



BC High Model UN 31: Israel-Palestine Conflict



Chair: Danny Moylan
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Letter from the Chair

Dear Delegates,

My name is Danny Moylan, and it is my high privilege and distinct honor to welcome you to BC High's 31st Model UN Conference! On behalf of the entire BC High community, I would like to thank you for expressing interest in the Israel-Palestine conflict and your willingness to work toward a resolution.

I began Model UN three years ago as a freshman, and have been fascinated with the geopolitical environment ever since. Model UN has been a way for me to meet like minded people from around the state, and has provided me with opportunities that have shaped my high school experience. The connections that you form working with others to solve a problem that you care about are the ones that last the longest, and I am proud to be able to offer that opportunity for all.

The events that we will be deliberating have updates in real time - the points that are on this background guide may be outdated by the conference! This is why it is so important to prepare well for the conference. As this is a novice GA committee, if you feel as if you would like to reach out to me for help preparing I will be more than happy to assist. My email is dp.moylan24@students.bchigh.edu if you would like to contact me with any questions or concerns regarding the topic, preparation, procedure, or anything else. I truly look forward to being your Chair for this exciting discussion, and will see you all in March!

Sincerely,
Danny Moylan '24
Charge d'Affaires



Letter from the Co-Chair

Dear Delegates,

My name is Tristin Jeorme John Neuman Pecevich, and I am so excited to be your co-chair for this Model UN conference. I have participated in model UN my entire high school career. I have enjoyed the memories and experiences that have come from Model UN. This is my first time actually co-chairing a conference, and I am beyond grateful for this opportunity and so excited for this as well. I play baseball for BC High. During the summers, I work with dogs in Southie. During my free time I help the elderly pack their groceries from Stop and Shop so that I can live out my Jesuit potentials and values that I have learned from BC High, and hope to share with you this coming conference.

Sincerely,

Tristin Pecevich

Class of 2024



Historical Background

The Israel-Palestine conflict has been ongoing since the early 20th century. The conflict originated from the rise of nationalist movements among Jewish and Arab communities both seeking to create a sovereign state in similar regions of the Middle East. At that time, there were nationalist movements worldwide as people of similar cultures and ethnicities began to identify themselves as nations and strove to become independent. Members of the Jewish diaspora sought to create their own independent state with borders, rather than being a nation spread around the world. Following the Second World War, this new movement, known as Zionism, became stronger among Jewish people and many Europeans following the Holocaust. To many, the region of Palestine, with strong ties to the historic land of the Jewish people, seemed to be the best option.

Following a centuries-long Ottoman rule, the area came under British control during the First World War, as stated in the Sykes-Picot Agreement between Britain and France in 1916. The British divided the territory into two states - the Arab Transjordan (McMahon-Hussein Correspondence, 1915) and the Jewish Palestinian state (Balfour Declaration, 1917). Following the Second World War, and amid rising tensions, Britain decided to terminate a mandate to draw borders (Faisal-Weizmann Agreement, 1919) in



1947, and referred to the UN for all matters regarding the future of Palestine. In reaction to this, the UN formed the United Nations Special Committee on the Status of Palestine (UNSCOP). This committee proposed the UN Partition Plan, recommending a partition following the termination of the British mandate. This resolution was adopted in November 1947, creating the independence of the two states of Israel and Palestine, and an International Regime for Jerusalem.



The Partition Plan provided guidelines for the eventual withdrawal of British armed forces and delineation of boundaries between the two states. The Plan sought to address the conflicting claims of the competing movements: Arab nationalism in Palestine and Jewish nationalism in Israel. The Plan also called for an economic union between the two states, and for protections of religious minorities. The plan was accepted by the Jewish populace, while rejected by Arab leaders in an unwillingness to accept any form of territorial division. Arab leaders stated that it violated the principles of national self-determination in the UN charter which granted people the right to decide their own government. Immediately following the Resolution, a civil war broke out. The partition plan was not implemented.

In 1967, the Six-Day War broke out in which Israel seized the West Bank, Gata Sinai, East Jerusalem and the Golan. Regarding these threats and invasions, the Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 242 sponsored by the United Kingdom. This stressed five different principles: a withdrawal of Israeli forces, peace within secure and recognized boundaries, freedom of navigation, a just settlement of the refugee problem, and security measures that included a demilitarized zone. The last Security Council action was in 1973 - adopting Resolution 338 - which called for a ceasefire in the Yom Kippur War, which broke out

in 1973 and was an attempt by a coalition of Arab states led by Egypt and Syria against Israel from October 6th-25th, 1973. Egypt's goal for the war was the expulsion of Israeli forces occupying Sinai. In 1974, the UN General Assembly Resolution 3236 recognised the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, national independence, and sovereignty in Palestine. This acknowledged the UN's contact with the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), and made them an official representative to the UN. Even though action by the United States is preventing Palestine from becoming an official member state, they were granted Non-Member Observer Status in 2012 by the UN Member States. The move was considered symbolic.



A key issue to consider is the territorial dispute, with continued Israeli encroachment on established Palestinian territory. The Jewish population has continued to set up settlements in the West Bank, despite the territory belonging to Palestine. Additionally, the status of East Jerusalem



and the question of which state it belongs to should also be considered. Secondly, the status of the Palestinian people has largely been ignored. According to Article 13 of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, everyone has the right to return to their country of origin. Israeli forces have not given Palestinian refugees free passage in return to their home country, and in doing so, have caused a demographic collapse in Palestine - and ensured an Israeli majority in the territory. A third issue arises when considering the internal political divisions within the Palestinian state as a result of the Partition. Politics in the state have remained divided between the Hamas, who have control over the Gaza Strip, and the Fatah who are in control of the West Bank. The Hamas are politically inclined toward a peaceful solution, whereas the Fatah believe that Palestinians need to be liberated by their own actions. Both parties have declared themselves as the legitimate representatives of the Palestinian people. Other key issues arise in the accessibility to drinking water and arability in the region.

The most important resolutions passed by the UN so far are the following:

- Resolution 181 (government of Palestine)
- Resolution 242 (aftermath of the Six-Day War)
- Resolution 338 (aftermath of the Yom Kippur War)
- Resolution 3236 (Palestinian people's right to self-determination)



Positions

1. Israel
2. Palestine
3. United States
4. Iran
5. Germany
6. Lebanon
7. United Kingdom
8. United Arab Emirates
9. Canada
10. Turkey
11. Japan
12. India
13. Greece
14. Pakistan
15. Ethiopia
16. Serbia
17. South Africa
18. Tunisia
19. Algeria
20. Ukraine
21. Jordan
22. Syria
23. Egypt
24. Australia
25. Russia
26. Kenya
27. Sweden
28. Brazil
29. China
30. Italy
31. Indonesia
32. Saudi Arabia
33. North Korea
34. Netherlands
35. Iraq
36. Oman
37. Vietnam
38. Mexico
39. Qatar
40. Singapore



Questions to Consider

1. How should the city of Jerusalem be divided on a map?
2. How should Palestinian refugees be dealt with?
3. Are Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip legal?
4. How should Israeli encroachment on Palestinian territory be approached?
5. How has militarization in the region raised tensions, and how can they be resolved?



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