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UNSC

The issue of Israel and Palestine conflict

INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE:

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations, established to maintain international peace and security. It plays a crucial role in addressing conflicts, preventing crises, and ensuring global stability. The UNSC is composed of 15 member states, of which 5 are permanent members— China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States—each wielding veto power. The other 10 members are elected by the General Assembly for two-year terms.

The UNSC functions primarily through deliberation, decision-making, and the implementation of resolutions. Its powers include the authorization of peacekeeping missions, imposition of sanctions, establishment of international tribunals, and the use of force if necessary to maintain or restore peace.

As the only UN body with the authority to issue binding resolutions, the UNSC remains a key player in addressing various global challenges, including armed conflicts, humanitarian crises, nuclear proliferation, and terrorism. The council's decisions and actions significantly impact international relations and security across the globe.

Historical Context: Overview of the historical roots of the conflict, including events like the Balfour Declaration, the creation of Israel in 1948, and subsequent wars - The historical roots of the Israel-Palestine conflict are intricate and multifaceted, involving various events and factors that have shaped the region's history. Here's an overview:

Balfour Declaration (1917): - The Balfour Declaration was a public statement issued by the British government during World War I. It expressed support for the establishment of a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine, then part of the Ottoman Empire.

It was seen as a pivotal moment in the aspirations of the Zionist movement, which sought to establish a Jewish homeland in the region.

Mandate Period and Creation of Israel (1948):- After World War I, the League of Nations granted Britain a mandate over Palestine. During this time, Jewish immigration to Palestine increased significantly. Following the Holocaust and amid increasing tensions between Jewish and Arab populations, the United Nations proposed a partition plan in 1947 to create separate Jewish and Arab states in Palestine.In 1948, Israel declared its independence, leading to a war between the newly established state of Israel and Arab countries (Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon), resulting in the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians. This event is known as the "Nakba," or catastrophe, for Palestinians.

Subsequent Wars and Conflicts:-

- Suez Crisis (1956):Conflict involving Israel, Egypt, the UK, and France over control of the Suez Canal and the Sinai Peninsula.

- Six-Day War (1967): Israel's preemptive strike against Egypt, Jordan, and Syria resulted in Israel gaining control over the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Sinai Peninsula, and Golan Heights.

- Yom Kippur War (1973:Egypt and Syria launched a surprise attack on Israel to regain territories lost in the Six-Day War.

Impact on Palestinian Population:

> - The creation of Israel and subsequent conflicts led to the displacement of a significant number of Palestinians, resulting in the creation of Palestinian refugee communities.

> - Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip lived under Israeli military occupation following the Six-Day War, leading to ongoing tensions, settlements, and restrictions on Palestinian autonomy.

Ongoing Conflict and Peace Efforts:

> - Peace initiatives, such as the Oslo Accords (1993), aimed to establish a framework for Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and achieve a two-state solution but faced numerous challenges and setbacks.

> - Issues such as borders, settlements, the status of Jerusalem, security, and the right of return for Palestinian refugees remain contentious points in peace negotiations.

The historical roots of the Israel-Palestine conflict are deeply embedded in territorial disputes, competing nationalisms, and religious significance for both Jews and Palestinians. Understanding this history is crucial in comprehending the complexities of the ongoing conflict and its impact on the region.

- Causes and consequences of the conflict: land disputes, religious significance, nationalism, and displacement of Palestinians.

Key Players:
- Israel: Statehood, government structure, military, settlements, and security concerns.
- Palestine: Palestinian Authority, Hamas, Gaza Strip, West Bank, and challenges in governance.

CURRENT SITUATION

Territorial Disputes:

- Status of Jerusalem:

  - Significance for Israelis: Jerusalem holds religious and historical importance, particularly the Western Wall and the Old City, as the capital of Israel.

  - Significance for Palestinians: Palestinians seek East Jerusalem as the capital of a future Palestinian state. The city's status remains one of the most contentious issues in peace negotiations.

- Settlements:

  - Israeli Settlements in the West Bank: The construction and expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank are considered illegal under international law and have been a major obstacle to the peace process.

  - Settlements hinder the contiguity and viability of a future Palestinian state, leading to increased tensions and conflicts over land.

- Borders and Territories:

  - Gaza Strip: Controlled by Hamas, Gaza faces severe economic hardship due to an Israeli blockade, limiting access to essential goods and services. Frequent conflicts and limited movement exacerbate humanitarian concerns.

  - West Bank: Under Israeli military occupation, the West Bank faces settlement expansion, checkpoints, and restrictions on movement, impacting Palestinian autonomy and daily life.

- Humanitarian Concerns:

  - Palestinian Refugees: Displacement since 1948 has led to a large refugee population seeking the right of return to their ancestral homes, a central issue in peace negotiations.

  - Addressing the refugee issue involves considering compensation, resettlement, or return within the framework of a peace agreement.

- Human Rights Violations:

- Allegations and Reports: Both sides face accusations of human rights violations, including civilian casualties, arbitrary detention, and restrictions on freedom of movement.

- Independent investigations are necessary to address these allegations and ensure accountability for violations.

• Humanitarian Aid and Access:

- Challenges in Aid Delivery: Gaza and parts of the West Bank face difficulties in accessing humanitarian aid due to restrictions on movement, blockades, and political tensions.

- Ensuring unrestricted access to aid is crucial to alleviate humanitarian crises and improve living conditions for Palestinians.

The current situation in the Israel-Palestine conflict involves complex territorial disputes, humanitarian concerns, and ongoing violations of human rights. The status of Jerusalem, settlements, borders, refugees, and humanitarian access remain critical issues that require diplomatic efforts and international support for resolution and long-term peace in the region.

Security and Conflict Resolution:

Security Challenges:

- Security concerns for Israel: Threats from Hamas, Hezbollah, and other groups.
- Palestinian security: Challenges in ensuring security amidst conflict and occupation.

Peace Process and Negotiations:

- Past negotiations: Oslo Accords, Camp David Summit, and subsequent peace talks.
- Roadblocks to peace: Analysis of failed negotiations and challenges faced by both parties.

International Involvement and UN Resolutions:

The United Nations (UN) plays a significant role in addressing the Israel-Palestine conflict, primarily through the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), resolutions, and various agencies.

Role of the United Nations:

UNSC Resolutions:
The UNSC has issued several resolutions addressing the Israel-Palestine conflict. Among these, Resolution 242 (1967) emphasizes the "inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war" and calls for withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from occupied territories. Resolution 338 (1973) reaffirms Resolution 242 and calls for a ceasefire. Additionally, Resolution 2334 (2016) reaffirms the illegality of Israeli settlements in occupied territories and calls for their cessation.

UN Agencies and Initiatives:
UN agencies like the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) play crucial roles. UNRWA provides aid and services to Palestinian refugees, offering education, healthcare, and social services. UNICEF focuses on child welfare, education, and protection in conflict-affected areas, including Palestine.

International Perspectives:

Regional Dynamics:
Neighboring countries such as Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria have historical ties and vested interests in the Israel-Palestine conflict. Egypt and Jordan have signed peace treaties with Israel, while Lebanon and Syria have ongoing disputes, particularly concerning territories like the Golan Heights.

Global Stance:
United States: Traditionally, the U.S. has been a key ally of Israel and has supported its right to self-defense. However, administrations have differed in their approaches to the peace process, with some actively involved in negotiations.

European Union: The EU has supported a two-state solution, emphasizing the need for a negotiated settlement, respecting international law, and

advocating for a halt in settlement construction.

Other Major Powers: Various countries, including Russia, China, and influential regional powers like Saudi Arabia and Iran, have expressed varying degrees of support for Palestinian rights and endorsed peace initiatives, often aligning with broader geopolitical interests.

The perspectives of these nations and international entities influence diplomatic efforts, peace negotiations, and the overall approach to resolving the Israel-Palestine conflict. The diverse opinions and interests often present challenges in finding a unified international approach to address the longstanding conflict.

QUESTIONS A RESOLUTION MUST ANSWER:-

Resolutions addressing the Israel-Palestine conflict must navigate complex issues. Here are key questions a resolution aims to answer:

1. Territorial Boundaries and Statehood:
- What are the recognized borders between Israel and a future Palestinian state?
- How do we address the status of Jerusalem, including its religious and political significance for both parties?
- How can both states exist securely and viably alongside each other?

2. Settlements and Land Disputes:
- How do we address the legality and future of Israeli settlements in occupied territories?
- What measures can be taken to prevent further expansion and ensure the integrity of Palestinian territories?

3. Palestinian Refugees:
- What is the resolution for Palestinian refugees and their right of return to their ancestral homes?
- How can their resettlement, compensation, or return be facilitated within the framework of a peace agreement?

4. Security and Conflict Prevention:
- What security arrangements are necessary to ensure the safety of both Israelis and Palestinians?
- How can peace be maintained and potential threats from militant groups like Hamas and Hezbollah be mitigated?

5. Humanitarian Concerns:
- How can humanitarian aid and access be guaranteed to Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank?
- What measures are necessary to address human rights violations and ensure the protection of civilians on both sides?

6. International Recognition and Support:
- How can the international community support and guarantee the implementation of the resolution?
- What role will international organizations and neighboring countries play in facilitating and maintaining peace?

7. Long-Term Stability and Sustainable Peace:
- How can the resolution foster long-term stability, trust, and cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians?

- What mechanisms and monitoring systems are needed to ensure compliance and sustainability of the peace agreement?