Israel’s territory is 8,019 square miles (sq. mi.). That makes it smaller than...

Israel’s Size Compared to the Arab World
- Israel’s land mass is about 1/625 (1/6 of 1 percent) the size of the Arab world.
- 6.25 million Israeli Jews; 370 million Middle Eastern Arabs and Muslims

Christian Population in the Middle East
Israel is the only Middle Eastern country where the Christian population is thriving instead of disappearing. Between 1948 and 2011, Israel’s Christian population grew over fourfold, from 34,000 to 154,000.

World Religions
- Christianity: 2 billion people
- Islam: 1.5 billion people
- Hinduism: 900 million people
- Buddhism: 360 million people
- Judaism: 14 million people

URL links for all sources cited in this booklet are at www.standwithus.com/footnotes.asp. For more information see StandWithUs Fact Sheets at www.standwithus.com/factsheets.
In the following pages, you will learn how the Jewish people restored their national independence in their ancestral homeland after 2,000 years of living under the rule of others. You will see how they built a vibrant society and how it strives to live up to the ethical and humanitarian ideals of both its ancient heritage and of modern times despite the challenges it faces.

You will also learn about global terrorism. Some terrorist organizations described in this booklet have cells around the world and have attacked countries worldwide, from the U.S. to India. Because of its location and history, Israel has been forced to stand on the front lines of the global war against organized terrorism.
A continuous Jewish presence in Israel for over 3,000 years

Jews are indigenous to Israel, the birthplace of their identity, language, religion, and culture. Zion is an age-old name for Jerusalem and the land of Israel. That is why Zionism is the name of the national liberation movement of the Jewish people who sought to restore their freedom and independence in their ancestral homeland.

Theodore Herzl founded the modern Zionist movement in 1897, but the dream of restoration and return had always been at the core of Judaism and Jewish identity. Rome tried to obliterate the millennia-old Jewish state in the first century, but unlike other nations conquered in ancient times, the Jews survived and never lost their profound attachment to their land of origin. Jews lived in the land of Israel continuously for 3,000 years. Those forced into exile expressed their yearning to return in their daily liturgy and prayers. For 2,000 years many came back in periodic waves of immigration. By the late 1860s, Jews once again were the majority in Jerusalem.1

Zionists adapted this historic dream to modern political ideals and circumstances. They were inspired by national liberation movements and hoped to overcome the 1,900 years of oppression and injustice Jews had endured across Europe and the Middle East. The Zionists believed that if the scattered Jews reunited in their historic homeland, joining the Jews who were already there, they could restore their freedom, be free from prejudice, and further develop their unique culture.

Disagreements arose among Zionists as Jews from different countries and with different ideologies—religious and secular, socialist and conservative—joined together. But they united around fundamental principles that combined idealism and practicality. They would seek official support from other national governments. They would return legally, purchase the land, and restore it through their own labor. Zionists envisioned living in friendship with non-Jewish residents and believed the entire region would benefit from their restoration of the land.

Within 50 years the Zionist dream became a reality. Britain recognized the thriving communities Jews had built and, in the 1917 Balfour Declaration, endorsed the “Zionist aspirations.” The international community turned Britain’s policy into international law at the San Remo Conference in 1920, and the League of Nations then carved out the Palestine Mandate as a national home for the Jewish people.

On May 14, 1948, Israel was reestablished as a modern state and recognized by the community of nations. It lived up to the Zionist dream. Israel began modern statehood with a Jewish majority that was recognized by the community of nations. It lived up to the Zionist movement.… We will wish the Jews a hearty welcome home…our two movements complement one another.”

Emir Faisal, a leader of the Arab world, 1919

“If it is manifestly right that the scattered Jews should have a national center and a national home and be reunited, and where else but in Palestine, with which for 3,000 years they have been intimately and profoundly associated?”

Winston Churchill, 1921

Lord Robert Cecil, British lawyer, MP, and diplomat, 1918

“We Arabs, especially the educated among us, look with deepest sympathy on the Zionist movement…. We will wish the Jews a hearty welcome home...our two movements complement one another.”

Lord Henry Balfour, British prime minister, 1921

“...the movement 'should stop' because it could lead to war, but “who can challenge the rights of the Jews in Palestine? Good Lord, historically it is really your country.”

Yusuf Diya al-Khalidi, Mayor of Jerusalem, 1899

“The remains of Gamla, evidence of an ancient Jewish city in the Golan Heights, where, in 67 C.E., Jews fought to the last person against the Roman army. Thousands of inhabitants were killed. Others jumped to their deaths from Gamla’s cliffs to avoid capture and certain slavery. The city was destroyed and never rebuilt.

The Kotel ha-Ma’aravi—the Western Wall

This outer retaining wall on the west side of the Temple Mount was all that remained after the Romans destroyed the Second Temple in 70 C.E. It became Judaism’s holiest site, and for centuries, Jews worshipped at the Kotel and put their prayers, written on scraps of paper, into its crevices.

When the Romans defeated the Jews in 70 C.E., they built this Titus Arch in Rome to commemorate their victory. The sculpture depicts the booty the Romans took when they ransacked and destroyed the Second Temple in Jerusalem. The Roman victors renamed the conquered Jewish region “Palestine.”

When the Romans defeated the Jews in 70 C.E., they built this Titus Arch in Rome to commemorate their victory. The sculpture depicts the booty the Romans took when they ransacked and destroyed the Second Temple in Jerusalem. The Roman victors renamed the conquered Jewish region “Palestine.”
Jewish civilization was already over 1,000 years old when the Romans conquered Judea, but the Jews safeguarded their unique heritage for the next two millennia. No matter how far they wandered, how much they adapted to their host societies, or how much they were persecuted, Jews maintained their identity.

The Jews, who emerged as a people over 3,500 years ago, created the religion of Judaism, and its sacred books have bound them together for millennia. Whether they are religious or secular, Jews are connected by the ethics and values that Judaism teaches. Parents have passed the tradition to their children, who passed it on to their own children, and so it has continued for thousands of years.

Jews everywhere observe the holy days in almost identical ways and repeat the rituals and prayers that Jewish families have used since the days of ancient Israel.

Jews share the same life-cycle rituals. When an eight-day-old infant is circumcised or adolescents celebrate their bar and bat mitzvahs and the whole community celebrates, they are reenacting age-old Jewish traditions. When a loved one dies, Jewish customs and prayers comfort the grieving and spell out how the community should support and console the mourners.

Jewish life centers around home and family. Jewish tradition sanctifies family relationships. Parents’ devotion and sense of responsibility for passing on Jewish identity have bound generations to the past while linking them to the future.

Jews have always identified with Zion, the Jewish homeland. It is at the core of Jewish history, religious texts, and identity. Many consider title to the land to be at the heart of the promise between God and the Jewish people in the Torah, which dates back thousands of years. The Hebrew language, the Torah, the laws in the Talmud, the Jewish calendar, and Jewish holidays and festivals all originated in ancient Israel and revolve around its seasons, way of life, and history. Zion and Jerusalem are mentioned 809 times in the Hebrew Bible. When Israel was reestablished in 1948, Jews everywhere came to embrace Israel and once again recognize it as the center of Jewish life and continuity.

"The Greeks and the Romans...are gone; other people have sprung up and held their torch high for a time but it burned out...the Jews saw them all, survived them all...all things are mortal but the Jew; all other forces passed, but he remains. What is the secret of his immortality?" —Mark Twain, 1898

Evolution of the Region

The Rise and Fall of Empires

In the first century, the Roman Empire defeated the over 1,000-year-old nation of Judea, destroyed its Holy Temple in Jerusalem and exiled hundreds of thousands of Jews. To erase all memory of Judea, Rome renamed it “Palestine” after the Jews’ biblical enemy, the Philistines, an Aegean people who had once settled along the coast.1 Afterward, Westerners referred to the Jewish-Christian Holy Land as Palestine.

For the two millennia after the Roman conquest, no other state or unique national group developed in Palestine, and no ruler chose Jerusalem as its capital. Instead, different empires and peoples came, colonized, ruled, and disappeared. Jews remained throughout these changes. Their numbers grew as exiled Jews returned in periodic waves of immigration; their numbers fell when the area’s rulers persecuted them.

Between 1517 and 1917, Palestine was an unimportant backwater of the sprawling Ottoman Empire, which, at its height in 1683, covered vast parts of the Middle East, North Africa, and Eastern Europe. It was separated into small subdistricts within the large province of Syria (and later Beirut). The Palestine region initially prospered under the Ottomans, but, during the Empire’s decline, it was reduced to a sparsely populated, impoverished, barren area.2

When the Ottoman Empire was defeated in World War I (1914-1918), its lands were ceded to the victorious Allies. Just as the Allies carved new nations out of Europe’s defeated empires, so too they carved nations out of the former Ottoman Empire and created most of the Middle Eastern states we know today, including Iraq, Lebanon, and Syria. They also drew Palestine’s boundaries and officially recognized it as the Jewish national home. Arab peoples did not widely adopt the name “Palestinian” until the 20th century.

The newly established League of Nations set up “mandates” to be administered by France and England until the new territories were ready for self-government. The boundaries established at the end of World War I would be changed several times before assuming their current form.

The independence of most of the Middle East’s modern nation-states is relatively recent, although the region is home to many ancient cultures. Several of these states, such as Bahrain and Kuwait, are younger than Israel.

*Israel withdrew from Gaza in 2005.

The League of Nations recognized the Jews’ deep ties to their historic homeland, admired the thriving community that had been revitalizing since the 1880s, and established the Palestine Mandate for a Jewish homeland. This is modern Israel’s story in maps.

In the 1917 Balfour Declaration, Britain endorsed “Zionist aspirations” to reestablish the Jewish homeland in Palestine and promised to “facilitate” the effort.¹ In 1920 the Covenant of the League of Nations incorporated the Balfour Declaration in Article 22, giving it the force of international law.² In 1922 the League of Nations instructed the British Mandate authorities to “facilitate” Jewish immigration and settlement of Palestine.³ Many European and Arab leaders hoped Jews would revive this small, impoverished, thinly populated region.

When the 1948 war ended, Jordan annexed the area west of the Jordan River and renamed it the “West Bank,” while Egypt occupied Gaza. Jordan and Egypt’s control of the areas was not recognized as legitimate by the international community. With these ceasefire lines, Israel was only nine miles wide at its center, leaving its population centers vulnerable to military and terrorist attacks. In the 1950s and 1960s, Arabs opposed to Israel’s existence repeatedly launched attacks from Syria, the West Bank, and Gaza.

In 1967, when Israel’s neighbors again mobilized for a full-scale invasion and blocked her waterways, Israel preempted them in a defensive war. In six days of fighting, Israel captured strategically vital buffer zones: the Golan Heights, the Sinai Peninsula, Gaza, and the West Bank. Israel immediately offered to negotiate with Jordan, Syria, and Egypt and exchange land for peace. Arab governments refused to talk to or recognize Israel.¹ In 1973 Syria and Egypt launched a surprise attack to destroy Israel on the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur and were again defeated.

Hoping to foster peace, Israel relinquished the entire Sinai Peninsula—which it had captured in 1967—to Egypt in the 1979 Camp David Peace Accords. In 1994 Israel and Jordan signed a peace treaty. Using a “land for peace” model, Israel and the Palestinians tried to negotiate for a possible future Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza. By the time Arafat began the violent second intifada in 2000, 98 percent of Palestinians lived under an autonomous Palestinian government.

Seeing it had no peace partner and hoping for progress, Israel withdrew unilaterally from Lebanon in 2000 and from Gaza and parts of the West Bank in 2005. Nonetheless, following the withdrawal, Israel was continuously attacked by Palestinians from Gaza and by Hezbollah from Lebanon.

In the mid-1800s a new energy seized the Jewish community in Palestine. With help from philanthropists like Sir Moses Montefiore and donations from ordinary Jews around the world, Jews branched out from the cities and began purchasing land and building farms, villages, and schools. More exiles returned. By 1854 Jews were the largest religious group in Jerusalem; by 1870 they had once again become the majority of the city’s population.1

Between 1882 and 1914, new kinds of Jewish immigrants arrived—the “Lover of Zion” and other types of early Zionists—who laid the groundwork for the modern Jewish state. These immigrants sought freedom from the oppression and persecution that had plagued Jews in Europe and the Middle East.

Between 1881 and 1906, Jews in Russia were slaughtered, their homes and towns were destroyed, and their women were raped. In Kishinev “[t]he mob was led by priests and the general cry, ‘Kill the Jews’ was taken up all over the city. The Jews…were slaughtered like sheep….Babies were literally torn to pieces by the frenzied and bloodthirsty mob.” —New York Times, April 28, 1903, p. 6

“Like the miserable dog without an owner, he [the Jew] is kicked by one because he crosses [aMuslim’s] path, and cuffed by another because he cries out—to seek redress he is afraid, lest it bring worse upon him; he thinks it better to endure than to live in the expectation of his complaint being revenged upon him.” —British Consul in Jerusalem, William T. Young, to Colonel Patrick Campbell, May 25, 18392

They were young, energetic idealists imbued with Western political principles and the dreams of national liberation that were sweeping across Europe. Many were socialists. They believed their country could be restored through their hard physical labor and dedication. They hoped to start a renaissance of Jewish culture and to restore Jewish dignity, self-reliance, and independence.

The returning Jews had no powerful nation to help them. They had no weapons. They were often penniless.

The land was only sparsely populated, and much of it had become barren. The Jews wanted to restore the land’s once-famous fertility and build villages and communities where none existed. The region was an impoverished backwater of the Ottoman Empire.

“The country was…and is now, underdeveloped and under-populated….There are…large cultivable areas that are left untilled. The summits and slopes of the hills are admirably suited to the growth of trees, but there are no forests. Miles of sand dunes that could be redeemed, are untouched.” —Interim Report on the Civil Administration of Palestine to the League of Nations, June 19213

In 1880 there were only an estimated 250,000 to 400,000 people, many of whom were also recent arrivals who had no sense of unity or ethnic or national identity.4 Their allegiance was to the Ottoman Empire, their religious group, their clan, and their local community.

The area included such an assortment of ethnic groups that over 50 different languages were spoken ("Palestine," Encyclopedia Britannica, 11th edition, 1911, p. 600).
Using money donated from Jewish communities around the world, the Jews legally bought the land they developed primarily from absentee landowners. Most of it was uncultivated swampland or sand dunes.

“They (Jews) paid high prices for the land, and in addition, they paid to certain occupants of those lands a considerable amount of money which they were not legally bound to pay.” —Hope Simpson Report, 1930

“Of the total of 418,000 dunums (quarter-acres) acquired by Jews in Palestine [between 1878 and 1914], 58 percent was sold by non-Palestinian [Arab] absentee landlords and 36 percent by Palestinian absentee landlords, for a total of 94 percent.” —Palestinian-American historian Rashid Khalidi

“Arab claims that the Jews have obtained too large a proportion of good land cannot be maintained. Much of the land now carrying orange groves was sand dunes or swamps and uncultivated when it was bought.” —Peel Commission Report, 1937

Through backbreaking labor the early Jewish pioneers cleared the wastelands and malarial swamps, reforested the hillsides, and built towns and villages.

“Nobody knows of all the hardships, sickness and wretchedness they [the early Zionists] underwent. No observer from afar can feel what it is like to be without a drop of water for days, to lie for months in cramped tents visited by all sorts of reptiles, or understand what our wives, children, and mothers go through.…No one looking at a completed building realizes the sacrifice put into it.” —Memoir of an early Zionist, 1885

“Jewish agricultural colonies…developed the culture of oranges….They drained swamps. They planted eucalyptus trees. They practiced, with modern methods, all the processes of agriculture….Every traveler in Palestine… is impressed by…the beautiful stretches of prosperous cultivation about them.” —Interim Report on the Civil Administration of Palestine to the League of Nations, June 1921

Evolution of the term “Palestine”

From the second century, when Rome renamed the Jewish state “Palestine,” until the mid-20th century, “Palestine” was associated with Jews and the Jewish homeland.

Jews in the area used the name Palestine for their symphonies, newspapers, and other enterprises. There was the Palestine Post (later the Jerusalem Post), the Palestine Symphony Orchestra, the Palestine Electric Company, the Palestine Potash Company, and others.

Arabs and Jews who lived in the Palestine Mandate all had Palestine Mandate passports, but Arab residents were generally referred to as Arabs, not Palestinians.

“Palestine is a term the Zionists invented!…Our country for centuries was part of Syria.” —Local Arab leader Auni Bey Abdul-Hadi to the Peel Commission in 1937

Before and after World War II, anti-Semites in Europe and the U.S. told Jews to get out and “go back home to Palestine.”

After 1948, when the reborn Jewish state took the name Israel, the term “Palestine” went out of usage to refer to Israel.

In 1964 the term was revived when Egypt helped organize the PLO, the Palestine Liberation Organization. By the 1970s the term came to be associated with Arabs, not Jews.

Top: A map produced in 1759 by a German mapmaker shows the geographic boundaries of Israel’s 12 ancient tribes in the region that became known as Palestine after 135 C.E.

Middle: The earliest currency of Palestine (1927) was inscribed with both Hebrew and Arabic, the languages of Jews and Arabs.

Bottom: A Palestine stamp from the Mandate era. Notice the Hebrew and Arabic writing.
Britain and the League of Nations created the Palestine Mandate as the Jewish national home in part because of the growing number of Jews and their achievements in the pre-World War I period. Between 1890 and 1915, the Jewish population rose from 42,900 to 83,000. They had built thriving farms; created villages, towns, and social institutions; introduced innovations like socialist communes; revived Hebrew; and created a rich culture.

“During the last two or three generations, the Jews have recreated in Palestine a community….This community [has] its town and country population, its political, religious and social organizations, its own language, its own customs, its own life.”
—The Churchill or British White Paper, June 1922

“The British Government was impressed by the reality, the strength and the idealism of this [Zionist] movement. It recognised its value in ensuring the future development of Palestine.”
—Interim Report on the Civil Administration of Palestine to the League of Nations, 1921

During the Mandate (1920-1948), Zionists continued their prewar policies of purchasing and restoring the land, often using innovative agricultural techniques. By 1935 the Jewish National Fund had planted over 1.7 million trees. Zionists also developed industry, power plants, urban life, and social institutions, such as labor unions, political parties, hospitals, universities, and a national orchestra. Three universities were founded before 1948. The Hebrew Opera first performed in 1922. The Palestine Orchestra, later the Israeli Philharmonic, was founded in 1936.

Zionists hoped to live in friendship and cooperation with the Arab population and believed that restoring the land would benefit everyone. Many Arabs welcomed this development, which also attracted Arab immigrants from the neighboring countries. An estimated 25 percent to 37 percent of immigrants to pre-state Israel were Arabs, not Jews. Between 1922 and 1946 alone, approximately 100,000 Arabs entered the country from neighboring lands. Approximately 363,000 Jews immigrated in the same period.

“Those good Jews brought…prosperity over Palestine without damage to anyone or taking anything by force.” —Syrian Alawi notable’s letter to French Prime Minister, June 1936

“No one doubted that the Arabs had benefited from Jewish immigration. Their numbers had almost doubled between 1917 and 1940, wages had gone up, the standard of living had risen more than anywhere else in the Middle East.” —Historian Walter Laqueur

Some Arab leaders in Palestine became increasingly hostile to the Jewish community. Many were affiliated with the rising Nazi movement and incited violence and instigated mob attacks against Jews in 1920, 1921, 1929, and 1936-1939. The British violated the Mandate obligations in response to Arab protests. They repeatedly restricted Jewish immigration and land purchases. As anti-Semitism mounted in Europe and led into the devastation of the Holocaust, these policies doomed hundreds of thousands of Jews who otherwise could have reached safety in Palestine, which had been established in part to serve as a refuge for persecuted Jews.

By 1947 the conflict between the two national movements had escalated and led the UN to recommend partitioning the Mandate into a Jewish state alongside an Arab state. The area the UN allotted for the Jewish state had a Jewish majority. They now numbered 650,000 and formed one-third of the whole Mandate population. Over 70 percent of the land for the proposed Jewish portion was not privately owned but was state land that belonged to the British Mandate. The 277 rural Jewish communities stretched throughout the countryside. Tel Aviv had grown from 550 people in 1911 to 230,000 in 1948.
The Hebrew term for immigration to Israel is “aliyah” or “going up.” There were five different waves of aliyah prior to World War II, when Jews from around the world joined the Jews who were already living there.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Numbers / Motive</th>
<th>Majority From</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Aliyah</td>
<td>25,000 Pre-Zionist socialists and religious Jews wanted to escape persecution and/or rebuild their homeland.</td>
<td>Russia, Romania, Kurdistan, and Yemen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Aliyah</td>
<td>40,000 Escape pogroms and persecution; restore nationhood and dignity and realize socialist ideals.</td>
<td>Russia and Poland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Aliyah</td>
<td>35,000 Escape persecution and impoverishment; restore nationhood and dignity and realize socialist ideals.</td>
<td>53% from Russia, 36% from Poland, 11% from Lithuania, Romania, and Western and Central Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Aliyah</td>
<td>67,000 Escape persecution and impoverishment.</td>
<td>Poland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th Aliyah</td>
<td>250,000 Escape persecution and anti-Semitism.</td>
<td>Germany, Austria, and other countries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In May 1948 the Jewish state of Israel was reborn and the Jews’ 2,000-year yearning to restore their national independence and ingather the exiles had become a reality.

But difficult struggles lay ahead: state-building, absorbing successive waves of immigrants and refugees (the majority of whom came from Arab countries), defending the new state from wars and terrorism, finding paths to peace, and keeping Judaism’s ancient ethical tradition vibrant even while facing harsh realities and an often hostile world.

The young state of Israel worked hard to meet these challenges.

The Kibbutz—Utopian Socialist Community

Inspired by socialism, Zionism, agrarian ideals, and necessity, young Zionists created unique collective communities dedicated to equality and communal ownership of all wealth. They worked cooperatively in decision-making, production, consumption, welfare, and education.

The first kibbutz was established by 12 young pioneers in 1910 at Degania. The kibbutz movement became one of the largest communal movements in history.

Today Israel has 270 kibbutzim with 130,000 people. Though they are less utopian and agricultural than they were originally, they still try to uphold the idealism of their founders.

In May 1948 the Jewish state of Israel was reborn and the Jews’ 2,000-year yearning to restore their national independence and ingather the exiles had become a reality.

But difficult struggles lay ahead: state-building, absorbing successive waves of immigrants and refugees (the majority of whom came from Arab countries), defending the new state from wars and terrorism, finding paths to peace, and keeping Judaism’s ancient ethical tradition vibrant even while facing harsh realities and an often hostile world.

The young state of Israel worked hard to meet these challenges.

The Kibbutz—Utopian Socialist Community

Inspired by socialism, Zionism, agrarian ideals, and necessity, young Zionists created unique collective communities dedicated to equality and communal ownership of all wealth. They worked cooperatively in decision-making, production, consumption, welfare, and education.

The first kibbutz was established by 12 young pioneers in 1910 at Degania. The kibbutz movement became one of the largest communal movements in history.

Today Israel has 270 kibbutzim with 130,000 people. Though they are less utopian and agricultural than they were originally, they still try to uphold the idealism of their founders.

In May 1948 the Jewish state of Israel was reborn and the Jews’ 2,000-year yearning to restore their national independence and ingather the exiles had become a reality.

But difficult struggles lay ahead: state-building, absorbing successive waves of immigrants and refugees (the majority of whom came from Arab countries), defending the new state from wars and terrorism, finding paths to peace, and keeping Judaism’s ancient ethical tradition vibrant even while facing harsh realities and an often hostile world.

The young state of Israel worked hard to meet these challenges.

The Kibbutz—Utopian Socialist Community

Inspired by socialism, Zionism, agrarian ideals, and necessity, young Zionists created unique collective communities dedicated to equality and communal ownership of all wealth. They worked cooperatively in decision-making, production, consumption, welfare, and education.

The first kibbutz was established by 12 young pioneers in 1910 at Degania. The kibbutz movement became one of the largest communal movements in history.

Today Israel has 270 kibbutzim with 130,000 people. Though they are less utopian and agricultural than they were originally, they still try to uphold the idealism of their founders.

In May 1948 the Jewish state of Israel was reborn and the Jews’ 2,000-year yearning to restore their national independence and ingather the exiles had become a reality.

But difficult struggles lay ahead: state-building, absorbing successive waves of immigrants and refugees (the majority of whom came from Arab countries), defending the new state from wars and terrorism, finding paths to peace, and keeping Judaism’s ancient ethical tradition vibrant even while facing harsh realities and an often hostile world.

The young state of Israel worked hard to meet these challenges.

The Hebrew term for immigration to Israel is “aliyah” or “going up.” There were five different waves of aliyah prior to World War II, when Jews from around the world joined the Jews who were already living there.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Numbers / Motive</th>
<th>Majority From</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Aliyah</td>
<td>25,000 Pre-Zionist socialists and religious Jews wanted to escape persecution and/or rebuild their homeland.</td>
<td>Russia, Romania, Kurdistan, and Yemen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Aliyah</td>
<td>40,000 Escape pogroms and persecution; restore nationhood and dignity and realize socialist ideals.</td>
<td>Russia and Poland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Aliyah</td>
<td>35,000 Escape persecution and impoverishment; restore nationhood and dignity and realize socialist ideals.</td>
<td>53% from Russia, 36% from Poland, 11% from Lithuania, Romania, and Western and Central Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Aliyah</td>
<td>67,000 Escape persecution and impoverishment.</td>
<td>Poland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th Aliyah</td>
<td>250,000 Escape persecution and anti-Semitism.</td>
<td>Germany, Austria, and other countries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In May 1948 the Jewish state of Israel was reborn and the Jews’ 2,000-year yearning to restore their national independence and ingather the exiles had become a reality.

But difficult struggles lay ahead: state-building, absorbing successive waves of immigrants and refugees (the majority of whom came from Arab countries), defending the new state from wars and terrorism, finding paths to peace, and keeping Judaism’s ancient ethical tradition vibrant even while facing harsh realities and an often hostile world.

The young state of Israel worked hard to meet these challenges.

The Hebrew term for immigration to Israel is “aliyah” or “going up.” There were five different waves of aliyah prior to World War II, when Jews from around the world joined the Jews who were already living there.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Numbers / Motive</th>
<th>Majority From</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Aliyah</td>
<td>25,000 Pre-Zionist socialists and religious Jews wanted to escape persecution and/or rebuild their homeland.</td>
<td>Russia, Romania, Kurdistan, and Yemen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Aliyah</td>
<td>40,000 Escape pogroms and persecution; restore nationhood and dignity and realize socialist ideals.</td>
<td>Russia and Poland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Aliyah</td>
<td>35,000 Escape persecution and impoverishment; restore nationhood and dignity and realize socialist ideals.</td>
<td>53% from Russia, 36% from Poland, 11% from Lithuania, Romania, and Western and Central Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Aliyah</td>
<td>67,000 Escape persecution and impoverishment.</td>
<td>Poland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th Aliyah</td>
<td>250,000 Escape persecution and anti-Semitism.</td>
<td>Germany, Austria, and other countries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In May 1948 the Jewish state of Israel was reborn and the Jews’ 2,000-year yearning to restore their national independence and ingather the exiles had become a reality.

But difficult struggles lay ahead: state-building, absorbing successive waves of immigrants and refugees (the majority of whom came from Arab countries), defending the new state from wars and terrorism, finding paths to peace, and keeping Judaism’s ancient ethical tradition vibrant even while facing harsh realities and an often hostile world.

The young state of Israel worked hard to meet these challenges.

The Hebrew term for immigration to Israel is “aliyah” or “going up.” There were five different waves of aliyah prior to World War II, when Jews from around the world joined the Jews who were already living there.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Numbers / Motive</th>
<th>Majority From</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Aliyah</td>
<td>25,000 Pre-Zionist socialists and religious Jews wanted to escape persecution and/or rebuild their homeland.</td>
<td>Russia, Romania, Kurdistan, and Yemen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Aliyah</td>
<td>40,000 Escape pogroms and persecution; restore nationhood and dignity and realize socialist ideals.</td>
<td>Russia and Poland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Aliyah</td>
<td>35,000 Escape persecution and impoverishment; restore nationhood and dignity and realize socialist ideals.</td>
<td>53% from Russia, 36% from Poland, 11% from Lithuania, Romania, and Western and Central Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Aliyah</td>
<td>67,000 Escape persecution and impoverishment.</td>
<td>Poland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th Aliyah</td>
<td>250,000 Escape persecution and anti-Semitism.</td>
<td>Germany, Austria, and other countries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“This will be a war of extermination and a momentous massacre which will be spoken of like the Mongolian massacres and the Crusades.” —Azzam Pasha, Secretary-General of the Arab League (BBC, May 15, 1948)

“We have come from an anguished and grieving land...from a people...that has not known a single year—not a single month—in which mothers have not wept for their sons.” —Yitzhak Rabin, 1993

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1920-1921</td>
<td>Arab Riots/Terrorism in the Early Mandate Period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Palestinian leader Haj Amin al-Husseini repeatedly fomented riots against Jews. In the 1920 incidents, six Jews were killed and 200 wounded; in 1921, 43 Jews were killed and 147 wounded. In response Jews organized defensive forces that would later become the Haganah, the forerunner of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>Massacres Instigated by Haj Amin al-Husseini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mobs attacked Jews in Jerusalem, Safed, Jaffa, and Kfar Darom (a kibbutz in the Gaza Strip). The centuries-old Jewish community of Hebron was destroyed, and 67 civilians were slaughtered. British authorities reported incidents of rape, torture, beheadings of babies, and mutilation. British High Commissioner John Chancellor wrote, “I do not think that history records many worse horrors in the last few hundred years.” In total, 135 Jews were killed, and 350 were maimed or wounded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936-1939</td>
<td>Great Arab Revolt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>With the support of Nazi Germany, Haj Amin al-Husseini led a three-year rebellion against the British, the Jews, and his political opponents to force an end to Jewish immigration and land purchases. An estimated 415 Jews, 200 Britons, and 5,000 Arabs were killed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947-1949</td>
<td>Israel's War of Independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>When the UN voted to partition the Mandate on November 29, 1947, Palestinian Arabs, with help from Arab states, launched attacks against Jews to seize all of the Mandate. On May 14, 1948, Israel declared independence and was immediately invaded by the armies of five Arab nations: Egypt, Syria, Transjordan, Lebanon, and Iraq. The newly formed IDF managed to prevail in 15 months of war that claimed over 6,000 Israeli lives (the equivalent of around 3 million Americans).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949-1956</td>
<td>The Fedayeen Raids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arab terrorists (fedayeen), trained and equipped by Egypt, repeatedly attacked Israeli civilians from bases in Lebanon, Gaza, and Jordan. One thousand three hundred Israelis were killed or wounded in terrorist attacks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>The Sinai/Suez War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Egypt increased its fedayeen attacks, prevented Israeli shipping through the Suez Canal, and blockaded the Israeli port of Eilat, violating international law and threatening Israel’s economic survival. With the support of France and Britain, Israel captured the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza. Israel completely withdrew six months later when Egypt assured Israel unimpeded navigation, and UN peacekeeping forces were stationed in the Sinai.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>Al Fatah Raids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Egyptian-born Yasser Arafat formed Fatah in 1959 to conduct guerrilla warfare operations against Israel. In 1965 Fatah adopted “the entanglement theory,” which presumed that its repeated attacks would force Israel to respond aggressively against the Arab states hosting Arafat’s fighters, thereby escalating the animosity between Israel and her Arab neighbors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Formed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The PLO was formed in Egypt, supported by the Arab League as an umbrella organization for anti-Israel militant groups. In 1968 Arafat’s Fatah joined the PLO and eventually dominated it. Over the decades the PLO carried out thousands of attacks against Israelis and others around the world, including the first airplane hijackings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>The Six-Day War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Israel was forced to defend itself when Syria, Egypt, Jordan, and Iraq intensified their terrorist attacks and Egypt illegally blocked Israel’s access to international waters and expelled UN peacekeeping forces. The four Arab countries mobilized more than 250,000 troops, armed with Soviet-supplied tanks and aircraft, on Israel’s borders in preparation for a full-scale invasion. The Iraqi defense minister ordered his troops to “strike the enemy’s civilian settlements, turn them into dust and pave the Arab roads with the skulls of Jews.” In a move sanctioned by international law, Israel preempted them in a defensive war and managed to capture the West Bank from Jordan, Gaza and the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt, and the Golan Heights from Syria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967-1970</td>
<td>The War of Attrition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shortly after the Six-Day War ceasefire, Egyptian President Gamal Nasser ordered attacks on Israelis in the Sinai. During the three-year-long conflict, 1,424 Israeli soldiers and more than 100 Israeli civilians were killed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>The Munich Massacre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After 1967 Palestinian terrorists attacked Israelis worldwide. In their most public operation, the group Black September held hostage and murdered 11 members of the Israeli Olympic Team at the 1972 Munich Olympics. It is widely accepted that the terrorists were controlled by Yasser Arafat’s Fatah faction of the PLO.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>The Yom Kippur War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Egypt and Syria launched a surprise attack against Israel on the holiest day of the Jewish year. Caught unprepared, the IDF nonetheless managed to fend off this assault, cutting off Egyptian forces across the Suez Canal and pushing Syrian troops back from the Golan Heights. While Israel was victorious militarily, the human toll was devastating—2,688 Israeli soldiers were killed in the nearly three weeks of fighting. Egypt claimed to have restored its own honor because of its success in the war’s first 48 hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982-1985</td>
<td>The Lebanon War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After Jordan expelled the PLO in 1970, it entrenched itself in southern Lebanon. During Lebanon’s ensuing civil war (1975-1990), PLO attacks on northern Israel intensified. Israel entered Lebanon in 1982 to root out the organization. The PLO was forced to relocate to Tunis. In 1985 Israel withdrew to a security zone, approximately four miles wide along the border, and stayed until it unilaterally withdrew in 2000. By 1982, 95,000 people had already died in the bitter Lebanese civil war. During this civil war, Lebanese Christian Phalangists entered the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatilla and massacred an estimated 460 to 700 people, including 200 PLO fighters. Although no Israelis were involved in the massacre, an Israeli court determined that Israel and General Ariel Sharon had indirect responsibility for it because the IDF did not stop the Phalangists’ entry into the camps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987-1991</td>
<td>First Intifada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The PLO initiated the intifada (“shaking off”) after false rumors of Israeli atrocities circulated through Palestinian territories. Palestinians claim this was a nonviolent uprising, but it quickly turned violent with 27 Israelis killed and more than 1,400 Israeli civilians and 1,700 Israeli soldiers injured. Almost half of the Palestinian casualties (1,000) were caused by other Palestinians in the “intrafada,” or internal, fighting among Palestinian factions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Persian Gulf War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>When the U.S.-led coalition fought to get Saddam Hussein, the dictator of Iraq, out of Kuwait, Hussein attempted to draw Israel into the war by firing 39 Scud missiles into Israel. To avoid disrupting the U.S.-led coalition, Israel did not retaliate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>First Suicide Bombing in Israel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eight civilians were killed in a suicide bombing on a bus in central Israel, a tactic that would increasingly be used by radical Islamic terrorist factions all over the world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-2005</td>
<td>Second “Al-Aqsa” Intifada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A campaign of suicide bombings and terrorist attacks began on September 29, 2000, and within five years had left over 1,084 Israelis dead and over 7,000 injured—71 percent of them civilians. Approximately 3,000 Palestinians were also killed in this conflict, the majority of them combatants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Second Lebanon War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hezbollah, the Iranian-supported terrorist group in Lebanon, attacked from across the Israeli-Lebanese border on July 12, killing eight soldiers and kidnapping two, and simultaneously launched barrages of rockets at civilians in northern Israel. Israel responded with a military operation that lasted 34 days.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2014</td>
<td>Hamas Rocket War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Since Israel’s complete withdrawal from Gaza in 2005, Hamas and other terrorist groups have fired over 15,000 rockets and mortars at civilians in southern Israel. Israel launched three military operations to stop the rocket fire and protect innocent Israeli men, women, and children: Operation Cast Lead in 2009, Operation Pillar of Defense in 2012, and Operation Protective Edge in 2014.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Over 10,000 Jews became refugees from areas of the Palestine Mandate where Arab armies prevailed. In the West Bank and Gaza, Arab armies razed Jewish communities and killed or expelled all Jews. After the 1948 war, no Jews were allowed to live in Arab-occupied zones. Jordan took control of the West Bank and refused to protect Jewish holy sites. In East Jerusalem alone, 57 synagogues, libraries, and houses of learning, many of them centuries old, were desecrated and destroyed, their stones later used to build urinals, sidewalks, and roads.

Over 850,000 Jews fled rising persecution or were expelled from Arab and Muslim lands after the War of Independence. Between 1949 and 1954, they became homeless though some of their communities were over 2,000 years old. Between 1948 and 2000, the Jewish population in Middle Eastern and North African countries dropped from around 900,000 to less than 50,000.

Israel resettled close to 600,000 Jews from Arab lands. The new state, barely recovered from the devastation of the 1948 war, struggled to absorb both the now-homeless Jews from Arab lands and 300,000 European refugees of World War II. Israel’s 1948 population of 650,000 more than doubled in three years as it fulfilled its mission to be a refuge for persecuted Jews. “No influx like it had been witnessed in modern times. It was an ‘open door’ from which older and vastly wealthier nations would have recoiled in dismay,” noted historian Howard Sachar. Yet, although the world community supported the rebirth of the Jewish state, no international aid agency assisted in the resettlement of homeless Jews.

Jewish refugees today: These early refugees are no longer refugees. Like the tens of millions of other refugees of the last century, the Jews resettled in other nations. Two-thirds of them chose to live in Israel. These refugees from the Middle East and their descendants made up over half of Israel’s Jewish population until the late 1990s.

---

**Over 850,000 Jews fled or were expelled from Arab and Muslim lands after 1948 (see chart below).**


Temporary refugee camps called “ma’abarot” were set up in Israel during the state’s early years to absorb Jewish refugees.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>140,000</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>265,000</td>
<td>2,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>10,400</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>105,000</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>55,000</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libya</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>38,000</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunisia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>105,000</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yemen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>55,000</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discriminatory treatment of Palestinian refugees: The tens of millions of refugees from other war-torn areas in the world during this period resettled in other countries, but Palestinians were not allowed to do the same. Neighboring Arab states (with the exception of Jordan) would not resettle the Palestinian Arabs despite their shared history, language, and religion. Instead, Arab governments confined them in refugee neighborhoods, refused them citizenship, and then used their plight as a propaganda weapon against Israel.

“The Arab states do not want to solve the refugee problem. They want to keep it an open sore, as an affront to the UN and as a weapon against Israel.”—Sir Alexander Galloway, former UNRWA official in Jordan, 1952

“Since 1948 Arab leaders... have used the Palestine people for selfish political purposes. This is...criminal.”—King Hussein of Jordan, 1960

“All the Arab countries want to keep this problem looking like an open wound.”—Ana Liria-Franch, regional representative in Cairo for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 2003

The “Right of Return”: Arab governments promised refugees they could go back to their homes. Arab leaders openly stated that their goal was to dismantle the Jewish state demographically by flooding it with Palestinian Arabs.

“If Arabs return to Israel—Israel will cease to exist.”—Gamal Abdel Nasser, President of Egypt, 1961

“The right of return... would extinguish Israel as a Jewish state, and that’s not an option.”—Barack Obama, President of the United States, 2008

The refugees today: The UN has given special treatment to Palestinian refugees. In 1949 it set up UNRWA, an agency exclusively serving the Palestinian refugees. UNRWA’s website reports that the agency “is unique in terms of its long-standing commitment to one group of refugees...and to four generations of refugees.”

All the world’s other refugees are served by one UN agency, UNHCR, and no other group’s descendants are also considered refugees. By 2011 UNRWA was serving 4.8 million Palestinians. After the PA was established, it governed 38 percent of the Palestinian refugees but did not use its billions of foreign aid dollars to improve their living conditions or opportunities.

Israel has contributed money to UNRWA but has no control over UNRWA policies. When Israel administered the territories (1967-1994), its efforts to improve refugee housing were denounced by the PLO and the UN (UN GA Resolutions 2792 [1971] and 41/69 [1986]). The Palestinian refugees continued to be used as political pawns.
The term “occupation” refers to Israel’s military administration of the West Bank and Gaza, which lasted from the end of the 1967 war until the Oslo Peace Accords in 1993. Israel then turned civil administration of almost all of the populated territories over to the newly created Palestinian Authority and intended to gradually end its military presence in the area, but has been unable to do so due to lack of a final peace agreement.

**Facts You Should Know About Occupation**

The “occupation” was a direct result of the broader Arab-Israeli conflict. The term “occupation” often implies an aggressive effort to take over and rule a foreign people, but the territories came under Israeli control during its defensive war in 1967. Arab states and Palestinians refused to accept the Jewish state’s right to exist and mobilized again in 1967 to destroy it (see page 13). As Israel defended itself and drove back Jordanian, Egyptian, and Syrian troops, it captured the territories that fell on Israel’s side of the armistice lines.

Palestinians had not made any claims to the territories until Israel captured them from Egypt and Jordan in 1967. During Egypt and Jordan’s 19-year occupation (1948-1967), no one called for a Palestinian state that would include Gaza and the West Bank. West Bank residents became Jordanian citizens. The original PLO Covenant (1964) explicitly excluded the territories from its description of Palestine and called instead for the destruction of Israel and for replacing it with Arab rule. The PLO amended its charter to include a claim to the territories only after Israel captured them in 1967.

The PLO “does not exercise any regional sovereignty over the West Bank in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, on the Gaza Strip or the Himmah Area.” —Article 24, PLO Covenant, 1964

Israel repeatedly tried to end the occupation after 1967. Israel had no wish to rule over the Palestinians. Within two weeks after hostilities ended, Israel offered to exchange land for peace, but Arab leaders categorically rejected the offer, officially issuing the “three nos” in Khartoum, Sudan.

“No peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel, no negotiations with it.” —Khartoum Resolution, September 1, 1967

Between 1967 and 1969, then again in the 1979 Israel-Egypt peace treaty, and from 1991 until today, Israel’s leaders have sought to peacefully resolve the conflict with the Palestinians, but their efforts have been repeatedly rejected.

Israel was forced to continue its presence in Gaza and the West Bank from 1967 until 1993 because no Palestinian leader emerged as a peace partner. International and customary law required Israel to administer the territories until a successful peace treaty could be negotiated. UN Resolution 242 did not call for Israel to withdraw from all territories acquired but called for the belligerents to negotiate for peace and mutually recognize new borders. Initially, the international community assumed that Israel would negotiate with Jordan and Egypt, which had occupied the territories between 1949 and 1967, but Egypt and Jordan refused to negotiate at the time. When they renounced their claims to the Gaza Strip and the West Bank territories in 1979 and 1988, respectively, Israel was left with the responsibility to continue its administration. When Yasser Arafat and the PLO claimed to accept Israel’s existence and negotiate for peace, Israel seized the opportunity to resolve the conflict.

During its administration of the territories, Israel sought to improve the lives of the Palestinians. Military barriers came down, and for the first time since the 1948 war, Israelis and Palestinians could travel freely between the territories and the Jewish state. Israel also removed all the Jordanian and Israeli military barriers that had divided Jerusalem between 1948 and 1967. Israel helped modernize Palestinian water and other infrastructure, aiding in the creation of more than 2,000 manufacturing plants, establishing seven universities, expanding schools, teaching modern agriculture, setting up medical programs, and opening over 100 health clinics. Israel instituted freedom of the press, of association, and of religion, and it “launched something entirely new—the first authentically Palestinian administration the local Arabs had ever known.” Unemployment plummeted, life expectancy soared, and the population nearly doubled in the 26 years between 1967 and 1993.

“During the 1970s, the West Bank and Gaza constituted the fourth-fastest-growing economy in the world—ahead of such 'wonders’ as Singapore, Hong Kong and Korea, and substantially ahead of Israel itself.” —Historian Efraim Karsh

1993-2007: Israel gradually ended its military administration. Per the 1993 Oslo Accords, Israel turned civil governance over to the Palestinian-elected government, the Palestinian Authority (PA), which was created in 1994. Israel’s plan was to help create a self-governing Palestinian state in all of Gaza and most of the West Bank, incorporating land where 98 percent of Palestinians live.

• By 1997 Israeli troops had left Palestinian towns and cities and turned them over to the PA. These areas were home to 98 percent of all Palestinians who were now self-governing under the PA.

**Facts About Israeli Administration of the Territories (1967-1993)**

• The territories became the world’s fourth-fastest-growing economy in the 1970s.
• West Bank per capita income rose 80 percent between 1967 and 1973.
• Unemployment in Gaza plummeted to 2 percent.
• Infant mortality plunged from 60 to 15 per 1,000 births between 1968 and 2000.
• Israel disbursed millions of dollars to improve refugee camps.
• The number of Palestinian school children rose 102 percent, and illiteracy dropped to 14 percent for adults over age 15.
• After Yasser Arafat rejected the Camp David proposals in 2000 and the second intifada began, Israel intermittently redeployed its troops in emergency counterterrorism operations against terrorist groups that refused to end hostilities against the Jewish state.

• Despite ongoing terrorism and the collapse of peace negotiations, Israel continued its withdrawals. In August 2005 Israel withdrew from the remaining few areas it still held in Gaza and from sections of the northern West Bank, which were three times the size of Gaza. In a painful, divisive process, Israel uprooted more than 8,500 Jews who had built thriving communities over the previous 30 years in Gaza and who had employed over 10,000 Palestinians from the surrounding areas. Israel left its expensive infrastructure intact for future use by the Palestinians. After Israel’s disengagement no Jewish or non-Jewish Israelis remained in Gaza. Even Jewish cemeteries were moved out of the area.

Border Issues and Settlements

Israelis built communities in Gaza and the West Bank after 1967. Though these communities have been politically contentious, they were built in undeveloped, uninhabited areas and were entirely legal according to many legal scholars. Palestinians claim they have rights to sovereignty over this land. Many are longtime inhabitants who feel they have been deprived of political rights and self-determination. Israel does not want to interfere with their political rights, but it disputes their territorial claims. Israel also has strong claims to the land, and, therefore, the West Bank and Gaza should be called disputed territories.

Israel’s Claims Include:

Legal claims: The British Mandate (1920-1948) was the last legal sovereign authority for the territories. Jordan and Egypt illegally held the territories between 1948 and 1967. According to international law, they remain unallocated portions of the British Mandate since no government legally replaced the Mandate’s jurisdiction. Its guidelines called for Jews to settle the area.15

Historical claims: Judea and Samaria (renamed the West Bank by Jordan in 1951) were the cradle of Jewish civilization and had a continuous Jewish presence for 3,000 years until the 1948 war, when Jewish inhabitants were killed and approximately 10,000 were expelled by the Jordanians.16

Security-related claims: Arab states repeatedly launched attacks from the West Bank’s strategic heights that overlook Israel’s heartland. UN Resolution 242 envisioned bilateral negotiations that would give Israel more secure borders and lead to greater regional stability. If Gaza’s Palestinian terrorist groups, which have fired thousands of rockets into southern Israel, gain a foothold in the West Bank, Israel’s heartland would be vulnerable to attack.

Israel’s security needs remain urgent. Today the Hamas-led Palestinian government continues to call for Israel’s destruction, and Israel is repeatedly attacked from Palestinian and Lebanese territories. Hamas has close ties with Iran, Syria, and Hezbollah and has forged ties with Al Qaeda, all of which call for Israel’s destruction (see pages 24-27).
As World War I came to an end and new nations were carved out of old colonial empires, the U.S. endorsed the Balfour Declaration and the British Mandate over Palestine, which were the forerunners for the modern state of Israel.

Despite their deeply shared values, the U.S. never automatically gave preference to Israel. The young state had to prove itself and fit into America’s larger geostrategic, economic, and political interests. Israel gradually became a critical U.S. ally and a valued partner in trade, humanitarian programs, and scientific research. The partnership has benefited both nations.

Along with its commitment to a safe and secure Israel, U.S. policymakers have also supported Arab states, assisted Palestinians, and repeatedly sought to help bring peace to the region.

Israel was politically isolated in the Middle East by the Arab League’s diplomatic boycott (imposed in 1948). Israel was further isolated by the Soviet and non-aligned nations blocs, which severed diplomatic relations with it in the mid-1950s. Instead, Israel developed strong relationships with Iran (until 1979), Turkey, and other European and Latin American nations. When the Soviet Union fell (1989), Israel rapidly formed diplomatic, trade, and cooperative agreements with India and other Asian nations and with Eastern European states. Nonetheless, the U.S. remains Israel’s most steadfast partner and ally.

1948: U.S. recognized Israel
The United States was the first nation to recognize the reestablished state of Israel.

1950-67: While recognizing that Israel shares U.S. values, U.S. supported Arab states and Israel
The U.S. government believed that one of the best policies for peace in the Middle East was a balance of military power between all the countries in the region. France and Germany were Israel’s main arms partners. U.S. economic aid was equally even-handed. Between 1946 and 1971, Israel received an average of $60 million in U.S. aid per year. During the same period, Arab states received an average of $170 million a year.³ The U.S. also financed almost two-thirds of the budget for UNRWA, the UN agency that supports Palestinian refugees.⁴ Nonetheless, the U.S. recognized that Israel shared its values.

Israel “carries the shield of democracy, and it honors the sword of freedom.” —U.S. President John F. Kennedy

“The Israelis have shown qualities that Americans identify with: guts, patriotism, idealism, a passion for freedom.” —U.S. President Richard M. Nixon

1967-68: U.S. regarded Israel as an ally in the Middle East
Israel’s surprising victory over Soviet-backed Arab countries in the 1967 war convinced the U.S. that Israel could help the U.S. policy of containing Soviet expansion in the Middle East. In 1968, for the first time, Congress agreed to sell U.S. Phantom jets to Israel. At the same time, the U.S. also continued to provide sophisticated military equipment to Jordan, Morocco, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the Gulf states.

1969: Israel proved its strategic value by capturing new Soviet military equipment
The Soviets supplied arms and their newest military technology to their Arab allies. In a daring raid in December 1969, called “Operation Rooster 53,” Israeli paratroopers captured the newest Soviet radar in Egypt and gave the technological information to the U.S.⁵

1970: Israel proved its strategic value when Syria threatened Jordan
The U.S. asked Israel to support Jordan when Syrian tanks invaded. Israeli jets did not attack. They simply flew low enough for the invading Syrian tank commanders to see Israel’s Stars of David on the wings. The Syrian tanks quickly withdrew from Jordan.
Israel participates in international space mission, 2003.

1973-80: The U.S. recognized Israel as a vital strategic partner

After Israel’s victory against the surprise Arab attack in the Yom Kippur War of 1973, the U.S. saw that Israel could pit itself against Soviet military technology and weaponry. The U.S. realized Israel was its only militarily strong, stable friend in the Middle East. Israel became eligible to sell military equipment to the U.S., and the two countries began joint, limited military programs.

“A strong, secure Israel is not just in Israel’s interest, it’s in the interest of the U.S. and...of the entire free world.”
—U.S. President Jimmy Carter

“My commitment to the security and future of Israel is based upon basic morality as well as enlightened self-interest.”
—U.S. President Gerald Ford

1981: U.S.-Israel ties grew stronger

President Ronald Reagan believed Israel was critical for U.S. interests in the Middle East. The U.S. and Israel signed a “Memorandum of Understanding” for military and strategic cooperation.

“Only by full appreciation of the critical role the State of Israel plays in our strategic calculus can we build the foundation for thwarting Moscow’s designs on territories and resources vital to our security and our national well-being.”
—U.S. President Ronald Reagan

1980s-2012: U.S. military grants to Israel helped not only Israel but the U.S. and other countries as well

At a fraction of the cost the U.S. spends to protect its allies and interests in Europe, East Asia, and Iraq, the U.S. protects its Middle East interests through military grants to Israel. The amount the U.S. spends annually to protect South Korea alone is equal to the amount it grants to Israel. However, South Korean expenses are in the U.S. defense budget, while Israeli costs are in the foreign aid budget.6

Three-fourths of the military financing that the U.S. grants to Israel is spent in the U.S. This spending generates American profits and jobs. “More than 1,000 companies in 47 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico have signed contracts worth billions of dollars.”7

Israeli technological developments save the U.S. significant funds in research and development.

1985: Israel became a major U.S. trading partner

The U.S. and Israel signed an agreement giving U.S. goods free access to Israeli markets. U.S. exports to Israel grew 437 percent by 2001, bringing profits to U.S. businesses. Israel became second only to Canada in per capita imports of U.S. products.

1987: The U.S. recognized Israel as a major non-NATO ally

By 1988, the U.S. was storing military equipment in Israel, holding joint military exercises, and working together in developing missile defense technology—an unprecedented level of military cooperation between two nations.8

1991: Israel cooperated with U.S. requests during the Gulf War

Iraq fired 39 Scud missiles into Israel during the first Gulf War. At the request of the U.S., Israel did not launch any counterattacks to defend itself in order to protect the U.S.-led coalition.

1990-2012: Israel and U.S. researchers cooperated in technological and biomedical breakthroughs

Israel and America have worked hand-in-hand in research and development of high-tech and biomedical products. Israeli has more companies traded on NASDAQ than any other country except the U.S. and China.9 Companies like Microsoft, IBM, and Intel established research and development centers in Israel, where Israeli and American researchers work jointly. Israeli and American researchers shared Nobel Prizes in 2002 in economics, 2004 in chemistry, in 2005 in economics, and in 2009 in chemistry.10

1996-2012: Allies on the front line against terrorism

The U.S. and Israel signed a counterterrorism cooperation accord on April 30, 1996, pledges to jointly fight international terrorism and to form a joint counterterrorism group. In 1999 they agreed to “share intelligence assessments, and prepare plans for cooperation in the development of technological means for counterterrorism.”11 Israel provides the U.S. with extensive intelligence on terrorists groups.

The U.S. continues to aid Middle East governments

The U.S. has been a principal backer of Jordan, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and the Gulf states. It has given $2 billion a year to Egypt since 1979 and regularly sold state-of-the-art military equipment to Egypt and Saudi Arabia. The U.S. has also continued to be a major supporter of Palestinian refugees and of the Palestinian Authority, directly as well as through the UN.

---


Zionists and then the reborn state of Israel always sought friendship with neighboring states, envisioning a future of cooperation in joint trade, science, environmental, and humanitarian projects. After World War I many Arab leaders shared this vision:

“We Arabs…look with deepest sympathy on the Zionist movement….We will wish the Jews a hearty welcome home….our two movements complete one another….I think that neither can be a real success without the other.”
—Emir Feisal, Leader of the Arab national movement, March 3, 1919

But within a short time, many Arab leaders became hostile to Zionism, denied the Jewish state’s right to exist as their neighbor, and repeatedly tried to destroy it. Nonetheless, Israel has clung to the dream of peaceful coexistence. The small Jewish nation has reemerged and has protected itself with strong defenses while simultaneously reaching out for friendship and compromise. The state of Israel has always shown its willingness to make painful concessions for genuine peace. Unfortunately, only two of the 22 Middle Eastern states have signed peace agreements with Israel: Egypt and Jordan.

1937: Zionists accepted Britain’s partition recommendation with some reservations. Based on the Peel Commission report, the proposal called for a Jewish state in only 4 percent of the original British Mandate, which included Jordan, and a Palestinian Arab state confederated with Jordan in the remaining 96 percent of the land. Arab leaders rejected it.

1947: Zionists accepted the UN Partition Plan, Resolution 181, which recommended dividing the remaining 22 percent of the land originally designated as the Jewish homeland for a two-state solution. Forty-five percent of the land was allotted for an Arab state and 55 percent for a Jewish state, though over 60 percent of the Jewish portion was the arid Negev Desert. Arab states rejected the compromise and continued hostilities to take over the whole area. The UN did not intervene to enforce its recommendation.

1949: Armistice agreements: After the 1948 war (see page 12), Israel and neighboring Arab states agreed to an armistice. The Old City of Jerusalem and the West Bank were occupied by Jordan and the Gaza Strip occupied by Egypt. The UN-sponsored Lausanne talks were intended to lead to permanent peace agreements, but the Arab states refused to make peace and their hostility to the Jewish state intensified. In 1951 Jordan’s King Abdullah was assassinated for trying to negotiate peace with Israel.

“We have a secret weapon…and this is time. As long as we do not make peace with the Zionists, the war is not over; and as long as the war is not over, there is neither victor nor vanquished.”—Azzam Pasha, Secretary General of the League of Arab States (1945-1952), 1949

1957: Israel withdrew from the Sinai Peninsula: Israel captured the Sinai during the 1956 Suez War (see page 12). Egypt refused to make peace. Nevertheless, Israel withdrew after Egypt stopped its illegal blockade of Israeli ships (in the Suez Canal and Straits of Tiran) and the UN put peacekeeping troops along the Egyptian-Israeli borders.

1967: Israel accepted UN Resolution 242—land-for-peace formula: The belligerents were to make peace, recognize each other’s sovereignty, and negotiate for more “secure borders.” In return, Israel was to withdraw from certain territories captured in the 1967 war. Contrary to Arab leaders’ claims, the carefully crafted resolution did not call for Israel to withdraw from all the territories. Arab states rejected this formula and remained committed to the “three nos” of their Khartoum Resolution—no peace, no negotiations, and no recognition of the Jewish state.

1979: Peace treaty with Egypt: When Egyptian President Anwar Sadat came to Jerusalem and made a sincere peace offer, Israel welcomed him. Although Israel had discovered oil and gas in the Sinai, it gave the entire Sinai Peninsula to Egypt (91 percent of all the land captured in the 1967 war) in accordance with Resolution 242, dismantled all Jewish communities that had been built, left its oil drilling infrastructure intact, and gave up the oil revenues the wells had produced. In 1981 President Sadat was assassinated by Egyptian extremists for striking a deal with Israel.

1993: Oslo Peace Accords with the PLO: After the PLO agreed to make peace, Israel agreed to withdraw from most of the territories and grant self-government to the Palestinians. In exchange the PLO was supposed to stop incitement, renounce terrorism, and accept Israel’s right to exist as a Jewish state within secure borders. By 1997, 98 percent of the Palestinian people were governed by the Palestinian Authority.

1994: Peace treaty with Jordan: King Hussein and Israel had multiple working arrangements, but Hussein kept them hidden due to pressure from Arab states. The regional atmosphere changed after the Oslo Accords of 1993, allowing Jordan and Israel to publicly formalize their peaceful relations.

2000-2006: Unilateral withdrawal from southern Lebanon: Despite continuing hostilities and threats from the Iranian- and Syrian-sponsored terrorist group Hezbollah and despite officially being in a state of war with Lebanon, Israel unilaterally withdrew its troops from the security zone it had established in southern Lebanon, hoping to promote peace. Unfortunately, between 2000 and 2006, Hezbollah amassed over 12,000 rockets in Lebanon aimed at Israel, continued rocket attacks against Israel’s northern region and orchestrated multiple acts of violence in the region and elsewhere. On July 12, 2006, Hezbollah launched an unprovoked attack against Israel, kidnapping two soldiers and killing eight while simultaneously firing rockets at Israeli cities.

2005: Unilateral disengagement from Gaza and parts of the West Bank: Though the Palestinian Authority was not living up to its commitments, Israel withdrew from parts of the northern West Bank and from the area it still controlled in Gaza—uprooting more than 8,500 Israelis from their homes. These actions were taken with the hope of breaking the impasse in the peace process and to facilitate a two-state solution with defined borders. As of this printing, these expectations have not been realized.

2008: Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert presented a far-reaching compromise but PA President Mahmoud Abbas did not respond or make a counter offer. Prime Minister Olmert offered all of Gaza, 94 percent of the West Bank with land swaps equivalent to the remaining 6 percent, evacuation of 60,000 Israelis from the West Bank, a shared capital in Jerusalem with an international body overseeing holy sites, and a family reunification program for approximately 50,000 Palestinian refugees as a compromise on the Palestinian demand for a “right of return” for Palestinian refugees. President Abbas did not respond.

2009-14: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu repeatedly asked PA President Abbas to resume direct negotiations for two states for two peoples, but Abbas refused until 2013. The negotiations failed and formally ended in April 2014 when the PA and Hamas announced a unity government.

High hopes for a new era of peace began with the Oslo Accords. The accords promised to end decades of warfare and to fulfill Palestinian aspirations while ensuring Israel's security.

Since its founding in 1964, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)'s explicit goal had been to replace Israel, not to live alongside it. New opportunities arose in the early 1990s when the first intifada ended and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat claimed that he recognized Israel. Israel's enemies seemed ready to lay down their arms and make peace. Israel was prepared to seize the opportunity. Most Israelis and Palestinians were full of hope and optimism.

PLO and Israeli representatives began secret talks in Oslo, Norway, in 1992. Arafat, the architect of terrorism against Israel, claimed he would renounce incitement, recognize Israel's right to exist, and accept a two-state solution. In return Israel and the United States looked beyond the PLO's terrorist past, acknowledged the PLO as the official representative of the Palestinian people, and agreed to give the Palestinians self-rule.

The Oslo process did not go smoothly. Though the Palestinian Authority governed 98 percent of its civilian population by 1997, escalating Palestinian incitement and terrorism led Israel to delay further withdrawals. Palestinians questioned Israel's commitment to Oslo because of these delays, while calls to violence by official Palestinian media, agencies, clerics, and political leaders led many Israelis to question Arafat's sincerity. At Camp David in 2000, Arafat rejected Israel's offer of a two-state solution, which was endorsed by U.S. President Bill Clinton, and made no counteroffer. The campaign of terrorism known as the second (al-Aqsa) intifada erupted two months later. In 2003 the UN, the EU, the U.S., and Russia endorsed a new plan, the "road map," to revive the peace process. When the negotiations envisioned in the road map also failed, Israel embarked upon a policy of unilateral withdrawals.

Important Events in the Oslo Peace Process

**September 13, 1993:** Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin shook hands on the White House lawn and signed the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements (DoP). The DoP laid out gradual steps for Israeli withdrawals. In exchange the PLO was to refrain from all incitement and all violence, dismantle terrorist groups, and eliminate the clauses in its charter that call for the destruction of Israel. The most difficult issues—Jerusalem, refugees, final borders, settlements, and security—were to be negotiated five years later once Israel was assured that its former enemy had sincerely renounced violence and the goal of destroying the Jewish state.¹

**May 4, 1994:** The Palestinian Authority was established to govern the Palestinians in the Gaza-Jericho Agreement. Israel turned civil service administration over to the PA and withdrew from Jericho and the Gaza Strip.

**July 1, 1994:** Arafat's exile in Tunis ended, and he returned to the Gaza Strip with his PLO associates.
October 14, 1994: The Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Rabin, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, and Arafat.

September 28, 1995: In Oslo II or the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement, Israel was scheduled to withdraw from Palestinian population centers, which would then be governed by the PA. The West Bank and Gaza were divided into Areas A, B, and C. Areas A and B included Palestinian population centers. Israel completed the withdrawal from population centers in December 1995. Oslo II also called for the creation of a Palestinian police force of 30,000 to keep order and control militant factions. Israel agreed to provide arms for the new police force. The PLO again agreed to stop incitement, amend the PLO Charter that still called for Israel’s destruction, and guarantee respect for Jewish holy sites in its territory.

November 4, 1995: Rabin was assassinated by an Israeli extremist who rejected any concessions to Palestinians, and Peres became prime minister.

March 1997: Violent demonstrations broke out in Hebron and Bethlehem when Israel began building Har Homa, a new Jewish neighborhood in southern Jerusalem that Palestinian critics claimed should be part of their future state.

October 23, 1998: The Wye River Memorandum was drafted to clarify each side’s ongoing obligations and to address Palestinian violations of previous agreements to end incitement, amend the PLO Charter, and dismantle terrorist groups. Further Israeli withdrawals were tied to Palestinians fulfilling these obligations.

July 11-25, 2000: In Camp David negotiations to resolve final status issues, Clinton acted as mediator. Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak offered 95 percent of a contiguous West Bank, 100 percent of Gaza, a capital in eastern Jerusalem, the removal of Jewish communities from those areas, and $30 billion to help resettle Palestinian refugees. Palestinians did not respond to the offer. PLO officials later claimed that Barak’s offer would have given them only disconnected enclaves. Israeli and U.S. officials disputed this claim.

The final proposals made to the Palestinians “couldn’t be a floor for negotiations. It couldn’t be a ceiling. It was the roof….Those who say there were cantons, completely untrue. It was contiguous.” —Dennis Ross, U.S. envoy and negotiator

September 28-30, 2000: Violence erupted, marking the start of the al-Aqsa or second intifada, a campaign of Palestinian terrorism, which effectively ended the Oslo process. Though at the time Palestinians claimed Israeli prime ministerial candidate Ariel Sharon’s walk on the Temple Mount triggered the violence, Palestinian leaders (including Palestinian Minister of Communication Imhad Falouji) later admitted publicly that the intifada had been planned since the end of the Camp David negotiations.

January 22-28, 2001: At the Taba Conference, where Barak made another offer, including 97 percent of the West Bank, again, no deal was reached. Barak’s offer was rescinded as Israeli elections approached and terrorist attacks against Israel escalated.
June 4, 2003: The road map was formally endorsed at the Aqaba Summit by Israeli Prime Minister Sharon, Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas, Jordan’s King Abdullah II, and U.S. President George Bush. The performance-based plan called for Palestinians to end terrorism and anti-Israel incitement. Israel was to help the Palestinians build their institutions and to freeze settlement building. It envisioned the establishment of a Palestinian state by 2005. The “Quartet,” the UN, European Union, the U.S., and Russia, was to oversee the process.

November 11, 2004: Arafat died in Paris. Former PA Prime Minister and Arafat colleague Abbas (Abu Mazen) was elected chairman of the PLO and later president of the PA.

August 2005: Israel unilaterally withdrew from the remaining 20 percent of the Gaza Strip that was still under Israeli administration and from the northern West Bank, uprooting Israeli communities (including the deceased from cemeteries).

January 2006: Ehud Olmert became interim Israeli prime minister after Sharon suffered a stroke. Hamas, a terrorist group dedicated to destroying Israel in accordance with its founding charter, won in the PA parliamentary elections.


June 2007: Hamas launched a violent coup that separated the PA into Hamas-controlled Gaza and the PA-controlled West Bank.

2009-2012: PA President Abbas refused to continue direct negotiations with Israel.

2013-2014: Negotiations resumed and collapsed; Fatah and terrorist group Hamas attempted to form a unity government.

### Diverse Political Parties In The Peace Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Israelis Murdered</th>
<th>Palestinians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>PA President Yasser Arafat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>PA President Yasser Arafat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>PA President Yasser Arafat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>PA President Yasser Arafat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>PA President Yasser Arafat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>PLO Chairman Mahmoud Abbas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>PA President Mahmoud Abbas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>PA President Mahmoud Abbas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>PA President Mahmoud Abbas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>PA President Mahmoud Abbas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>PA President Mahmoud Abbas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>PA President Mahmoud Abbas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>PA President Mahmoud Abbas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>PA President Mahmoud Abbas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>PA President Mahmoud Abbas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>PA President Mahmoud Abbas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>PA President Mahmoud Abbas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>PA President Mahmoud Abbas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>PA President Mahmoud Abbas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Terrorism Since the Start of the Oslo Peace Process

In the five years after the Oslo Accords were signed, Palestinian terrorist groups opposed to the two-state solution killed 233 Israelis, more than the number killed (216) in the entire 15 years that preceded the accords. Despite escalating terrorism and incitement, Israel continued to withdraw until 98 percent of Palestinians were governed by the PA. Israel intermittently reoccupied these areas as needed for security purposes with its defensive operations during the second intifada. The violence undermined the central premise of the Oslo Accords, that differences would be resolved peacefully, and effectively shattered the Oslo peace process.

---

3. Interview with Dennis Ross on Fox News Sunday, April 21, 2002.
**SEPTEMBER 28, 2000-2007**: The Oslo process came to an end in September 2000 when multiple extremist Palestinian groups, with the backing of Yasser Arafat and the PA, launched a terrorist war against Israel called the second intifada or the Oslo War. These groups hijacked the peace agenda from ordinary Palestinians and forced Israel to focus on self-defense. Though there had been terrorism throughout the Oslo years, it now escalated into an organized, systematic campaign of roadside explosives, ambushes, and shootings. The intifada’s signature tactic, suicide bombing, was the most lethal, causing 47 percent of all Israeli casualties. Terrorists targeted Israeli civilians. Suicide bombers struck restaurants, dance clubs, synagogues, bar mitzvah celebrations, and public buses. Snipers shot at commuters on the highways. Attackers infiltrated private homes and launched rockets into schoolyards. During the Oslo negotiations, Yasser Arafat, the PLO, and the PA committed to disarming and dismantling terrorist groups. Instead, they continued to arm terrorists, promote incitement, and give terrorists financial and ideological support, hoping to force more concessions from Israel. The PA officially celebrated suicide bombers as heroic martyrs and authorized public incitement in the media, schools, and mosques to attack Israel and Israelis. Many PA security officials doubled as terrorist operatives. By 2005 Israel’s counterterrorism measures had quelled the second intifada. In January 2006 PA Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas announced he would continue the PA policy of paying suicide bombers’ families with annual stipends. In the same month, the radical Islamic group Hamas won the majority vote in the PA elections, and, in a violent coup in 2007, took over the Gaza Strip.

**Palestinian Terrorism: A Who’s Who in the Terror War Against Israel**

Terrorists come from a large network of armed Palestinian groups. Some are directly connected to the PLO, which remains a force in the PA. Most PA officials belong to the PLO or Hamas. Some groups, like Hamas, are radical Islamists, while others, like the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), are secular. Immediately following Israel’s withdrawal from Gaza in the fall of 2005, Al Qaeda and Hezbollah operatives established cells in Gaza. Though these groups often compete with one another, they also frequently collaborate. All receive encouragement, financial support, weapons, and, in some cases, direction from Arab and other states, which also offer them safe havens. For example Iran has given Hamas and Hezbollah millions of dollars annually; the Hamas leader Khaled Mashal lives in Damascus, Syria; and Hamas and Hezbollah signed an agreement in 2004 to increase attacks on Israel.

**HAMAS (ISLAMIC RESISTANCE MOVEMENT)**

- **FOUNDED:** 1987—won PA Parliamentary elections in January 2006.
- **LEADERS:** Sheikh Ahmed Yassin (1987-2004); Khaled Mashal (2004-present).
- **LOCATION:** West Bank/Gaza; Leaders also in Lebanon, Qatar, Egypt, Iran, and Turkey
- **IDEOLOGY:** Muslim Brotherhood Islamists. Opposes PLO. “Israel will exist until Islam will obliterate it. There is no solution for the Palestinian question except through Jihad (holy war).”—Hamas Charter
- **NOTES:** Governs Gaza. Major player in the terrorist war against Israel. Has shifted strategy from suicide bombings to rockets, mortars, and tunnels. Closely tied to Iran, Lebanon, Qatar, and Turkey. Funded by groups in Saudi Arabia, the Gulf states, Western Europe, Hezbollah, and others. Listed as terrorist organization by U.S. State Department, the European Union (EU), Canada, Japan, and Israel.

“Whoever thinks that the intifada broke out because of the despised Sharon’s visit to the al-Aqsa Mosque is wrong. This intifada was planned in advance, ever since President Arafat’s return from the Camp David negotiations, where he turned the table upside down on President Clinton.”
—PA Communications Minister Imad Falouji, March 3, 2001

**Terrorism Against Israel**

Sept. 28, 2000 - Dec. 31, 2005

25,770 terrorist attacks
147 suicide bombings (causing 48% of all deaths)
1,084 killed
7,454 injured
71% of dead and wounded were civilians (2000-2005)

**TERRORIST**

Bombing of Sbarro Restaurant in Jerusalem.
### PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION (PLO)  
**FOUNDED:** 1964  
**FOUNDER/LEADERS:**  
- Egyptian-born Ahmed Shukairy. Sponsored by Egyptian president Gamal Nasser.  
**IDEOLOGY:** Secular Arab nationalist. “Armed struggle is the only way to liberate Palestine. The partition of Palestine in 1947 and the establishment of the State of Israel are entirely illegal, regardless of the passage of time. Claims of historical or religious ties of Jews with Palestine are incompatible with the facts of history.” —PLO Charter, 1968  
**OPERATIONS:** Plane hijackings, hostage taking, bombings, assassinations. 1968-1982: targeted Israeli civilians and Jews globally and conducted operations against Lebanese, Jordanians, and Americans. Tried to overthrow King Hussein of Jordan and was crushed by Hussein’s army in September of 1970.  
**NOTES:** Founded as umbrella organization for militant Palestinian nationalist groups. 1974: UN recognizes PLO as sole representative of the Palestinian people. 1993: PLO is signatory of Oslo Peace Accords and says it formally recognizes Israel. Becomes dominant political party in the PA. 1996: PLO votes for amending its charter to eliminate clauses calling for destruction of Israel. Charter remains unchanged in public documents. Accused by the international community of extensive corruption and theft of international aid during its governance of the PA.
# PALESTINE ISLAMIC JIHAD (PIJ)\textsuperscript{10}

| **FOUNDED:** | 1979 |
| **FOUNDER/LEADERS:** | Fathi 'Abd al-Aziz al Shqaqi (1979-1995), Sheikh 'Abd al-Aziz 'Odah, Dr. Ramadan Shalah. |
| **LOCATION:** | West Bank and Gaza. Sponsored by Iran and Syria. |
| **IDEOLOGY:** | Radical Islamist and nationalist. Committed to "creation of an Islamic Palestinian state and the destruction of Israel through holy war." Opposes pro-Western and Arab governments. ––BBC Report |
| **NOTES:** | Small group but an increasingly major player. Recruits followers in mosques and universities. Opposed to hudnas (ceasefires) and lulls in the terrorist operations, such as the one negotiated for February 2005 to January 1, 2006. |

---

# HEZBOLLAH (PARTY OF GOD)\textsuperscript{11}

| **FOUNDER/LEADERS:** | Iranian Revolutionary Guards; spiritual father Sheik Muhammed Hussein Fadlallah; General Secretary Sheik Abbas al-Musawi, 1991-1992; Sheik Hassan Nasrallah, 1992 to present. |
| **LOCATION:** | Southern Lebanon. Established by Iran. |
| **IDEOLOGY:** | Shia Islamic fundamentalist terrorist group/Lebanese political party. Goals are to establish Islamic state across the Arab world, eliminate Israel and fight "Western imperialism." |
| **NOTES:** | Not Palestinian-based but extensively supports Palestinian terrorist groups. Set up cells in the West Bank and Gaza. Continuous attacks across the Israel/Lebanon border. Operatives now in Caribbean and Central, North, and South America. Listed as a terrorist organization by U.S. State Department. |
**FOUNDED:** 1967  
**FOUNDER/LEADERS:** George Habash (1971-2000); Ahmad Sadat (2001-present)  
**LOCATION:** West Bank, Gaza, Syria, and Lebanon  
**IDEOLOGY:** Marxist/Leninist, revolutionary nationalism through armed insurrection. Refuses to recognize Israel. Broke with PLO in 1974 for its "stages strategy" ("liberating" Palestine in stages rather than in a single war) but later rejoined the PLO.  
**OPERATIONS:** Initiated showcase, media-oriented attacks in the 1970s, such as plane hijackings, shootings, bombings, and suicide attacks. Assassinated Israeli Tourism Minister Rechavim Ze'evi, October 2001. 8 suicide bombings (2000-2005). 14 suicide bombers were stopped and arrested (2005). Fought alongside Syrian regime in its brutal war against its own people. As of 2015 over 200,000 people have been killed in Syria, including nearly 3,000 Palestinian refugees.  
**NOTES:** Major players in the 1970s and 1980s, but PFLP and related groups are small and considered minor players today.
Conventional wars against Israel ended after the 1973 war and the 1979 Israel-Egypt peace treaty. Since then, Israel has had to defend itself against terrorist organizations supported by countries like Syria and Iran.

Iranian proxy Hezbollah, based in Lebanon, triggered a war against Israel in 2006, referred to as the second Lebanon or Hezbollah war (see page 13). Iranian-backed Hamas, which governs Gaza, forced Israel to launch three military operations to stop incessant barrages of rockets: Operation Cast Lead (December 2008), Operation Pillar of Defense (November 2012), and Operation Protective Edge (July 2014).

In 2005 Israel evacuated all its soldiers and 8,500 citizens from Gaza to promote peace. Israel's withdrawal, however, brought escalating terrorism, not peace. In 2006 Iranian-backed Hamas won Palestinian Authority (PA) parliamentary elections and violently seized control of Gaza in 2007. Between 2005 and 2008, Hamas and allied groups fired over 9,500 mortars and rockets at Israel's southern communities, forcing Israel to launch Operation Cast Lead. The attacks soared again in 2012, forcing Israel to mount Operation Pillar of Defense. A subsequent 20-month truce ended when Hamas affiliates kidnapped and murdered three Israeli teens and again launched rocket barrages, forcing Israel to begin Operation Protective Edge in July 2014.

"If somebody is sending rockets into my house where my two daughters sleep at night, I'm going to do everything in my power to stop that. And I would expect Israelis to do the same thing." —U.S. president Barack Obama, July 2008.

Hamas exploited truces to smuggle arms and upgrade its weaponry despite Israel's blockade, which was deemed legal by the UN Palmer Report. By 2008 Gaza's terrorists had long-range Iranian rockets that put 80 percent of Israel in rocket range. They also had built elaborate underground tunnels for infiltrating Israeli communities to kidnap or kill Israelis on a mass scale, as they planned to do on the Jewish holiday of Rosh Hashanah in 2014.

Hamas' goal, as stated in its founding document and regularly repeated by its leaders, is the murder of Jews, the "obliteration" of Israel, and its replacement with a Taliban-like Muslim theocracy (Hamas charter, 1988). Iranian-backed Hamas rejects all negotiations and compromise and shares the ideology of radical Islamists surging in the region.

The psychological trauma for Israelis: Hamas rockets and mortars have hit kindergartens, hospitals, schools, day care centers, homes, and shopping malls. In 2014 a rocket landed one mile from Ben Gurion Airport. Israelis live in dread as warning sirens give them only 15 to 60 seconds to reach bomb shelters. In Sderot, a town bordering Gaza, 94 percent of children suffer from post-traumatic stress syndrome.

Israel's response: restraint and continued transfer of humanitarian aid, but it was eventually compelled to mount major operations to stop the attacks. Israel attempted to avoid major military operations, limiting its response to periodic pinpoint strikes, destroying rocket-launching sites, munitions depots, and arms-smuggling tunnels. When rocket attacks escalated, Israel sought truces, but Hamas rejected such offers in 2008, 2012, and 2014. Nonetheless, Israel continued transferring thousands of tons of humanitarian aid, fuel, and medical supplies to Gaza's civilians through designated border crossings.

Israel's goal in each major operation: disable Hamas' military capabilities while preventing harm to ordinary Palestinians.

"Residents of Gaza...we are not fighting against you. This terrorist organization [Hamas] has brought disaster to two peoples." —Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, December 27, 2008.

Israel's targets were Hamas's 15,000 to 20,000 armed fighters, its terrorism infrastructure, and lethal attack tunnels.

Hamas consistently committed human rights abuses and war crimes, intentionally putting Israeli and Palestinian civilians in harm's way. It indiscriminately targeted Israeli civilians and systematically used human shields. By calling upon civilians to gather at targeted buildings and firing from and hiding its arsenals in schools, mosques, hospitals, homes, and UN buildings, Hamas
turned these protected structures into legitimate military targets under international law. This happened with UNRWA schools and Gaza’s Al-Wafa Hospital in 2014. Hamas entrap Palestinians and intentionally put them in harm’s way.

“Each and every missile against Israel constitutes a crime against humanity, whether it hits or misses, because it is directed at civilian targets.” — Palestinian Envoy to the UN Human Rights Council, July 9, 2014.

Hamas regularly attempted to manipulate the media and exaggerate the number of civilian deaths to win world sympathy in what some called its “civilian death strategy.” The BBC reported that the horrifying pictures Hamas claimed were taken during Operation Protective Edge were actually from 2009 or earlier or depicted atrocities in Iraq and Syria. Hamas directed social media activists to call all fatalities “innocent civilians,” even if they were combatants, and to never show rockets fired from civilian centers. After Operation Cast Lead, Hamas officials admitted that the majority of the estimated 1,166 to 1,400 Palestinian fatalities were combatants, as were the majority of the 167 fatalities during Operation Pillar of Defense. Although research is still in process, most studies estimate that in 2014’s Operation Protective Edge, around half of those killed were combatants.

Hamas has a “crass... strategy designed to force Israel to kill their own [Palestinian] civilians so that the rest of the world will condemn them [Israel].” — Former U.S. President William Clinton, July 17, 2014.

In each major military operation, Israel went beyond the requirements of international law to protect Gaza’s civilians. Israel warned about impending attacks so civilians could move to safe areas through hundreds of thousands of widely distributed leaflets, and radio broadcasts. Unfortunately, there were still many civilian casualties because Hamas urged civilians not to seek safer areas.

“Israel’s use of individualized, specific warnings by phone and text goes far beyond what the law requires.” — Professor Laurie Blank, Emory Law School, July 2014.

• Israel ensured the regular transport of goods during all its military operations, even serving unilateral truces to ensure their delivery, and treated wounded civilians, even setting up a field hospital in Gaza in 2014.

• The UN Goldstone Report initially criticized Israel’s action during Operation Cast Lead, but the report’s chairman, Judge Richard Goldstone, retracted his main criticisms after more evidence emerged, confirming that “Israel had not intentionally targeted civilians as a matter of policy.”

“Israel may be raising the moral standards of warfare.” — Will Saletan, July 2014.

Some claim that Israel used “disproportionate force” because Palestinians suffered more casualties than Israel. The law of proportionality does not mean that the casualties or sophistication of weaponry must be equal. The law prohibits actions in which “the incidental civilian injuries would be clearly excessive in relation to the anticipated military advantage,” according to the International Criminal Court. Israel’s response has been proportionate to the threat Hamas poses. Unfortunately, civilian casualties are war’s tragic and regrettable byproduct.

Palestinian casualties were high because Hamas intentionally endangered civilians and its underground bunkers protected Hamas leaders and weapons, not civilians. In contrast, Israel’s elaborate civil defense system has saved countless lives. Warning sirens, bomb shelters, and the Iron Dome—which shot down 90 percent of the rockets headed for civilian centers—are demonstrations of a government that invests in protecting its own people.

**Rocket and Mortar Attacks from Gaza Into Israel**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Attacks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>1,777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>1,281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>1,277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>1,261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>1,257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>1,249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1,239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>1,226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>1,217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>1,209</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Operation Pillar of Defense**

- **Operation Cast Lead 2008-09**
  - **Operation**
    - **Date**
    - **Casualties**
  - **Low, conservative estimate:**
    - **Casualties**


**Sir Geoffrey Palmer:** “Report of the Secretary-General’s Panel of Inquiry on the May 31, 2010 Flotilla Incident,” September 2011. **“WATCH”: Footage of IDF strikes on Gaza hospitals;” Times of Israel, July 23, 2014. **MEMRI:** “Palestinian Envoy to UNHRC: Israelis Won Civilians Stifles Attacks, We Don’t;” Interview on Egyptian TV, posted July 13, 2014. **Hamas:** “Crass... strategy designed to force Israel to kill their own [Palestinian] civilians so that the rest of the world will condemn them [Israel].” — Former U.S. President William Clinton, July 17, 2014.

**EMORY LAW SCHOOL:** “Israel’s use of individualized, specific warnings by phone and text goes far beyond what the law requires.” — Professor Laurie Blank, Emory Law School, July 2014.

**Operation Cast Lead 2008-09**

- **Operation**
  - **Date**
  - **Casualties**
- **Low, conservative estimate:**
  - **Casualties**

**Will Saletan:** “Israel May Be Raising The Moral Standards Of Warfare,” Slate, July, 12, 2014.
Iranian leaders are more likely to use nuclear weapons than any state that has possessed them to date. Religious extremists with an expansionist, apocalyptic ideology, the regime’s leaders want to spread the Islamic revolution worldwide. They have encouraged their citizens to carry out suicide attacks, sacrificed tens of thousands of Iranian children, and committed grave human rights violations in pursuit of their goals.

A nuclear Iran would trigger a nuclear arms race in the Middle East, further destabilizing the volatile region. Neighboring states such as Jordan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia have already indicated that they, too, plan to start nuclear programs.

The risk of nuclear terrorism, with “dirty” weapons in the hands of terrorists, would escalate in Israel and around the world. Iran is already the world’s leader of state-sponsored terrorism and has sponsored terrorism in the Middle East, Europe, and Central Asia. Iran and its proxies have also killed Americans: 241 U.S. marines in Lebanon in 1983 and 23 soldiers in Saudi Arabia in 1996. Iran has given “lethal” support to the insurgency in Iraq, to the Taliban in Afghanistan, and to President Assad in the brutal Syrian civil war.

A nuclear Iran could destabilize the world economy by manipulating oil supplies and prices. Iran has threatened to close the Strait of Hormuz, the shipping route for 40 percent of the world’s crude oil, and it could bully the Gulf states and Saudi Arabia into altering oil prices.

A nuclear Iran poses special threats to Israel.

• The Iranian regime has repeatedly issued genocidal threats against Israel, attacked Jews and Israelis around the world, and committed acts of war against Israel. Between 2011 and 2012, Iranian agents attacked or attempted to attack Israeli diplomatic missions in India, Thailand, Georgia, and Azerbaijan.

• Iran has been the main supporter of Hezbollah and Hamas, terrorist groups dedicated to the destruction of Israel.

• A nuclear attack would be catastrophic for Israel, a small country of only 8,000 square miles and 8.1 million people.

Israel and the international community are trying to stop Iran’s nuclear quest through UN resolutions, stiff economic sanctions, and negotiations. Both Israel and the U.S. have declared that they hope the conflict can be solved diplomatically, but both have also said that the military option must remain on the table.

“An atomic bomb would not leave anything in Israel but would just produce minor damages in the Muslim world.”
— Ali Rafsanjani, Former Iranian president, 2001

“Israel is a cancerous tumor that must be removed.”
— Iranian leader Ayatollah Khamenei, 2012

In 1979, just as Israel made peace with its most powerful regional enemy, Egypt, a new threat emerged. The 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran brought extremist, anti-American, anti-Israel ayatollahs to power. The theocratic regime severed the friendly ties that had existed between Israel and Iran since 1950. The Iranian regime began using genocidal rhetoric calling for Israel’s destruction and racing to build nuclear weapons capability in defiance of six UN Security Council resolutions. The international community regards a nuclear Iran as a global threat. Israel believes this threat jeopardizes its very existence.
Palestinian and Arab leaders have led anti-Jewish, anti-Israel boycotts since 1933, and most Arab countries still enforce rigid anti-Israel boycotts. Today’s variant—BDS—was launched by radical NGOs and certain Islamic governments at the UN Conference against Racism held in 2001 in Durban, South Africa. It was reinvigorated when the second intifada subsided in 2005 and Palestinian extremists assumed leadership of BDS.

BDS appears decentralized, but is a cohesive, well-organized movement with a long-term strategy. It mobilizes radical allies and attempts to recruit progressive groups in liberal democracies, especially the U.S. BDS leaders carefully hone and synchronize their slogans, strategy, and actions; conduct skills-training sessions; groom new leaders; operate speakers’ bureaus; and provide how-to manuals. The EU and various foundations are major funders of many BDS groups.

BDS spreads anti-Israel propaganda by generating publicity through resolutions to boycott Israel or divest from companies doing business with Israel and through high profile demonstrations. BDS takes several forms:

- **Cultural and academic boycotts** of Israeli academia, artists, scientists, and athletes; pressuring popular artists to cancel performances in Israel; disrupting events featuring Israeli speakers and performers abroad.
- **Economic boycotts** promoted through divestment resolutions presented to university student governments, mainline churches, unions, local governments, professional associations and corporate shareholder meetings. Also through pressuring retailers to stop stocking Israeli products.
- **Travel/diplomatic boycotts through “lawfare.”** BDS activists falsely accuse Israeli officials of war crimes and obtain unjust arrest warrants issued against them. For example, Israeli politician Tzipi Livni had to cancel her UK trips in 2009 for fear of arrest.

BDS often falsely claims success, and it has had few victories thus far even on college campuses. Over 250 university presidents and scholarly organizations denounced the American Studies Association’s academic boycott of Israel. Only 17 of America’s 2,000 colleges considered divestment in 2014; only five passed it and those schools’ officials rejected the policy. However, BDS does not measure success by the number of boycotts implemented but rather by the number of people it reaches, the publicity it generates, and its effectiveness in mainstreaming anti-Israel propaganda.

BDS is fundamentally discriminatory. It blames Israel alone for the lack of peace and singles out the Jewish state for condemnation. “Partial boycotts” of Israel over the Green Line, such as those recommended by the EU, are equally discriminatory. As NY Times columnist Thomas Friedman wrote, “criticizing Israel is not anti-Semitic, and saying so is vile. But singling out Israel...is anti-Semitic, and not saying so is dishonest.”

BDS attempts to conceal its extremist agenda: the elimination of Israel as a Jewish state.

- “We oppose a Jewish state in any part of Palestine.”—BDS Co-founder Omar Barghouti
- A central BDS demand is the alleged “right of return” to Israel of millions of Palestinian refugees that would turn Jews into a minority in their own state. “It is well-known...that the Arabs, in demanding the return of the refugees...mean the liquidation of Israel.”—Muhammad Salah al-Din Bey, Former Foreign Minister of Egypt.

---

The long history of terrorism against Israel has forced it to develop innovative counterterrorism strategies. Israel is now respected as a global expert in the field, and its policies have become a model for other democracies committed to upholding humanitarian standards. In responding to the wars and terrorism since 2000, Israel has sought ways to defend its citizens and, at the same time, protect the lives of innocent Palestinians and Lebanese who were also victimized by those who want to destroy Israel.

Balancing Self-Defense and Humanitarian Values

The guiding principles of Israel’s policies are:

**Humanitarian**
- Save the lives of Israeli citizens
- Protect the lives and well-being of innocent Palestinians
- Uphold civil and human rights with Supreme Court review of contested policies

**Defensive**
- Stop terrorists and dismantle their infrastructures
- Prevent the success of terrorist missions
- Root out terrorist leaders and their supporters

"Why don’t [Syrian forces] learn from the Israeli army, which tries through great efforts, to avoid shelling area populated by civilians in Lebanon and Palestine."

– Faisal al-Qassem, Al Jazeera Arabic anchor, 2014.
Israel has been under incessant attack since its inception in 1948. It has had to learn how to preserve its humanitarian values while protecting its citizens.

Intelligence Gathering

Israel’s most effective and important weapon is its intelligence operations, which allow it to monitor and preempt attacks against its citizens.

Deterrence And Prevention Measures

Israel has chosen not to use its full military power to eliminate the terrorists in order to limit the loss of innocent Palestinian lives. One strategy was to try to block the terrorists’ ability to access Israeli population centers. There are no natural barriers between Israel and the West Bank. There were man-made barriers when Jordan occupied the West Bank, but Israel removed them when it gained control of the area in the 1967 war. For the next 33 years, people traveled more freely between the two regions. However, this free movement ended when the terrorist campaign erupted in 2000. Israel had to prevent terrorists from simply walking or driving into Israeli communities to maim and murder men, women, and children.

Israel employs several forms of prevention:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Checkpoints</th>
<th>Bypass Roads</th>
<th>Security Fence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **All checkpoints are temporary, legal, and part of the jointly agreed-upon Oslo Accords. They inconvenience Palestinians and Israelis though Israel has progressively introduced improvements to ease the transit for Palestinians.**
  - Security checks within pre-'67 Israel: All Israelis and visitors must go through metal detectors and bag and/or potential body checks when they enter public places such as malls, bus stations, museums, clubs, cafes, hotels, and religious sites.
  - Checkpoints at border crossings: There were 26 checkpoints between Israel and the territories in September 2005. They regulate entry from the West Bank into Israel and resemble the checkpoints other nations put along their borders with neighboring states.
  - Security checkpoints and road blocks within the West Bank: These checkpoints try to prevent terrorists from moving freely within the West Bank and were built around cities known to be terrorist centers, such as Nablus. In 2005, as construction of the fence progressed, Israel reduced the number of checkpoints and roadblocks. When PA security efforts improved in 2009, the number of manned Israeli roadblocks dropped to 10 and the number of checkpoints dropped to 14.
  - Emergency checkpoints and seam zone checkpoints: By September 2005, as construction of the fence progressed, Israel was able to reduce the number of West Bank checkpoints and roadblocks. These are erected during high alerts and then quickly dismantled. As terrorism declined Israel reduced the number of checkpoints. By 2012 only 10 remained and are active only during terrorist alerts.
| Bypass roads were agreed on in the Oslo Accords.
  - Israel built highways in the territories that bypassed crowded population centers, and the Oslo Accords permitted their construction. The roads were used freely by both Palestinians and Israelis until the intifada started in 2000. Then, to reduce the number of casualties from roadside attacks and drive-by shootings, Israel reserved certain roads for only Israeli citizens of all religions, including Muslims, Christians, Jews, Druze, and others. In September 2005 there were 41 such roads. At the same time, Israelis were prohibited from driving on roads reserved only for Palestinians, such as the old Bethlehem-Hebron road, to improve Palestinians’ commute and reduce the risk of attacks by terrorists.
| Israel did not begin building the fence until 2002, when terrorism reached unprecedented levels. Though many have protested against the fence, it is similar to barriers that other democracies have built, such as those between India and Pakistan (Kashmir), Spain and Morocco, and South and North Korea. Israel’s security fence is saving lives.
  - Since construction of the fence began in 2002, the number of terrorist attacks has dropped by more than 90 percent.
  - Ninety-seven percent of the barrier is a chain-link fence; approximately 3 percent (10 miles) is a concrete wall, built to prevent the sniper shootings that were frequent in selected areas.
  - Though the fence is not completed, only 5 to 8 percent of West Bank land and only three-tenths of 1 percent of Palestinians will be on the Israeli side of the fence.
  - Palestinians can bring their grievances about the barrier to Israel’s Supreme Court, which in several cases has ruled in the favor of the Palestinians, resulting in rerouting of the fence.
Special Operations: Precision Attacks

When the PA proved unable or unwilling to dismantle terrorist groups, Israel was forced to take active defensive measures to root out terrorists, their infrastructure, and their arms-smuggling tunnels. Its guiding principle was to only target terrorists and to spare the civilian population, although this has not always been possible.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Air Force Strikes</strong></th>
<th><strong>Land-based Raids</strong></th>
<th><strong>Targeted Strikes</strong></th>
<th><strong>House Demolitions</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Israel tries to limit the use of airstrikes because terrorists often surround themselves with civilians. In addition Israel uses controlled, limited precision air attacks to destroy military targets such as terrorist planning centers, terrorist training bases, and ammunition depots.</td>
<td>In many cases, instead of using its aerial bombing capacity, Israel uses its own soldiers to dismantle terrorist bases. This helps avoid harm to innocent civilians but risks soldiers’ lives. In 2002 Israel used ground troops in Jenin, the “terrorist capital,” though aerial bombardment would have prevented Israeli deaths. Instead, 23 Israeli soldiers were killed and 75 were wounded in Jenin’s booby-trapped roads and houses. Despite the many days of fighting, the UN reported that no more than 52 Palestinians died. Seventy-three percent of them were armed combatants, dispelling the huge numbers of casualties initially reported by a variety of media outlets (which even initially referred to the occurrence as a massacre).11</td>
<td>In accordance with the rules of war, Israel attempted to prevent future attacks through pinpoint operations against the masterminds and engineers of terrorist groups. Eliminating these leaders destabilizes the terrorist organizations and lowers their morale. After Hamas leaders were cut down by such precision operations, lower-echelon Hamas leaders went into hiding, which dramatically impeded their ability to gather support and mount attacks.12 On occasion, these pinpoint attacks cause civilian deaths, even of children, partly because terrorists use civilians as human shields, a practice that Amnesty International denounced in its 2002 reports. Israel has tried to develop techniques to avoid all civilian casualties. By 2011, 91 percent of those killed in targeted strikes were terrorists.</td>
<td>In August 2002, after multiple suicide bombings, the Israeli government approved demolishing terrorists’ houses in extreme cases to deter future attacks and destroy weapon stashes. Nevertheless, in February 2005 the IDF announced it would halt the practice unless there was an “extreme change” in circumstances. When the IDF did demolish terrorists’ homes, it gave advance warning so nobody would be physically hurt. Israel also demolished Gaza houses that concealed arms smuggling tunnels, called “arteries of terror.” Almost 100 such tunnels were uncovered between 2000 and September 2005. Yet even with this emergency measure in place, most demolition orders can be appealed to Israel’s High Court, which halts or compensates for the destruction when it rules for the appellants.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Risking Israeli soldiers’ lives to protect Palestinian civilians: the case of Jenin

“Had the Israelis chosen, they could have easily pummeled the camp [in the battle of Jenin in 2002] from afar and starved the terrorists out. Instead, they chose to do things the hard way, house to house—in part to avoid civilian casualties, not to inflict them. Were there civilian casualties? Almost certainly. But there is a world of difference between deliberately targeting civilians and the unintentional and inevitable casualties that were bound to occur in Jenin, where terrorists deliberately hid themselves among civilians.”

—Senator Joseph R. Biden (D-Delaware), May 6, 200214

“In battle, the Israeli army regularly accepted risks to its own men in order to reduce the risks that it posed on the civilian population.”

—Professor Michael Walzer, Princeton University, 200215

Seeing Israeli infantry “was like hunting, like being given a prize. I couldn’t believe it when I saw the soldiers. The Israelis knew that any soldier who went into the camp like that was going to get killed. I’ve been waiting for a moment like that for years.... It was a very hard fight. We fought at close quarters, sometimes just a matter of a few meters between us, sometimes even in the same house.”

—Thabet Mardawi, a senior Islamic Jihad terrorist, captured by Israeli soldiers in Jenin fighting16
Legal and Punitive Measures: Prison and Exile

Prison and Exile: Israel has no death penalty except in very extreme cases, as with convicted Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann. The strictest penalties are prison and exile, which apply to those directly involved in carrying out, planning, assisting, or supporting terrorists or terrorist activities.

Civil Defense in Israel

Israel requires that all homes and factories have bomb shelters. Bus stop shelters are made of reinforced concrete. Security guards are on all buses and at the entrances of public venues. Sirens warn of incoming rockets; and citizens have gas masks. Special agencies are trained to ensure the supply of necessities and medical treatment during emergencies and conduct national emergency drills.

Protecting children: When Palestinian terrorists seized a school in Maalot in 1974, murdering 25 teachers and students and wounding 66, Israel passed new laws to increase the protection of all schoolchildren. They required a perimeter security fence with alarm systems around all schools. When Gaza terrorists launched thousands of rockets into southern Israel between 2005 and 2009, Israel upgraded its warning system, periodically closed schools, and built bomb shelters on playgrounds and schools to protect the targeted victims, ranging from preschoolers to college students.

Measuring the Success of Israel’s Combined Defensive Operations

- Suicide bombings dropped from a high of 60 in 2002 to zero in 2009.
- Thwarted suicide bombing attempts rose from 36 percent in 2001 to 95 percent in 2006.
- Total Israeli fatalities dropped 98 percent, from a high of 451 in 2002 to six in 2013.
- Total Israelis wounded dropped from a high of 2,309 in 2002 to 30 in 2013.
- Total attacks dropped from a high of 5,633 in 2001 to 1,993 in 2012.
- The IDF has avoided harming civilians with increasing success. From 2009 to 2012 roughly 28 percent of Palestinians killed were civilians. In contrast the UN reports that 75 percent of casualties in similar conflicts around the world were civilians.
- After Israel’s operation against Hamas in 2012, the number of rockets and mortars fired from Gaza has dropped dramatically, from 2,560 in 2012 to 55 in 2013.
- Iron Dome, Israel’s newest air defense system, has stopped hundreds of incoming rockets since its implementation in 2011.

The Future

Wars cause hardship and suffering. Every Israeli and Palestinian has been personally affected by the terrorist campaign. Israel’s security concerns have forced Israel to employ counterterrorism initiatives that have impacted innocent Palestinians and Israelis. Both peoples dream of a time when incitement, terrorism, and military operations are a thing of the past.

 Ministries of Foreign Affairs

6B’Tselem, op. cit.
7“Summary of High Court of Justice Ruling on the Fence Surrounding Alfei Menashe,” Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), September 15, 2005.
The young state of Israel has faced daunting challenges. It was surrounded by enemies, poor in natural resources, often boycotted, and constantly absorbing penniless refugees from around the world. Yet Israel defied the odds and turned its liabilities into strengths, from revolutionizing techniques for desert agriculture to becoming a world leader in economic development.

By investing in its people and education and by encouraging creativity, Israel built a dynamic society in just 64 years. Israel is a trailblazer in biomedical and technological innovation and has made major contributions to the world in science, medicine, technology, the arts, and humanities. Since its earliest days, Israel has also been at the forefront of humanitarian programs, sharing its expertise and discoveries with the world.

Israel invests in education and “brain power.”

• Israel has the world’s second-highest per capita rate of university degrees.
• Israel has the world’s highest ratio of educated scientists and technicians, with 135 per 1,000 citizens, as compared to 85 in the U.S.
• Israel has the world’s second-highest per capita output of new books annually.
• Israel produces more scientific papers per capita than any other nation in the world.

Israel invests more of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in research and development (R&D) than any other country in the world.

• While the world spends an average of 1.5 percent of its GDP on R&D, Israel commits 5 percent of its GDP to R&D.
• Israel has the third-higher rate of entrepreneurship in the world, including the highest rate among women and people over 55.
• Israel ranks third in the world in per capita patents, behind only the U.S. and Japan.

Israel is at the forefront of high-tech innovation.

• “The world’s second Silicon Valley” and a global source of innovation, Israel has the highest concentration of high-tech companies in the world apart from Silicon Valley itself. Israel became the world’s fourth-largest high-tech economy in the 1990s.
• Israel has the third-largest number of NASDAQ-listed companies in the world, with the U.S. and China having the first and second.
• Microsoft and Intel built their only non-U.S. R&D facilities in Israel. Over 50 other international giants also established R&D facilities in Israel.
• Israeli researchers developed most of the Windows NT operating system (Microsoft Israel), the technology for AOL Instant Messenger, the first PC anti-virus software, voicemail technology, electro-optic chips, and nanotechnology.
• Israel developed the Centrino processor for laptop computers—a revolutionary innovation the industry.
• Israel is developing the next generation of Mars rovers and the first models of the “flying car.”
• Israel is devising new protections from disasters, such as an alarm that senses a coming earthquake 30 seconds before it hits, and systems to help people safely exit tall buildings in emergencies, such as collapsible external elevators.
Though Israel faced ongoing terrorism and wars for survival, it concentrated on life and hope, on building a good society, and on making contributions to humanity.

“Do not forget what part they [Jews] have played in the intellectual, the artistic, the philosophic and scientific development of the world…. They rowed all their weight in the boat of scientific, intellectual and artistic progress, and they are doing so to this day. You will find them… in every centre of learning; and at the very moment when they were being persecuted… their philosophers were developing thoughts which the great doctors of the Church embodied in their religious system. As it was in the Middle Ages, as it was in earlier times, so it is now.” — Lord Alfred Balfour, 1922

Israel is at the forefront of biomedical innovation and has developed:

- Advanced techniques for helping the paralyzed, from motorized robotic arms and legs that respond to brain commands to procedures for regenerating the spinal cord.
- Preliminary research for generating molecules that will kill cancer cells while preserving normal cells.
- Groundbreaking research for treatments or cures for type I diabetes, Parkinson’s disease, Alzheimer’s disease, and emphysema.
- Safer methods for diagnosing diseases, from a mini-video camera that fits into an ingestible pill and can be used for diagnosing intestinal diseases to safer imaging techniques for diagnosing breast cancer.
- A device that causes acne bacteria to self-destruct without damaging surrounding skin.

Israel is at the forefront of environmentally friendly innovations

- Israel is the only country in the world that entered the 21st century with a net gain in its number of trees.
- An Israeli scientist pioneered the use of bacteria to clean up oil pollution in oil tankers, pipelines, and beaches.
- Israelis developed a new technology that eliminates the need for chemicals, pesticides, and fungicides in hydroponic agriculture.
- Israelis developed drip irrigation systems that revolutionized agriculture.
- An Israeli developed the sun-heated water tank, which converts solar energy into thermal energy.
- Israeli, American, and Canadian researchers formed the Nanotechnology Clean Water Initiative to work on a nanotech-based solution to water shortages in the Middle East and rest of the world.

Since its founding Israel has been at the forefront of humanitarian programs around the world

- Israel conducts nearly 300 courses annually for emerging nations and has trained almost 260,000 participants in 140 countries, from Albania to Zimbabwe, in desert agriculture, water management, desertification prevention, emergency and disaster medicine, refugee absorption, and employment programs.3
- Israel’s missions included the Ethiopian airlifts that rescued 28,000 African Jews; assistance to Turkey, Greece, Haiti, and Nepal after devastating earthquakes; and setting up first-class, complete field hospitals in war-torn Rwanda, flood-devastated Djibouti, post-tsunami Japan, and post-typhoon Philippines.4
- Israel’s Save a Child’s Heart (SACH) foundation is the largest program in the world for children from poor nations who need heart surgery. At no charge to its patients, SACH has treated over 2,800 children from the Congo, China, the Palestinian Authority, Nigeria, and other regions.
- In the year 2000 alone, Israel helped build hospitals in areas as diverse as Mauritania, Gaza, Ukraine, and Turkey.

"ISRAEL...will be based on freedom, justice and peace...ensure complete equality of social and political rights...irrespective of religion, race or sex...guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture...[and] safeguard the Holy Places of all religions.”

—Israel’s Declaration of Statehood, May 14, 1948

Just as Japan, France, Sweden, and other democracies publicly acknowledge their national identities and cultures, so Israel’s democracy publicly identifies with the Jewish people and their culture.

PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY IN ACTION
HOW THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT WORKS

Israel’s government has features similar to those of the governments of Britain and the U.S. Like Britain, it does not yet have a constitution. Instead, its basic laws serve as its constitution. The government is a parliamentary democracy with separation of powers between the executive, legislative, and judicial branches.1

The president is elected by the Knesset, serves for seven years, and cannot serve a second term. He appoints diplomats, justices, and judges based on Knesset recommendations.

The leader of the party with the most Knesset members is given the opportunity to become prime minister. His or her cabinet of ministers must be approved by the Knesset; the cabinet is usually composed of a coalition of political parties. The Knesset can bring down the government with a no-confidence vote that requires new, early elections.

The judiciary is independent and serves as a watchdog for civil and human rights. Unlike most democracies, Israel’s Supreme Court also has jurisdiction to review military actions and rule against military operations.

Marriage and divorce are not regulated by civil law. Instead, each religious group has its own "religious court" which adjudicates these issues. Many Jewish Israelis call for reforms that would make marriage regulated by civil law instead.
Freedom of religion: Though Israel was established as a state for the Jewish people, it formally recognizes 15 religions, including Islam, the Bahá’í and Druze faiths, as well as Chaldaic and many other Christian denominations. Each religious community can freely exercise its faith, observe its own holy days and weekly day of rest, and administer its own internal affairs. Israel protects the holy sites of all religions.

- The Bahá’ís, a religious group persecuted in Muslim countries, built its world center in Haifa, Israel.
- Israel is the only region in the Middle East, including the region governed by the PA, where the Christian population is thriving instead of disappearing. Between 1948 and 2011 Israel’s Christian community grew more than fourfold, from 34,000 to 154,000.2

Freedom of assembly, speech, press, and dissent: Israel is known for its freewheeling, self-critical, often blistering debates in which differing opinions are aired widely and loudly. For example, Israeli Arab politicians on occasion have vehemently criticized the Jewish state, even from the floor of the Knesset. Only hate speech and incitement to violence are illegal. Israel has nine Hebrew daily newspapers; several dailies in Russian, Arabic, French and English; over 1,000 periodicals; multiple radio and TV stations; and easy access to the foreign press.

Civil Rights: Israel’s progressive laws protect the rights of women, minorities, and the LGBTQ community.

- Seventy-five percent of Israelis are Jews of different ethnicities and races. Many emigrated from the Middle East, Ethiopia, India, Russia, the U.S., and Europe. Refugees from the Middle East and North Africa make up over half the Jewish population.3
- Israel’s minorities form 25 percent of the population and include Arab Muslims, Arab Christians, non-Arab Christians, Druze, Bedouins, Circassians, and Asians.4

The Party System: Every Voice is Heard...

Some have quipped that Israel has “too much democracy” because it is a multiparty, not a two-party, system. Though right-wing Likud and left-wing Labor have traditionally been the largest parties, there are many that promote a broad range of communities, including Communist, religious, Arab, and secular constituents.

As many as 19 different parties have been in the Knesset at one time.

Israelis vote for a party rather than for an individual. Each party elects its own list of Knesset candidates. Knesset seats are then allotted according to the percentage of the popular vote that the party receives. For example, if a party wins five seats, the first five candidates on its list will become Members of the Knesset (MK).

Even the smallest parties have a voice because one party never gets a Knesset majority, and the largest political group has to form coalitions to function.

ACCESS TO COURTS

Though Palestinians in the territories are not Israeli citizens, they have ready access to petition Israel’s highest courts. The court judges by the merits of a case, and it frequently decides in favor of the Palestinians, as it did, for example, when Palestinians petitioned that the security fence be rerouted around Beit Sourik (June 30, 2004) and around Alfei Menashe (September 15, 2005).5

“One of the most unusual aspects of Israeli law is the rapid access that petitioners, including Palestinians, can gain to Israel’s highest court. In April 2002, during the fiercest fighting of the current conflict...the high court was receiving and ruling on petitions almost daily.” —New York Times, May 5, 20036
FACTS ABOUT ISRAELI ARABS

- There are 1.6 million Israeli Arabs living in Israel (including Muslim, Druze, Christian, and Bedouin Arabs), making up around 20 percent of the total population. Many are descendents of Palestinian Arabs who chose to remain in Israel in 1948.

- Hebrew and Arabic are Israel’s two official languages.

- Just as the U.S. strives to better integrate its minorities, Israel works to do the same for its Arab population through programs similar to affirmative action.

- There are four official Arab political parties.

- Israeli Arabs were elected to the first Knesset in 1949 and have continued to play an active role in political life. They have won as many as 17 of the 120 Knesset seats in a single election.7

- Twenty percent of Haifa University’s student body and 10 percent of its faculty are Israeli Arabs.8

- All Arab municipalities receive government funding for education and infrastructure.

- Israeli Arabs in high-level positions:
  - Salim Jourban, permanent member of Israel’s Supreme Court
  - Walid Mansour, and Mohammed Masarwa, ambassadors
  - Major General Hussain Fares, commander of Israel’s border police
  - Major General Yosef Mishlav, head of homeland security as Israel’s Home Front commander
  - Raleb Majadele, Knesset member and cabinet minister

- Many Israeli Arabs play prominent roles:
  - Dr. Nof Atamna-Ismaeel, microbiologist and winner of the reality cooking show Master Chef Israel
  - Rana Raslan, Miss Israel
  - Dr. Rania Okby, Ben-Gurion University graduate, first female Bedouin physician in the world
  - Sayed Kashua, author and creator of the popular Israeli TV series Arab Labor
  - Amal Ayoub, graduate of Ben-Gurion University, founder and CEO of Metallo-Therapy, which is developing a new method for cancer diagnosis

Since polls were first taken in 1996, Palestinians have consistently rated Israel’s democracy as the one they admire most in the world.

“Every year Israel has been the top performer, at times receiving 80 percent approval. The American system has been the next best [67 percent in 1999], followed by the French.” —Center for Palestine Research and Studies10

---

The Many Faces Of Israel

Despite the hardships the young state faced, Israelis have created a rich, diverse, and vibrant multicultural society.
Continuous Jewish Presence in the Land of Israel

Jews are indigenous to the land and maintained a continuous presence for over 3,000 years according to archeological and historical evidence. Jewish civilization was already over 1,000 years old when Rome destroyed the Holy Temple and conquered the Jewish nation in the first century.

Rome exiled only a portion of the population. The remaining Jews, banned from Jerusalem, flourished for centuries in other Jewish towns, such as Yavne, Rafa, Gaza, Ashkelon, Jaffa, and Caesarea.

The Jewish population was decimated by the crusaders in the 12th century CE, but Jews returned in waves of immigration in subsequent centuries and settled in Safed, Jerusalem, Tiberius, and Hebron.

By the 1860s Jews once again were the majority religious group in Jerusalem. Early modern Zionists began purchasing land and establishing thriving communities like Tel Aviv (1909) even while the territory was still ruled by the Ottoman Empire.

Civil Liberties and Human Rights in Israel

Israelis enjoy the same civil liberties and human rights as citizens of America and other advanced, liberal democracies. The right to vote is universal. Israel has more political parties – there were 19 in 2004 – than most other parliamentary democracies. They range from extreme left to extreme right and from religious to secular. Israel has one of the freest medias in the world and is famous for its self-criticism and blistering debates.

Israeli women and minorities are protected by laws that in some cases are more progressive than those of other democracies. There is legal protection against religious persecution. LGBT people are protected against discrimination and hate crimes. Professor Uzi Even, an openly gay man, became a Knesset member in 2002. Education is encouraged equally for both men and women. Fifty-three percent of women are in the workforce, a similar percentage as in the U.S. Women have reproductive rights. Israel is the only Middle Eastern country that has never required a woman to have a male guardian’s permission to travel. Israel treats honor killings as harshly as other murder cases.

War Crime: Using Human Shields

Israel uses rockets to protect its civilians. Hamas uses civilians to protect its rockets. Hamas' strategy of hiding among civilians, launching attacks from civilian centers such as schools and mosques, and deliberately endangering noncombatants violates the Fourth Geneva Convention and is a war crime according to international law.

"The presence of a protected person may not be used to render certain points or areas immune from military operations."

– Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, August 12, 1949, art. 28

"The Parties to the conflict shall not direct the movement of the civilian population or individual civilians in order to attempt to shield military objectives from attacks or to shield military operations."

– Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions, Article 51 (7)

A Pluralistic Society

• Israel formally recognizes 15 religions, including Islam, the Baha’i and Druze faiths, as well as Chaldaic and many other Christian denominations. Each religious community can freely exercise its faith, observe its own holy days and weekly day of rest, and administer its own internal affairs. Israel protects the holy sites of all religions.

• Israel is the only Middle Eastern country where the Christian population is thriving instead of disappearing. Between 1948 and 2012, Israel’s Christian population grew over fourfold, from 34,000 to 158,000.

• The Baha’i, a religious group persecuted in Muslim countries, built its world center in Haifa, Israel.

• Israel’s non-Jewish minorities form about 25 percent of the population and include Arab Muslims, Arab Christians, non-Arab Christians, Druze, Bedouins, Circassians, Asians, and others.

• Seventy-five percent of Israelis are Jews of different ethnicities and races from Arab countries, Ethiopia, India, Russia, the former Soviet Union republics, Latin America, the U.S., and Europe. Refugees from Arab and Muslim Middle Eastern and North African countries and their descendants make up over half the Jewish population.

Apartheid

Apartheid was a legal system in South Africa under which a small minority of whites ruled over the black majority population. Apartheid subjected blacks to severe political, economic, and social discrimination and segregation.

They could not be citizens, vote, participate in the government, or fraternize with whites.

Israel, a democracy like the U.S., established a legal system that gives equal rights, liberties, and protections to all its citizens. Israeli Arabs participate as full and equal members in Israeli society. While Israel, like all multiethnic democracies, struggles with the disadvantages that its minorities experience, its laws try to eradicate – not endorse – discrimination.

Israel never formally annexed the West Bank or Gaza. The Palestinians are not Israeli citizens and wish to have their own state.

Today, Palestinians lack full rights because of their own governments: Hamas in Gaza and the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank.

Israeli Arabs

• In 1948 almost all of the 160,000 Palestinian Arabs who remained within Israel’s borders became citizens. Today, Israeli Arab citizens have civil and human rights equal to those of other Israeli citizens.

• There are 1.6 million Israeli Arabs now living in Israel, making up about 20 percent of the population.

• Hebrew and Arabic are Israel’s two official languages.

• There are four official Israeli Arab political parties. Many other Israeli Arabs are members of other Israeli parties.

• Three Israeli Arabs were elected to the first Knesset. Israeli Arabs have held as many as 17 of the 120 seats in the Israeli Parliament at one time.

• All Arab municipalities receive government funding for education and infrastructure.

• Many Israeli Arabs hold high-level positions, such as:

  • Salim Jurban, a permanent member of Israel’s Supreme Court
  • Nawaf Massalha, deputy foreign minister
  • Ali Yahya, Walid Mansour, and Mohammed Masarwa, ambassadors
  • Major General Hussain Fares, commander of Israel’s border police
  • Major General Yosef Mishlau, head of homeland security as Israel’s Home Front commander

• Israel has enacted affirmative action policies to help its minority citizens achieve full social and economic equality.

Rights in Israel

Additional to the Geneva Convention, Article 51 (7), June 8, 1977.


2Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions, Article 51 (7), June 8, 1977.
### International Financial Support for Palestinians

The international community has provided welfare for Palestinian refugees and their descendants since 1949 through the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

- The U.S., the largest single donor, contributed $4.15 billion between 1950 and 2011.
- In UNRWA’s first 20 years, Israel contributed more than most Arab states to the program.
- Two percent of the UN’s total budget goes to UNRWA, while 3 percent of the total goes to all other refugees in the world.

The Palestinians have received “the highest per capita aid transfer in the history of foreign aid anywhere,” reported World Bank official Nigel Roberts in February 2004.1 Between 1993 (the Oslo Accords) and 2012, the international community donated approximately $30 billion to the Palestinians. Today, much of that money is unaccounted for.

The PLO was “the richest of all terrorist organizations,” with $8 billion to $10 billion in assets and an annual income of $1.5 billion to $2 billion, according to a 1993 British National Criminal Intelligence Service report. In 1999 England’s Daily Telegraph reported the PLO had $50 billion in secret investments around the world.2

---

### U.S. Aid to Israel and Arab States

U.S. policy has been to assist both Israel and Arab states. Between 1947 and 1971, U.S. annual aid to Israel was $60 million, while the Arab states received $170 million. After 1970 the U.S. regarded Israel as a valuable strategic ally and increased its aid. It also continued to aid and/or sell arms to Jordan, Morocco, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Yemen, and the Gulf states.

The U.S. committed $2 billion per year to Egypt and $3 billion per year to Israel after the Israel-Egypt peace treaty of 1979.

In comparison, the U.S. spends $250 billion per year on maintaining its military presence around the world, in part to protect the security of its other allies. This aid is in the U.S. defense budget, not in the foreign aid budget, because U.S. troops are deployed in or near those countries. For example, the U.S. grants roughly the same amount of money to Israel each year as it spends for troops to protect South Korea.

The U.S. has never had to commit its own troops or risk American lives to protect Israel. Israel receives only military aid from the U.S. and is required to spend 75 percent of its grant money to purchase military equipment and other items from the U.S., creating jobs in America. Finally, by aiding in Israel’s protection, the U.S. is helping maintain the thriving economic ties that exist between the two countries. U.S.-Israel partnerships have produced breakthroughs in technology and in biomedical, environmental, and agricultural research—saving the U.S. substantial funds in research and development. Israeli companies have created countless jobs in America, investing $57 billion in the U.S. economy between 2000 and 2010. At the same time, Israel bought $180 billion worth of goods and services from U.S. companies, and many of the groundbreaking products sold by American tech companies were invented and designed in Israel. Considering all of these factors, aid to Israel is one of America’s best investments.

---

### Israel’s Checkpoints and the Security Barrier

No natural barriers separated Israel and the West Bank between 1967 and 2000, and Palestinians and Israelis traveled freely between the two areas. But when the Palestinian terrorist campaign erupted in 2000, Israel had to find a way to prevent terrorists from easily entering Israeli communities. Checkpoints, similar to U.S. airport security procedures after 9/11, are meant to separate terrorists from their intended victims – Israelis of all religions and ethnicities. It is also true that Israeli safety measures inconvenience many ordinary Palestinians. This happens because terrorists forced Israel to make an awful choice: make life more difficult for Palestinians or allow more Israeli civilians to be murdered.

Israel did not begin building the barrier until 2002, when terrorism reached unprecedented levels:

- Israel’s barrier is similar to barriers that other democracies have built to protect innocent civilians. There are barriers between India and Kashmir, Cyprus and Northern Cyprus, and North and South Korea. There are also walls within Belfast that separate Protestant and Catholic neighborhoods.

- Since construction of the barrier began in 2002, the number of successful terrorist attacks has dropped by close to 100 percent, and leaders of Palestinian terrorist groups have admitted that it prevents them from carrying out suicide bombings.

- Ninety-seven percent of the barrier is a chain-link fence; about 3 percent (10 miles) is a concrete wall, built to prevent sniper fire at Israeli civilians.

- Only 5 percent to 8 percent of the disputed West Bank land and less than 1 percent of Palestinians are on the Israeli side of the fence.1

- Palestinians can bring their specific grievances about the barrier to Israel’s Supreme Court, which has ruled in favor of the Palestinian claimants and rerouted the fence several times.2

Israelis do not want to live behind checkpoints and barriers. These measures exist only because there was no other way to prevent terrorists from murdering innocent men, women, and children. The only way forward is for Israelis and Palestinians to negotiate, make peace, and build a future in which these safety measures will no longer be necessary.

---

### Anti-Semitism and Anti-Zionism

It is perfectly legitimate to criticize Israel’s policies. Israelis do it all the time in blistering debates. But criticism crosses the line into classic anti-Semitism when it exhibits what Natan Sharansky called the “Three Ds.”

**Delegitimization:** Critics say the Jewish state has no right to exist and that Israelis do not belong in the Middle East.

**Demonization:** Through distortions and lies Israel is depicted as the world’s most evil and dangerous country, and the claim is made that if the Jewish state ceased to exist, the Middle East’s – and the world’s – main problems would be solved.

**The Link:** Denying the Jewish people their ancestral homeland or the denial of Israel’s right to exist as a Jewish state includes demonizing and dehumanizing Jews as a group. This is why many people claim that Anti-Zionism is a modern variation of classical anti-Semitism. “Anti-Semitic bigotry is no less morally deplorable when camouflaged as anti-Israelism or anti-Zionism,” according to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.3 People of goodwill must try to see through anti-Israel propaganda in order to foster reasonable dialogue.

---

### Divestment and Boycotts

Anti-Israel activists have launched an intense propaganda campaign to turn Israel into the pariah of nations. They make false accusations, then call for companies, churches, universities, and other institutions to divest – withdraw investments – from companies doing business with Israel and to boycott Israeli products, academics, and cultural events. While this movement sells itself as a champion of justice and human rights, its real agenda is to eliminate Israel and extinguish Jewish self-determination. They are “not really talking about rights; They’re talking about [how] they want to destroy Israel,” according to notorious Israeli critic Norman Finkelstein. Instead of joining the boycott, divestment, and sanctions movement against Israel (BDS), people of conscience should support solutions that respect the collective rights of both Palestinians and Israelis.

Boycotts and divestment resolutions:

- Make false or disputed accusations to demonize Israel and its history and blame her for the ongoing conflict.

- Ignore context, including Palestinian incitement against Israel, terrorism, and the need for Israel’s safety measures.

- Deny or ignore the steps that Israel has repeatedly taken to promote compromise and peace.

- Rarely condemn the Palestinian role in the continuing conflict.

---


Imagine peace in the Middle East where Israel and her neighbors join forces to become a major player on the global stage. With shared technology and resources, the possibilities are endless. We can create a future filled with peace and prosperity for our children and for generations to come.

This “Israel 101” booklet is produced by:

StandWithUs

We are pleased to support StandWithUs in its effort to promote peace through education across the globe.

To order more booklets visit StandWithUs.com/order

Like us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/StandWithUs

Follow us on Twitter
twitter.com/StandWithUs

Find out more about Israel and our amazing work at www.StandWithUs.com

Help us distribute this brochure on campuses and in communities everywhere. Support our efforts! Send your generous donation to:
StandWithUs
P.O. Box 341069
Los Angeles, CA 90034-1069
or donate online at:
www.StandWithUs.com