

Lecture Outline—Arab-Israeli Conflict

The Origins

The roots of the conflict go deep into European history

- The Romans
- 1481--The Spanish Inquisition (flight to Ottoman Empire begins)
- Middle Ages onwards --expulsions from France, Spain, Russia, Austria, etc
- the 19th Century pogroms in Russia and Eastern Europe
- Dreyfus Affair in France—1890's
- 19th Century--Many thousands of European Jews migrated to Palestine (many more migrated to the US and Canada)
- 1895--Theodore Herzl and Zionism
 - (Zionism is an international movement that supports a homeland for the Jewish People in the biblical lands of Israel)
- 1917--Balfour Declaration
 - (the British government supported Zionist plans for a national home for the Jewish people within Palestine with the condition that nothing should be done which might prejudice the rights of existing communities there)
- 1920--The British Mandate in Palestine
 - Arab population of 600,000
 - myth: a land without people for a people without land
- 1929 Arab Uprising
- 1930's and forties—terrorism—Stern Gang, Irgun-Menachim Begin
- The Holocaust

The “Foundation” of the Conflict

- 1947—UN General Assembly Resolution 181—
 - the partition of Palestine to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict in the British Mandate of Palestine. 33-13-10 abstentions.
 - All 10 Muslim, including all four Arab states opposed
- 1947-8—War of independence or Naqba (“the disaster”)
- UNGA resolution 194
 - The resolution consists of 15 articles, the most quoted of which are:

- Article 7: protection and free access to the Holy Places
 - Article 8: demilitarization and UN control over Jerusalem
 - Article 9: free access to Jerusalem
 - Article 11: calls for the return of refugees
- 1949--UN General Assembly Resolution 273: admission of Israel to the UN
- 1956—the Suez Canal and the war
 - UK, France and Israel
 - US opposition
- 1967—the Six Days War—pre-emption or prevention?
- UN Security Council Resolution 242

“Emphasizing the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war and the need to work for a just and lasting peace in which every State in the area can live in security,

.....

Affirms that the fulfillment of Charter principles requires the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East which should include the application of both the following principles:

 - Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict; (N.B. The official French text refers to “des territories”)
 - Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force;
 - Affirms further the necessity
 - For guaranteeing freedom of navigation through international waterways in the area;
 - For achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem;
 - For guaranteeing the territorial inviolability and political independence of every State in the area, through measures including the establishment of demilitarized zones;...”
- The Israelis build settlements in the West Bank and Gaza and annex East Jerusalem
- The international community regard the West Bank and Gaza “occupied territories” under the terms of the Fourth Geneva Convention
- 1973—“Yom Kippur” war

- UNSC Resolution 338
 - 1. Calls upon all parties to the present fighting to cease all firing and terminate all military activity immediately, no later than 12 hours after the moment of the adoption of this decision, in the positions they now occupy;
 - 2. Calls upon the parties concerned to start immediately after the cease-fire the implementation of Security Council Resolution 242 (1967) in all of its parts;
 - 3. Decides that, immediately and concurrently with the cease-fire, negotiations shall start between the parties concerned under appropriate auspices aimed at establishing a just and durable peace in the Middle East
 - 1978 Menachim Begin
- 1975--UN General Assembly Resolution 3379: equating Zionism with Racism
- 1978 Camp David I
 - Two Accords signed by Egyptian President Anwar Al Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and witnessed by United States President Jimmy Carter.
 - A Framework for Peace in the Middle East (in three parts)
 1. a framework for negotiations to establish an autonomous self-governing authority in the West Bank and the Gaza strip and to fully implement SC 242.
 2. The second part dealt with Egyptian-Israeli relations, the real content being in the second agreement.
 3. "Associated Principles" declared principles that should apply to relations between Israel and all of its Arab neighbors
 - A Framework for the Conclusion of a Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel, the second leading towards the Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty
 - (According to Jimmy Carter), Begin's oral promise to stop settlement building not honoured
 - undermined prospect for Palestinian autonomy
- 1979 UN Resolution 446: 'determines' that Israeli settlements are a 'serious obstruction' to peace and calls on Israel to abide by the Fourth Geneva Convention". 12-0-3 (Norway, US, UK)
- 1980 UN Resolution 465: " ... 'deplores' Israel's settlements and asks all member states not to assist Israel's settlements program". 15-0-0

- 1979 Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty
 - Return of the Sinai
 - Beginning of a “cold peace”

- The 1982 Lebanon War
 - PLO driven out of Beirut
 - Sabra and Shatilla—Sharon

- 1987 to 1993 First Intifada, (Palestinian uprising against Israeli rule)
 - Largely non-violent

- 1991-- UN General Assembly Resolution 4686: annulled Res. 3379

- 1993 Oslo Accords
 - a framework for the future relations between the two parties
 - provided for the creation of a Palestinian Authority.
 - the Palestinian Authority had responsibility for the administration of the territory under its control.
 - They also called for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from parts of the Gaza Strip and West Bank.
 - arrangement would last for a five year interim period during which a permanent agreement would be negotiated (beginning no later than May 1996).
 - Permanent issues such as Jerusalem, refugees, Israeli settlements in the area, security and borders were deliberately left to be decided at a later stage.
 - The 1949 Green Line would form the basis of the border, with agreed land swaps
 - The Palestinian state would occupy 22% of the Mandate territory
 - Settlements east of the line would be dismantled
 - The right of return” would be limited to thousands
 - Interim self-government was to be granted in phases.

- Settlement building continues
 - today over 400,000 settlers, including East Jerusalem

- 1994 Jordan-Israel Peace Treaty

- 1990’s--Oslo runs aground

- Camp David II—Clinton

- The Second Intifada
 - Sharon goes to Al Aqsa
- 2000--UN resolution 1322 (14-0-1US)
 1. Deplores the provocation carried out at Al-Haram Al-Sharif in Jerusalem on 28 September 2000, and the subsequent violence there and at other Holy Places, as well as in other areas throughout the territories occupied by Israel since 1967, resulting in over 80 Palestinian deaths and many other casualties;
 2. Condemns acts of violence, especially the excessive use of force against Palestinians, resulting in injury and loss of human life;
 3. Calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, to abide scrupulously by its legal obligations and its responsibilities under the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949;
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- Taba
 - Better than Camp David
 - The basics of an eventual deal?
- Bush
 - Eight wasted years
 - The Road Map (in the glove compartment)
 - The Quartet
- Withdrawal from Gaza
- 2006— Hamas wins Palestinian election
- 2006—Israeli-Lebanese (Hezbollah) war
- Annapolis?

Canadian Policy on Israel and Palestine—(from the DFAIT website)

Support for Israel and its security

Canada supports Israel's right to live in peace with its neighbours within secure boundaries and recognizes Israel's right to assure its own security, and to take proportionate measures in accordance with international law, including human rights and international humanitarian law, to protect the security of its citizens from attacks by terrorist groups.

Palestinian statehood

Canada recognizes the Palestinian right to self-determination and supports the creation of a sovereign, independent, viable, democratic and territorially contiguous Palestinian state, as part of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace settlement.

Support for a comprehensive peace settlement

Canada is committed to the goal of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East, and the creation of a sovereign, independent, viable, democratic and territorially contiguous Palestinian state living side by side in peace and security with Israel.

The 1993 Israel-Palestine Liberation Organization Declaration of Principles continues to provide the basis for a comprehensive agreement based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. Canada welcomed the decision of the Palestine National Council to accept UN Security Council Resolution 242 as a basis for peace negotiations as well as mutual recognition by Israel and the PLO in 1993.

Canada supports the Declaration of Principles, along with the 1979 Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty and the 1994 Jordan-Israel Treaty.

Canada also strongly supports the Quartet's Road Map, which sets out the obligations of both parties and steps for establishment of a Palestinian state.

Canada has continuously shared in practical contributions by the international community such as participation in peacekeeping forces, and the delivery of development assistance programs in the region.

Status of Jerusalem

The United Nations General Assembly resolution 181 of 1947, supported by Canada, proposed the partitioning of British Mandate Palestine into three separate entities, including the City of Jerusalem which was to be administered by the United Nations. A number of United Nations resolutions since 1947 have reaffirmed the special status of Jerusalem.

Canada considers that the status of Jerusalem can be resolved only as part of a negotiated settlement of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Canada does not recognize Israel's unilateral

annexation of Jerusalem, nor Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. For this reason, the Canadian Embassy to Israel is located in Tel Aviv and not Jerusalem.

Palestinian refugees

Canada believes that a just solution to the Palestinian refugee issue is central to a settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as called for in United Nations General Assembly resolution 194 (1948) and United Nations Security Council resolution 242. A solution to the Palestinian refugee issue must be negotiated among the parties concerned in the context of a final status peace agreement. This solution should respect the rights of the refugees, in accordance with international law.

Canada has played a prominent role in the search for a viable and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian refugee issue, primarily as Gavel Holder of the multilateral Refugee Working Group. Although the Refugee Working Group has been formally in abeyance since 1996, Canada continues to focus international attention on the situation of the more than four million Palestinian refugees, and to promote preparations for the eventual resumption of negotiations.

Occupied territories

Canada does not recognize permanent Israeli control over territories occupied in 1967 (the Golan Heights, the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip).

Canada opposes all unilateral actions that might prejudice the outcome of negotiations, including the establishment of settlements in the territories, unilateral moves to annex Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, and construction of the barrier inside the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

The Fourth Geneva Convention applies in the occupied territories and establishes Israel's obligations as an occupying power, in particular with respect to the humane treatment of the inhabitants of the occupied territories.

Settlements

As referred to in UN Security Council Resolutions 446 and 465, Israeli settlements in the occupied territories is a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention. The settlements also constitute a serious obstacle to achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace.

The barrier

Canada recognizes Israel's right to protect its citizens from terrorist attacks, including through the restriction of access to its territory, and by building a barrier on its own territory. However, Canada opposes Israel's construction of the barrier inside the West Bank and East Jerusalem which is occupied territory. This is contrary to international law under the Fourth Geneva Convention. Canada not only opposes Israel's construction of a barrier extending into the occupied territories, but also expropriations and the demolition of houses and economic infrastructure carried out for this purpose.

Terrorism

Canada condemns all acts of terrorism and terrorists should be brought to justice and prosecuted in accordance with international law. Terrorism must be rejected as a means for achieving political ends. It is counter-productive to reaching a comprehensive, just and lasting peace settlement.

Canada has listed Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Hezbollah, the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, and other groups as terrorist organizations in accordance with UN Resolution 1373 (2001) and Canadian legislation.

The Palestine Liberation Organization

Canada recognizes the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as the principal representative of the Palestinian people, as defined in the 1993 Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government.

Palestinian Authority

Canada also recognizes the Palestinian Authority (PA) as the governmental entity of the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza. Canada will continue to support Palestinian President Abbas, work with the Palestinian government led by Prime Minister Salam Fayyad and look at how Canada can best provide assistance to his government.

Support to the Palestinian People

Working with its partners and through the United Nations, its agencies and other organizations, Canada continues to support and respond to the humanitarian and development needs of the Palestinian people.

In 2006-2007, Canada contributed close to \$40 million in assistance to the Palestinian people, delivered through international organizations such as the United Nations.

Respect for human rights and international humanitarian law

Canada believes that Israel and the Palestinian Authority must comply with their obligations under international human rights law. Their respect for human rights and international humanitarian law is key to ensuring the protection of civilians, and can contribute to the creation of a climate conducive to achieving a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement.

United Nations resolutions on the Middle East

Every year, resolutions addressing the Arab-Israeli conflict are tabled in the United Nations, such as at the United Nations General Assembly and the Human Rights Council. To decide how to vote on any particular resolution, Canada assesses each resolution on its merits and consistency with our principles. We support resolutions that are consistent with Canadian policy on the Middle East are rooted in international law, reflect current dynamics, contribute to the goal of a negotiated two-state solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, and address fairly and constructively the obligations and responsibilities of all parties to the conflict. Canada advocates a fair-minded approach and rejects one-sided resolutions and any politicization of the issues. Successive Canadian governments have been concerned about the polemical nature of many of the Middle East resolutions. Canada believes that the United Nations and its member states have a responsibility to

contribute constructively to efforts to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Canada will continue to view examine carefully each of these resolutions as they come forward.

US Policy on the Middle East

- The US has
 - Subsidized Israel's economic development
 - \$154 billion
 - Supported Israel in successive wars since 1967
 - Underwrote Israeli military dominance in the Middle East
 - Shielded Israel from UN Security Council censure
 - Backstopped Israeli diplomacy

Questions for discussion

1. Do diasporas and electoral politics in Canada play a positive or negative role in formulating Canadian Middle East policies?
2. Do lobbies unduly influence Canadian policy?
3. Should Canada tilt towards Israel, a fellow democracy whose people have been persecuted down through the centuries, or should Canada lend greater support to the Palestinians and their aspirations for a viable state?