

ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT

Humanitarian
Crisis

PIYUSH KESHRI
Y5303,
4TH YEAR, B.TECH (EE)
IIT KANPUR

23/03/09

SOC 486 – Human Rights Theory &
Practice

Outline

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- History of Israel - Palestine Conflict
- Current Gaza Conflict
- Issues of Conflict
 - Refugee Problem
- Peace Processes
- Humanitarian Crisis
 - Collective Punishment
 - Extra Judicial Executions
 - War Crime
 - Crime Against Humanity
- Breach of International Humanitarian Law
- Use of Illegal Weapons
- Recommendations



Israel - Palestine Conflict
Humanitarian Crisis

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History of Israel-Palestine Conflict

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- Ancient History
 - Rise of Zionism
- The British Mandate of Palestine (1917-1948)
 - World War I
 - Balfour Declaration (1917)
- Establishment of Israel & Arab-Israel Conflict (1948-1982)
- Current Conflict of Gaza
 - 22 Day War

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Ancient History

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- Amorites, Canaanites and other Semitic people about 2000 B.C.
- Known as Land of Canaan
- Jews evolved out of native Canaanite peoples
- Ruled by various empires - Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Romans
- Romans named the area "*Palestine*"
- Arabs ruled from (8th - 19th Century)



Israel/Canaan during the reign of King David

Rise of Zionism (19th – 20th Century)

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- Continuous migration of Jews to Palestine.
- Emancipation of European Jews.
- Introduction of Liberal and Modern Ideas.
- Practical Goal – Living in the Land of Jews.
- Ignored the existing Arab population.
- Triggered anti-Jewish political & Social movement.

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British Mandate of Palestine (1917-1948)

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- World War I & Balfour Declaration (1917)
 - Large number of Jews forced to flee.
 - Britain conquered Palestine.
 - Britain's support for creation of Jewish National Home.
- Arab Riots (1920-1930)
- Jewish immigration (1930's-1945)
 - Holocaust
 - Anti-Zionist Movements



Israel - Palestine Conflict

Humanitarian Crisis

Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA)

History of Israel-Palestine Conflict

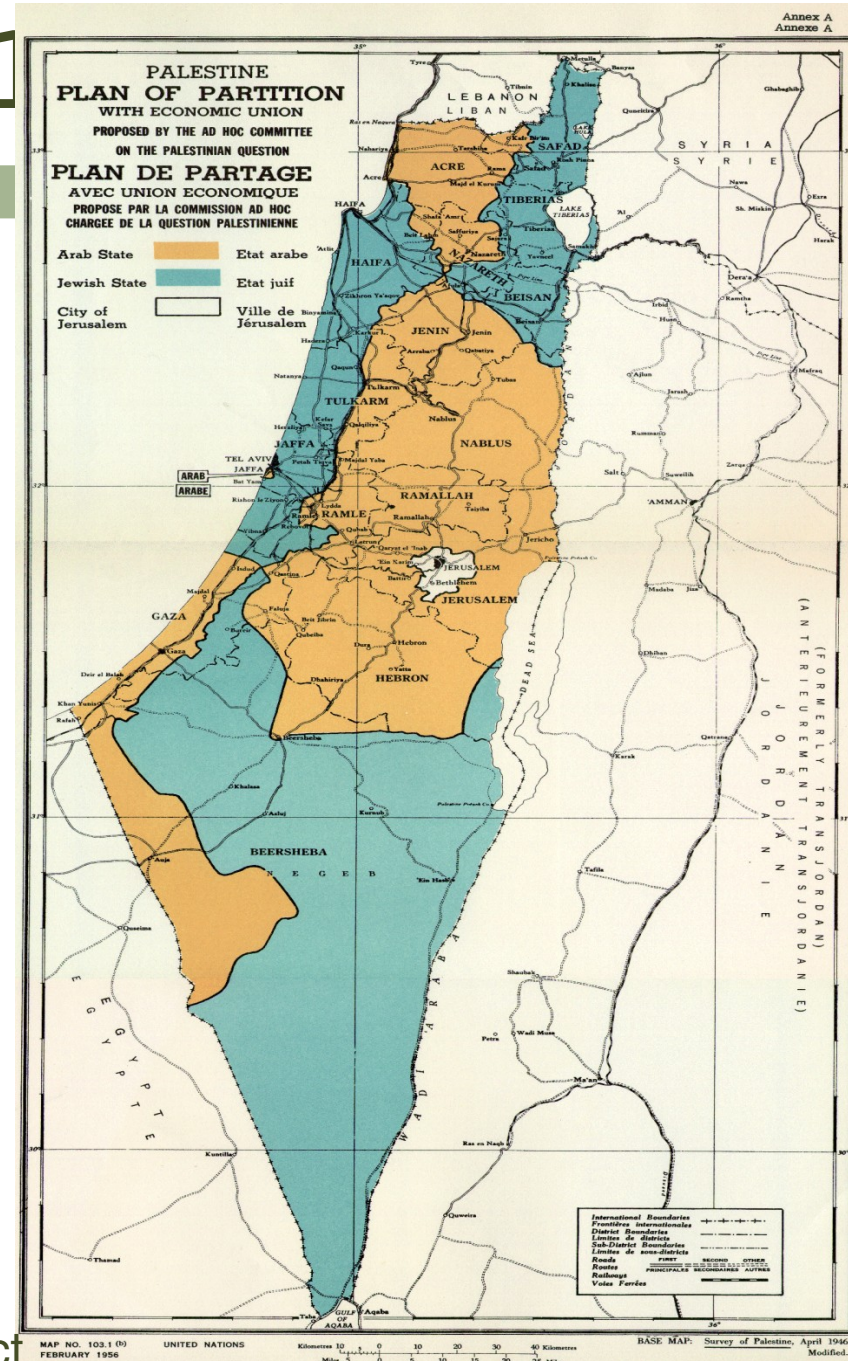
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Establishment of Israel & Arab-Israel Conflict (1948-1949)

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- British found Palestine to be ungovernable
- Returned mandate to United Nations in 1947
- UN recommend-Palestine divided into
 - An Arab state
 - A Jewish state
 - Internationalized zone of Jerusalem
- Arabs didn't accept partition
- The war broke out



Establishment of Israel & Arab-Israel Conflict (1948-1982)

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- The War of Independence - 1948 War
 - Syria, Jordan and Egypt joined the war.
 - Jews gained a decisive victory in 1949.
 - Egypt held the Gaza Strip.
 - Jordan held the West Bank.

- The 1967 (6-Day) War
 - Israel acquired extensive territories
 - The Sinai desert, the Golan Heights and the West Bank

- The October War (1973)
 - Egypt acquired back the Sinai Peninsula.



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Current Conflict of Gaza

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- Series of Suicide attacks in Israel since 1994.
- Palestinians have killed over 1000 Israelis in terror & suicide attacks.
- Israelis have killed over 3,500 Palestinians in "defence".
- Series of Negotiations & Peace processes have failed.
- Israel Strike in Gaza Strip
 - Hamas continued to launch rockets into Israel.
 - 22 Day War, (27th Dec.'08 -18th Jan.'09)
 - Killed 1,434 people -960 civilians, 239 police officers and 235 fighters.
 - During the offensive 13 Israelis killed including 3 by rockets fired into Israel.

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Issues of Conflict

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- Divisive History
- **Borders**
- Occupation, Land and **Settlements**
- Palestinian State
- **Refugees**
- Palestinian Terror
- Israeli Repression
- Israel Security
- Water
- **East Jerusalem**

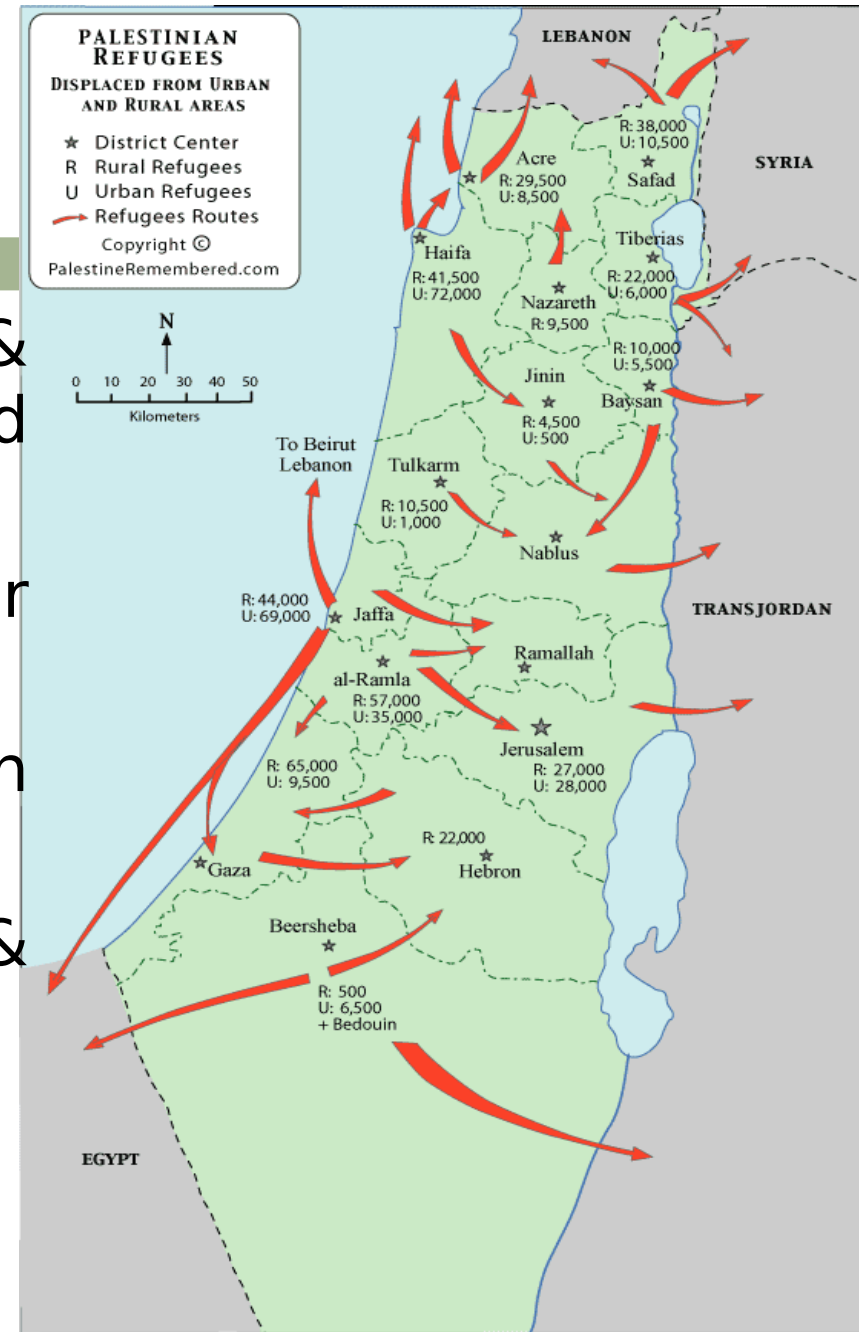


Israel/Canaan during the reign of King David

Refugee Problem

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- During 1948 war, b/w 700,000 & 750,000 Palestinian Arabs fled from Israel.
- Not allowed to go back to their home.
- Conflict created as many Jewish refugees from Arab countries
- Stripped of their property, rights & nationality



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Humanitarian Crisis

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Peace Processes

□ **Oslo Peace Process (1994-1996)**

- creation of Palestinian National Authority (PNA)
- Power to negotiate with Israel & to govern areas of West Bank & Gaza.
- Both sides recognized the rights of the other to exist.

□ **Geneva Accord**

- historic concessions by both sides
- Israel would give up sovereignty in Arab portions of Jerusalem
- Palestinians would explicitly renounce the right of Palestinian refugees to return to Israel.
- Both governments have denounced the agreement.

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Humanitarian Crisis

- Gaza subjected to 18-month blockade
- Denied Palestinians fuel, food & medicine
- Imports insufficient to support population
- 80% of the population dependant on UN food aid
- Unemployment in Gaza is close to 40%
 - 95% of Gaza's industrial operations suspended
- Water and sewage systems - close to collapse
- Fuel and electricity restrictions
- Hospitals experiencing heavy power cuts
 - Medical machines out of order
- 80% failure rate in schools

Collective Punishment

- Israel government seized Gaza Strip
- Prohibited by the Geneva Conventions
- civilian population locked into war zone
- Denied option of becoming refugees
- Difficult for relief personnel to reach, evacuate casualties & distribute aid
- Widespread destruction of civilian infrastructure
 - electricity, water, communication services and roads, hospitals
- dangerous shortage of electricity
 - Threatens the lives of critically ill patients in all of Gaza's hospitals
 - Chronic shortages of petrol and diesel
 - widespread shortages of bread

Casualties & Crisis

Description	Palestinians	Israelis
Children killed, Since 2000	1,487	123
Civilians killed, Since 2000	6,348	1,072
Civilians Injured, Since 2000	39,019	8,864
Daily US Taxes to	\$0.3 million per Day	\$6.8 million per Day
UN Resolution Targeting	0	65
Current Number of Political Prisoners	10,756	1
Demolition of Homes	18,147	0
Unemployment Rate	23%	7.3%

Source: <http://www.ifamericansknew.org/>

Human Rights Violation

□ **Extra Judicial Executions**

- According to PCHR, Israel committed 348 extra-judicial execution operations (2000-2008)
- killed 754 Palestinians, including 233 civilian, 71 children

□ **War Crimes**

- Wilful killing, unlawful deportation, torture and inhuman treatment
- Extensive destruction and appropriation of property

□ **Crimes against Humanity**

- Both Hamas and Israel have been responsible
- Campaign of suicide bombings and other attacks against civilians
- Deportations, collective punishment, and unlawful killing

Human Rights Violation

- Denial of Entry to Human Rights Organisations & Journalists to Gaza Strip

- **Human Rights Violation on Civilians**
 - Over 10,000 Palestinian men, women, and children held in Israeli prisons.
 - Physical abuse and torture are frequent
 - Periodically men, women, and children are strip searched
 - people are beaten
 - food and medicine are blocked from entering Gaza
 - Israeli forces invade almost daily, injuring, kidnapping, and sometimes killing inhabitants.
 - Extra-judicial executions, wilful killings, house raids and demolitions, settlement activities and restrictions on freedom of movement.

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Breach of International Humanitarian Law(IHL)

- IHL lays down stringent, legally-binding, obligations regulating the conduct of hostilities.
- Civilians and civilian objects must be spared the effects of any hostilities to greatest extent possible.
- Palestinian militants' use of rockets to target civilians in southern Israel
- Israel's act of carrying out vastly disproportionate attacks
- Disproportionately high rate of death amongst civilian population
 - In 22 day Israeli : 1,434 Palestinians were killed.
 - Of these, only 235 were combatants.
 - 5,303 Palestinians were injured, including 1,606 children and 828 women.
 - Wilful killing & extensive destruction of houses & other civilian property

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Use of Illegal Bombs

- Use of Phosphorous Bombs
 - Side effects on humans & environment - severe & highly dangerous
 - Banned from use where civilians may be harmed
 - Potential to harm civilians magnified by Gaza's high population density
 - Use of WP in densely populated areas of Gaza violates IHL
- Israel experimented new weapons - GPS guided Mortar, DIME, Spike & APAM
 - Cause more destruction as compared to regular bombs.
- Hamas using bombs like Grad and Qassam against Israel
- Indiscriminate/Disproportionate Attacks
 - Number of casualties of civilians in Gaza strip

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Recommendations

- Strict implementation of IHL
- Humanitarian Truce
- Allow humanitarian assistance to reach needy
- Provide the necessary protection for all Palestinian civilians
- Allow emergency repairs to essential infrastructure
- Demand the immediate opening of Gaza Strip's border by Israel
- Setting up of Independent Fact Finding Committee
- Provide Justice



Thank You!

*"No two historians ever agree on what happened,
and the damn thing is they both think they're
telling the truth."*

- Harry S. Truman