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<http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/index.php?pr=71&code=mwp&p1=3&p2=4&p3=6&case=131&k=5a>

United Nations

<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpa/qpal/>

PALESTINE FACTS

<http://www.palestinefacts.org/index.php>

UNRWA

<http://www.un.org/unrwa/>

Rediscovering Palestine

<http://www.rediscoveringpalestine.org.uk/Main%20Page.html>

Scottish Palestinian Forum

<http://www.scottishpalestinianforum.org.uk/SPF/Home.html>

The Other Israel

<http://otherisrael.home.igc.org/>

Getting Involved

Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign

<http://spsc.scottishpssc.org.uk/index.php>

Campaign Against Arms Trade

<http://www.caat.org.uk/>

Israeli Committee Against House Demolition

<http://www.icahd.org/eng/>

Palestine Solidarity Campaign

<http://www.palestinecampaign.org/index2b.asp>

STOP THE WALL Campaign

<http://www.stophthewall.org/>



Edinburgh Peace & Justice Resource Centre
MAKING THE LINKS, WAGING PEACE

About us

The Centre is committed to

- Non – violence
- Alternatives to war
- Human Rights
- Ecological responsibility

Responding to the expressed needs and ideas of individuals and organisations who aim to deepen understanding of and commitment to issues of justice and peace.

If you would like to volunteer, contribute to or receive our Newsletter, support us financially or use our services please get in touch. We are located at:

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*There may seem very little that you can do
but it is very important that you do it.*

Charity no. Sco26864

PALESTINE



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As the Ottoman Empire disintegrated in the aftermath of the First World War, Palestine came under the British Mandate. But unlike other Mandate Arab territories, Palestine was not granted independence, whereas Britain was committed to the establishment in Palestine of a national home for Jewish People (The Balfour Declaration, 1917). Under the British Mandate, Palestine became the destination for large scale Jewish immigration, mainly from Eastern Europe, as a result of Nazi persecution of Jews.

With rising violence in Palestine from both sides (Jews and Palestinians/Arabs), Britain turned the problem of Palestine over to the United Nations whose General Assembly adopted resolution 181 on 29 November 1947. Resolution 181 called for the establishment of two states, one Jewish and one Arab. Whilst Jews provisionally welcomed the decision, Palestinians and Arab governments predominantly rejected Resolution 181, and on May 15th, 1948, the State of Israel came into being.

Resolution 181 was never implemented. On the one hand, Israel acquired more land than the resolution envisaged, and in doing so, severed the geographical continuity of the proposed Palestinian state. On the other hand, the Palestinian West Bank and East Jerusalem came under the control of Jordan, whilst the Gaza Strip came under Egyptian control. For the people of Israel, 1948 is the year of independence and of realising statehood. For the Palestinians, 1948 remains in Palestinian collective memory as the year of *Nakba* (Arabic for catastrophe), the start of more than six decades of occupation, suffering, and the forced exile of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees.

In 1967 Israel expanded its territorial control over the rest of Palestine and beyond, causing a second Palestinian exodus (half a million) to neighbouring countries. Israel occupied East Jerusalem, the West Bank, the Syrian Golan Heights, the Gaza Strip, and the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula. With the exception of Sinai Peninsula, Israel's occupation and/or control of the areas it occupied in 1967 continues to-date; and so does the building and expansion of Jewish settlements in contravention of international law and UN Security Council Resolution 242 of November 1967, which called upon Israel to withdraw from the territories it occupied.

Hopes for a peaceful resolution to the conflict, however, were partially realised in 1993 when Israel and the PLO signed the Oslo Accords in Washington on 13 September 1993. Also known as the “Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements”, the Oslo Accords provided for a transitional period of Palestinian self-rule pending a final status agreement. And although the agreement had its opponents on both sides of the conflict, it ushered in the Palestinian Authority and kept alive the hope of an independent Palestine in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Progress towards a final settlement, however, has been frustrated on the one hand by Israeli procrastination, continued Israeli occupation and/or control over Palestinian territories, and expansion of settlements. On the other hand, intra-Palestinian strife between the major movements within the PLO, and between *Fateh* -the dominant movement within the PLO- and the Islamist *Hamas* movement (not affiliated to the PLO) has proved almost as damaging to the prospects of peace and Palestinian independence.

The conflict between *Fatah* and *Hamas* intensified after the latter won the parliamentary (Palestinian Legislative Council) elections in 2006. And although a *Hamas*-led unity government was formed, this was short-lived and a break-up of the Palestinian Authority between a *Fatah*/PLO-led West Bank and a *Hamas*-led Gaza Strip followed. And in December 2008, Israel launched a major military offensive against a besieged and poverty-stricken Gaza Strip, claiming the offensive was in response to continued rocket attacks on southern Israel from the *Hamas*-controlled zone. The offensive lasted three weeks into January 2009, leaving hundreds dead and injured and massive destruction behind.

Not only do the peoples of Palestine and Israel deserve to live in peace, many if not most desire a peaceful end to the conflict which entered its seventh decade in 2008. Peace, however, requires the realisation of Palestinian self-determination and addressing the final status issues left unsettled by the Oslo Accords, and in particular the borders of a Palestinian state, the status of Jerusalem and the right of return of Palestinian refugees. As such, the Israeli 'Wall' being built in and around the West Bank not only breaches international law as was declared in 2004 by the International Court of Justice, but is also symbolically damaging to the prospects of cooperation towards peace.

The issue of Palestine continues to highlight that without justice there will be no lasting peace. Continued campaigning is one way in which the voices calling for a peaceful and just conclusion to the conflict can be helped to inform the political will, and render the guns silent in the Holy Land.