

Palestine and Israel

1897 - First Zionist Congress met in Basel, Switzerland. The World Zionist Organization was established and the Basel Program promoted Jewish settlement in Palestine. The first wave of Jewish immigration had begun in 1882, and a second wave began in 1904.

1914 - August, The Great War began with England and France and Russia allied against Germany and Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire. The Ottomans had ruled the Middle East for 500 years, but that rule was now challenged by Jewish and Arab nationalism, and British oil interests in [Iraq](#) and [Iran](#). During the war, Sharif Hussein and Henry McMahon, the British high commissioner in Egypt, exchanged correspondence guaranteeing Arab independence in return for the Arab revolt that began 1916 against the Ottomans.

1916 - May 16, Britain and France signed the Sykes-Picot Agreement that divided the Ottoman Middle East provinces among them.

1917 - Nov 2, Lord Arthur James Balfour, British foreign secretary, sent a letter, later known as the Balfour Declaration, to Lord Edmund de Rothschild supporting the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine.

1918 - Nov. 11, armistice ended the fighting on the Western Front. December 9, British forces occupied Palestine.

1920 - April 24, San Remo Conference granted Great Britain mandate over Palestine.

1922 - July 24, League of Nations confirmed the mandate for Palestine.

1933 - Haavara Agreement by Nazi Germany allowed Jews to transfer money to Palestine until 1941, making it possible for thousands to emigrate.

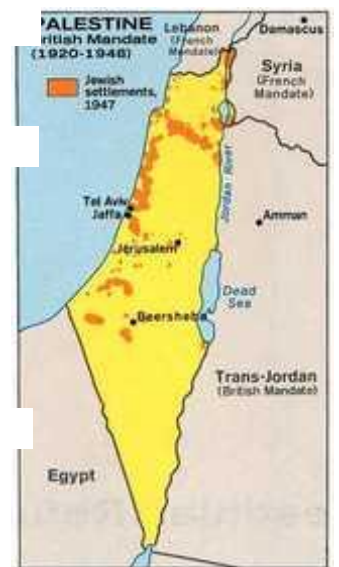
1936-1939 - Arab Revolt led by Haj Amin Al-Husseini. Over 5,000 Arabs were killed according to some sources, mostly by British. Several hundred Jews were killed by Arabs. Hussein fled to Iraq and then to Nazi Germany.

1937 - July 7, the Peel Commission Report recommended turning Palestine into a Jewish State and an Arab State incorporated into Transjordan, with Jerusalem and Bethlehem placed under the British Mandate.

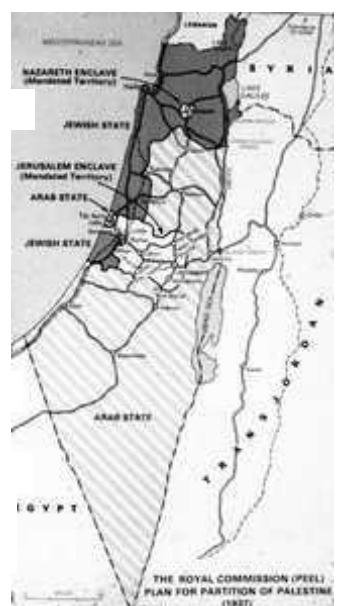
1939 - May 17, The British government issued the MacDonal White Paper to limit and restrict Jewish immigration and land purchases in Palestine. This White Paper marked the end of Britain's commitment to the Jews under the Balfour Declaration. It provided for the establishment of a Palestinian (Arab) state within ten years and the appointment of Palestinian ministers to begin taking over the government as soon as "peace and order" were restored to Palestine; 75,000 Jews would be allowed into Palestine over the next five years, after which all immigration would be subject to Arab consent; all further land sales would be severely restricted. Sept. 1, World War II began with the invasion of Poland by Germany. David Ben-Gurion, chairman of the Jewish Agency, declared his opposition to both Germany and the British White Paper.



Mideast 1683, map from [UT](#)



Palestine 1920, map from [UT](#)



Peel Plan 1937



1940 - The British began to recruit Jewish volunteers into parachutists and Palestinian battalions to fight with the British army in Europe. By 1944, these units were united into the [Jewish Brigade](#) that fought in Italy in 1945

1942 - May 11, Ben-Gurion and the Zionists at the Biltmore Conference in New York advocated the establishment of a Jewish "Commonwealth" (replacing the word "homeland") in Palestine and unlimited immigration.

1946 - After the war, Prime Minister Clement Atlee and his foreign minister, Ernest Bevin, continued to enforce the policy of the 1939 White Paper. The Jewish Agency united with radicals to oppose British policy. The Haganah, the Irgun and Lehi carried out terrorist attacks against British forces, the most spectacular of which was the bombing of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem in July.

1947 - November 29, the UN General Assembly adopted the resolution of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) in favor of a complex system of Palestine's partition into separate Arab and Jewish states, a special international status for Jerusalem, and an economic union linking the three members. Although supported by the United States and the Soviet Union, the plan was opposed by the League of Arab States (Arab League) Council, meeting in December.

1948 - In January, as violence grew between Jews and Arabs and the British, President Truman reversed his decision for partition and now opposed it, supporting instead a trusteeship plan, and then full statehood for Israel. April 9, Jewish underground forces led by Menachem Begin's Irgun massacred 254 Palestinians in the village of Deir Yassin near Jerusalem. May 14, the Mandate over Palestine officially ended and the Zionists proclaimed the establishment of the state of Israel. The U.S. extended full diplomatic recognition to Israel. May 15, Israel War of Independence began. British left Palestine; Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, Saudi Arabia declared war on Israel. Egyptian, Syrian and Jordanian invasion began. September 1, the Palestinian National Conference met in Gaza and the All-Palestine Government was established under the leadership of Hajj Amin al-Husseini. Al-Husseini headed the meeting of the Palestinian National Council in Gaza. December 1, Palestinian notables from the east central Palestine, the area that remained under Jordanian military control, later called the West Bank, met in Jericho and advocated a temporary union with Transjordan. December 11, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 194, which recognized the right of Palestinians who were expelled by the Israeli army or who fled during the 1948 war to return to their homes.

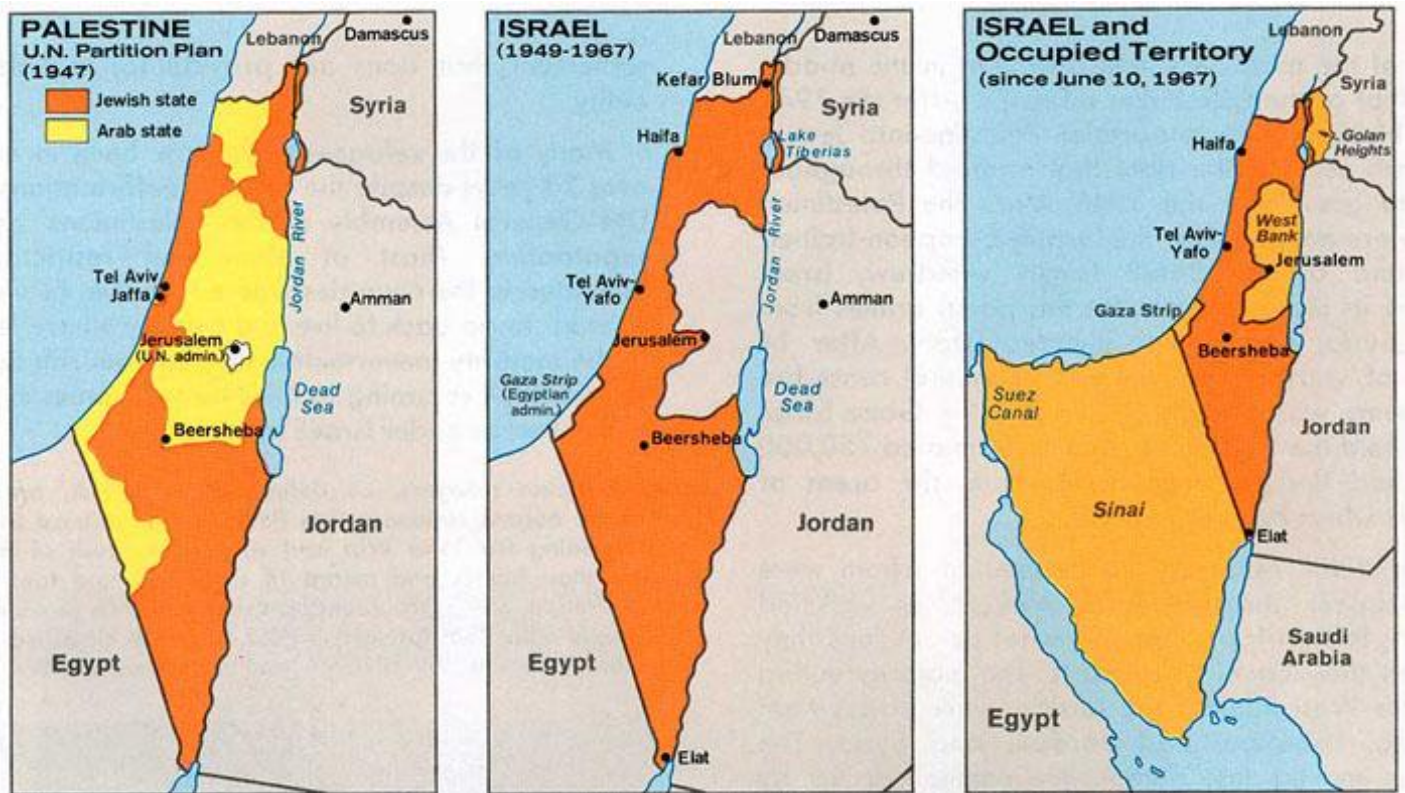
1949 - April 3, Israel and Arab states agreed to armistice. Israel gained about 50% more territory than was originally allotted to it by the UN Partition Plan.

1950 - April 24, the West Bank officially became part of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

1953 - February 28, Israel launched a large scale assault on the Gaza Strip.

1956 - Oct. 29, Suez War. In retaliation for a series of escalating border raids as well as the closure of the straits of Tiran and Suez canal to Israeli shipping, and to prevent Egyptian use of newly acquired Soviet arms in a war, Israel invaded the Sinai peninsula and occupies it for several months, with French and British collaboration.

1964 - May, the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization) founded with the aim of destroying Israel. The Palestinian National Charter of 1968 officially called for liquidation of Israel.



Israel 1947-67, map from [UT](#)

1967 - May, Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser closed the straits of Tiran to Israeli shipping and dismisses UN peacekeeping force. Negotiations with US to reopen the Straits of Tiran fail. June 5-10, Six Day War. Israel destroyed the Egyptian air force on the ground, conquers and occupies Sinai and Gaza, then conquers the West Bank from Jordan, and Golan Heights from Syria. November 22, the UN resolution 242 called for Israeli withdrawal, establishment of peace.

1968 - March 21, the Battle of al-Karameh took place in the village Karameh, east of the Jordan River, where Palestinian guerilla movements joined the Jordanian army to block Israel from entering the East Bank.

1971 - July 9, the Jordanian army evicted the PLO from Jordan and dismantled its infrastructure. November 28, Black September, a Palestinian organization, formed after the civil war between the PLO and Jordan in September 1970, claimed responsibility for the assassination of Wasfi al-Tal, Jordan's Prime Minister.

1973 - Oct. 6, Yom Kippur War (October War). In a surprise attack on the Jewish day of atonement, Egypt retook the Suez canal and a narrow zone on the other side. Syria reconquered the Golan Heights. Following massive US and Soviet resupplying of the sides, Israel succeeded in pushing back the Syrians and threatening Damascus. In Sinai, the IDF crossed the Suez Canal and cut off the Egyptian Third Army. October 22, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 338, recommending negotiations between Israel and its Arab neighbors.

1978 - March 14, the Israeli army invaded southern Lebanon, demolished a number of villages, and killed some 700 Lebanese and Palestinians. September 17, U.S. President Jimmy Carter, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin signed the Camp David Accords. Israel agreed to withdraw from the Sinai in exchange for peace with Egypt and to granted the Palestinians "full autonomy" in the Occupied Territories after a transitional period of five years.

1979 - March 22, the United Nations Security Council adopted resolution 446, which demanded that Israel dismantle the settlements in the Occupied Territories. March 26, Peace treaty signed between Egypt and Israel.

1981 - June 7, Israel destroyed Iraqi nuclear reactor in daring raid. Oct. 6, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat is

assassinated while on the reviewing stand of a victory parade.

1982 - June 6, Massive Israeli invasion of Lebanon to fight PLO. Israel besieged Beirut for three months. Palestinian and Lebanese casualties were estimated at tens of thousands of people killed. September, 16-18, members of the Phalange militia massacred up to 2,000 Palestinian refugees at Sabra and Shatila camps in Beirut.

1983 - December 20, PLO leader Yasser Arafat and 4,000 PLO commandos left north Lebanon on Greek ships and relocated their headquarters in Amman, Jordan.

1985 - November 19, Yasser Arafat and the PLO Executive Committee met in Baghdad and reaffirmed the PLO's rejection of UN resolutions 242 and 338.

1987 - December 9, The Palestinian intifada (uprising) began in Gaza and spread to the West Bank.

1988 - July 31, King Hussein officially broke administrative and legal ties with the West Bank and announced that he was relinquishing control to the PLO. August 3, the PLO declared full responsibility for the affairs of the West Bank and Gaza. November 24, the Palestinian National Council proclaimed an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza; 55 countries including China and the Soviet Union recognized the Palestinian state. December 7, PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat declared in Stockholm that the PLO accepted Israel's right to exist and denounced terrorism. The United States rejected the term "denounce" and insisted that he "renounces" terrorism. December 14, the United States authorized its ambassador to Tunis, Robert Pelletreau, to open a diplomatic dialogue with the PLO.



1988 - [bg](#), map from [LC](#)

1989 - January 12, the UN Security Council granted the PLO the right to speak directly to the Council as "Palestine" with the same status as any UN member nation. April 2, the PLO Central Council appointed the organization's Chairman Yasser Arafat the first President of Palestine. April 20, the UN General Assembly condemned Israeli practices in the Occupied Territories and called on the UN Security Council to protect Palestinian civilians.

1990 - May 25, after the United States refused to grant Yasser Arafat a visa to enter New York to address the UN General Assembly, the General Assembly moved to Geneva where Arafat called for deployment of UN forces into the West Bank and Gaza.

1991 - January 17, the United States and its allies invaded Iraq in the first Gulf War to force Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait. July 21, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker informed Palestinian leaders that the American initiative envisioned the creation of "less than a state, and more than autonomy." August 28, the PLO agreed, with provisions, to participate in the Middle East Peace Conference. October 16, the PLO and Jordan agreed to form a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to attend the forthcoming Conference in Madrid. October 30, the Madrid peace conference begins with representatives from Israel, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine.

1993 - Sept. 13, in the Oslo Declaration of Principles, Israel and PLO agreed to mutual recognition.

1995 - Sept 28, Oslo Interim Agreement signed. Palestinian Authority to be established. Nov. 4, Israeli PM Yitzhak Rabin assassinated by right-wing Israeli fanatic Yigal Amir. Rabin is replaced by Shimon Peres.

1996 - June, right-wing Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu elected Prime Minister in Israel, replacing Shimon Peres. Sept., the Al-Aksa tunnel riots: Arab sources spread the false rumor that a gate opened in an underground tunnel tourist attraction by the Israeli government, endangered the foundations of the Al-Aqsa mosque. This caused several

days of rioting and numerous casualties.

1997 - Jan 18, Israel and Palestinians reached agreement on Israeli redeployment in the West-Bank city of Hebron.

1998 - Oct. 23, Wye River Plantation talks resulted in an agreement for Israeli redeployment and release of political prisoners and renewed Palestinian commitment to correct its violations of the Oslo accords including excess police force, illegal arms and incitement in public media and education.

1999 - May 17, Israel elected Labor party leader and Former General Ehud Barak as Prime Minister in a landslide. Barak promised rapid progress toward peace. September 4, Israel and the PLO signed the Sharm el-Sheikh Memorandum, known as Wye II. November 10, Israel opened one of the "safe passage routes" along existing roads that connected the West Bank and Gaza.

2000 - March, Israeli-Syrian peace negotiations failed when Hafez Assad rejected an Israeli offer relayed by US President Clinton in Geneva. Sept. 28, Palestinians initiated riots after Israeli opposition leader Ariel Sharon visited the Temple Mount, which was also the location of the Haram as Sharif holy to Muslims.

2001 - Feb. 6, Right-wing Likud leader Ariel Sharon elected Prime Minister in Israel replacing Ehud Barak and promising "peace and security." Sept. 11, Terror attacks on World Trade Center in NYC and the Pentagon carried out by fanatic Islamic Al-Qaida group headed by Osama Bin Laden initiate US war on terror. Israel and Palestinians agree to a cease fire, but it is not implemented.

2002 - March-April, Israel conducted operation Defensive Wall in the West Bank, following a large number of Palestinian suicide attacks on civilian targets. Saudi peace initiative adopted at Beirut summit.

2003 - Jan 28, Elections in Israel gave wide margin of 40 seats to right wing Likud party, returning PM Ariel Sharon for another term. March 19, US began invasion of Iraq by a strike against a building where Saddam Hussein and other leaders were meeting. Baghdad fell on April 9.

2004 - July 9, International court of Justice (ICJ) ruled that the Israeli security barrier violated international law and must be torn down. Nov 11, Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat died.

2005 - Jan 9, Mahmoud Abbas elected President of the Palestinian National Authority. Jan 10, Ariel Sharon formed unity government with Labor and United Torah Judaism parties in Israel. April, Ariel Sharon visited US President George Bush at his Texas ranch. Syrian Army left Lebanon, officially ending Syrian occupation. May 26, Mahmud Abbas visited US President George Bush at the White House, an important symbolic gesture signaling US backing for Abbas and Palestinian aspirations. Israel released 400 Palestinian prisoners. Britain confirmed "low level" negotiations with Hamas. June, Violence flared in Gaza. US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice visited Palestinian and Israeli leaders to ensure coordination of Israeli withdrawal from Gaza. June 21, Israeli PM Ariel Sharon and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas met in Jerusalem. Sharon announced that Palestinians have promised to coordinate regarding Gaza withdrawal. PM Abbas postponed Palestinian legislative elections in order to change the election law, amidst growing concern that Hamas would defeat Abbas's Fatah party in the elections. Lebanese elections gave a decisive majority to the opposition to Syria, led by Saad Hariri, son of slain leader Rafiq Hariri. August 15, disengagement began with Israeli evacuation of Gaza settlements and four West Bank settlements, completed by August 24.



Israel 2005, map from CIA

Links:

- Timeline from [MidEastWeb](#) and [Palestine Center](#)
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