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PRESIDENT ISABELLA MARÍN

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I. Welcoming Letter

Dear delegates,

For me it is a great honor to be with you in SOCHUM as a member of the Dais. It is a pleasure to welcome you to our esteemed committee for this year's conference. We are thrilled to have you join us for what promises to be a thought-provoking and enlightening experience.

Our committee, SOCHUM holds a unique place in this conference as it addresses some of the most pressing global issues that our world faces today. Throughout the conference, you will have the opportunity to engage in meaningful debates, collaborate with delegates from diverse backgrounds, and work towards innovative solutions that have the potential to shape the future of our planet. We hope this committee will challenge you, inspire you, and provide an invaluable opportunity to develop crucial skills in negotiation, public speaking, and problem-solving.

As we embark on this journey together, I encourage you to be proactive in your preparation, to engage in fruitful debate, and to uphold the principles of diplomacy and mutual respect that are the hallmark of the United Nations. Remember that, as delegates, you are not only representing your respective countries but also contributing to a greater global dialogue.

As your Dais, it is my job to guide you and help you with any concern or inquiry. Please feel free to contact me before the conference so that I can help you develop your best work for the committee. Do not hesitate to let me know of any questions that you may develop while researching the topic and I will do my best to help you resolve them.

Once again, welcome to SOCHUM! This guideline will serve as a tool for you to understand the topic. I am confident that your passion, knowledge, and dedication will make this committee a resounding success. Together, let us strive to make a positive impact on the world.

Sincerely,

Isabella Marín Hernández, President

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II. Introduction to the Committee

2.1 History

The Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee (SOCHUM) is the third committee of the United Nations General Assembly¹. The General Assembly allocates to the Third

¹ The United Nations General Assembly is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations, serving as its chief deliberative, policymaking, and representative organ.

Committee, agenda items relating to a range of social, humanitarian affairs, and human rights issues that affect people worldwide. SOCHUM was founded in reaction to the establishment of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights². First convening in 1948, the committee has become one of the most important bodies in the United Nations, since almost all international or national conflicts have a “social” aspect, including the issues refugees face, overpopulation, prostitution, social welfare, and discrimination issues.

A significant part of the committee focuses on the examination of human rights questions, including reports on the special procedures of the Human Rights Council³, which was established in 2006. SOCHUM has passed numerous resolutions on its mission and discusses many other topics such as the advancement of women's rights, the protection of children, the international drug trade, and the treatment of refugees.

In 2000, the GA⁴ wrote a resolution on gender equality and women's rights based on reports from the Third Committee. Both resolutions were adopted and have created global standards for nations, influencing laws, policies, and practices in Member States worldwide. In actuality, SOCHUM continues to work on resolutions to social and humanitarian issues of great impact. For instance, at the seventy-sixth session of the General Assembly, the Third Committee considered 51 draft resolutions, around half of which were submitted under the human rights agenda item alone.⁵

² The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is an international document adopted by the United Nations General Assembly that enshrines the rights and freedoms of all human beings.

³ The United Nations Human Rights Council is a United Nations body whose mission is to promote and protect human rights around the world.

⁴ United Nations General Assembly.

⁵ United Nations. (n.d.-a). United Nations, Third Committee, social, humanitarian, cultural, main body, main organs, General Assembly. United Nations. <https://www.un.org/en/ga/third/index.shtml>

2.2 Organization and Functions

The membership of SOCHUM includes all 193 member states. In addition, non-member states⁶ and other entities recognized by the UN as permanent observers may attend and participate in meetings, but they cannot vote. The Committee will hear and interact with special rapporteurs, independent experts, and chairs of treaty bodies and working groups as mandated by the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly.

The Third Committee ensures that the information they receive is up-to-date to create solutions that will accurately address current issues. Its primary role is to encompass social issues at the individual level, particularly through the protection of marginalized or threatened groups, including indigenous people, women and children, and members of the press.

SOCHUM has almost all the powers of the General Assembly. SOCHUM has no power to force nations to keep promises or actions but can set agreed-upon international standards and recommend actions. One must remember that the UN is not a higher authority or government, but instead more similar to an exclusive conference to find solutions to common problems, bettering the international community.

The committee promotes and enforces basic freedoms and ideals meant to be enjoyed by the entire international community; such as the right to life, the expression of cultures, the freedom of political participation, the protection of children's rights, and the promotion of social development, among many others. The commission derives its legitimacy from the original United Nations Charter⁷ and operates intending to design peaceful settlements for issues within the large spectrum of social, humanitarian, and cultural complications in the international community. This body does so by initiating studies that encourage recommendations for the promotion of international cooperation and fundamental freedoms for all.

⁶ Member states of the United Nations: <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/member-states>

⁷ The Charter of the United Nations is the foundational treaty of the United Nations, an intergovernmental organization.

Actions of the Third Committee begin in early October and are usually finished by the end of November. Unlike most other bodies of the General Assembly, the work of the Third Committee does not begin with a general debate between its members. Instead, its agenda items are debated individually from the beginning of the session. The committee is expected to consider a similar number of draft resolutions during the present session of the General Assembly.

SOCHUM focuses on human rights, humanitarian affairs, and social issues. In addition, it also considers issues relating to:

- The advancement of women
- The protection of children
- The protection of Indigenous populations, and related issues
- The treatment of refugees, and related issues such as racism and discrimination
- The promotion of fundamental freedoms
- The right to self-determination
- Youth, family, and aging
- The rights of people with disabilities
- Crime prevention and criminal justice
- The international drug trade, and related

2.3 Main Goals of the Committee

SOCHUM is to provide a forum for impartial dialogue and negotiation between countries with different experiences and backgrounds, having all United Nations Member States represented within the committee. The goal is to address the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms all over the world, especially those in the social and cultural framework.

SOCHUM works hand in hand with the other five GA commissions⁸ on issues presented all around the globe. It is expected for the committee to have a successful resolution for the

⁸ Disarmament and International Security, Economic and Financial, Special Political and Decolonization, Administrative and Budgetary, Legal.

problems being discussed, and it encourages the participation of all its members in the search for agreements through diplomacy.

The Third Committee looks to improve human rights around the world, improve global literacy, and advocate for: women's rights, children's rights, and the treatment of refugees and displaced persons. It also addresses international drug control, crime prevention, and the elimination of racism and discrimination.

2.4 References

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III. Topic: Addressing the Humanitarian Crisis in the Gaza Strip: Promoting Sustainable Development, Human Rights, and Regional Stability

3.1 Introduction

The Gaza Conflict is a protracted and deeply entrenched conflict that remains a remarkable source of tension in the Middle East region. The nucleus of this dispute is the

Gaza Strip⁹, a narrowing area along the Mediterranean Sea. However, it is imperative to acknowledge that this prolonged situation is not an isolated occurrence. Instead, it represents the broader Israeli-Palestinian conflict¹⁰ and could be considered emblematic of this conflict. It involves generations and is marked by a complex interplay of historical, political, religious, and territorial issues.

In the Gaza Strip, there have been various reported violations of human rights that have affected the lives of its residents in profound ways. The people in the territory have often faced threats to their right to life due to conflicts, bombings, and security concerns. The severe restrictions on the movement of people and goods in and out of Gaza have made life extremely challenging for its residents. Restrictions on the freedom of expression and assembly have limited the ability of Palestinians to voice their concerns and advocate for change peacefully. Children situated in the middle of the problem have experienced disruptions to their education due to the ongoing conflict, causing long-term implications for their future. Many struggle to access healthcare, education, and economic opportunities outside the strip, which hinders their ability to lead fulfilling lives. Infrastructure in the land has been heavily damaged over the years, affecting access to clean water, electricity, and healthcare. Frequent hostilities have led to the destruction of homes, leaving many without adequate shelter.

The Gaza Strip has been subjected to a series of various complexities that have contributed to the ongoing situation. The complexities of the conflict are divided into historical, political, and religious complexities.

Historical complexities of the Gaza Strip are firmly entrenched with the Ottoman Empire¹¹. Throughout this period, the region witnessed a convergence of ethnic and

⁹ A polity and the smaller of the two Palestinian territories. On the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, Gaza is bordered by Egypt on the southwest and Israel on the east and north.

¹⁰ The Israeli–Palestinian conflict is an ongoing military and political conflict in the Levant. It is one of the world's longest-continuing conflicts. Various attempts have been made to resolve the conflict as part of the Israeli–Palestinian peace process, alongside other efforts to resolve the broader Arab–Israeli conflict.

¹¹ Empire that controlled much of Southeast Europe, West Asia, and North Africa between the 14th and early 20th centuries.

nationalist tensions. As well as diverse communities, such as Jewish immigrants and Arab Palestinians, cohabitated. Nevertheless, following the conclusion of World War I, the establishment of the British Mandate for Palestine aggravated these “tensions”. After the war, the League of Nations granted Britain the mandate to govern Palestine. The mandate system was established by the League of Nations¹² to oversee the administration of former Ottoman territories and to facilitate their transition to independence. The following flood of Jewish immigrants into the region exacerbated the preexisting strains, thereby setting the stage for the conflicts that would promptly transpire. The mandate period was marked by several Arab uprisings and protests against British policies and the increasing Jewish presence.

The Great Arab Revolt of 1936-1939 was a significant and violent protest against British rule and Jewish immigration. In 1936, widespread Palestinian dissatisfaction with Britain's governance erupted into open rebellion.¹³ The primary source of tension was related to conflicting promises and agreements made by the British to various parties involved in the region. Arabs were promised greater autonomy and independence in the Arab territories in exchange for their support against the Ottoman Empire. The understanding was that after the war, the Arab territories would be allowed to form their independent states.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is marked by a multitude of *historical complexities* that have evolved over the 20th and 21st centuries. The United Nations proposed a partition plan in 1947 to divide Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states, with Jerusalem under international administration. The plan was accepted by Jewish leaders but rejected by Arab leaders, leading to the 1947-1949 Arab-Israeli War, which resulted in the establishment of the State of Israel. The 1948 war led to a significant Palestinian refugee crisis, as hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were displaced from their homes, a historical event known as

¹² The League of Nations was the first worldwide intergovernmental organization whose principal mission was to maintain world peace.

¹³ Interactive encyclopedia of the palestine question – palquest | great Arab revolt, 1936-1939. (n.d.). Interactive Encyclopedia of the Palestine Question.

<https://www.palquest.org/en/highlight/158/great-arab-revolt-1936-1939>

the Nakba¹⁴. The 1967 Six-Day War¹⁵ resulted in Israel's occupation of the West Bank¹⁶, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. Israel's control over these territories has been a major point of conflict for decades, with Palestinians seeking self-determination and independence in these areas.

These *historical complexities*, along with the deeply emotional and religious aspects of the conflict, have made it extremely challenging to reach a lasting resolution. Despite numerous attempts and peace processes, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains one of the most protracted and unresolved conflicts in the world.

The **political complexities** of the Gaza Strip serve as a symbol of the wider Israeli-Palestinian conflict since it has always been facing constant changes. Throughout the years, this region has witnessed shifts in governance. Following the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, the Egyptian authority was the first one to be in charge. Later on, in 1967, after the Six-Day War, it transitioned to Israeli occupation. Nonetheless, the Israeli Disengagement Plan (2005) provoked the removal of settlers and troops, yet Israel maintained control over crucial aspects of Gaza, such as its coastline, airspace, and borders. This complex political landscape was further magnified by the Hamas¹⁷ takeover in 2007, leading to a fragmented governance structure between Gaza and the West Bank under the Palestinian Authority.

The Israeli disengagement plan began in August 2005 and by September, around 9,000 Jews living in 25 settlements were evicted, and the Israeli troops completely withdrew from the Gaza Strip to the Green Line; a 1949 Armistice Line drawing boundaries between Israel and its Arab neighbors. These settlements had stood for decades until 2005 and their removal involved bulldozing, and forceful eviction by Israeli troops. Although the settlers

¹⁴ Arabic for Catastrophe

¹⁵ A conflict in which Israel attacked Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. The conflict ended with Israel occupying substantial amounts of Arab territory.

¹⁶ The West Bank is the larger of the two Palestinian territories. A landlocked territory near the coast of the Mediterranean Sea in the Levant region of Western Asia.

¹⁷ Islamic Resistance Movement is a political and military organization governing the Gaza Strip of the Israeli-occupied Palestinian territories. Headquartered in Gaza City, it also has a presence in the West Bank, in which its secular rival Fatah exercises control. Hamas is widely considered to be the "dominant political force" within the Palestinian territories.

received compensation from the Israeli government for rehabilitation, the process was protracted and tedious. Israel still has control over the airspace and maritime boundaries of the Gaza Strip and supplies electricity, and water to the region.

The **religious complexities** present in the Gaza Strip are inextricably linked to the region's perspectives on Abrahamic faiths¹⁸ and how important it is for both of them. It holds a profound religious value for adherents of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, with numerous historical and religious sites dispersed throughout the area related to their beliefs in Abraham. This importance has frequently resulted in tensions and disagreements concerning the accessibility and governance of these sacred sites. Thereby, this contributed to an additional layer of religious complexity to the overarching conflict, since there are still a lot of loopholes related to these “sacred” places.

Both Israelis and Palestinians have historical claims to the territory. Israel asserts its right to the territory based on historical and biblical connections to the land. The Jewish belief is that many of the now-occupied territories are the “promised land” according to the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament). This belief has historical and religious significance, as it is seen as a fulfillment of God’s promise to the Jewish people. The Temple Mount¹⁹ Jerusalem is one of the holiest sites in Judaism. Jews believe it is the location of the First and Second Temples and the Western Wall, which is the only remaining part of the Second Temple. Control over the Temple Mount has been a major source of tension, as it is also sacred to Muslims.

Muslims believe that the Prophet Muhammad made a night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem, known as the Isra and Mi'raj, and ascended to heaven from the area now occupied by these structures. This makes Jerusalem, particularly the Temple Mount, a site of great religious significance to Muslims. For many Palestinians, their national identity is intertwined with their Islamic faith. The struggle for self-determination and control over their homeland is deeply connected to their religious beliefs and historical ties to the land.

¹⁸ The Abrahamic religions are a group of religions, most notably Judaism, Christianity and Islam, centered on the worship of the God of Abraham.

¹⁹ Haram al-Sharif, is a hill in the Old City of Jerusalem that has been venerated as a holy site in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam for thousands of years.

The *religious significance* of the land has often contributed to the intractability of the conflict, with competing claims and desires for control over key religious sites and territories. This has made the Israeli-Palestinian conflict not just a political and national dispute but also a deeply religious one. Efforts to address the conflict have often had to consider these religious sensitivities and the importance of religious sites to all parties involved.

3.2 Historical Background

The origin of the Gaza conflict can be traced back to the turbulent late 19th and early 20th centuries. During this time, the territory, which was then a constituent part of the expansive Ottoman Empire, commenced experiencing the emergence of ethnic and nationalist tensions. It was during this time that discord started to take place as a result of successive waves of Jewish immigrants who began to settle in the area. Thereby, igniting confrontations with Arab Palestinians. Therefore, the critical juncture occurred in 1947 when the United Nations (UN) sanctioned a partition proposal for Palestine which entailed the creation of distinct Jewish and Arab states, keeping Jerusalem under international administration (UN General Assembly, 1947. Resolution 181). Nevertheless, instead of guaranteeing a period of tranquility, it had the opposite outcome. The resolution provoked the eruption of the initial Arab-Israeli conflict, spanning from 1948 to 1949. The consequence of this confrontation was the establishment of the State of Israel, signifying a momentous milestone in the history of the Gaza Strip.

As a consequence of the war, the ‘strip’ came under the control of Egypt, causing the displacement of a considerable amount of Palestinian people. This migration had unfortunate effects, including the establishment of a substantial Palestinian refugee population in the Gaza Strip. Consequently, the stage for numerous decades of turmoil and conflict was set. On the other hand, 1967 marked a crucial turning point in the dispute for this territory. During the Six-Day War, Israel seized control of it, along with other strategically important areas. This event could be considered as the beginning of an extended period of Israeli military occupation, until the Gaza Disengagement Plan (2005). Although this plan involved the withdrawal of Israeli settlers and troops from the Gaza Strip, as was mentioned before, it also entailed the retention of significant control over

Gaza's strategic zones, such as borders, airspace, and coastline (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2005).

As a result of the Israeli Disengagement, the political situation in Gaza became progressively complex. The Palestinian Authority, initially led by Fatah, took charge of the region. Nevertheless, escalating tensions between Fatah and the Islamist organization, Hamas, caused a critical juncture. Violent confrontations and, ultimately, a Hamas seizure of power in Gaza (2007), were only a few of the multiple consequences provoked by this dispute. Since then, Gaza has been under the de facto governance of Hamas, while the West Bank, another area in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that can be considered as 'crucial' because of its geographical location in the Palestinian territories and the Palestinian claim of it being part of their sovereign nation, continues to be administered by the Palestinian Authority. (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2020).

The Palestinian National Liberation Movement, also known as Fatah, is a prominent political party in Palestine and a member of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), founded back in the late 1950s. It has played a significant role in Palestinian politics for several decades and is often associated with the leadership of Yasser Arafat, chairman of the PLO and the president of the Palestinian Authority. It can be stated that the party pursued a non-religious and nationalist agenda, rooting for their institution (Palestinian state) in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem.

Fatah has agreed to establish negotiations with Israel at multiple points throughout the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Among these 'negotiations', the Oslo Accords (the 1990s) can be highlighted. However, the conflict remains unresolved, and political divisions between Fatah and other Palestinian factions, particularly Hamas, have contributed to this. Fatah has been very involved in the governance of the West Bank, where the Palestinian Authority exercises limited self-rule. Nevertheless, its control has been challenged by Hamas in Gaza. Taking into account each of them has its own agenda and support base, the complex interplay of various political parties in the Palestinian territory can be considered one of the main reasons for the long-going disputes.

On the other hand, Hamas, officially known as "**Harakat al-Muqawamah al-Islamiyah**" (Islamic Resistance Movement), is a Palestinian political and militant group. It was founded

during the First Intifada (1987), a Palestinian rebellion against Israeli occupation. Thenceforth, the party has become an important participant in Palestinian politics and the Israeli-Palestinian dispute. It is well-known for its faithfulness to Islamist ideology and its rotund opposition to the existence of the State of Israel. The organization's charter, adopted in 1988, advocates for the creation of an Islamic state having hold of historic Palestine and present-day Israel (BBC News, “Hamas: Palestinian movement,” 2023). It categorically rejects any negotiations or recognition of Israel.

Additionally, the ‘Islamic Resistance Movement’ has also been responsible for numerous acts of violence, including suicide bombings, rocket attacks, and targeting both Israeli civilians and military personnel. Apart from its military wing, the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades²⁰It also maintains a political extension that is actively involved in Palestinian elections and governance. As an example, Hamas secured a majority of seats in the Palestinian Legislative Council elections in 2006, gaining control over the Gaza Strip. Therefore, at a certain point, a political and territorial division emerged. Hamas was governing Gaza, and the Palestinian Authority, led by Fatah, was governing the West Bank.

Finally, certain entities have designated this group as a terrorist organization. Despite that, Hamas managed to gain the support of some of the Palestinian population who saw the movement as a resistance maneuver against Israeli occupation and policies which they were against. It is important to bear in mind that the presence and actions of Hamas continue to be a complex and contentious issue within the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

3.3 Current Situation

²⁰ The Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades is the military wing of the Palestinian organization Hamas, operating in the Gaza Strip



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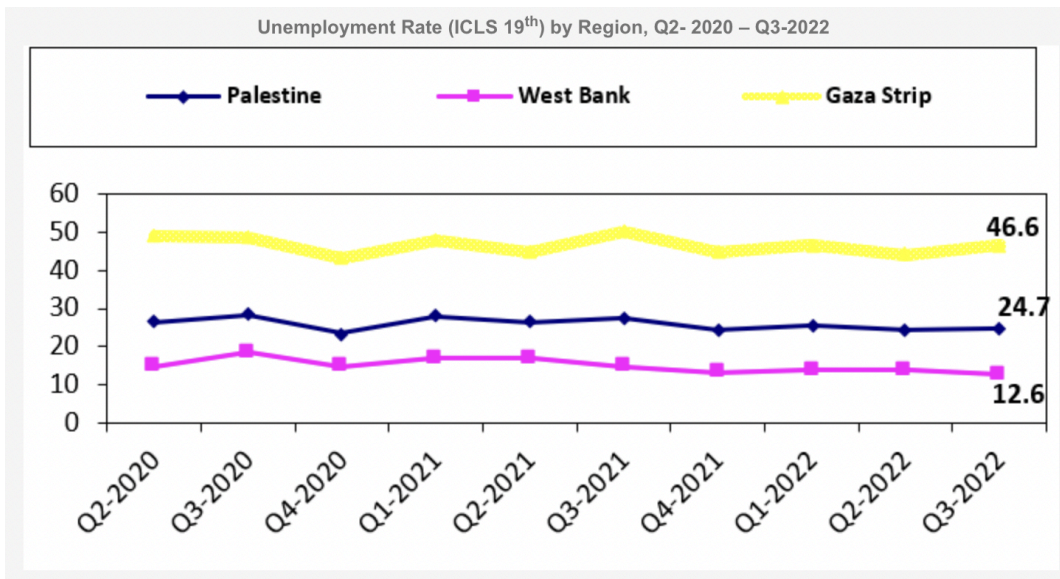
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As of the year 2023, the region known as the 'Gaza Strip' remains embroiled in conflict, characterized by intricate dynamics and profound tensions. In light of this context, the situation in Gaza serves as a poignant symbol of the wider conflict, encapsulating the enduring challenges faced by its population. The current state of affairs reflects the ongoing hardships and suffering endured by the people of Gaza, with a profound humanitarian crisis that has persisted for an excessive duration.

The humanitarian crisis in Gaza has reached a critical turning point, resulting in severe consequences for its inhabitants.

a. Unemployment and Economic Hardship: These have become pervasive issues in Gaza, with unemployment rates skyrocketing to an alarming percentage. This economic instability can largely be attributed to the prolonged blockade imposed by Israel and Egypt, which severely restricts the movement of goods and people. Consequently, poverty has become widespread, making it increasingly challenging for Gazans to meet their basic needs.

According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) quarterly labor force report, In the third quarter of 2022, unemployment in Gaza stood at 46.6%, a 2.5 percentage point increase compared to the previous quarter (when unemployment was 44.1%). The unemployment rate in the West Bank in the third quarter was 12.6%.



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) (July – September, 2022). Press Release on the Results of the Labour Force Survey “About a fourth of the participants in the labor force in Palestine are unemployed in the Third quarter of 2022”

b. Healthcare System Under Duress: The healthcare system in Gaza is facing immense strain as a direct consequence of the blockade. Medical facilities are overwhelmed, and there is a severe shortage of critical medical supplies and equipment. As a result, patients often struggle to access proper medical care, leading to a significant decline in the quality of healthcare services available. According to the Office of the High Commissioner,

Gaza is suffering from a long-term health crisis. The Israeli blockade, three devastating wars, a harmful split in Palestinian unity, and poorly paid health workers have meant that the availability of medical services and hospital beds are seriously inadequate to service the many health needs of the two million Gazans. (UN Experts Say Gaza Health Care at “Breaking Point”, 2018)

A meager electrical power supply, a badly-depleted water aquifer, the inability to treat sewage, and the world’s highest unemployment rates have only intensified the social-health crisis. “We endorse the call of the UN Secretary-General for Israel to end its unlawful blockade and to be an active partner to enabling Gaza to rebuild its economy and resuscitate its health care sector,” said the human rights experts.

The short-term responses to Gaza’s current health crisis must go hand-in-hand with decisive steps to change Gaza’s future for the better. In addition to its obligations under International Humanitarian Law as the occupying power, Israel should respect and ensure the respect of the human rights of the people in Gaza, including their right to health. The Palestinian authorities also bear human rights obligations towards the population of Gaza. (UN General Assembly - Subsidiary Organs of the General Assembly - Commissions, n.d.)

c. Child Malnutrition: One distressing outcome of this crisis is the high prevalence of malnutrition among children under the age of five, affecting 7.3% of this vulnerable

population according to the National Institutes of Health²¹. Chronic malnutrition not only hampers their growth but also has long-term health implications for these children.

d. Access to Clean Water and Electricity: Furthermore, Gazans are grappling with inadequate access to clean water and electricity. Frequent power outages disrupt daily life, including essential services such as hospitals and schools. The scarcity of clean water poses significant health risks, and many households lack consistent access to safe drinking water. The Gaza Strip now grapples with catastrophic water, sanitation, and hygiene needs essential to the survival of its 2.3 million inhabitants, of whom half are children. Safe and sustained access to water in Gaza remains extremely limited.

Currently, the Gaza territory has been subjected to numerous attacks that started in October 2023. These attacks have endangered even more the humanitarian situation in the territory. The constant bombings that the strip has been subjected to have left numerous casualties over the last months of the past year. The infrastructure has been dangerously destroyed, and the ongoing blockade has complicated access to aid resources for civilians.

The UN's humanitarian chief Griffiths stated that Gaza has become a place of "death and despair" for Palestinians as Israel attacked al-Amal Hospital in south Gaza in tensions that occurred in 2023. After 2 months of the current conflict, last year ended with what are known as the "Christmas Eve attacks" on the territory.

Gaza and its population were victims of a bombardment sent by Israel on December 24th, 2023. Reportedly during this event, more than 100 people were deceased during the overnight air-raids. The devices fell on homes and buildings, reported Hani Mahmoud from Rafah in southern Gaza, destroying neighborhoods and infrastructure, such as roads leading in and out of the refugee camps. (Moor, 2023). The nearest hospital to the camp is Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital but health facilities have been rendered non-functional across Gaza as Israel continues to attack the territory for a third month by the end of last year. Statistics about the deceased have revealed that more than 20,400 Palestinians have passed due to the

²¹ (Analysis of the Nutritional Status in the Palestinian Territory: A Review Study, 2023)

conflict since October 7 and more than 80 percent of the 2.3 million people who live there have been displaced.

For two weeks at the beginning of the war, no humanitarian assistance – including food – was allowed into Gaza at all. The flow of aid has gradually increased as the war has gone on, according to figures shared by UNRWA: there were 20 trucks a day in the last 10 days of October, 85 a day in November, and 104 a day in December. But that is still way down on the pre-conflict level of 500 trucks a day.

Humanitarian aid is meanwhile far harder to distribute because of the damage caused by Israel’s bombardment – 142 UNRWA workers have been killed, while 128 of the organization’s buildings have been damaged. WFP says that about one in four households is already at risk of starvation, and the entire population is facing food shortages that could lead to malnutrition.

At the beginning of 2024, figures from the government media office in Gaza cited by the OCHA²² estimate that about 65,000 residential units have been destroyed or rendered uninhabitable. Another 290,000 have been damaged. This leaves about half a million people with no home to inhabit. Analysis of satellite data cited by the Associated Press suggests that about two-thirds of all structures in the north of Gaza have been destroyed, and about a quarter in the southern Khan Younis area.

3.4 Focus 1: Reconstruction efforts in the Gaza Strip, including the rebuilding of infrastructure, housing, and healthcare facilities.

Reconstruction efforts in the Gaza Strip have been ongoing for years due to the series of conflicts and humanitarian crises in the region. These efforts primarily focus on rebuilding infrastructure, housing, and healthcare facilities to address the extensive damage caused by conflicts and improve the living conditions of the people in Gaza.

²² UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

Rebuilding infrastructure is a critical component of the reconstruction process. This includes repairing or constructing roads, bridges, water and sewage systems, and electrical grids. These infrastructure improvements are essential for the functioning of the region and the delivery of basic services. Apart from that, the conflict in Gaza has destroyed many homes. Restoration efforts aim to provide safe and adequate housing for those who have been displaced or left homeless. Various organizations and governments, such as the GMR²³, The World Bank Group²⁴, the UN, the EU²⁵, and NATO²⁶ have been involved in constructing new homes and rehabilitating damaged ones.

Healthcare facilities in Gaza have also suffered significant damage. Rebuilding and upgrading hospitals and clinics are vital to ensure that the population has access to proper medical care. This includes providing medical equipment, training healthcare personnel, and improving the overall medical infrastructure. Years of socioeconomic decline, conflict, and closure have left the health sector across the Gaza Strip lacking adequate physical structure and training opportunities. Facilities are overstretched, service is frequently interrupted by power cuts. These challenges further threaten the health of the population, which is already at increasing risk. International organizations play a crucial role in providing humanitarian aid to Gaza. This aid includes food, clean water, medical supplies, and other essential resources to support the population during and after conflicts.

In August 2014, UN representatives, the Palestinian Authority, and the Coordinator of COGAT²⁷ Major General Yoav Mordechai formulated a mechanism to rehabilitate the Gaza Strip, called the **Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism** (GRM). Its main objective is to rebuild and improve the civilian infrastructure of the Gaza Strip and allow the entry of construction materials under supervision. Thus, with cautious optimism, one of the most ambitious projects was launched in the Gaza Strip to improve the economic situation and assist the civilian population as much as possible. The program has three main channels: 1) the

²³ The Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism

²⁴ International financial institution that provides governments loans and grants for the purpose of pursuing capital projects.

²⁵ The European Union

²⁶ The North Atlantic Treaty Organization

²⁷ Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories

renovation of housing units damaged during Operation Protective Edge, 2) the renovation of housing units that were destroyed, and 3) the establishment of large-scale public projects in a wide range of subjects for the welfare of the population. More than 7 million tons of various kinds of building supplies have entered Gaza since the mechanism was formed in October 2014. According to the mapping done by the UN, out of a total of 130,000 damaged housing units, 102,331 had been renovated as of January 2017. More than 11,500 new homes are being built, and hundreds of them are now ready for occupants.

As the reconstruction work progressed, international bodies recognized attempts of exploitation by the Hamas terror organization, where they attempted to steal cement trucks designated for the reconstruction mechanism. International bodies informed Israeli security officials of these activities and as a result COGAT immediately instructed halts on cement entrance to the private sector, which Hamas tried to take over.

UNRWA²⁸ has provided healthcare services to the vast majority of the over 1.2 million Palestine refugees in Gaza. Across the Gaza Strip, psychological trauma, poverty, and environmental degradation have harmed residents' physical and mental health; many, including children, suffer from anxiety, distress, and depression. To assist those most affected, UNRWA established special education needs (SEN) clinics in several of their health centers and placed psychosocial counselors in several schools; this was designed to support children dealing with a range of problems, including fear of violence, sleeplessness, a lack of motivation in school or the inability to concentrate. The centers are well-equipped with resources to attend to physical conditions, provide care to pregnant women, and give radiology services and laboratory services in all of their 22 centers across the Gaza territory.

After Israel's "11-day assault" on the Gaza Strip in 2021, 1,800 residential units were destroyed and left unfit for housing. The other 14,300 housing units were partially destroyed, forcing tens of thousands of Palestinians to take shelter in the United

²⁸ United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees in the near east

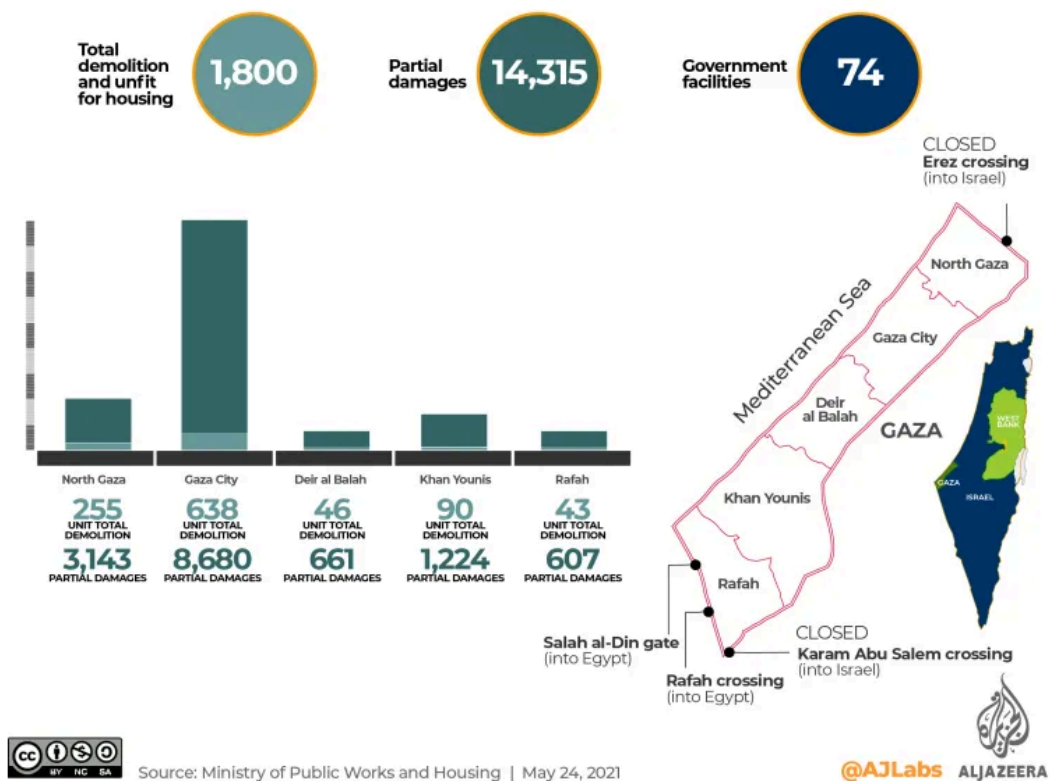


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Nations-run²⁹ schools. 74 public buildings, including local municipalities, were also destroyed. After the attacks, Palestinian officials said it would cost around \$150m to rebuild the damage to industry, power, and agriculture in the already impoverished enclave.



Source: Najjar, F. (2021, May 25). "A matter of time": Gaza plans to rebuild despite challenges. Israel-Palestine conflict News | Al Jazeera.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/5/25/in-ravaged-gaza-reconstruction-impeded-by-drawing-challenges>

²⁹ The U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) runs 288 schools in the Palestinian territory, among 700 across parts of the Middle East region that it funds alongside 140 medical clinics.

Before this latest outbreak of violence, about 80% of Gaza’s population was dependent on humanitarian aid and food subsidies provided by humanitarian organizations. Since October 7th, 2023, the Gaza Strip has been cut off from water and electricity networks, while all crossings for import of fuel and goods have been closed, leaving Gaza’s population without the most basic survival needs. Without fuel, Gaza’s health facilities cannot deliver lifesaving healthcare, tend to the relentless flow of patients with trauma injuries, or provide necessities to people who seek safety from bombardment. Fuel is running out also for ambulances, which are currently the only link to people who are trapped and injured in affected, hard-to-reach areas. Fuel is also needed for water desalination plants, as well as for garbage disposal, both essential to be able to maintain basic good hygiene and prevent the spread of diseases.

The human toll of the conflict in Gaza is incalculable. But the costs of rebuilding what has been destroyed through the Israeli bombardment of Gaza are not. Early estimates in 2023 suggest they may be as high as \$50 billion (€46.4 billion). (Schaer, n.d.) In the past year, Israeli media reported that “country's leader Benjamin Netanyahu had told his Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee that the Saudis and the UAE would be willing to pay the bill for Gaza's reconstruction. This is even though Israel has not yet laid out a plan for who will govern Gaza if it succeeds in its goal of destroying Hamas.” (Magid, 2023)

It has also been suggested in the layout of the conflict that various European countries would contribute economically to the current reconstruction situation in Gaza. Among these, the European Union and Germany in particular have been major long-term monetary and humanitarian aid donors for the occupied Palestinian territories.

Multiple international government officials have spoken up toward the acceleration of the ‘Gaza reconstruction process’, including President of Turkey, Tayyip Erdogan who announced that “Turkey will make mammoth efforts to rebuild hospitals, schools, and other destroyed infrastructure as soon as a ceasefire is implemented.”; as well as the United States

President, Joe Biden who raised the issue that “the international community needed to ‘establish a reconstruction mechanism to sustainably meet Gaza’s long-term needs.’” (Razzaq & Bajec, 2023)

Gaza’s problem has caused extensive damage to hundreds of schools and hospitals and has left the territory’s sole electricity plant and much of its solar power infrastructure defunct. It has destroyed 50 government buildings, and three water pumping stations, and taken six water desalination plants out of service. The Arab League’s statement about the reconstruction process provided statistics that estimated that, to date, we are looking at the destruction of, or going out of use of, 35 hospitals. Returning them to work will cost between \$1.7 and \$2 billion. We are looking at the ongoing destruction of schools [...] affecting 550 schools – rebuilding them and returning them to work will cost around \$2.1 billion. (Razzaq & Bajec, 2023)

About half of all buildings across northern Gaza have been damaged or destroyed, according to an analysis of Copernicus Sentinel-1 satellite data by Corey Scher of the CUNY Graduate Center and Jamon Van Den Hoek of Oregon State University. The conflict has knocked 27 of 35 hospitals across Gaza out of operation, according to the World Health Organization.

3.5 Focus 2: Protection of civilians affected, including women, children and vulnerable populations.

The protection of civilians, including women, children, and vulnerable populations, in the Gaza Strip is of paramount importance during and after conflicts in the humanitarian crises. Given the complex and volatile situation in the region, there are several key considerations and actions to ensure the safety and well-being of these groups. This requires a coordinated and sustained effort to mitigate the devastating impact of conflict on civilian populations.

All parties involved in the conflict, including military forces and armed groups, must adhere to the principles of international humanitarian law, which include the protection of civilians, non-combatants, and civilian objects. The deliberate targeting of civilians, indiscriminate attacks, and the use of human shields is prohibited under IHL³⁰.

For the protection of civilians, including women, children, and vulnerable populations, it is important to ensure unimpeded access for humanitarian organizations to deliver aid, including food, clean water, medical supplies, and shelter, to affected populations. Humanitarian corridors and safe zones may be established to facilitate this access as well, as it is imperative to safeguard hospitals, clinics, and medical personnel. These facilities must be protected from attacks, and medical personnel must be able to perform their duties without fear of harm.

Children are at utmost risk as they are the most vulnerable in the conflict. Measures to prevent their recruitment into armed groups, providing access to education and psychosocial support, and addressing the specific needs of child survivors of violence are essential for ensuring their safety.

In August 2022, three days of hostilities took place in the Gaza Strip, leaving thousands of children traumatized in and around Gaza and in need of life-saving support. Exacerbated by protracted trauma, these recurrent rounds of violence have serious impacts on children and women's lives and their mental health.

In 2022, UNICEF in the State of Palestine co-created with a wide range of stakeholders, including children and young people, the new Area Programme Document (APD) 2023-2025 for Palestinian children in Jordan, Lebanon, the State of Palestine, and Syria³¹.

³⁰ International Humanitarian Law (IHL) is a set of rules that seek to limit the effects of armed conflict. It lays out the responsibilities of states and non-state armed groups during an armed conflict.

³¹ Results for children summary narrative - UNICEF. (n.d.).

<https://www.unicef.org/sop/media/2421/file/Results%20for%20Children%20Summary%20Narrative%20.pdf>

The process was coordinated with the Regional Office and with the other Country Offices. In 2022, about 4,100 children in the West Bank and 3,200 in the Gaza Strip benefited from early detection of developmental delays and early intervention services.

Against the backdrop of multi-sectoral and household vulnerabilities contributing to child protection risks, there are considerable need for MHPSS³² interventions, including specialized case management and approaches, targeting adolescents and caregivers, particularly males. The Child Protection Area of Responsibility (CP AoR) estimates that some 678,000 children (345,800 boys, 332,200 girls) across the oPt need child protection and MHPSS services, 34 including 122,000 in need of focused non-specialized support or specialized services. 35 More than half (53 percent) of all children in Gaza are in need, and 12 percent of all children in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Additionally, 137,000 caregivers in Gaza, require various MHPSS services.³³

The ongoing conflict in the area has exacerbated pre-existing risks facing women and girls in the oPt. These risks include discrimination and GBV³⁴, including early/forced marriage, intimate partner/ family violence, sexual harassment, rape, incest, denial of resources, psychological abuse, and risk of sexual exploitation and abuse. Some ten percent of households report that women and girls avoid areas near settlements, checkpoints, community areas, and markets, and use public transportation because they feel Unsafe.

Women and girls with disabilities, Bedouin women, internally displaced women, and women and girls living in refugee camps are particularly at risk of violence. Being physically cut off from employment prospects and financially dependent on partners leaves them with few options for supporting themselves financially. Therefore they are more likely to marry, and not report intimate partner violence if it means losing their only source of economic support.

³² Mental health and psychosocial support

³³ CAAC Bulletin 2020 situation of concern: Israel and the State of Palestine. (n.d.-a).
https://www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/UNICEFCAACBUL2020_240921.pdf

³⁴ Gender Based Violence

On May 12, 2023, Israeli forces continued to launch strikes on multiple locations, including inhabited residential buildings, across the Gaza Strip, reportedly targeting armed groups and related infrastructure. Israeli airstrikes and shelling hit houses and apartment buildings. The hostilities also led to internal displacement. A total of 73 families, comprising 417 people, have been internally displaced, mostly due to the destruction of their homes. Out of the internally displaced persons (IDPs), 27 people stayed in a UNRWA school in Beit Lahiya.

As of May 12, 2023, armed hostilities between Israeli forces and Palestinian armed groups in the Gaza Strip continued for the fourth consecutive day, resulting in further casualties and damage. Referring to the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza, UNRWA decried the loss of life among civilians in the Gaza Strip and stated that “the escalation in hostilities exacerbates an already severe humanitarian situation for Palestine Refugees in the Gaza Strip, among them many women and children.”³⁵

³⁵ United Nations. (2023). Escalation of hostilities between Israeli forces and Palestinian armed groups in Gaza - OCHA flash update
<https://www.un.org/unispal/document/escalation-of-hostilities-between-israeli-forces-and-palestina-n-armed-groups-in-gaza-ocha-flash-update-3/>



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Palestinian Casualties



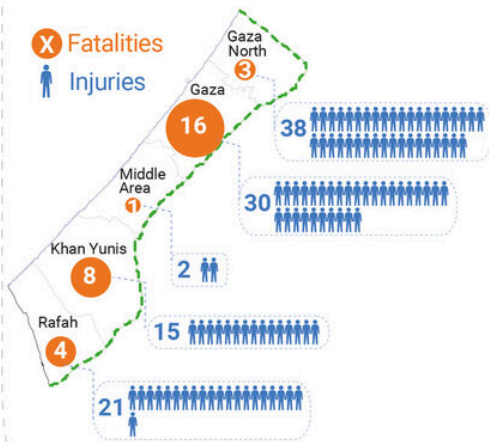
Source: OHCHR for fatalities and Ministry of Health for injuries

Casualties in Israel



Source: OHCHR for fatalities and Israeli sources for injuries

Palestinian Casualties by Governorate



Palestinians Internally Displaced and Damaged Housing Units



Source: Ministry of Social Development



Source: United Nations. (2023). *Escalation of hostilities between Israeli forces and Palestinian armed groups in Gaza - OCHA flash update* <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/escalation-of-hostilities-between-israeli-forces-and-palestinian-armed-groups-in-gaza-ocha-flash-update-3/>

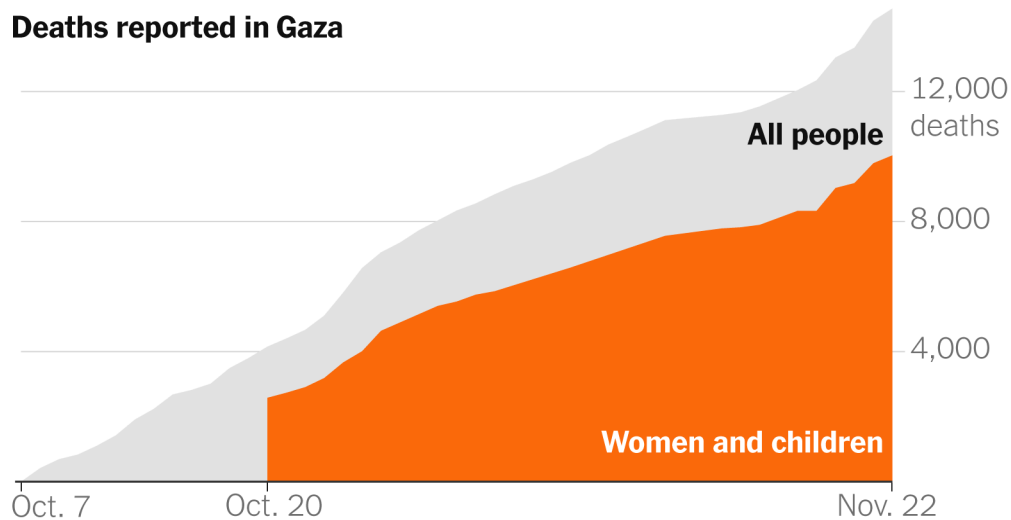
Displacement, hunger, lack of medical care and clean water, and the onset of winter are stretching the coping abilities of women and children to the absolute limit, CARE³⁶ warns. Although all 2.3 million Palestinians in Gaza are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance, the conflict is disproportionately affecting women and children.

³⁶ Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere



“More aid is urgently needed in Gaza to save lives and stem the torrent of human suffering,” UNFPA Executive Director Dr. Natalia Kanem said in recent remarks to the UN Security Council. “Unimpeded access to humanitarian workers and supplies, including sexual and reproductive health services, is a matter of life and death for women and girls.”

Deaths reported in Gaza



Leatherby, L. (2023, November 25). *Gaza Civilians, Under Israeli Barrage, Are Being Killed at Historic Pace.* The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/11/25/world/middleeast/israel-gaza-death-toll.html>

Since the escalation of the conflict, the CARE team in Gaza was able to distribute 6,500 hygiene kits, shelter items such as blankets and mattresses for 3,000 people, and 154,000 liters of water to vulnerable displaced people. Each kit covers the hygiene needs of a family of five for one month. CARE also supplied two mobile clinics with medicine, serving around 4,000 patients for one month. (*Gaza: After Two Months of War, Women Last to Eat and Children First to Die - Occupied Palestinian Territory, 2023*).

According to the World Food Programme³⁷ There is a high risk of famine and cases of dehydration and malnutrition are increasing rapidly. “Mothers eat once per day in favor of their children’s health. Lack of medical care, hygiene, and high levels of malnutrition while living in overcrowded shelters are a poisonous mix, and we fear the numbers of women and children dying of otherwise preventable and treatable diseases will rise.”.

CARE continues to call for all parties to uphold their obligations under international humanitarian law, which starts with the protection of civilian lives. Hostages illegally taken following the abhorrent attacks in Israel must be immediately released unharmed. All allegations of rape and gender-based violence must be promptly and thoroughly investigated. Humanitarian aid must flow through all border crossings in Gaza, starting with the largest one, Kerem Shalom.

3.6 Focus 3: Palestine’s recognition as an independent State and its implication on human rights in the area.

The recognition of Palestinian statehood has now become an important issue in the evolution of the conflict between the state of Israel and the Palestinian people. Many countries and international organizations have recognized the State of Palestine, either bilaterally or through international resolutions. In the 21st century the concept of “state” remains a critical component of international law and international relations.

Bearing in mind that self-determination is a collective right of the Palestinian people, as defined according to United Nations General Assembly Resolution 3210³⁸ and Resolution 3237³⁹, the subject of this right, Palestinian self-determination necessarily encompasses all

³⁷ WFP Palestine Emergency Response External Situation Report #10 (03 December 2023) - occupied Palestinian territory. (2023, December 3). ReliefWeb

<https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/wfp-palestine-emergency-response-external-situation-report-10-03-december-2023>

³⁸ Economic Cooperation Foundation: UN General Assembly Resolution 3210 - English Text. (n.d.). ECF. https://ecf.org.il/media_items/490

³⁹ 63rd Session of the UN General Assembly. (n.d.). 63rd Session of the UN General Assembly. https://www.un.org/en/ga/63/plenary/A_palestine.shtml

Palestinians who were living in Mandatory Palestine’s borders and their descendants, wherever they are.

In the Palestinian context, the application of the principle of *uti possidetis juris*⁴⁰ would support the transfer of the borders of Mandatory Palestine, as the latest recognized colonial administrative borders, to the newly independent state of Palestine, at the expiration of the British Mandate in 1948, which serves as the latest recognized legal title. It is also consistent with the ultimate purpose of the League of Nations’ mandate system: to eventually achieve the independence and self-determination of peoples under the trusteeship system.

Some events played a crucial role in determining the actual status of Palestine and its claims for statehood and recognition. The territory of Palestine from which both Israel and Palestine originated, was part of the Ottoman Empire. With the end of World War I, which implied its disintegration, its territory was placed under the League of Nations Mandate system, with Great Britain exerting the Mandatory power. Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, referring to the so-called “Class A Mandates”, such as Palestine, provided them with the provisional recognition that “their existence as independent nations can be provisionally recognized subject to the rendering of administrative advice and assistance by a Mandatory until they can stand alone”. The premises for a Palestinian state were created with UN Resolution 181⁴¹, which was the result of the UN partition plan of 1947 to secure both the state of Israel and the State of Palestine.

Furthermore, after 1967 the UN Security Council passed Resolution 242⁴² demanding that Israel withdraw from the territory occupied in 1967. The resolution highlights the respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence of all states.

⁴⁰ A principle of international law which provides that newly formed sovereign states should retain the internal borders that their preceding dependent area had before their independence.

⁴¹ (2023, October 30).

<https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/038/88/PDF/NR003888.pdf?OpenElement>

⁴² Resolution 242 (1967) The Security Council, Expressing its continuing concern with the grave-situation in the Middle East, Emph. (n.d.). UN Peacemaker.

<https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/SCRes242%281967%29.pdf>

Recognition of Palestine is often viewed as a step toward fulfilling the right to self-determination, a fundamental human right. As a recognized state, Palestine would have increased responsibility for protecting and promoting the human rights of its citizens. The recognition of Palestine can influence the dynamics of negotiations between Israel and Palestine, affecting the resolution of key issues such as borders, refugees, and the status of the territory of Jerusalem.

For the Palestinian population, statehood may enhance political participation for Palestinians, allowing them to engage in the governance of their state. This recognition may contribute to the establishment of the rule of law, protecting civil and political rights. Statehood could facilitate international support for economic and social development in Palestine, addressing issues like poverty, education, and healthcare that would also grant increased access to resources for improving living standards. The Humanitarian implications of the recognition of the Palestinian Independent State may impact the rights and status of Palestinian refugees, addressing issues related to their return and compensation.

The dynamics of security coordination with Israel could influence the protection of human rights in the context of the ongoing conflict. If Palestine, in UN terminology, is a state, it will strengthen the arguments of the Palestinians against Israel as an occupying power according to international law. There would no longer be any doubt as to the law governing the relations between Israel and Palestine. The Palestinian territory remaining under Israeli control would be occupied by the Fourth Geneva Convention. With the status of a state, Palestine would become a party to international conventions and international courts. This would give the Palestinians new tools to uphold their rights in line with all other recognized states.

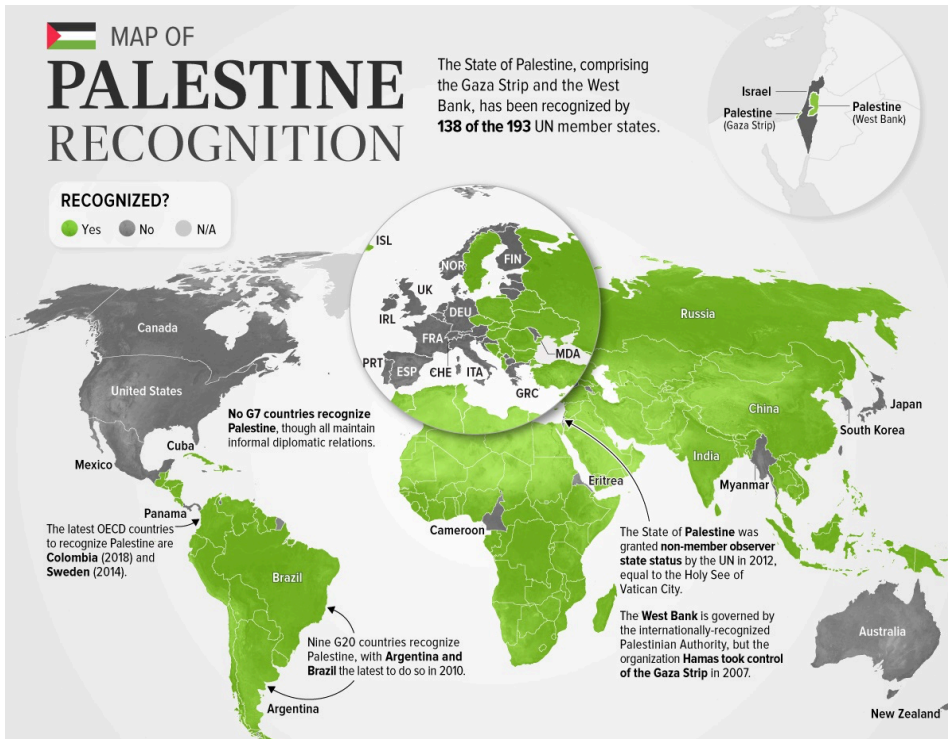
The territory's recognized statehood would open the way for it to become a party to international conventions and international courts. Becoming a state party to these could provide Palestine with new tools to enforce Israel's obligations to uphold Palestinian human rights. In addition to the rights afforded by international recognition of Palestinian statehood, this new status would obligate it to meet standards of international law, deepening the obligation of Palestinian governing authorities to uphold human rights, and

heightening its duty and responsibility to prevent acts operated outside of the law and threats that originate from within its territory.

The status of Palestine draws sustenance from recent developments in international law. It is also influenced by its rather unique history as a Class A mandate under the United Nations. The definition of a state in international law is still influenced by Article 1 of the Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States.

After Palestinian–Israeli negotiations broke down in September 2010, the Palestinians adopted a new diplomatic strategy. Asking individual states to recognize a Palestinian state based on the pre-1967 borders, officials started working towards the bid for statehood now handed into the UN. This led to bilateral recognition from 128 of the 193 UN member states. In addition to strengthening diplomatic relations, efforts have been made to support the Palestinian private sector and implement institutional reforms in preparation for statehood. (Holm, 2011)

The recent conflict between Hamas and Israel has brought the Gaza Strip, and the partially recognized State of Palestine, prominently into the focus of the global news cycle. On November 15, 1988, the State of Palestine was officially proclaimed by the PLO coalition. The state claimed sovereignty of the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem. As of November 2023, 138 of the 193 UN members (72%) recognize the State of Palestine. Many of the world’s Western countries, including the entire G7, do not recognize Palestine. Instead, many maintain informal diplomatic relations.



Venditti, B., & Lu, M. (2023, November 10). *Mapped: Recognition of Palestine by Country*. Visual Capitalist. <https://www.visualcapitalist.com/recognition-of-palestine-map/>

A massive post-conflict reconstruction plan is taking shape for the besieged Gaza Strip if only the combatants and local politics don't stand in the way. The plan is being advanced by Arab states, the United States, and the European Union. It aims to transform life for the Palestinians and move them closer to statehood, with new support from the Palestinian Authority.

Moves are accelerating after the PA⁴³ agreed to a proposal by the U.S., the EU, Arab Gulf states, Egypt, and Jordan for a “day-after” scenario. The plan seeks to rebuild the coastal strip, unite and overhaul Palestinian governance, and create a Palestinian security force in

⁴³ Palestinian National Authority.

Gaza to ensure Palestinian and Israeli security. This was to secure the territory in preparation for ownership of statehood.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict and regional geopolitical dynamics continue to present challenges to the full realization of human rights. The effective implementation of human rights in a recognized Palestinian state would depend on good governance, institutional development, and ongoing efforts to address historical challenges. While the recognition of Palestine as an independent state holds potential positive implications for human rights, its realization depends on various factors, including diplomatic negotiations, and regional stability.

3.7 Guiding Questions

1. *Does your delegation have a direct impact on the Gaza Strip?*

If it does,

- How has this impact been portrayed in the sides your country makes alliances with?

2. *Is your delegation directly affected by the Gaza Strip issues?*

If it is,

- How does this impact your country in humanitarian and socioeconomic aspects?
- How has this affected the alliances between your country and other countries?

3. *Is your delegation involved in humanitarian rights resolutions in the past?*

If so,

- What have been the proposed solutions, and what is your country's stand on human rights?

4. *Has your delegation been participating in humanitarian aid in the Gaza Strip?*

If so,

- What kind of humanitarian aid?
- What has been the impact of this humanitarian aid?
- Has your country made alliances with other delegations toward the help of the crisis in the Gaza Strip?
- Has your delegation contributed with economic resources directed to the rebuilding of homes in the Gaza Strip?
- Has your delegation worked with other organizations to provide this aid?

If not,

- Why has your country not contributed to the humanitarian aid in the area?
- Does your delegation have alliances with other nations that don't allow them to participate in the help for the people of Gaza?
- Is your country interested in helping with the humanitarian aid being provided to the Gaza Strip?

5. *What solutions can your delegation propose and pursue toward the topics in the focus?*

- Are these solutions viable?
- Is the obtaining of these results long-term or short-term?
- Will the solutions have a positive impact?

6. *What interventions from your delegation may contribute to the solution of these problems?*

- How will these interventions play out in the resolution of the issue?

7. *How would your delegation play a role in the recognition of Palestine as an independent state?*

- Does your delegation recognize Palestine as a State?
- Would the delegation support the decision to officially recognize Palestine as a state?
- Is the delegation aware of the implications to human rights and stability in the area if Palestine gets Statehood?

3.8 Recommendations

Recommendations regarding the topic:

1. Have a good understanding of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and how it has impacted Gaza.
2. Understand the humanitarian crisis in Gaza
3. Be clear about the delegations' position on the issue, i.e., whether they are directly involved in the conflict, their allies, and their help

toward the crisis. Know who they can collaborate with on working papers.

4. Research current events and historical background on the issue as this can help understand the delegation's position.
5. When formulating solutions, take into account the current resources in the area and the specific issues that need to be addressed
6. Based on the delegation's position, delegates will be able to seek solutions to aid the people in Gaza and prevail in ensuring their human rights.

Recommendations to the Committee:

1. If you bring an electronic device, be sure that it is fully charged to minimize inconveniences with the availability of charging spaces.
2. Arrive with research developed, and avoid doing all the research during the debate so that time can be used at its maximum during the formulation of interventions.
3. Follow the handbook guidelines.
4. Do not use cell phones without permission from the Dais.
5. Try not to interrupt or make points while other delegates are intervening unless necessary.
6. Only speak to other delegates directly if on paper, making appropriate use of the floor.
7. Cooperate with other delegates to maintain the flow of discussion.
8. Do not leave the room without permission.
9. Arrive on time at the beginning of the day and after each break.

3.9 Useful links

- United Nations. (n.d.). *United Nations, Third Committee, social, humanitarian, cultural, main body, main organs, General Assembly*. United Nations. <https://www.un.org/en/ga/third/index.shtml>
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3.10 Glossary

- Gaza Strip: A Palestinian exclave on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea. The smaller of the two Palestinian territories, it borders Egypt on the southwest for 11 km and Israel on the east and north along a 51 km border.
- Israeli-Palestinian conflict: The Israeli–Palestinian conflict is one of the world's most enduring conflicts, beginning in the mid-20th century. Various attempts have been made to resolve the conflict as part of the Israeli–Palestinian peace process, alongside other efforts to resolve the broader Arab–Israeli conflict.
- Fatah: The Palestinian National Liberation Movement
- Hamis: "Harakat al-Muqawamah al-Islamiyyah"
- UNRWA: The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine
- Child Protection area of responsibility: A community led by UNICEF with a wide, diverse, and active membership of national and international

organizations committed to supporting and providing the coordination of child protection response and prevention activities in humanitarian crises.

- West Bank: The West Bank is a landlocked territory near the coast of the Mediterranean Sea in the Levant region of Western Asia that forms the bulk of the Palestinian territories.

3. 11 References

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3. *Gaza Reconstruction Underway: More Than 100000 Housing Units Have Been Built in the Gaza Strip - occupied Palestinian territory*. (2017, February 21). ReliefWeb. Retrieved November 3, 2023, from <https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/gaza-reconstruction-under-way-more-100000-housing-units-have>
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IV. Expectations

In this committee delegates are expected to comply with the protocols presented and always maintain the greatest possible respect for the Dais, other delegates, staff, and any other visitors. They should maintain good behavior and keep in mind what is outlined in the handbook manual of parliamentary and behavioral procedure. This refers to the way they act during the model, their language, the following of the dress code, and so on.

In addition, all delegates must turn in the required documents on time, these being the position paper and the opening speech. If they do not meet the deadlines, their grade will be affected, and they will not be considered when choosing the academic award winners. Provided that they are submitted on time, delegates will receive feedback on their papers and will have the opportunity to make any necessary corrections.

Remember that SOCHUM is a humanitarian-focused committee, so the ensuring of human rights guided by the International Declaration of Human Rights is imperative. Delegates should consider their delegations' positions on the issue, and not make points that go against them. Delegates are taking on the role of their assigned country and should not present their point of view on the topic.

It is important not only to highlight problems, but also to propose solutions, either by oneself or in conjunction with other delegations. The Dais expects every delegate to feel comfortable and to participate as much as possible since every single one of the delegate's participation is relevant to the flow of the debate. Ideally, delegates should contribute to the discussion throughout the session, but keep in mind that quantity does not ensure quality. The idea is that interventions should be well formulated and sufficiently supported.

Delegates can expect from de Dais full support before and during the commission, in the development of the debate and your preparation of the opening speeches and position papers. The Dais will be attentive to the delegate's needs regarding support and guidance.

Finally, we remind you that at any time we are open to any doubts and questions you may have and that the communication channels are constantly open for delegates to contact the Dais to clarify these same concerns.

V. Annexes and Guidelines

5.1 Opening Speech

5.1.1 Clarifications

Opening speeches have a duration of up to 1 minute and 30 seconds per speaker. If the delegate does not use the entirety of the time they can either yield their remaining time to the Dais or pass it on to the next delegate. An opening speech is designed for the delegation to give a brief introduction of their position and what they aspire to do in the committee. All delegates have to turn in the opening speech on the established due date and they will receive guidance and corrections from the Dais. If a delegate is to cite in their opening speech they shall ask the Dais "permission to cite" and will have to provide the source from which this citation was taken. Ideally, an opening speech presents a brief description of the topic that is going to be discussed followed by their respective delegations' position regarding this. It is recommended that opening speeches are precise and not that long so that they can punctually communicate what the delegation wants to open their presence in the committee with. An opening speech is the first impression of the delegate to the committee and it is recommended that it can be impactful. Delegates should pay close attention to what other delegations say in their opening speeches and they can present key

facts about their participation in the committee and can let delegates learn information about other countries to find their allies.

5.1.2 Opening Speech Model

Good morning honorable members of the Dais, esteemed delegates, and honored guests,

Today, we are gathering here in the SOCHUM committee to discuss and deliberate on promoting sustainable development, human rights, and regional stability in the Gaza Strip.

India, with its rich history and commitment to global peace and cooperation, stands firmly dedicated to addressing the complex challenges faced by the people of the Gaza Strip acknowledges that this conflict demands our collective attention, and we must work together to provide solutions.

The reconstruction efforts in the Gaza Strip, rebuilding infrastructure, housing, and healthcare facilities, are of paramount importance. The delegation is deeply concerned by the critical need for comprehensive and timely reconstruction to alleviate the suffering of the affected population. We believe that a stable and thriving Gaza Strip is not only in the interest of the region but also contributes to global peace and security. In this endeavor, India is committed to providing meaningful support and assistance to the reconstruction process.

As we engage in discussions today, let us be guided by the principles of compassion, cooperation, and inclusivity. It is only through a collaborative and concerted effort that we can truly make a difference in the lives of the people in the Gaza Strip and contribute to the broader goal of regional stability.

Thank you, the delegation yields the floor to the Dais.

5.2 Position Paper

5.2.1 Clarifications

The position paper is the second document that all delegates have to turn in on the established due date. Delegates will receive feedback and guidance from the Daiss in the elaboration of their position paper. The position paper is extremely important as it will show that the delegate understands clearly the position of their assigned country. The position paper is a concise description of the delegation's position regarding the topic/or topics. This document allows delegates to learn information about their country and other countries present in the committee; it also serves as planification for the course of action that the delegate plans to take in the elaboration of their interventions and participation in the debate.

A position paper should include a relevant sentence in the beginning that clearly states the delegation's position regarding the topic. A succinct political declaration of the country so that every topic accurately represents the country's position. The document should include one of the following: citations from the United Nations Charter; ratified resolutions or agreements made by their member state; citations or declarations made by their chief of state, current president, ministers, or representative delegates from the UN and any other internationally relevant documents, including reports by the Secretary General of the United Nations regarding the topic, Recommendations of actions to be followed by the committee (SOCHUM), a conclusion that reaffirms the assigned country's position. It is also recommended that the position paper includes relevant statistics, citations, and information collected from external sources that should be cited in the approved academic citation format. Delegates are not allowed to make use of the first person in the position paper and they should instead choose alternative expressions such as "the delegation of ...", "Our government", and "Our nation", among others.

AISMUN's position paper will require a minimum of 500 words and it is required it to include a picture of the country's flag, the political/ economic/ military/ social ideology of the delegation (according to the focus of the topic), the topic of discussion, school, model's edition, general information of the delegation (complete name, current president, type of

government, capital, language, population, religion). When redacting the position paper take into account that the document is characterized as being a general perspective of the topic without upholding the characteristics of an essay. It is recommended that before the redaction of the paper delegates should have done an extensive investigation of the topic and their delegations' position on it.

5.2.2 Position Paper Model

Topic: Addressing the Humanitarian Crisis in the Gaza Strip: Promoting Sustainable Development, Human Rights, and Regional Stability.

General Sentence: The delegation of India supports a comprehensive and just resolution to the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip, emphasizing the importance of promoting sustainable development, safeguarding human rights, and fostering regional stability through diplomatic means and international cooperation.

Complete name	Republic of India
Current President	Draupadi Murmu
Type of government	Constitutional, federal and parliamentary republic.
Capital	New Delhi
Language	Hindi
Population	1,425,775,850 habitants
Religion	Religious pluralism. Hinduism (79.8%) Islam (14.2%) Christianity (2.3%)



ALTAMIRA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Breaking Borders

TWENTIETH EDITION AISMUN

February 29th - March 3rd

	Sikhism (1.7%) Buddhism (0.7%) Adivasi (incl. Sarnaism, Bon, Animism, Kirat Mundhum, Donyi-Polo) (0.5%) Jainism (0.4%)
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The delegation of India has traditionally expressed concern over the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip and has consistently called for a peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. India's position emphasizes the need to address the root causes of the crisis, promoting sustainable development, upholding human rights, and ensuring regional stability. India has supported a two-state solution, with independent and sovereign delegations such as Palestine coexisting peacefully with delegations such as Israel. India often advocates for international efforts, including those by the United Nations, to facilitate dialogue and negotiations for a comprehensive and just resolution to the situation in the Gaza Strip.

The humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip is a multifaceted issue characterized by severe socio-economic challenges, political instability, and ongoing conflict. The problem stems from the longstanding Israeli-Palestinian conflict, resulting in restricted access to basic resources, infrastructure damage, and limited economic opportunities. This crisis particularly affects the Palestinian population residing in the Gaza Strip, subjecting them to inadequate living conditions, food insecurity, and restricted movement. The lack of essential services and infrastructure exacerbates the difficulties faced by civilians, impacting their health, education, and overall well-being. Furthermore, the instability in Gaza contributes to regional tensions, hindering prospects for peace and stability in the broader Middle East.

The delegation of India consistently advocates for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, asserting the need for an independent and sovereign Palestine living peacefully alongside Israel. This position reflects India's commitment to addressing the root causes of the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip, emphasizing the importance of a just political settlement for sustainable development and regional stability. India's

commitment to a two-state solution aligns with the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter, emphasizing the right to self-determination for all peoples.

The principle of establishing independent and sovereign states is fundamental to numerous UN resolutions, including Article 33 of the UN Charter which states that “The parties to any dispute, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security, shall, first of all, seek a solution by negotiation, inquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice.” (UN, Charter, n.d)

“We strongly condemn the death of civilians in the Israel-Hamas conflict” (Prime Minister Modi). India actively supports humanitarian efforts in the Gaza Strip through financial aid and developmental assistance. By contributing to projects that enhance infrastructure, healthcare, and education, India aims to alleviate the immediate suffering of the affected population while promoting sustainable development. This approach aligns with India’s broader commitment to human rights and socioeconomic progress as integral components of resolving the crisis.

The delegation stresses the significance of multilateral diplomacy and international cooperation in addressing the Gaza Strip crisis. The country actively participates in discussions within international forums, including the United Nations, to foster dialogue and negotiations. India’s engagement underscores the belief that a collaborative, diplomatic approach is essential for achieving a lasting solution that upholds human rights, promotes sustainable development, and contributes to regional stability in the long term. India’s emphasis on multilateral diplomacy and international cooperation is consistent with the principles outlined in the IHL that states that “[they] fight for impartial, neutral and independent humanitarian action and against misuse of humanitarian activities.”

The delegation can advocate for renewed diplomatic efforts to facilitate a peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. By actively engaging with international partners, including through the United Nations and other multilateral forums, India can support initiatives that promote dialogue and negotiations. Emphasizing the importance of a

two-state solution and respecting the sovereignty of both Israel and Palestine can contribute to lasting regional stability and address the root causes of the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip.

India can continue to provide humanitarian aid and development assistance to the Gaza Strip, focusing on initiatives that address immediate needs and promote sustainable development. This can include funding for healthcare, education, infrastructure, and economic development projects. By collaborating with international organizations and NGOs, India can play a crucial role in improving living conditions and fostering long-term stability in the region.

The delegation of India can contribute to the empowerment of the Palestinian population by investing in capacity-building programs and skill development initiatives. By enhancing educational opportunities and vocational training, India can help create a skilled workforce that is better equipped to contribute to the sustainable development of the Gaza Strip. This approach aligns with India's commitment to human rights and socio-economic progress, addressing the crisis at its core by promoting self-reliance and economic resilience among the affected population.

The Indian delegation has consistently voiced apprehension regarding the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip and has consistently urged for a peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. India's standpoint underscores the importance of tackling the fundamental issues behind the crisis, fostering sustainable development, preserving human rights, and securing regional stability. India endorses a two-state solution, advocating for the peaceful coexistence of independent and sovereign entities like Palestine and Israel. The country actively supports international endeavors, particularly those led by the United Nations, to facilitate discussions and negotiations, aiming for a comprehensive and equitable resolution to the challenges faced in the Gaza Strip.

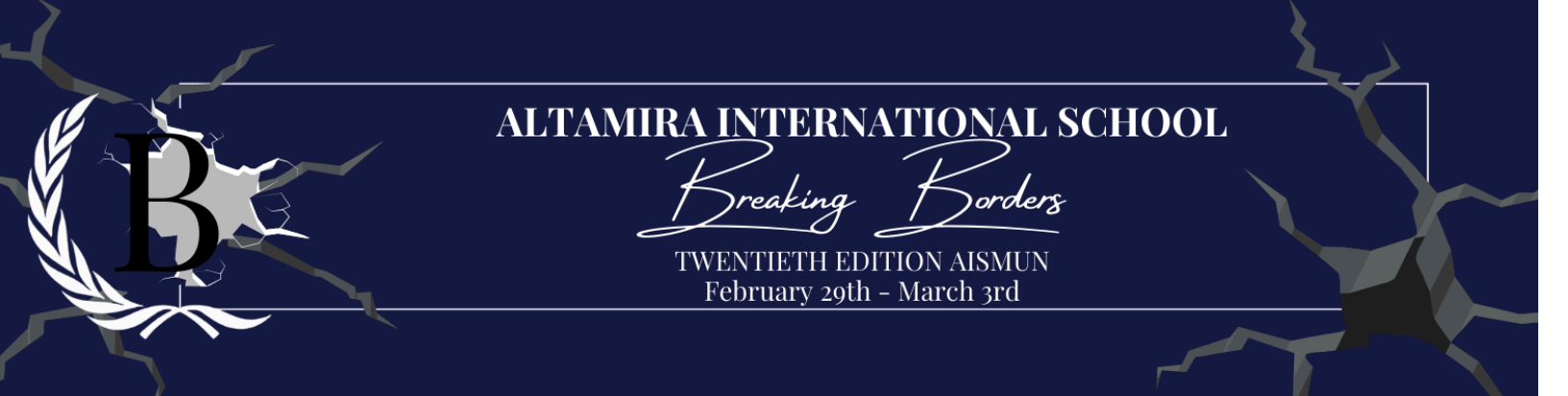
5.3 Working Paper

5.3.1 Clarifications

Working papers have to be made up of at least 7 delegations. The working paper is made up of the name of the document, the name of the committee, 2 heads of block, sponsored countries, signing countries, preambulatory clauses, and resolute phrases. The heads of the block are the leaders of the paper and will be the ones to present it to the committee. Sponsored countries are the ones in charge of sponsoring and following up on the presented resolutions. Signing countries are all the countries that are participating in the working paper and are agreeing on the preambles and resolutions. Sponsored countries and heads of block are to be included in the signing countries as well.

The document requires a minimum of 9 preambulatory clauses and resolute phrases. Preambulatorias offer a description of what has been discussed in the committee and start with phrases such as “having into consideration”, “Emphasizing”, and “Convinced” among others, these phrases are to be in italics. Resolves provide the solutions that the block has agreed upon and is presenting to the committee and are numbered. They begin with phrases such as “Reaffirms”, “Accepts”, and “And encourages” among others; these phrases are to be in italics followed by a comma. It is recommended that delegates write more than 9 preambulatory clauses and resolute phrases as it will minimize the risk of the paper not passing after amendments if a clause is to be removed. After each block presents its working papers there will be a space for amendments which are corrections to the presented documents, these amendments can be voted either friendly or unfriendly by the heads of the block. If the amendment is friendly it will be immediately corrected by the Dais, if it is unfriendly a voting procedure will start to define whether it should be corrected or stay the way it is. An example of a friendly amendment is a spelling error, a correction in the format, etc...; An example of an unfriendly amendment is the elimination of a resolve.

After finishing the reading of the amendments a voting procedure will be opened to determine whether the working paper passer does not pass. Delegates will be called one by one to vote either in favor/ against/ or abstain. To abstain means to not vote, a delegation can not abstain if it said “present and voting” during roll call. It is important that when joining a block the delegate has in mind the country’s position regarding the topic and the proposed resolutions by each block, as well as their allies and collaborators during the debate, and take into account the relevant historical alliances of the country; for example the Russian Federation and the United



States of America, can not be heads of block in the same working paper due to historical complexities of both nations. More details about the elaboration of a working paper can be found in the handbook.

9.3.2 Working Paper Model

Working Paper 1.1.1

SOCHUM

Topic: Addressing the Humanitarian Crisis in the Gaza Strip: Promoting Sustainable Development, Human Rights, and Regional Stability.

Heads of block: State of Palestine, United Arab Emirates

Sponsored Countries: The State of Qatar, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, The Arab Republic of Egypt, the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, The Republic of Yemen, The People’s Republic of China.

Signing countries: Annex 1

The Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee,

Taking into consideration the events that unfolded in the duration of the committee,

Emphasizing the importance of humanitarian aid in the Gaza Strip,

Convinced of the importance of civil liberties of the population of the Gaza Strip and Israeli territories,

Taking into account the recent attack on Palestinian territories by the delegation of Israel,

Affirming that the implementation of international unity should be a priority for the committee,

Reaffirming the crisis presented yesterday by the United Nations Security Council and the delegation's positions on the matter,

Concerned about the commutative management of the conflicts unraveling,

Seeking a form of bringing all nations together to form a peaceful unity in the committee,

Acknowledging the use of white phosphorus in the nations of Israel and Palestine,

Expecting the committee to find effective solutions,

Fully aware of the conflict happening in the Gaza Strip,

Declaring that the working paper will be implemented as soon as approved by the committee,

Guided by previews, resolutions, and action plans,

Resolves,

1. *Recognizes,* that other solutions were presented to the committee, yet none fitted with the block's ideologies or purposes to fix the problem;
2. *Fully believes,* that the Palestinians as well as every human are to be protected at all times;
3. *Emphasizes,* on protection of human rights and of peace to a possible peace treaty;

4. *Designates*, the Hamas group as an ally and part of the State of Palestine;
5. *Trusts*, that the group Hamas will excel at serving as the military of Palestine;
6. *Further recommends*, a negotiation table between the delegations that are conflicted for a better understanding of the solutions;
7. *Regarding*, the conflict's development, the proposal asks for immediate and peaceful culmination;
8. *Regulate*, the amount of power of Hamas in the Palestinian government;
9. *Expecting*, to promote peaceful unity of the international community;
10. *Accept*, the humanitarian, economic, and health care aid from other delegations;
11. *Recommends*, that all nations here present join the plan for further peaceful treaties within;
12. *Further Invites*, all the delegations in the committee to analyze this plan;
13. *Transmits* extreme preoccupation about this conflict;
14. *Changing or reorganizing* the Hamas group and establishing it as the government of the delegation of Palestine.

5.4 Press Release

5.4.1 Clarifications

A Press Release is a document written by a maximum of seven delegates. It includes the date on which it was written, the names of the countries that wrote it, the place in which it

is presented, the time at which it is presented, and to whom it is addressed. A press release should give a broad explanation of the issue being discussed, the position of the delegates, and why the delegations are not part of any of the other blocks. Delegates must present their solutions in this paper.

A press release is read in front of the entire committee before the Working Papers. These papers are not voted on. Also, the minimum word count is 800 words, explaining and describing in depth each of the variables (subtopics or cases) established in the committee. The results of the discussions in the previous debates have to be taken into account, too have complete communication. The press release should follow parliamentary language and procedure. If it is decided to develop this document, there should be one press release per topic (taking into account cases and subtopics).

5.4.2 Press Release Model

December 1, 2023.

The State of Israel's and The United States of America's resolute press release.

Jerusalem, Israel

1:20 PM (EST)

Addressed to the Social Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee

The delegation of Israel and the delegation of The United States inform the international community of the following press release:

Being acutely aware of the intricate and multifaceted nature of the situation that the committee finds itself embroiled in at present, the delegations wish to express their profound dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs. The delegations feel compelled to

take decisive action, given the critical nature of the circumstances. They find how the topic has been approached and managed thus far to be utterly unacceptable, falling short of addressing the pressing concerns and the gravity of the issues at stake.

The delegations accept the need for the full support of the international community and, at the same time, reject any solution that may interfere with the sovereignty of its territory. The aforementioned will not be negotiated, to prevent the nation's land from being endangered.

Seriously concerned about the integration of the group Hamas into the Palestinian government, the delegations acknowledge the significant implications this development holds not only for regional stability but also for the broader international community. Recognizing Hamas' history and its designation by many countries as an armed organization, there is an understandable apprehension regarding the potential impact on peace efforts and regional security.

Having previously redacted the resolution proposal of the plan P.E.A.C.E. The delegations of the United States of America and the State of Israel will prevail for the resolutions proposed to be taken into action by the international community.

Highlighting the importance of Political dialogue, Economic development, Aid and reconstruction, Community Engagement, Education, and empowerment as showcased in the P.E.A.C.E protocol developed in collaboration with delegations such as The French Republic, Italian Republic, Kingdom of Spain, Russian Federation, Republic of China, The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Republic of Poland.

Deeply affected by the lack of understanding from the committee toward the delegation of Israel's efforts for the resolution of the problem. The delegations feel obligated to restate that everything discussed in the debates was for the ensuring of the greater benefit for all nations involved and that any action taken by either delegation was done to resolve the ongoing crisis.

Proclaims the right of self-defense for the State of Israel, a principle firmly rooted in international law and essential to its sovereignty and security. This declaration underscores Israel's unwavering commitment to ensuring the safety and stability of its citizens and the wider region. Recognizing the complexities and evolving challenges in the Middle East, Israel maintains that it will utilize any means necessary to safeguard its interests.

Reaffirming that the crux of this ongoing conflict is deeply entrenched in the association of the Palestinian government with the armed group Hamas, a connection that raises significant concerns regarding the intentions and methods of governance in the Palestinian territories. This alliance, viewed by many international observers as problematic, complicates diplomatic efforts and poses a substantial obstacle to the peace process.

Having devoted attention to the humanitarian conflicts presented, the delegations consider a new, effective, humanitarian relief program that truly fulfills the needs of the affected population and resolves what the UN has not been able to accomplish.

Israel and the United States of America express their trust in the international alliance to analyze and determine the social, humanitarian, and cultural needs of the parties involved in the conflict, to reach a diplomatic agreement that proposes a solution that satisfies the needs of the nations affected by the current crisis.

The Israeli and the United States of America delegations do not reject the solutions presented out of spite and trust that the international community will understand where such uncooperative behavior is sprouting from.

Being reminded of the development of this session, the State of Israel and The United States of America will continue to work toward Addressing the Humanitarian Crisis in the Gaza Strip: Promoting Sustainable Development, Human Rights, and Regional Stability.

Noting with regret that the recent sequence of events, marked by a series of unforeseen and complex circumstances, has unjustly resulted in the State of Israel being unable to exercise its voting rights on the working papers.

Regretting the outcome, as well as fully understanding the intentions against the State of Israel by the international community, the Israeli and United States delegations invite others present to become aware and to refuse such incompetent solutions.

Lastly, the delegation expresses appreciation for those who showed support. Israel and the United States of America trust that in the face of conflict, adversity, and violence, realistic, possible, and positive alternatives prevail.

VII. Country List

1. Bahrain
2. China
3. Egypt
4. France
5. Swiss Confederation
6. Iraq
7. Israel
8. Republic of Albania
9. Jordan
10. Kosovo
11. Lebanon
12. Myanmar
13. Palestine
14. Gabonese Republic
15. Brazil
16. Russia
17. Saudi Arabia
18. Republic of Malta
19. Syria
20. United Arab Emirates
21. Ecuador
22. Republic of Mozambique



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- 23. United Kingdom
- 24. United States
- 25. Yemen
- 26. Afghanistan