

An Overview of Key Events Since 1967

Attrition Battles between Wars / The War of Attrition, 1967-1970

During the 1967 War, Israel gained land from Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. While Israel maintained that Jerusalem would remain a unified city, with all religions having access to their holy sites, it stated that it was open to returning other territories in exchange for peace and recognition of its right to exist. Eight Arab heads of state met in Khartoum August 29-September 1, 1967 and adopted the “3 NOs” policy-- no peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel, and no negotiations with Israel. Egypt began small-scale attacks against Israeli positions along the Suez Canal which continued until Anwar Sadat came to power in 1970. During this same period, the PLO attacked Israeli military personnel and civilians from bases in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Egypt. The PLO also carried out airplane hijackings and terrorist attacks outside of Israel. In 1970, after an attempt by the PLO to overthrow Jordan’s King Hussein, the Jordanian army attacked PLO forces in what became known as “Black September.” Fighting continued until June of 1971 when Jordan succeeded in evicting the PLO from the country. The PLO moved its base of operations to Lebanon.

Settlement Construction Begins

In 1967, the Israeli government approved the building of settlements in the Sinai Peninsula, Gaza Strip, and West Bank. The term *settlements* refers to Israeli communities built on land that was captured in the 1967 War. The first settlements were intended to act as security outposts and to prevent attacks on major population centers. Settlements were also built on the sites of Jewish villages that had been destroyed by Arab forces during the 1948 War. Settlement construction was very limited for the first decade that Israel controlled the territories, as Israel anticipated withdrawing in exchange for peace. Over time, settlement construction increased due to natural growth, ideological motivations, and the affordability of housing. The future of the settlements is one of the issues that the Israel and the Palestinian Authority must negotiate as part of a comprehensive peace agreement.

The October War or Yom Kippur War

In 1973, Egypt and Syria attacked Israel on Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish year. After initial Arab military successes, the Israelis managed to push back the attack. For many Israelis, the 1973 war reinforced the strategic importance of the buffer zones gained in 1967. Syrian troops were stopped ten miles from the Israeli town of Tiberias; many Israelis felt that the heartland of Israel could have been overrun if not for the time it took the invading forces to move through the West Bank, the Golan Heights, and the Sinai. After the war, Israel retained the territories captured in 1967, but did not keep any additional land.

Camp David Accords

Menachem Begin of Israel and Anwar al-Sadat of Egypt signed agreements in Camp David on September, 1978. The American-sponsored talks paved the way to the peace treaty signed in 1979.

Egypt and Israel Sign a Peace Agreement

In 1979, as a result of intense diplomatic efforts by the United States, Egypt became the first Arab country to recognize and enter into a peace treaty with Israel. Egypt’s President, Anwar Sadat realized that a continuing state of war with Israel was harming the Egyptian economy and the well-being of his people. For its part, Israel returned to Egypt all of the Sinai that had been captured during the 1967 war

and removed Jewish families from the homes they had established there. This agreement became a model for Israel's "land for peace" policy.

The 1982 Lebanon War

In 1982, PLO units in southern Lebanon increasingly attacked communities in northern Israel. In response, Israel launched an attack on PLO militants stationed in Lebanon. This conflict is known as the 1982 Lebanon War or the First Lebanon War. Israeli troops advanced as far as Beirut and succeeded in expelling the PLO leadership from Lebanon to Tunisia. This costly struggle drew Israel into the increasingly complicated Lebanese civil war and generated domestic and international opposition to its involvement in Lebanon. Israel withdrew from most of Lebanon in June 1985. Until 2000, Israel maintained a military presence in a section of southern Lebanon that served as a buffer zone and prevented widespread terrorist incursions into Israel from the north. Renewed terrorist attacks from southern Lebanon led to the Second Lebanon War in 2006.

The First Intifada

In 1987, Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank engaged in an uprising, or *intifada*, against Israeli control of these territories. Palestinians attacked Israelis with improvised weapons and firearms supplied by the PLO, which organized much of the uprising. Israel tried to contain the violence, which was directed at soldiers and civilians, primarily in the territories. This conflict continued until the Oslo Accords were signed in 1993.

The Oslo Accords

The Oslo Accords were a set of agreements that began in 1993 when Israel and the PLO signed a Declaration of Principles (DOP). The Oslo Accords led to the creation of the Palestinian Authority, which had responsibility for administering the territory under its control. It also called on Israel to gradually withdraw its military presence from the Gaza Strip and a small area around Jericho. The Oslo Accords left Israel the right to defend itself and its citizens, including those in the territories. Along with the DOP, Israel and the PLO exchanged Letters of Mutual Recognition. For the first time, the PLO formally recognized Israel, renounced violence, and publicly expressed acceptance of peaceful coexistence with Israel. Also, for the first time Israel formally recognized the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people. The Oslo Accords were intended to be an interim agreement that would lead to a permanent settlement with Israel giving up land in return for peace and security.

Israel and Jordan Sign a Peace Agreement

As with the 1979 peace treaty between Egypt and Israel, the United States led a difficult but successful diplomatic process to help Jordan and Israel achieve peace. In 1994, Jordan became the second Arab country to recognize Israel. Trade, business relations, tourism, cultural exchanges, and scientific cooperation between the two nations have increased since the agreement was signed, although at a slower pace than hoped for initially.

The Camp David Summit

American President Bill Clinton brought Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat to Camp David in July 2000. This was the first major attempt to negotiate a comprehensive final status agreement between Israel and the Palestinians. Although the negotiations were carried out in secret, participants President Clinton and Dennis Ross attributed the failure of the talks to Arafat's refusal to compromise. They reported that Barak made major concessions including withdrawing from the vast majority of the West Bank to create an independent Palestinian state with a capital in East Jerusalem. Arafat did not feel the offer was enough, refused it, and made no counter-proposals. The goal of the summit, two states living side by side in peace, was not achieved.

The Second Intifada

In September 2000, Israeli opposition leader Ariel Sharon visited the Jewish Temple Mount, a site revered by Jews that is also holy to Muslims. Many Palestinians claimed that Sharon's visit was provocative and began to riot. Many Israelis claimed that Sharon's visit was a pretext for violence, not its cause since the visit was coordinated in advance with Palestinian officials. Palestinians rioted and threw rocks onto Jewish worshippers at the Western Wall. Israeli police responded. Palestinian terrorists attacked Israelis with numerous suicide bombers, killing almost 900 civilians and wounding thousands of others at restaurants, nightclubs, on buses, and other civilian places. In response, Israel's military returned to major population centers in the territories and carried out operations against terrorist targets. Palestinian civilians were also unintentional victims of the intifada. There is no definitive event marking the end of the Second Intifada. Many people suggest late 2004 or early 2005. Others argue it never stopped.

Israel Begins Constructing the West Bank Barrier

In 2002, Israel responded to the suicide bombings by constructing a security barrier to protect its citizens from terrorist groups in the West Bank. The new barrier was similar to the one that Israel had built in 1996 between Israel and the Gaza Strip. The barriers have been effective in dramatically reducing the number of suicide bombings in Israel coming from the Gaza Strip and West Bank. However the 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 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.

The Arab Peace Initiative Is Proposed

In March 2002, during the Beirut Summit of the Arab League, crown prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia (the current king) proposed a peace initiative that was endorsed by all members of the Arab League. 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 Arab League endorsed the proposal again at the Riyadh Summit in 2007. The proposal is viewed by some as a major breakthrough because previously most Arab nations had ruled out peace, recognition, and even negotiations with Israel. Israel has 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. In July 2007, Israeli leaders met with representatives of the Arab League to discuss the proposal. This was the first time that the Arab League sent an official delegation to Israel.

The Roadmap for Peace Is Proposed

The Roadmap for Peace, known as the Roadmap, is a plan for peace that was proposed in 2003 by the "Quartet": the United States, Russia, the European Union, and the United Nations. The Roadmap involves reciprocal steps by the Israelis and Palestinians with the ultimate goal of a secure Israel and an independent Palestinian state. Progress on the Roadmap was completely halted following the 2006 Palestinian election of Hamas, a terrorist organization committed to destroying Israel. Negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority became possible again when the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, dissolved the government controlled by Hamas. On November 27, 2007, the basic principles of the Roadmap were reaffirmed at the Annapolis Conference.

Disengagement From Gaza

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon led Israel to unilaterally withdraw from the Gaza Strip and four West Bank settlements as part of a larger policy of “disengagement,” the separation of Israel from Palestinian territories. The Gaza disengagement was very controversial domestically, because Israeli soldiers were required to uproot Israeli citizens who wanted to remain in their communities in Gaza. Nevertheless, Israel decided to remove itself from this territory so that the Palestinians living there could govern themselves. Since Israel withdrew from Gaza, the number of rockets fired by terrorists from Gaza into Israel has increased dramatically.

Hamas is Elected

In January 2006, Palestinians elected a majority of Hamas members to the Palestinian Authority’s legislature over the PLO’s Fatah party that had previously been in power. The Hamas charter calls for the destruction of Israel and for the killing of Jews. Hamas does not accept previous Palestinian-Israeli agreements and has claimed responsibility for hundreds of terrorist attacks against Israeli citizens. As a result of the election, many Western nations imposed sanctions, suspending aid to the Palestinian Authority, with a declaration that sanctions would be lifted once Hamas recognizes Israel’s right to exist, forswears violence, and accepts previous Palestinian-Israeli agreements.

The 2006 Lebanon War

Hezbollah, a radical Islamist organization committed to destroying Israel, is based in Lebanon and is believed to be heavily supported by Iran and Syria. On July 11, 2006, Hezbollah crossed the Lebanon-Israel border and attacked an Israeli army unit, killing eight soldiers and kidnapping two more who were later murdered. At the same time, it began launching rockets into Israeli cities and towns. In response, Israel launched air strikes on suspected Hezbollah military targets, particularly rocket launchers, and mounted a ground offensive. This conflict is known as the 2006 Lebanon War or the Second Lebanon War. Hezbollah used a human shield strategy by imbedding its fighters and rocket launchers in civilian neighborhoods and homes, resulting in the loss of civilian lives and property damage when Israel retaliated. Israel strategically damaged Lebanese transportation infrastructure to prevent Hezbollah from resupplying and redeploying. Hostilities officially ended with UN Cease Fire Resolution 1701 passed on August 11, 2006.

The Battle of Gaza

Ongoing tensions between Hamas and the PLO’s Fatah party culminated in June 2007 when Hamas militants attacked and assassinated Fatah members throughout Gaza. In response, the Palestinian Authority president, Mahmoud Abbas, dissolved the Hamas government. Since that time there have been effectively two Palestinian governments. Hamas controls Gaza and the Palestinian Authority controls the West Bank

The Annapolis Conference

On November 27, 2007, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice organized a conference between Israel and the Palestinian Authority’s Fatah leaders, which was attended by many Arab countries, including Saudi Arabia and Syria. The Annapolis conference marked the first time that a two-state solution was publicly referred to as the mutually agreed-upon framework for a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. A majority of Israeli citizens support the two-state solution.



The Gaza Conflict/Operation Cast Lead

Between December 27, 2008 and January 18, 2009, Israel targeted Hamas strongholds in Gaza to stop ongoing rocket attacks on civilian towns in southern Israel and to disrupt the terrorist infrastructure and weapons smuggling. Hundreds of militants were killed, as were many civilians, due to Hamas' launching of attacks from urban areas. Gaza's buildings and economy were heavily damaged.

Gaza Flotilla Incident

After Hamas violently seized control from the Palestinian Authority in 2007, Egypt and Israel began a blockade to prevent Hamas from smuggling weapons and missiles into Gaza. They required all goods to be inspected before entering Gaza. In May 2010, six ships set sail from Turkey to break the blockade. Israel directed the ships to dock at the Israeli port of Ashdod for inspection and transfer of legal goods to Gaza. The ships refused. Israeli soldiers boarded the ships. On one ship, the *Mavi Marmara*, the soldiers were attacked with iron bars and knives. During the ensuing struggle, nine Turkish activists were killed. Israel gained control of the ship and directed it to Ashdod along with the other five ships, which went to Ashdod without incident. The cargo was subsequently inspected and permitted goods were delivered to Gaza. The relationship between Israel and Turkey, allies since 1949, deteriorated following the 2008-2009 Gaza Conflict and the election of Prime Minister Erdogan.

Prisoner Exchange for Gilad Shalit

In 2006 Hamas militants kidnapped Israeli Army soldier Gilad Shalit in a cross-border raid into Israel from Gaza via underground tunnels. Hamas held Shalit captive for five years. In 2011, Israel made a deal with Hamas to release 1,027 Palestinian prisoners held in Israel in exchange for Shalit. The release of those prisoners, including 280 prisoners serving life sentences for planning and perpetuating terror attacks on Israel, was a difficult and painful decision for many Israelis.

Gaza-Israel Conflict Operation Pillar of Defense

Over the course of 2011, 680 rockets, mortars and Grad missiles were fired from the Gaza Strip into Israel. In March 2011, Israel first deployed the Iron Dome missile defense system. In mid-March 2012, Hamas significantly escalated missile attacks. In November 2012, Hamas launched over 100 rockets into Israel during a 24-hour period. Israel responded with Operation Pillar of Defense, an eight-day Israeli Defense Force operation in Gaza, aimed at halting missile attacks from Gaza into Israel, attacking rocket launch pads, weapon depots, and Hamas military and government facilities. Ahmed Jabari, military chief of Hamas, involved in suicide bombings against Israeli citizens and implicated in the kidnapping of Gilad Shalit, was killed in an airstrike.

Kerry Israeli – Palestinian Authority Peace Talks

In 2013, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry attempted to re-start the peace process with direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. The rulers of Gaza, Hamas, did not participate in the talks. Kerry met with both Mahmoud Abbas and Benjamin Netanyahu many times over nine months. Despite promising developments during negotiations, on April 23, 2014, shortly before the nine-month negotiation period expired, rival Palestinian factions Hamas and Fatah announced the formation of a unity government. Hamas maintained its calls for the destruction of Israel and the peace talks collapsed.

Kidnapping and Murder of Three Israeli Teens

On the night of June 12 2014, terrorists from Hebron, affiliated with Hamas, kidnapped and killed three Israeli teenagers Eyal Yifrach, Gilad Shaar, and Naftali Frankel as they were hitchhiking home in the West Bank. Their fate became the focus of intense concern by Israeli society. Their bodies were found after an intensive 18-day search. Two days later, a Palestinian teenager Mohammed Abu Khdeir was abducted

from East Jerusalem and murdered by extremist Israelis in an apparent revenge killing. Israeli Police located the body within hours and arrested Israeli nationalist suspects several days later.

Gaza-Israel Conflict and Operation Protective Edge

Tensions increased during the intense search for the three missing Israeli teenagers. From the day of the abductions on June 12th through July 5th, there were 117 rockets launched from Gaza into Israel and approximately 80 Israeli air strikes on Gaza. In addition, the IDF arrested 51 Hamas operatives who had been released in exchange for Gilad Shalit in 2011. The IDF warned that a military offensive would begin shortly if missile attacks did not cease. After Hamas increased rocket attacks, 100 rockets in three days, the IDF launched Operation Protective Edge, aimed at stopping missile and mortar attacks on Israel, halting the smuggling of weapons into Gaza, and destroying a sophisticated network of offensive terror tunnels leading from Gaza into Israel. Missiles in Gaza were often launched from densely populated civilian areas within Gaza, and approximately 2,100 Palestinians were killed, a mixture of militant fighters and civilians. Seventy Israelis were killed, including 64 soldiers. Without the Iron Dome missile defense system, thousands of Israelis would have been killed by rockets. Both Palestinians and Israelis were displaced during the conflict. On August 26, there was a ceasefire.

A Timeline Chart of Major Events in Arab-Israeli Relations

Fill in the second and third column. The first two rows have been completed as examples.

Event	Date	Brief Description	Outcome
1948 War	1948	Israel declared independence. Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, & Iraq attacked Israel.	Israel gained land. Egypt gained the Gaza Strip and Jordan gained the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians and Jews became refugees.
Establishment of the PLO	1964	The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was formed with the aim of destroying Israel and creating a Palestinian state in its place.	Over the years, the PLO has used political and violent means in pursuit of its goals.
Six Day War or The 1967 War	1967	Egypt blockaded Israel. Egypt, Jordan, Syria & Iraq moved troops to Israel's borders and made threatening statements. Israel launched a preemptive strike.	Israel captured the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan, the Golan Heights from Syria, and the Gaza Strip and all of the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt. More Palestinians and Jews became refugees. Terrorism became more common.
Attrition Battles	1967-1970		
Settlement Construction Begins	1967		

The October War or Yom Kippur War	1973		
Egypt and Israel Sign a Peace Agreement	1979		
The 1982 Lebanon War	1982		
The First Intifada	1987-1993		
The Oslo Accords	1993		
Israel and Jordan sign a Peace Treaty	1994		
The Camp David Summit	2000		

The Second Intifada	2000-2005		
Israel Begins Constructing the West Bank Barrier	2002		
Arab Peace Initiative Is Proposed	2002		
The Roadmap for Peace Is Proposed	2003		
Israel Disengages from Gaza	2005		
Hamas Is Elected	2006		

The 2006 Lebanon War	2006		
The Battle of Gaza	2007		
The Annapolis Conference	2007		
The Gaza Conflict	2008-2009		
The Gaza Flotilla Incident	2010		
Prisoner Exchange for Gilad Shalit	2011		

The Gaza-Israel Conflict Operation Pillar of Defense	2012		
The Kerry Israeli-Palestinian Authority Peace Talks	2013 - 2014		
Kidnapping and Murder of Three Israeli Teens	2014		
The Gaza-Israel Conflict and Operation Protective Edge	2014		

