Israel-Palestine Conflict
Workbook Packet and Important Information

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II.

The Jewish Question

No one can deny the gravity of the situation of the Jews. Wherever they live in perceivable numbers, they are more or less persecuted. Their equality before the law, granted by statute, has become practically a dead letter. They are debarred from filling even moderately high positions, either in the army, or in any public or private capacity. And attempts are made to thrust them out of business also: "Don't buy from Jews!"

Attacks in Parliaments, in assemblies, in the press, in the pulpit, in the street, on journeys—for example, their exclusion from certain hotels—even in places of recreation, become daily more numerous. The forms of persecution varying according to the countries and social circles in which they occur. In Russia, imposters are levied on Jewish villages; in Rumania, a few persons are put to death; in Germany, they get a good beating occasionally; in Austria, Anti-Semites exercise terrorism over all public life; in Algeria, there are travelling agitators; in Paris, the Jews are shut out of the so-called best social circles and excluded from clubs. Shades of anti-Jewish feeling are innumerable. But this is not to be an attempt to make out a doleful category of Jewish hardships.

I do not intend to arouse sympathetic emotions on our behalf. That would be foolish, futile, and undignified proceeding. I shall content myself with putting the following questions to the Jews: Is it not true that, in countries where we live in perceivable numbers, the position of Jewish lawyers, doctors, technicians, teachers, and employees of all descriptions becomes daily more intolerable? Is it not true, that the Jewish middle classes are seriously threatened? Is it not true, that the passions of the mob are incited against our wealthy people? Is it not true, that our poor endure greater sufferings than any other proletariat? I think that this external pressure makes itself felt everywhere. In our economically upper classes it causes discomfort, in our middle classes continual and grave anxieties, in our lower classes absolute despair.

Everything tends, in fact, to one and the same conclusion, which is clearly enunciated in that classic Berlin phrase: "Juden Raus" (Out with the Jews!)

shall now put the Question in the briefest possible form: Are we to "get out" now and where to?

Or, may we yet remain? And, how long?

Let us first settle the point of staying where we are. Can we hope for better days, can we possess our souls in patience, can we wait in pious resignation till the princes and peoples of this earth are more mercifully disposed towards us? I say that we cannot hope for a change in the current of feeling. And why not? Even if we were as near to the hearts of princes as are their other subjects, they could not protect us. They would only feel popular hatred by showing us too much favor. By "too much," I really mean less than is claimed as a right by every ordinary citizen, or by every race. The nations in whose midst Jews live are all either covertly or openly Anti-Semitic. 
THE PLAN

The whole plan is in its essence perfectly simple, as it must necessarily be if it is to come within the comprehension of all.

Let the sovereignty be granted us over a portion of the globe large enough to satisfy the rightful requirements of a nation; the rest we shall manage for ourselves.

The creation of a new State is neither ridiculous nor impossible. We have in our day witnessed the process in connection with nations which were not largely members of the middle class, but poorer, less educated, and consequently weaker than ourselves. The Governments of all countries scourged by Anti-Semitism will be keenly interested in assisting us to obtain the sovereignty we want.......... PALESTINE OR ARGENTINE?

Shall we choose Palestine or Argentine? We shall take what is given us, and what is selected by Jewish public opinion. The Society will determine both these points.

Argentina is one of the most fertile countries in the world, extends over a vast area, has a sparse population and a mild climate. The Argentine Republic would derive considerable profit from the cession of a portion of its territory to us. The present infiltration of Jews has certainly produced some discontent, and it would be necessary to enlighten the Republic on the intrinsic difference of our new movement.

Palestine is our ever-memorable historic home. The very name of Palestine would attract our people with a force of marvelous potency. If His Majesty the Sultan were to give us Palestine, we could in return undertake to regulate the whole finances of Turkey. We should there form a portion of a rampart of Europe against Asia, an outpost of civilization as opposed to barbarism. We should as a neutral State remain in contact with all Europe, which would have to guarantee our existence. The sanctuaries of Christendom would be safeguarded by assigning to them an extra-territorial status such as is well-known to the law of nations. We should form a guard of honor about these sanctuaries, answering for the fulfillment of this duty with our existence. This guard of honor would be the great symbol of the solution of the Jewish question after eighteen centuries of Jewish suffering.

Consider:

1. According to Herzl, what is the situation for the Jews?

2. Why Argentina for a Jewish state? Why Palestine?
Primary Source Analysis: Solving the Arab-Israeli Conflict

The British Position. Analyze two documents submitted by the British concerning their position on Palestine and the creation of a Jewish state.

Go to the following website: http://israelipalestinian.procon.org/

Click on the link to the left titled Key Documents. View the following two documents and answer the questions below.

A. Balfour Declaration of Principles (1917) (Letter from British foreign secretary, Arthur James Balfour, to Lord Rothschild, head of the British Zionist Organization)

1. What promise does Balfour seem to be making to Lord Rothschild, head of the British Zionist Organization?

2. Would Rothschild have been pleased with this? Explain why or why not by considering whose interests Rothschild represents.

3. How would you expect the Palestinian Arabs to react to this declaration?
B. Churchill White Paper (1922) (Responds to Arab concerns over the Balfour Declaration and Jewish Immigration to Palestine)

1. Read the first three paragraphs. How does the British government attempt to address the concerns of the Palestinian Arabs?

2. Read paragraphs 7-9. What concessions are given to the Jewish population?

C. What conflict can one foresee in this region?
United Kingdom

Foreign Office, November 2nd, 1917.

Dear Lord Rothschild,

I have much pleasure in conveying to you, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted to, and approved by, the Cabinet.

"His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of the object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country".

I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) Arthur James Balfour
The Churchill White Paper

The Secretary of State for the Colonies has given renewed consideration to the existing political situation in Palestine, with a very earnest desire to arrive at a settlement of the outstanding questions which have given rise to uncertainty and unrest among certain sections of the population. After consultation with the High Commissioner for Palestine the following statement has been drawn up. It summarizes the essential parts of the correspondence that has already taken place between the Secretary of State and a delegation from the Moslem Christian Society of Palestine, which has been for some time in England, and it states the further conclusions which have since been reached.

The tension which has prevailed from time to time in Palestine is mainly due to apprehensions, which are entertained both by sections of the Arab and by sections of the Jewish population. These apprehensions, so far as the Arabs are concerned, are partly based upon exaggerated interpretations of the meaning of the Declaration favouring the establishment of a Jewish National Home in Palestine, made on behalf of His Majesty's Government on 2nd November, 1917.

Unauthorized statements have been made to the effect that the purpose in view is to create a wholly Jewish Palestine. Phrases have been used such as that Palestine is to become "as Jewish as England is English." HMG regard any such expectation as impracticable and have no such aim in view. Nor have they at any time contemplated, as appears to be feared by the Arab Delegation, the disappearance or the subordination of the Arab population, language or culture in Palestine. They would draw attention to the fact that the terms of the Declaration referred to do not contemplate that Palestine as a whole should be converted into a Jewish National Home, but that such a Home should be founded in Palestine. In this connection it has been observed with satisfaction that at the meeting of the Zionist Congress, the supreme governing body of the Zionist Organization, held at Carlsbad in September, 1921, a resolution was passed expressing as the official statement of Zionist aims "the determination of the Jewish people to live with the Arab people on terms of unity and mutual respect, and together with them to make the common home into a flourishing community, the upbuilding of which may assure to each of its peoples an undisturbed national development."

It is also necessary to point out that the Zionist Commission in Palestine, now termed the Zionist Executive, has not desired to possess, and does not possess, any share in the general administration of the country. Nor does the special position assigned to the Zionist Organization in Article IV of the Draft Mandate for Palestine imply any such functions. That special position relates to the measures to be taken in Palestine affecting the Jewish population, and contemplates that the Organization may assist in the general development of the country, but does not entitle it to share in any degree in its Government.

Further, it is contemplated that the status of all citizens of Palestine in the eyes of the law shall be Palestinian, and it has never been intended that they, or any section of them, should possess any other juridical status.

So far as the Jewish population of Palestine are concerned it appears that some among them are apprehensive that His Majesty's Government may depart from the policy embodied in the Declaration of 1917. It is necessary, therefore, once more to affirm that these fears are unfounded, and that that Declaration, re-affirmed by (he Conference of the Principal Allied Powers at San Remo and again in the Treaty of Sevres, is not susceptible of change.

During the last two or three generations the Jews have recreated in Palestine a community now numbering 80,000, of whom about one-fourth are farmers or workers upon the land. This community has its own political organs; an elected assembly for the direction of its domestic concerns; elected councils in the towns; and an organization for the control of its schools. It has its elected Chief Rabbinate and Rabbinical Council for the direction of its religious affairs. Its business is conducted in Hebrew as a vernacular language, and a Hebrew press serves its needs. It has its distinctive intellectual life and displays considerable economic activity. This community, then, with its town and country population, its political, religious and social organizations, its own language, its own customs, its own life, has in fact "national" characteristics. When it is asked what is meant by the development of the Jewish National Home in Palestine, it may be answered that it is not the imposition of a Jewish nationality upon the inhabitants of Palestine as a
whole, but the further development of the existing Jewish community, with the assistance of Jews in other parts of the world, in order that it may become a center in which the Jewish people as a whole may take, on grounds of religion and race, an interest and a pride. But in order that this community should have the best prospect of free development and provide full opportunity for the Jewish people to display its capacities, it is essential that it should know that it is in Palestine as of right and not on sufferance. That is the reason why it is necessary that the existence of a Jewish National Home in Palestine should be internationally guaranteed, and that it should be formally recognized to rest upon ancient historic connection.

This, then, is the interpretation which His Majesty's Government place upon the Declaration of 1917, and, so understood, the Secretary of State is of opinion that it does not contain or imply anything which need cause either alarm to the Arab population of Palestine or disappointment to the Jews.

For the fulfillment of this policy it is necessary that the Jewish community in Palestine should be able to increase its numbers by immigration. This immigration cannot be so great in volume as to exceed whatever may be the economic capacity of the country at the time to absorb new arrivals. It is essential to ensure that the immigrants should not be a burden upon the people of Palestine as a whole, and that they should not deprive any section of the present population of their employment. Hitherto the immigration has fulfilled these conditions. The number of immigrants since the British occupation has been about 25,000.

It is necessary also to ensure that persons who are politically undesirable be excluded from Palestine, and every precaution has been and will be taken by the Administration to that end.

It is intended that a special committee should be established in Palestine, consisting entirely of members of the new Legislative Council elected by the people, to confer with the administration upon matters relating to the regulation of immigration. Should any difference of opinion arise between this committee and the Administration, the matter will be referred to His Majesty's Government, who will give it special consideration. In addition, under Article 81 of the 1923 Palestine Order in Council, any religious community or considerable section of the population of Palestine will have a general right to appeal, through the High Commissioner and the Secretary of State, to the League of Nations on any matter on which they may consider that the terms of the Mandate are not being fulfilled by the Government of Palestine.

With reference to the Constitution which it is now intended to establish in Palestine, the draft of which has already been published, it is desirable to make certain points clear. In the first place, it is not the case, as has been represented by the Arab Delegation, that during the war His Majesty's Government gave an undertaking that an independent national government should be at once established in Palestine. This representation mainly rests upon a letter dated the 24th October, 1915, from Sir Henry McMahon, then His Majesty's High Commissioner in Egypt, to the Sharif of Mecca, now King Hussein of the Kingdom of the Hejaz. That letter is quoted as conveying the promise to the Sharif of Mecca to recognise and support the independence of the Arabs within the territories proposed by him. But this promise was given subject to a reservation made in the same letter, which excluded from its scope, among other territories, the portions of Syria lying to the west of the District of Damascus. This reservation has always been regarded by His Majesty's Government as covering the vilayet of Beirut and the independent Sanjak of Jerusalem. The whole of Palestine west of the Jordan was thus excluded from Sir Henry McMahon's pledge.

Nevertheless, it is the intention of His Majesty's Government to foster the establishment of a full measure of self government in Palestine. But they are of the opinion that, in the special circumstances of that country, this should be accomplished by gradual stages and not suddenly. The first step was taken when, on the institution of a Civil Administration, the nominated Advisory Council, which now exists, was established. It was stated at the time by the High Commissioner that this was the first step in the development of self governing institutions, and it is now proposed to take a second step by the establishment of a Legislative Council containing a large proportion of members elected on a wide franchise. It was proposed in the published draft that three of the members of this Council should be non official persons nominated by the High Commissioner, but representations having been made in opposition to this provision, based on cogent considerations, the Secretary of State is prepared to omit it. The legislative Council would then consist of the High Commissioner as President and twelve elected and ten official members. The Secretary of State is of the opinion that before a further measure of self government is extended to
Palestine and the Assembly placed in control over the Executive, it would be wise to allow some time to elapse. During this period the institutions of the country will have become well established; its financial credit will be based on firm foundations, and the Palestinian officials will have been enabled to gain experience of sound methods of government. After a few years the situation will be again reviewed, and if the experience of the working of the constitution now to be established so warranted, a larger share of authority would then be extended to the elected representatives of the people.

The Secretary of State would point out that already the present administration has transferred to a Supreme Council elected by the Moslem community of Palestine the entire control of Moslem Religious endowments (Waqfs), and of the Moslem religious Courts. To this Council the Administration has also voluntarily restored considerable revenues derived from ancient endowments which have been sequestrated by the Turkish Government. The Education Department is also advised by a committee representative of all sections of the population, and the Department of Commerce and Industry has the benefit of the cooperation of the Chambers of Commerce which have been established in the principal centres. It is the intention of the Administration to associate in an increased degree similar representative committees with the various Departments of the Government.

The Secretary of State believes that a policy upon these lines, coupled with the maintenance of the fullest religious liberty in Palestine and with scrupulous regard for the rights of each community with reference to its Holy Places, cannot but commend itself to the various sections of the population, and that upon this basis may be built up that spirit of cooperation upon which the future progress and prosperity of the Holy Land must largely depend.
Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Involves two main groups: The Israelis and the Palestinians. Israel is a country, Palestine is occupied by the Israeli military.

The Palestinian Territories

The names of the Palestinian Territories are the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Most Palestinians are Arabs and Muslims.
- Most Arabs are Muslims, but most Muslims are not Arabs

Israel

Most Israelis are Jews. The capital of Israel is Jerusalem. Jerusalem is a holy city for which religions?

1. Christianity
2. Islam
3. Judaism

Holy Sites for all 3 religions are found in Jerusalem. Access to these holy sites is an issue in this conflict.
The Conflict
The Israelis and Palestinians have been fighting over land since 1948. Both sides want Jerusalem as their capital. The Palestinians have NO country but want independence. The Palestinians live in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

The Israelis have a country and occupy the Palestinians.

It is 2 peoples, 2 histories, 2 religions, but the SAME land. For example, the year 1948:

For Israel: Independence

For Palestine: The Catastrophe

Weapons
The main weapon of the Israelis is a strong military. The main weapon of the Palestinians is the stone, suicide bombers, and rocket attacks. Thousands of innocent civilians have been killed on both sides.

What do they want?

Palestinians want a country. Israelis want security.

Palestinians

They want an independent country. They want No More Checkpoints. They want No More Roadblocks. An end to curfews. They want Jerusalem as their capital. At the very least, they want East Jerusalem.
Other Palestinian Grievances:
- Right of Return; an independent country; East Jerusalem as their capital; access to holy sites; land swaps because of Israeli settlements in the West Bank; an end to the West Bank Wall; a freeze in Israeli building in a future Palestinian state

Palestinian Right of Return: About 5,000,000 refugees. Most fled or were forced to leave in 1948 and 1967 wars

 Israeli West Bank Barrier (430 miles when it will be completed)

Jewish Settlements within the West Bank. Why do they want to live here?
About 400,000 Israelis live in the 130 settlements in the West Bank
About 200,000 Israelis in East Jerusalem

What to do with Hamas? An organization that has vowed to destroy Israel....

Why are many Palestinians angry with the U.S.A? $3 Billion/year
They want security from suicide bombers, rocket attacks, and other acts of violence.

The Conflict

The name for the Palestinian Uprising to end the occupation is called The Intifada. It means "the shaking off."


You will be asked to solve this conflict! Will be a one state solution? A two state solution? How will you resolve this conflict that has so many issues?
The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Part II
Use 18.4 (pages 584-589) Start at subtitle: Israel and Arab States in Conflict
Have your map out while you read and complete this section

1) After Israel declares independence in 1948, which states invaded Israel?

2) List all of the major consequences of the 1948 war?

3) What caused the 1956 Suez Crisis? What are the major consequences of this conflict?

4) What are the major consequences of the 1967 War (The Six-Day War)?

5) What are the major consequences of 1973 conflict (Yom Kippur War)?

The Palestinian Liberation Organization
6) What is Israel’s rationale for occupying the West Bank and the Gaza Strip?

7) What is the PLO? What is its purpose? What were its tactics in the 1960s and 70s?

8) How was the PLO changed? How have its tactics changed? What is its current role? (you will not find this in the book)
Efforts at Peace
9) What are the major successes and failures of the Camp David Accords in 1978?

Israeli-Palestinian Tensions Increase
10) What led to the first Intifada? What happened and what were the major consequences?

The Oslo Peace Accords
11) What are the major successes and failures of the Oslo Peace Accords in 1993?

Peace Slips Away
12) What attempt at peace was in 2000? What did it lead to?
13) What are the major consequences of the second Intifada?
14) What is the new push for peace in 2003 called?

Shifting Power and Alliances
15) What happened in 2005 and 2006?
16) What is Hamas?
17) Who is Mahmoud Abbas and organization is he a part of? What is his current status? (not in book)
To Achieve Mideast Peace, Suspend Disbelief

These are hard times for trying to promote, much less make, peace between Palestinians and Israelis. The rise of political Islam, Syria's civil war and looming implosion, and the Iranian nuclear imbroglio not only dominate the environment, but they also render it forbidding for peacemaking. And while all these factors make Israelis and Palestinians reluctant to take risks for peace, they do not represent the biggest hurdle for ending the conflict. The most fundamental problem between Israelis and Palestinians is the problem of disbelief.

Most Israelis and Palestinians today simply don't believe that peace is possible. I won't rehearse all the reasons both sides have lost faith. Suffice it to say that Israelis feel that their withdrawal from territory (like southern Lebanon and the Gaza Strip) has not brought peace or security; instead, it has produced only violence. Why, then, should they repeat the same mistake and subject themselves to far greater, even existential, risk in the West Bank? Meanwhile, Palestinians believe that negotiations from 1993 onward failed to produce independence but instead yielded a huge Israeli settler presence in their midst.

Put simply, neither side believes that the other is committed to a two-state outcome: leaving aside Hamas's explicit rejection of the principle, Israelis are generally convinced that when the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, and his Fatah Party speak of two states, they do not mean Palestine and a Jewish state called Israel; they mean a Palestinian state and a binational state.

Likewise, Palestinians discount what Israelis say about two states and believe instead that the Israelis will never accept Palestinian independence. They ask, if Israel is truly committed to two states, why is it building settlements in what should be the Palestinian state?

Fourteen points to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Given this context of mutual disbelief, the idea that the two sides now will seize an initiative to end the conflict is an illusion. But that cannot be an argument for doing nothing. The longer the stalemate drags on, the greater the cynicism and the less anyone on either side will be able to speak of two states and retain any credibility.

If the two-state solution is discredited as an outcome, something and someone will surely fill the void. Already the Islamists of Hamas, with their rejection of two states, seem primed to do so. The moment Islamists come to define Palestinian identity is the moment when this conflict will be transformed from a national into a religious one — and at that point it may no longer be possible to resolve.

So what can be done? It is more important than ever to find ways to reinforce and sustain Mr. Abbas's Palestinian Authority. As important as that may be, it can't, by itself, change a dynamic that discredits peacemaking and the possibility of two states.

Reinvigorating that possibility — and giving the Israeli and Palestinian peoples a reason to take a second look at negotiations as the means to produce it — is vital. However, at this point, if negotiations resumed tomorrow, the two sides would largely talk past each other. They need an agenda for discussions that can actually generate changes that ordinary citizens on both sides could see and feel.

I propose a 14-point agenda for discussions. Twelve of the points — six on the Israeli side and six on the Palestinian side — would be coordinated unilateral moves that each party would be willing to discuss and implement provided that the other side would do its part. The final points would be mutual steps taken concurrently by both sides. The goal would be to chip away at the sources of each side's disbelief about the other's commitment to a genuine two-state solution.
Diplomatic Relations

Since its founding in 1945, the Arab League has maintained a hostile stance toward Israel and an official economic boycott. After the 1967 War, the league passed the Khartoum resolution calling for no peace, no recognition, and no negotiations with Israel. Currently, only Egypt, Jordan, and Mauritania have diplomatic relations with Israel (following the 1979 Egypt-Israel peace treaty, the league suspended Egypt's membership for a decade).

In March 2002, the Arab League proposed and endorsed the Arab Peace Initiative, a plan including full recognition of Israel by all Arab League states. The proposal offered Israel peace in return for Israeli withdrawal from all territories captured in the 1967 War, recognition of an independent Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and a “just solution” for Palestinian refugees. The proposal is viewed by some as a major breakthrough given the stance of Arab nations since the Khartoum Resolution in 1967. Israel welcomed the proposal, but does not accept all of its demands, particularly that it withdraw to the pre-1967 borders as a precondition to negotiations.

Even though there is no official recognition between other Arab states and Israel, there have recently been news reports of cooperation between Israel and other nations in the region, including Saudi Arabia and some of the Gulf States. In 2015, Israel opened its first diplomatic mission in the United Arab Emirates.
Final Borders

In the 1967 Six-Day War, Israel gained control of Gaza and the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt, the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan, and the Golan Heights from Syria. Following the war, Israel stated that it would return most of the land in exchange for peace and recognition of its right to exist as an independent state. Israel completely withdrew from the Sinai Peninsula after Egypt and Israel signed a peace treaty in 1979 and it completely withdrew from Gaza in 2005.

The government of Israel, however, says that it must retain control of some post-1967 areas to ensure the country’s security arguing that Israel: 1) has been attacked and threatened by its neighbors since its founding; 2) gained the territory in a war of self-defense; and 3) that binding UN resolutions recognize its right to secure borders.

Arab leaders state that Israel must completely withdraw to pre-1967 borders. They argue that Israel cannot keep any land gained by war, no matter the circumstances. Disagreements about final borders affect negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians over the future of the West Bank (Jordan relinquished its claim to the West Bank in 1988) and negotiations between Israel and Syria over the Golan Heights.

Practically speaking, all negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians have included the principle of land swaps, with Israel retaining large settlement blocks near the green line* (the Armistice demarcation lines from 1949) in exchange for giving the Palestinians comparable amounts of land from Israel.

*green line: refers to the military demarcation lines established in the 1949 Armistice Agreements between Israel its neighbors (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria) after the 1948 Arab–Israeli War. The green line became significant in Israel after the Six-Day War in 1967, when, as a result of the war, Israel gained territories beyond the green line.
Jerusalem

Jerusalem is a holy city for Jews, Christians, and Muslims. The majority of the holy sites for all three religions are in a section of East Jerusalem called the Old City. Israeli law ensures that all religious groups have access to and control over their own holy sites.

Palestinians demand that Israel recognize an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital. Israel has endorsed the idea of an independent Palestinian state, but most Israelis feel that Jerusalem should remain Israel's undivided capital. They argue that Judaism's most important holy sites are in East Jerusalem, that Jerusalem was the undivided capital of previous Jewish states, that Jews everywhere have expressed deep connections to Jerusalem for millennia, and that Jews lived in the Old City of Jerusalem (a section of East Jerusalem) from antiquity until 1948. In 1948, the Jewish community in East Jerusalem was evicted by the Jordanian army. From that time until June 1967, Jews were not allowed to enter East Jerusalem where the Jewish holy sites are located. As a result, most Israeli Jews are reluctant to give up control.

Palestinians argue that some of the most holy Islamic sites are in East Jerusalem and must be part of a Palestinian state. Palestinians say that they will maintain free access to the religious sites of all religious groups. They also highlight the facts that Jerusalem is an important cultural center for Palestinians and that most of the residents of East Jerusalem are Palestinian.

Figure 1: Image from Rodgers Digital Media - Radio Vancouver
Refugees

Another major unresolved issue is the status of the approximately 700,000 Palestinian refugees who fled their homes in 1948. Today, the number of refugees and their descendants approaches 4 million individuals who live in Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, other Arab countries, the West Bank, Gaza, and elsewhere (including the U.S. and Europe). They claim a "right of return" to Israel that Israel rejects.

Many Israelis argue that there would be no refugees if Arabs had accepted the UN Partition Plan and had not attacked the fledgling State of Israel causing the 1948 war. They note that the Israeli Declaration of Independence guaranteed full equality for non-Jews and that approximately 20% of Israel's citizens are Arabs who chose to remain in Israel during the war and their descendants. Most Arabs counter that Israeli forces played a role in creating the refugee population and the cause of the conflict should not affect the right of refugees.

Two populations of refugees—Palestinian Arabs as well as Jews from Arab countries—emerged as a result of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The vast majority of the nearly 700,000 Jewish refugees from the Middle East and North Africa do not seek to return to their former homelands where they were persecuted. As with most other displaced populations in modern times they have integrated fully in their new homes. Israel argues that other groups in similar situations have not had the right to return. It also says that binding UN Resolutions do not speak of a "right of return," but rather reference a "just settlement of the refugee problem." Israelis point out that this vague wording equally applies to the comparable number of Jewish refugees who fled from Arab countries due to persecution. Many Israelis feel that since they absorbed Jewish refugees from Arab states, the West Bank, Gaza, and neighboring Arab states should have absorbed Palestinian Arab refugees.

Many Palestinians argue that there is a "right to return" to Israel proper and that the refugees and their descendants should be compensated. Some Palestinians support this in the hopes of changing the demographics in such a way that Israel would no longer have a Jewish majority. Recognizing this, many Israelis reject this demand which they see as tantamount to the destruction of Israel and Jewish self-determination. Some Palestinians focus on securing a right of return for all refugees and displaced Palestinians to an independent state in the West Bank and Gaza. Israel supports a Palestinian return to a future independent Palestinian state, but not to Israel. Some Palestinians and Israelis have suggested that recognizing the plight of the Palestinian refugees and giving them some form of monetary compensation might be a solution, while other Israelis feel this is too much of a concession and other Palestinians feel this is insufficient.
Security Needs

The sides disagree about how to balance Israel's security needs with Palestinian aspirations for independence. Israel argues that it is prepared to give up territory for the promise of peace, asserting that its citizens need to feel confident that they will be safe in their country. For example, Israelis insist that the West Bank must be demilitarized with no heavy weapons such as tanks. They point out that after Israel withdrew from the Gaza Strip in 2005, Hamas took power and has launched thousands of rockets and mortars into Israel causing death, injury, property destruction, and trauma. They note that if Israel ceded control of the West Bank, which is much closer to major Israeli population centers, the damage done by rockets could be devastating. For their part, Palestinians insist that their state should not be different from other states, so there should not be any restrictions or bans on heavy weapons.

The situation is further complicated by measures such as the security barrier which Israel constructed in 2002 to protect its citizens from Palestinian suicide bombings. The barrier is similar to the one that Israel had built in 1996 between Israel and the Gaza Strip. The barriers have been effective, dramatically reducing the number of suicide bombings in Israel coming from the Gaza Strip and West Bank. The West Bank barrier, composed mainly of chain link fence, has been criticized for dividing some Palestinians from their land and places of work or study and requiring these individuals to wait in lines to pass through security checkpoints. The government of Israel argues that the barrier is a necessary precaution given the ongoing threat of Palestinian terror, noting that it is temporary and can be removed in the context of true peace. In response to petitions by some Palestinians, Israel's Supreme Court has required modifications to the barrier's route.
Settlements

Returning to the 1967 borders is also complicated by the existence of Israeli communities in the West Bank known as settlements. Israel originally established settlements to serve as security outposts for Israel's main population areas and to restore Jewish communities that were destroyed when Arab states invaded in 1948. However, beginning in the 1970s, the number of settlements grew. Israelis move to settlements for a variety of reasons. Some are motivated by ideology, which holds that Jews should have the right to live anywhere in the historical Jewish homeland where important Jewish history took place. Many other Israelis are motivated by cost of living considerations and the availability of more affordable housing close to Israel's major cities. Israeli opinion on the settlements is not monolithic. However, most Israelis see a difference between building in parts of Jerusalem or in the communities just over the green line* and between the more remote/isolated settlements in the West Bank.

Most Arabs feel that settlements are illegal and that Israelis cannot live on land gained in the 1967 War. The Palestinian Authority has gone so far as to make selling land to Jews a capital offense, punishable by death. Palestinians view all building beyond the green line as a provocation and say that it is a sign of Israel's lack of commitment to the two-state solution. They also criticize Israel for its security measures to protect Israelis in the West Bank. For example, Palestinians argue that checkpoints designed to stop attackers make travel more difficult for Palestinians.

While Israel insists on the legality of the settlements, it is willing to discuss removing them and negotiations have included discussion on this topic. Israel notes that it proved its willingness to dismantle settlements for peace as it withdrew completely from the Sinai Peninsula following its peace treaty with Egypt and from Gaza in 2005.

Israeli and Palestinian peace negotiators have accepted the principle of a land-swap in which Israel would give up land elsewhere in exchange for keeping large settlements. However, the two sides have not been able to agree on precisely which land would be swapped.

* green line: refers to the military demarcation lines established in the 1949 Armistice Agreements between Israel and its neighbors (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria) after the 1948 Arab–Israeli War. The green line became significant in Israel after the Six-Day War in 1967, when, as a result of the war, Israel gained territories beyond the green line.
Water Resources

The right to use water resources is a major political issue that impacts the Arab-Israeli conflict and peace process. For example, in 1964, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon attempted to divert rivers that supplied Israel with water. After issuing warnings, Israel launched military strikes to prevent the plan. Agreements over how to share water resources were important parts of the 1994 peace treaty between Israel and Jordan and of the 1995 agreement between Israel and the Palestinians known as Oslo II. In 1967, Israel expressed willingness to withdraw from the Golan Heights in exchange for peace, but this offer was rebuffed with the Khartoum Resolution by the Arab states. Syria insists that Israel withdraw completely to the pre-1967 lines which would give Syria partial control over the Sea of Galilee, one of Israel's major water resources. Given the water shortages in the region, this is a critical matter.

The distribution of water resources also impacts negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. Underground aquifers cross the borders between Israel and the West Bank and between Israel and Gaza.

Though the Palestinian Authority and Israel agreed to share this water in the 1995 Oslo II agreement, many Palestinians feel the agreement should be changed because it gives Israel a larger share of the water. Palestinians note that Oslo II was an interim agreement and that the final agreement should give them rights to more of the water. Many Israelis feel the issue was already the subject of negotiations that reached a mutually agreed upon decision and should not be renegotiated.

This is a sensitive subject due to the scarcity of water in the region but one which has shown promising examples of regional cooperation among Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinian Authority primarily through the work of grass-roots, non-governmental organizations.