

VMUN 24'

ECOSOC



**Economical & Social Repercussions of the
Israel Palestine Conflict**

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Message From the Executive Board:

Dear Delegates,

We are honoured to welcome you to the Economic and Social Council, Vmun 2024.

Over these couple of days, our committee shall delve into one of the most important issues that the world is facing which will have a great impact on future generations. The Agenda will be :”[Economic and Social Repercussion of the Israel-Palestine conflict.](#)”

Delegates, this agenda encompasses many aspects. In the scope of the committee, we ask you to address the problems that we are facing currently due to the Israel-Palestine war that is occurring and what are the economical restraints that countries face due to the conflict , how does it impact countries and what causes instability. Together the committee should reach a comprehensive resolution which should contain measures to reform the impacted economy, solutions to build up the economy , new initiatives and discussion about casualties.

The committee carries out its mandate through three core pillars: research and analysis, technical assistance and capacity building, and normative work. In terms of research and analysis, the knowledge about Global trends and related issues. This information helps member states in formulating effective policies and strategies. Because the scale of the problems is often too great for states to confront alone, ECOSOC offers practical assistance and encourages transnational approaches to action. We do this in all regions of the world through our global programs and network of field organisations.

We wish for committee-wide participation, fruitful and productive debate, and require your discussions to serve as a reflection to the progress made during the committee session

The background guide for this topic will merely give a brief overview on the topic and shall serve as a starting point for your individual research. We expect each delegate to have a good grasp of his or her country's position. For any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

U.Premkumar - Chairperson
Jeynikil Nadaar - Vice
Chairperson Zaiera Akhtar -
Vice Chairperson

For any issues such as misspelled names, wishing to be reallocated, etc, feel free to contact us privately, or at:

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Introduction to ECOSOC and its Mandate:

The Economic and Social Council is a one of the six principal organs of the United Nations that overlooks the work of the UN and specialised agencies with its primary focus on Economic, Social, Cultural and Health matters and additionally human rights and fundamental freedoms.

ECOSOC was established by the UN Charter (1945) and was designed to be the United Nations main venue for the discussion of economic and social issues. Formulating Resolutions, conducting studies and suggesting Economic policies are the main duties of the committee.

ECOSOC is responsible for several issues, such as, economic and social development, encouraging employment, and promoting higher standards of living.

The committee has several ongoing projects, of which, the focus of ECOSOC 2024 is to strengthen the 2030 agenda of achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets.

In follow up to the World Summit, the General Assembly adopted [resolution 61/16](#) on the “Strengthening of the Economic and Social Council”. In its resolution, the General Assembly decided that the AMR should

- be held as part of its high-level segment.
 - be conducted by means of a cross-sectoral approach focusing on thematic issues common to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields, including the MDGs and other IADGs

- review progress made in the implementation of the outcomes of those conferences and summits and their follow-up processes and;
 - assess its impact on the achievement of the goals and targets of the conferences and summits.

In this regard, the General Assembly:

- recommended that such reviews provide an opportunity for countries to make voluntary national presentations;
- requested the Council to urge the functional commissions and other relevant subsidiary bodies and follow-up mechanisms, as appropriate, to contribute, in accordance with their mandates and taking into account their specificity, to the assessment;
 - recommended that the Council establish a multi-year programme of work for the ministerial-level substantive reviews;
- invited the organisations of the UNs system, including the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization, to contribute within their respective mandates to the consideration by the Council.

It also requested ECOSOC to urge the UN regional commissions, in collaboration with other regional and subregional organisations and processes, as appropriate,

- to contribute, within their mandates, to the review of progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major UN Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields and
 - to provide input to the discussions of the Council in accordance with its rules of procedure.

Introduction to the agenda:

“Economic and Social Repercussions of the Israel Palestine Conflict”

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict dates back to the end of the nineteenth century.

In 1947, the United Nations adopted **Resolution 181**, known as the **Partition Plan**, which sought to divide the British Mandate of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states.

On May 14, 1948, the State of Israel was created, sparking the first Arab-Israeli War. The war ended in 1949 with Israel’s victory, but 750,000 Palestinians were displaced, and the territory was divided into 3 parts:

- The State of Israel,
- The West Bank (of the Jordan River),
- and The Gaza Strip.

Over the following years, tensions rose in the region, particularly between Israel and Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. Following the 1956 **Suez Crisis** and Israel’s invasion of the Sinai Peninsula, Egypt,

Jordan, and Syria signed mutual defence pacts in anticipation of a possible mobilisation of Israeli troops.

In June 1967, following a series of manoeuvres by Egyptian President Abdel Gamal Nasser, Israel preemptively attacked Egyptian and Syrian air forces, starting the **Six-Day War** (refer to page number 8).

After the war, Israel gained territorial control over the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip from Egypt; the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan; and the Golan Heights from Syria.

Six years later, in what is referred to as the **Yom Kippur War** or the **October War**, Egypt and Syria launched a surprise two-front attack on Israel to regain their lost territory; the conflict did not result in significant gains for Egypt, Israel, or Syria, but Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat declared the war a

victory for Egypt as it allowed Egypt and Syria to negotiate over previously ceded territory. Finally, in 1979, following a series of cease-fires and peace negotiations, representatives from Egypt and Israel signed the Camp David Accords, a peace treaty that ended the thirty-year conflict between Egypt and Israel.

In 2000, sparked in part by Palestinian grievances over Israel's control over the West Bank, a stagnating peace process, and former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's visit to the al-Aqsa mosque—the third holiest site in Islam—in September 2000, Palestinians launched the second

intifada, which would last until 2005. In response, the Israeli government approved the construction of a **barrier wall** around the West Bank in 2002, **despite opposition** from the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court.

Factionalism among the Palestinians flared up when Hamas won the Palestinian Authority's parliamentary elections in 2006, deposing longtime majority party Fatah. This gave Hamas, a political and militant movement inspired by the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood, control of the **Gaza Strip**.

Gaza is a small piece of land on the Mediterranean Sea that borders Egypt to the south and has been under the rule of the semi-autonomous Palestinian Authority since 1993.

Fatah entered into a unity government with Hamas in 2014.

In the summer of 2014, clashes in the Palestinian territories precipitated a military confrontation between the Israeli military and Hamas in which Hamas fired nearly three thousand rockets at Israel, and Israel retaliated with a major offensive in Gaza. The skirmish ended in late August 2014 with a cease-fire deal brokered by Egypt, but only after **73 Israelis** and

2,251 Palestinians were killed. After a wave of violence between Israelis and Palestinians in 2015, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah announced that Palestinians would no longer be bound by the territorial divisions created by the Oslo Accords.

In March of 2018, **Israeli troops killed 183 Palestinians** and **wounded 6,000** others after some Palestinians stormed the perimeter fence between the Gaza Strip and Israel and threw rocks during an otherwise *peaceful demonstration*.

Just months later, Hamas militants fired over one hundred rockets into Israel, and Israel responded with strikes on more than fifty targets in Gaza during a twenty-four-hour flare-up. The tense political atmosphere resulted in a return to disunity between Fatah and Hamas, with

Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah party controlling the Palestinian Authority from the West Bank and Hamas de facto ruling the Gaza Strip.

The Donald J. Trump administration reversed longstanding U.S. policy by **cancelling funding** for the UN Relief and Works Agency, **which provides aid to Palestinian refugees**, and relocating the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The Trump administration also helped broker the Abraham

Accords, under which Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates normalized relations with Israel, becoming only the third and fourth countries in the region—following Egypt in 1979 and Jordan

in 1994—to do so. Similar deals followed with Morocco and Sudan. Palestinian leader Mahmoud

Abbas of Fatah rejected the accords, as did Hamas.

In early May 2021, after a court ruled in favour of the eviction of several Palestinian families from East Jerusalem properties, **protests erupted**, with Israeli police employing force against demonstrators. After several consecutive days of violence, Hamas, the militant group which governs Gaza, and other Palestinian militant groups launched hundreds of rockets into Israeli territory. Israel responded with artillery bombardments and airstrikes, killing Palestinians and hitting both military and non-military infrastructure, including residential buildings, media headquarters,

and refugee and healthcare facilities. The threat of displacement affected numerous families in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood, although exact numbers can be difficult to ascertain due to the fluid and often chaotic nature of such events.

The most far-right and religious government in Israel's history, led by Benjamin '**Bibi**' Netanyahu and his Likud party and comprising two ultra-Orthodox parties and three far-right parties, was inaugurated in late December 2022. The coalition government prioritized the expansion and development of Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank, endorsed discrimination against LGBTQ+ people on religious grounds, and voted to limit judicial oversight of the government in May 2023 after a delay due to nationwide protests in March.

7 October, 2023.

Following the outbreak of war between Israel and Hamas on October 7, 2023, President Joe Biden made a strong statement of support for Israel. On the same day that Israel declared war against Hamas, the United States announced that it would send renewed shipments of arms and move its Mediterranean Sea warships closer to Israel.

While the UN Security Council called an emergency meeting to discuss the renewed violence, the members **failed** to come to a consensus statement. Given the history of brutality when Israel and Palestinian extremist groups have fought in the past, international groups quickly expressed concern for the safety of civilians in Israel and the Palestinian territories as well as those being held hostage by militants. In the first month of fighting, approximately **1,300 Israelis and 10,000 Palestinians were killed**. Increasing loss of life is of primary concern in the conflict.

While the United States said there was “no direct evidence” that Iranian intelligence and security forces directly helped Hamas plan its October 7 attack, Iran has a well-established patronage relationship with Hamas and other extremist groups across the Middle East. Israel has exchanged artillery fire with **Iran-backed Hezbollah** almost daily and struck Syrian military targets and airports, prompting concern that the war could expand north. To the south, **Yemen’s Houthi** rebels have launched multiple rounds of missiles at Israel as well.

Meanwhile, the Islamic Resistance of Iraq, a coalition of Iranian-backed militias, has claimed responsibility for dozens of attacks on U.S. military targets in Iraq and Syria since the war began.

The 1956 Suez War :

The second Arab-Israeli war, also known as the Suez War, broke out on **October 29, 1956** when Israel, Great Britain and France launched a joint attack against Egypt aimed at instituting a 'regime change' and deposing Gamal Abdel Nasser, the country's charismatic leader.

But this significant war failed to achieve its goals and marked the decline of Britain's colonial powers in the Middle East.

It also brought home the realities of Cold War politics.

Tensions first arose when Nasser struck an arms deal with Czechoslovakia – a move that worried Great Britain and the US who viewed it as a shift towards closer ties with the Soviet Union.

The World Bank, prodded by the US, retaliated by withdrawing a loan to Egypt for the building of the Aswan Dam. In the ongoing tit-for-tat, Nasser surprised the world by nationalising the Suez Canal, a vital waterway, and replacing the private Anglo-French company which ran it.

The Six-Day War :

What was the Six-Day War?

Six-Day War, brief [war](#) that took place June 5–10, 1967, and was the third of the [Arab-Israeli wars](#). [Israel](#)'s decisive victory included the [capture](#) of the [Sinai Peninsula](#), [Gaza Strip](#), [West Bank](#), [Old City of Jerusalem](#), and [Golan Heights](#); the status of these territories subsequently became a major point of [contention](#) in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Why did the Six-Day take place?

Prior to the start of the war, tensions were rising between Israel and its neighbouring Arab countries. Palestinian guerrilla groups in Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan were attacking Israel, and Israel was responding with military strikes. For example, in November 1966, Israel attacked a village in Jordan, killing 18 people.

In April 1967, there was an air battle between Israel and Syria, where Israel shot down several Syrian fighter jets. Around the same time, there were reports that Israel was planning a military campaign against Syria, which made the situation even more tense.

Egypt's President, Gamal Abdel Nasser, was criticised for not supporting Syria and Jordan against Israel earlier. To show support, he took several steps: he mobilised Egyptian troops in the Sinai Peninsula, asked the UN peacekeeping force (UNEF) to leave the area near Israel, and closed the Gulf of Aqaba to Israeli ships. This last move blocked Israel's access to the port of Elat in southern Israel.

King Hussein of Jordan also joined forces with Egypt by signing a defence pact, and Iraq joined this alliance soon after.

These actions by Egypt and its allies, along with the escalating conflict, set the stage for the Six-Day War that began in June 1967.

Main Events of the War

After Egypt and other Arab countries mobilized their forces near Israel in May 1967, Israel decided to strike first. Early on June 5, Israel launched a surprise attack on Egyptian and Syrian air forces. They destroyed most of Egypt's planes while they were still on the ground and also hit Syrian air bases hard.

With their air forces severely weakened, Egypt's army became an easy target for Israel's ground troops. Within three days, Israel had taken control of the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula up to the Suez Canal, which separates Egypt and Israel.

At the same time, Jordan started shelling West Jerusalem, even though Israel had warned Jordan's King Hussein to stay out of the conflict. Israel responded swiftly, pushing Jordanian forces back. By June 7, Israel had taken East Jerusalem and most of the West Bank from Jordanian control. The images of Israeli soldiers entering the Old City of Jerusalem became famous around the world.

During this time, the UN Security Council called for a cease-fire on June 7. Israel and Jordan agreed immediately, and Egypt agreed the next day. However, Syria continued shelling villages in northern Israel until June 9 when Israel launched an attack and captured the Golan Heights from Syria. Finally, Syria also accepted the cease-fire on June 10.

This swift and decisive conflict became known as the Six-Day War and had lasting implications for Israel and the broader Middle East.

The Damascus Gate :

Damascus Gate (Bab al-Amud in Arabic) is one of the main gates of the Old City of Jerusalem. It is located in the northern wall of the Old City and serves as a significant entry point for both residents and visitors. Damascus Gate holds significance in the

Israeli-Palestinian conflict primarily due to its location in East Jerusalem, which has been a focal point of disputes over sovereignty and control.

Here are a few key points regarding its significance:

Access to Holy Sites: Damascus Gate provides access to several important religious sites for both Muslims and Jews within the Old City, including the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Western Wall. Control over access to these sites has been a source of tension and conflict between Israeli authorities and Palestinian residents.

Political and Symbolic Significance: The gate has often been a site of protests and clashes between Palestinian residents, Israeli security forces, and Jewish settlers. Issues such as settlements, house demolitions, and evictions in East Jerusalem have frequently escalated tensions around Damascus Gate and its vicinity.

Media Attention: Events at or near Damascus Gate frequently attract international media coverage, especially during periods of heightened violence or political unrest in Jerusalem. Incidents involving security measures, protests, or clashes can quickly escalate into wider unrest in the region.

In summary, Damascus Gate is significant in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict due to its location, symbolism, and the political and religious dynamics surrounding it. Control and access issues in East Jerusalem, where the gate is situated, continue to be contentious and are closely watched by the international community.

Zionism:

Zionism is a political and nationalist movement that emerged in the late 19th century among Jewish communities advocating for the establishment of a Jewish homeland or state in the territory defined as the historical Land of Israel. The movement is named after Mount Zion in Jerusalem, which holds symbolic significance in Jewish history and tradition.

Historical Background: Zionism emerged in response to widespread anti-Semitism and the desire among Jewish communities for a safe haven and national identity in their ancestral homeland.

Theodor Herzl and Early Leaders: The movement gained momentum under the leadership of figures like Theodor Herzl, who organised the First Zionist Congress in 1897, aiming to establish a political framework for achieving Jewish statehood.

Goals and Objectives: Zionists sought to establish a Jewish state where Jews could live freely and independently, revive Hebrew as a national language, and foster Jewish cultural and religious life.

Aliyah and Settlement: Central to Zionism was the concept of Aliyah, or Jewish immigration to the Land of Israel. Zionist organisations facilitated the migration of Jews from various countries to settle in Palestine (later Israel), often purchasing land and establishing communities.

Modern State of Israel: The culmination of the Zionist movement was the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, following the United Nations Partition Plan for Palestine, which allocated separate Jewish and Arab states.

Zionism has evolved over time, encompassing various ideological streams and perspectives, from secular to religious, socialist to revisionist. It remains a central ideology influencing Israeli politics, society, and identity, as well as a subject of debate and controversy in the context of Israeli-Palestinian relations and Middle Eastern geopolitics.

Rafah Border :

What is the Rafah crossing?

It's the southernmost post of exit from Gaza and borders Egypt's Sinai peninsula. There are only two other border crossings from and into the Gaza Strip - Erez, a crossing into Israel in northern Gaza, which is for people, and Kerem Shalom, a solely commercial goods junction with Israel in southern Gaza. **Both are shut.**

Why is it important now?

Gunmen from the Palestinian militant group Hamas, which governs Gaza, attacked the Erez crossing on 7 October during an unprecedented assault on southern Israel which killed more than 1,300 people. Days later, Israel declared Erez and Kerem Shalom closed until further notice, leaving the Rafah border as the only way into and out of the Strip for people. **Rafah is now also the only crossing point for humanitarian aid.**

What is going on at the crossing?

Hamas and Egypt exercise control over who can pass through, but operations have been disrupted since Israel began conducting waves of air strikes on Gaza in retaliation for Hamas's assault. Egyptian media said the crossing was shut down following three Israeli strikes on 9 and 10 October, which it said left injuries on the Egyptian and Palestinian sides of the border.

On 12 October, the Egyptian government asked Israel to halt strikes near the Rafah border crossing so it could serve as a "support lifeline" for people in Gaza, and made it clear that it would not open the passage until there were guarantees for the safety of its staff. Three weeks later, people are gathering at the border following reports that Qatar has mediated an agreement to allow some people out of Gaza. Reuters news agency says the Gulf state has been holding talks between Egypt, Israel and Hamas, in coordination with the US. It is this

deal that is allowing some critically injured people and foreign passport holders out of the Gaza Strip.

Qatar is home to the political leadership of Hamas - which has had an office in the capital, Doha, since 2012.

Why have the crossings been shut?

Israel and Egypt have restricted the movement of goods and people in and out of Gaza since Hamas took control of the territory in 2007. The two countries say their blockade is needed for security reasons. As part of its response to Hamas's deadly attack, Israel's defence minister ordered a "complete siege" of Gaza on 9 October, adding: "**There will be no electricity, no food, no fuel, everything is closed.**" Meanwhile Egypt fears a massive influx of Palestinian refugees fleeing the war. Egypt's president warned on 12 October that an exodus from Gaza risked "liquidating" the Palestinian cause and called on Palestinians to "remain steadfast on their land". It is also concerned about the possibility of Islamist militants coming into the country, having faced a jihadist insurgency in Sinai for almost a decade.

How is the Rafah crossing normally used?

It is not easy for Palestinians to leave Gaza via Rafah. Palestinians wishing to use the crossing must register with the local Palestinian authorities two to four weeks in advance and may be rejected by either the Palestinian or Egyptian authorities with little warning or explanation.

The Balfour Declaration :

The Balfour Declaration was a public statement issued by the **British government** during World War I on November 2, 1917. It expressed support for the establishment of a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine, then an Ottoman region with a minority Jewish population. The declaration was named after Arthur Balfour, the British Foreign Secretary at the time.

Support for a Jewish Homeland:

It declared the British government's favourable view towards the creation of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine. This was seen as a significant step towards the **Zionist** movement's goal of establishing a Jewish state.

Political Considerations:

The declaration was partly motivated by **British strategic interests** in the Middle East during World War I. It aimed to garner Jewish support internationally, especially in the United States and Russia, and to influence Jewish opinion in Germany and Austria-Hungary.

Impact and Controversy:

The Balfour Declaration had profound consequences for the region's future. It sparked hope among Jews worldwide for a homeland but also fueled tensions with the Arab population in Palestine, who opposed the idea of a Jewish state in what they considered their homeland.

Legal and Diplomatic Legacy:

The declaration laid the groundwork for subsequent British mandates in Palestine and influenced later international agreements regarding the region, such as the League of Nations Mandate for Palestine (1922) and the United Nations Partition Plan for Palestine (1947).

Overall, the Balfour Declaration remains a pivotal document in the history of Zionism, British Middle East policy, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The Defence Forces:

Palestine - Hamas :

Hamas, Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiya (“Islamic Resistance Movement”) is an Islamic movement, controlling the Gaza strip for almost 20 years. It was founded by Sheikh Ahmed Yassin. The military movement aggressively denies the existence of Israel and had published a charter in 1988 with the calling for the destruction of Israel, and the killing of Jews being one of its few objectives, of which the latter was removed in a newly presented charter in 2017.

Israel - IDF :

Israel Defense Forces (IDF), armed forces of [Israel](#), comprising the Israeli [army](#), [navy](#), and [air force](#). The order to create the IDF was issued on May 26, 1948, and went into effect on May 31, 1948, just two weeks after Israel’s declaration of independence. Since its creation, its guiding principles have been shaped by the country’s need to defend itself from its numerically superior neighbours. In relation to the current conflict, the IDF’s combat objectives are to eliminate the political and military leadership of the Hamas and neutralise the military capabilities of other terrorist organisations operating on the Gaza strip, while also aiming to erase any public expression of the Hamas ideology by declaring war on it.

Questions to be asked:

1. What are the projected financial losses resulting from the continued conflict for both Palestine and Israel?
2. What impact has the conflict had on both regions' employment rates and job creation?
3. How could affected countries employ economic reforms and policies to recover from the economic effects of the war.
4. Should Israel pay war reparations to Palestine?
5. What part do donor nations and international financial institutions play in promoting regional economic development and stability?

Closing Remarks:

As we approach the culmination of our preparation for the upcoming VMUN 2024 conference, it is with great anticipation and enthusiasm that we conclude this background guide. We hope that it has served as a valuable resource, shedding light on the intricacies of the complex issues that we will tackle during our simulated diplomatic discussions. Remember that this guide is just the beginning of your MUN journey. It has provided you with a foundation upon which you can build your understanding, explore diverse perspectives, and develop innovative solutions. As you embark on this transformative

experience, we encourage you to delve deeper into the topics, to critically analyse the implications, and to engage in thoughtful debates that will shape your resolutions.

I would like to conclude by saying “ Students who do model UN would one day change the world”.

Wishing you all success and a truly transformative VMUN experience.

U.Premkumar - Chairperson
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