While the current ceasefire between the US and Iran still appears to be holding, it's due to run out next week, with both sides still far apart on agreeing the conditions for a lasting deal.

Clive Myrie presents BBC News at Ten reporting by Sarah Smith, Dharshini David and Lyse Doucet.

## **TEHRAN REASSERTS CONTROL OVER STRAIT OF HORMUZ**

[ABC News](#) 18 Apr 2026 1min 56sec

A tanker reported coming under fire from Iranian gunboats while traveling through the strait on Saturday morning. It's the second incident in the critical waterway, according to the British military.

## **IRAN TIGHTENS GRIP ON STRAIT OF HORMUZ WITH 'CONTROLLED 'MARITIME ZONE'**

[Fox News](#) 21 May 2026 8min 11s



## RUMP, IRAN AND THE \$150,000 STRAIT OF HORMUZ TOLL

**The Telegraph 21 May 2026 30min 19sec**

That's the grim prognosis of the UAE's most senior oil executive. But even if it does open, Iran is implementing a system of tolls that will have long-term implications, both in the Middle East and further afield. International economic editor Hans van Leeuwen tells Roland Oliphant how the ongoing crisis in the Strait of Hormuz is transforming shipping all over the world.

Hans also looks at why India's leader Narendra Modi is in Europe at the moment trying to drum up deals amid fears the Iran war could impact his country's superpower trajectory.

Meanwhile, Donald Trump and Benjamin Netanyahu clash over whether to restart active hostilities, Pakistan's army chief heads to Tehran to coax the regime towards a peace deal, and Iran says it will not give up its Uranium.

### Highlights

How Iran's Strait of Hormuz toll could spread worldwide Why the Iran war is throwing India off its superpower trajectory

## ISRAEL IS BUILDING THE BEN GURION CANAL TO BYPASS THE SUEZ CANAL

[The Primest – the Megaproject &](#) 1 May 2026 6min 17sec



Israel is once again at the center of global attention, and this time it's not just about politics or conflict — it's about one of the most controversial megaprojects ever proposed: the Ben Gurion Canal. A project that could potentially bypass the Suez Canal entirely and reshape global trade forever.

The Suez Canal, a 193 km-long waterway connecting the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea, has long been one of the most critical chokepoints in the world, handling a massive portion of global trade between Europe and Asia. Suez Canal Every year, thousands of ships pass through it, saving time and distance compared to routes around Africa. But recent disruptions, rising geopolitical tensions, and vulnerabilities exposed by events like the Ever Given blockage have reignited discussions about alternatives.

Enter the Ben Gurion Canal — a decades-old proposal that is now resurfacing in 2025 and 2026 discussions. First conceived in the 1960s, the idea was simple but ambitious: create a completely new maritime corridor connecting the Red Sea to the Mediterranean, running through Israel's Negev desert.

The proposed canal would stretch roughly 260 to 300 kilometres, significantly longer than the Suez Canal, and would link Israel's southern port of Eilat on the Gulf of Aqaba directly to the Mediterranean coast. If completed, it would provide a fully sovereign alternative shipping route, reducing reliance on Egypt's control over one of the world's most important trade arteries.

But this isn't just about infrastructure — it's about power. Control over global trade routes means influence over energy, shipping, and geopolitics. The Ben Gurion Canal has been described as a project that could dramatically shift regional dynamics, positioning Israel as a key transit hub between Europe and Asia.

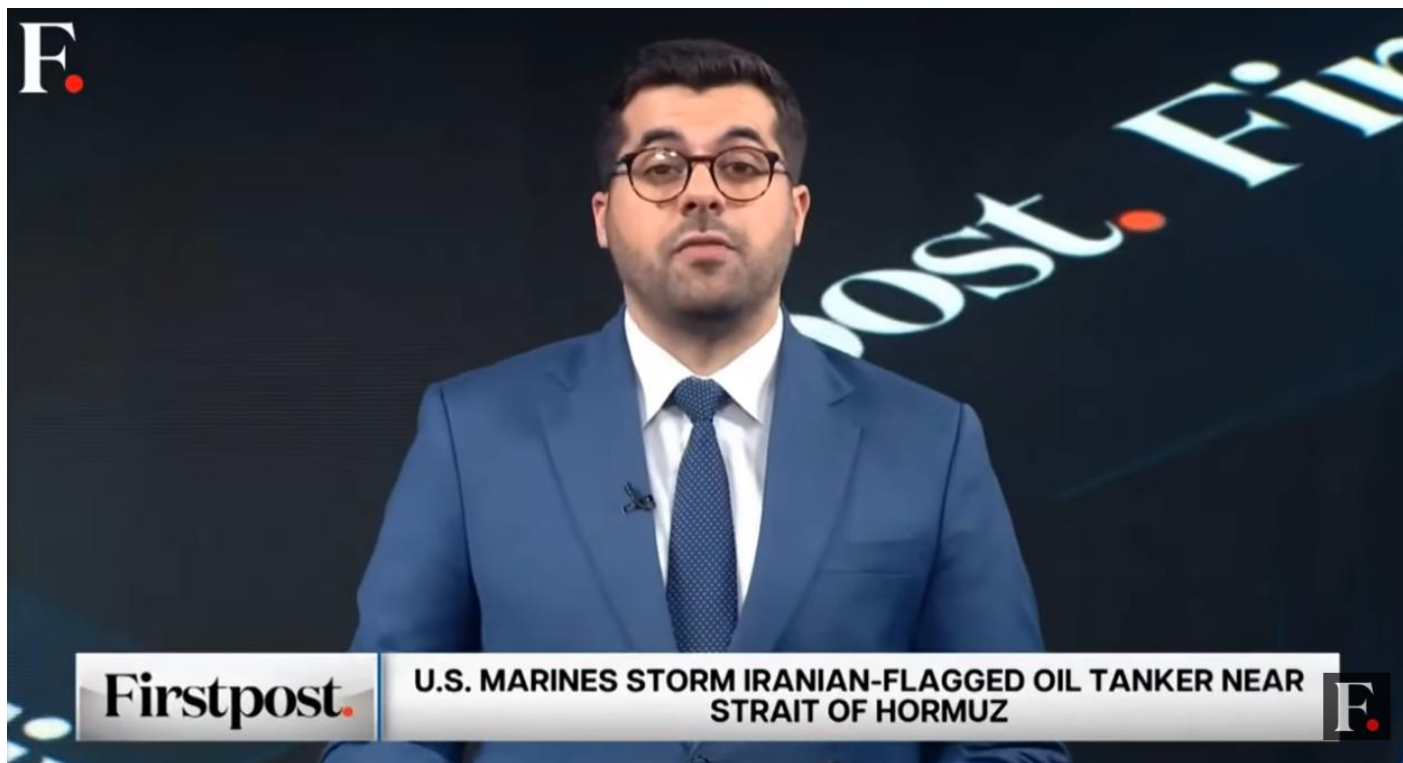
At the same time, the project is surrounded by controversy. Questions remain about feasibility, cost, environmental impact, and regional stability. The sheer scale of excavating a canal through desert terrain presents enormous engineering challenges. Historically, even extreme proposals — including the use of nuclear explosions to carve the canal — were considered and ultimately abandoned due to cost and risk.

In today's world, the urgency behind such a project is growing. Disruptions in the Red Sea, rising tensions across the Middle East, and increasing competition over global trade routes have made the idea of a second canal more relevant than ever. The world is moving toward redundancy — eliminating single points of failure in global supply chains. And the Suez Canal, despite its importance, is exactly that: a single, fragile chokepoint.

So the question remains: is Israel truly building a canal to bypass the Suez, or is this still just a strategic vision being revived in uncertain times? And if it does move forward, what would it mean for Egypt, global shipping, and the balance of power in the region?

In this video, we break down the reality behind the Ben Gurion Canal, separate fact from speculation, and explore whether this megaproject could become one of the most important infrastructure developments of the 21st century.

This is not just a canal — this is a potential shift in how the world moves.



## **STRAIT OF HORMUZ TENSIONS FUEL GLOBAL FOOD CRISIS ALARM | LIVE**

**Firstpost** 21 May 2026 45min 42sec

US Marines boarded an Iranian-flagged oil tanker in the Gulf of Oman as Washington intensified enforcement of shipping restrictions around Iran and the Strait of Hormuz. According to US Central Command, the vessel was intercepted while heading toward an Iranian port and was later redirected after being searched. The incident marks a major escalation in one of the world's most critical maritime chokepoints, through which nearly a fifth of global oil and gas supplies normally transit. With more than 1,500 ships reportedly stranded in the Persian Gulf, the disruption is now impacting global energy markets, shipping costs and supply chains. The United Nations has also warned that prolonged Hormuz disruptions could trigger a worldwide food inflation crisis by disrupting fertilizer exports and agricultural supply routes.



## ISRAEL'S \$55 BILLION CANAL RUNS THROUGH GAZA

**GIANT UNBOXED** 13 May 2026 13min 38sec

In March 2021, the Ever Given ran aground inside the Suez Canal and stopped \$10 billion in global trade every single day for six days. Container ships backed up across the Red Sea. Supply chains seized across multiple continents. And the world got its first clear look at how fragile the infrastructure holding the global economy together actually is. What almost no one reported at the time — and what almost no one is reporting now — is that Israel has a \$55 billion answer to that problem. A canal. 180 miles long. Wider and deeper than the Suez. No locks, no size limits, no chokepoints. Capable of handling the largest post-Panamax container ships on Earth that the Suez Canal physically cannot fit. The Ben Gurion Canal would connect the Red Sea to the Mediterranean through Israeli territory — permanently bypassing Egypt's most valuable asset and breaking the Suez Canal's 150-year monopoly on global shipping. It would generate \$6 billion per year in toll revenue. It would give the West a shipping corridor it fully controls. And it would remove China's Belt and Road Initiative from its single most strategically critical chokepoint in one architectural move.

But the Ben Gurion Canal route has one problem that no amount of engineering can solve. The only viable path — the one corridor that makes this project financially and physically possible — runs directly through Gaza. Not near it. Not around it. Through it.

This video breaks down the engineering reality, the Project Plowshare nuclear excavation proposal from 1963, the existential threat to Egypt's economy, China's Red Sea exposure, and the documented facts that connect this infrastructure project to the conflict currently reshaping the region. As Houthi attacks collapsed Suez Canal revenue from \$10.25 billion to \$4 billion in a single year, the strategic logic behind a second Mediterranean to Red Sea shipping corridor stopped looking theoretical. The canal may never be built. But once the map is examined closely, Gaza starts looking less like a conflict zone and more like the center of the most consequential infrastructure calculation on Earth. 📌 If this is the kind of story no one else is covering — SUBSCRIBE to [@GiantsUnboxed](#). New mega-project and infrastructure videos every week.

📌 CHAPTERS [\[00:00\]](#) — Cold Open | Ben Gurion Canal Gaza route explained [\[00:40\]](#) — What They're Actually Trying To Build | Israel canal engineering scale [\[03:15\]](#) — The Geometry That Changes Everything | Why canal route runs through Gaza [\[03:56\]](#) — The

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Canal. Four Consequences. | Israel canal global trade consequences [08:51] — The China  
Dimension | Belt and Road Initiative Red Sea threat [11:30] — The Thing Nobody Will Say  
Out Loud | Gaza canal strategic logic documented