THAIMUN

Special Political and Decolonization Committee

The Question of the Annexation of Occupied Territories by Israel
The Question of Achieving Economic Decolonization in Francophone Africa

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Introductory Letters:

Piriyakorn Piroonhapat Chaiwatanarat (Nami)

Hello delegates! My name is Nami and I'll be your head chair for this year's THAIMUN. I'm currently in the 11th grade at the International School Bangkok, and I've been involved in MUN for around 2 years now. This is my second time chairing for THAIMUN, and I can proudly say that it's been an incredible experience. I've met so many wonderful people and made so many memories. I started speech and debate in 7th grade, and even after 4 years of experience, speaking can still be intimidating! Whether this is your first conference or your 20th, I'll do my best to support you in any way I can.

Outside of MUN, I enjoy physics (I hate math though!!), baking, and procrastinating on things I need to do. I might look a little clueless in my photo, but I promise I'm friendly, so please don't be scared to say hi! I'm so excited to get to know you all. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to email me at 17840@students.isb.ac.th or message me on instagram @namipiriyakorn. See you soon!

Anika Alijana Siahaan

Greetings, Delegates of SPECPOL! I would like to extend my warmest welcome to you approaching THAIMUN XI. My name is Anika Alijana Siahaan, and I am honored to serve as your Deputy Chair this year! As a student in the tenth grade at Global Jaya School, Indonesia, and the Secretary-General of my school's MUN club and conference, HAWKSMUN, inevitable change lies ahead of me. However, one thing that will always remain the same is my appreciation for THAIMUN, as it was my very first conference as a delegate and now my very first conference as a chair. From the second I joined my first MUN conference, online in seventh grade, to the second I am writing this remark, I stand firm by the fact that MUN is a provider of remarkable learning experiences. Through MUN, I have not

only learned to understand diplomacy and international relations, but I also learned to understand myself as an individual. I hope to see the learning spirit ignite within each of you. Finally, delegates, I want to remind you that MUN is much more than a competition. Rather, it is a conference; a culmination of unique minds and ideas that work together to achieve a common goal. Whether it is through research, speaking, or writing, do everything with love, a love for diplomacy, and a love for this globe which we all share. If you have any questions or would just like to reach out, please do not hesitate to contact me @anikalijana on Instagram or send me an email at anika@student.globaljaya.com! See you all very soon. Godspeed!

Committee Overview

The General Assembly

The United Nations (UN) has six principal organs outlined in its charter, including the General Assembly (GA), consisting of all 193 Member States that each have one vote. The GA Resolution adopted on September 16, 2005, reiterates its position as the chief deliberative and policymaking organ, playing a crucial role in international law and standard-setting. (*Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 16 September 2005*). Led by one President and twenty-one Vice-Presidents, the GA operates through a Plenary, six Main Committees, a General Committee, and a Credentials Committee. It oversees several subsidiary bodies, including boards, committees, commissions, and councils, all reporting to the GA. Its Mandate states that it serves as a forum for member states to discuss and cooperate on international issues within the Charter's scope, excluding those under the Security Council's consideration. It discusses the powers and reports of UN organs and subsidiary bodies, approves the UN budgets, and appoints officers and members of other organs or subsidiary bodies. Notably, the GA is responsible for appointing the UN Secretary-General based on the Security Council's recommendation (*The GA Handbook: A Practical Guide to the United Nations General Assembly* 14).

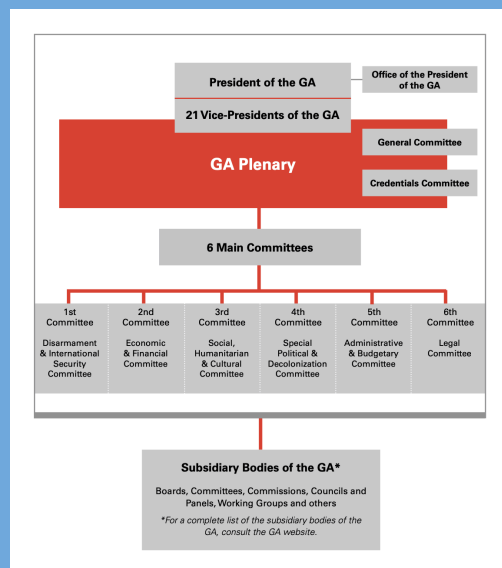fig 1: https://www.eda.admin.ch/dam/mission-new-york/en/documents/UN_GA__Final.pdf

The Special Political and Decolonization Committee

The United Nations Special Political and Decolonization Committee (SPECPOL), also known as the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly (GA), was established on August 17, 1993, in accordance with 47/233 GA Resolutions. SPECPOL is driven by a combination of agendas from

the discontinued Special Political Committee and the former Fourth Committee, the Decolonization Committee. Currently, the committee tackles a wide range of global situations and issues that once overlapped between the two committees, including a cluster of five decolonization-related agenda items, the implications of atomic radiation, information security, peacekeeping operations, special political missions, relief and territorial occupation amidst the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and international cooperation in the peaceful use of outer space ("UN General Assembly - Fourth Committee - Special Political and Decolonization"). In an effort to solve the various issues pertaining to the world, the Fourth Committee works to create and adopt resolutions. Following the passing of a resolution, the implementation of the terms and solutions involved must be carried out voluntarily by member states. Given that SPECPOL on its own does not have the jurisdiction to create legally binding international law, the need for a legally binding instrument may only be fulfilled through member-state-led treaty negotiation ("Functions and powers of the General Assembly"). Numerous subsidiary bodies report to the GA through the Fourth Committee, including:

- The Committee on Information
- Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (also called "C-34")
- Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories
- United Nations Relief and Works Agency for State of Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) (*The GA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly* 76-77).

<u>Topic 1: The Question of the Annexation of Occupied Territories by Israel - Anika</u>

Considering the persistence of tensions between Israel and various other countries since the late nineteenth century, as well as the recent elevation of the conflict in late 2023, SPECPOL's involvement in overseeing the UNRWA and The Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories, tasks the committee with the responsibility of defending international law amidst the ongoing disputes ("UN General Assembly - Fourth Committee - Special Political and Decolonization"). However, a single question remains: How is it ensured that the current investigation of the annexation of occupied territories by Israel will lead to timely action? A consideration that must always be made is the lives that have been lost, and the landscapes that have been destroyed.

<u>Topic 2: The Question of Achieving Economic Decolonization in Francophone Africa - Nami</u>

The social and economic well-being of previous French colonies in Africa is essential to global development as a whole. Economic decolonisation involves more than efforts involving monetary aid. Since the historical age of new imperialism and colonialism, many impacts of economic exploitation can still be seen. A SPECPOL resolution and involvement must include a focus on the nuanced issues of political instability, cultural complexities, and decolonisation in the contemporary world. Delegates must answer the question of how to achieve economic decolonisation in Francophone Africa while balancing each country's diplomatic stances.

Topic 1: The Question of the Annexation of Occupied Territories by Israel - Anika

TOPIC INTRODUCTION:

Certainly, almost no individual is foreign to the long-spanning dispute between Israel and Palestine. The conflict, initially a fight over land, led to various implications that left the United Nations in charge of resolving the issue and promoting peace. Rooted in historical, religious, and territorial claims, the conflict has evolved into a complex web of geopolitical, humanitarian, and legal concerns that demand careful consideration.

Israel's annexation of occupied territories is a practice condemned by the international community and viewed as a violation of established worldly principles. For over half a century, Israel has maintained control over Palestinian territories, including the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem. This occupation has resulted in profound consequences for the Palestinian population, impacting their daily lives, access to resources, and overall socioeconomic development. From the eyes of SPECPOL, the issue is a pressing concern that requires comprehensive analysis and diplomatic intervention. Given the council's commitment to addressing political challenges and promoting decolonization, SPECPOL is compelled to examine the situation with a keen focus on international law, human rights, and the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

As the world grapples with the complexities of this longstanding conflict, this council plays a crucial role in developing just solutions, protecting human rights, and setting the stage for lasting peace. The complexity of the conflict encourages delegates to carefully consider humanitarian issues, follow international laws, and build an atmosphere that supports long-term international cooperation. Its work is vital for bringing justice and stability to a world seeking resolution amid persistent tensions in this challenging and seemingly perennial dispute.

KEY TERMS:

Term	Definition
Annexation	Annexation is the forced possession of territory by one State at the expense of another State (Hofmann), usually executed through conquest or military invasion. Annexation may be peaceful, as they differ from occupations. Peaceful annexations involve formally transferring sovereignty over a piece of land to a new nation (Petrarca).
Occupied	In the case of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, the Occupied Territories are

Territories	the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. Based on international law, a territory may be classified as "occupied" when it is under the control of the enemy military ("Occupied Territory"). The definition of occupation presently used can be found in *the Regulations Concerning the Laws and Customs of War on Land* in the Fourth Hague Convention of 18 August 1907 (*Hague Convention IV*). Humanitarian law states that when one country occupies another during a conflict, it is considered an international armed conflict, governed by the four Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol I (*Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949*). However, the occupying power is still nailed to certain responsibilities when they have effectively controlled the occupied territories, including upholding human rights, maintaining law and order, and following relevant humanitarian laws related to occupation. Above all, public life in the occupied area must be kept in order, adhering to the existing laws of the territory (*Hague Convention IV* Art. 43).
Israeli-Palestinian Conflict	The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict is a long-standing disagreement between the Israeli and Palestinian people, also known as the Jews and the Arabs, over the right to live and govern the land that includes both nations' territories. Deeply rooted in historical and religious arguments, this conflict is the source of many complex social and political issues dating back to the late nineteenth century. The conflict's recent escalation in the Gaza Strip has caused tensions to rise between Israel and Hamas-led Palestinian militant groups (Center for Preventive Action).
West Bank	The West Bank is the larger one of the two Palestinian territories and is inhabited by three million Palestinians. Populated since 15 B.C., it has been occupied by various people and parties in history, including the Ottoman Empire in the early sixteenth century and the British Mandate of Palestine in World War I. During several Israeli-Palestinian wars, Israel has captured and annexed the West Bank. An agreement known as the Oslo Accords divided the West Bank into three regions: one entirely governed by the Palestinian Authority (PA), another fully managed by Israel, and the last being controlled in a shared manner until a lasting agreement could be created between the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel ("West Bank - The World Factbook").
East Jerusalem	East Jerusalem is an area part of the West Bank under Israeli occupation as of its annexation following the 1967 war. Its overall status is frequently argued in a debate that transcends legal matters involving natural aspirations and religious claims. Disagreement and arguments surrounding East Jerusalem's occupation did not begin recently, in 1967, or in 1948. Rather, it began thousands of years ago before the common era. The legal situation of Israel's "sovereignty" over East Jerusalem is significantly

	influenced by the UN-adopted November 1947 *Partition Plan.* Israeli legislation has been implemented to strengthen the nation's hold over the East Jerusalem area (*The Legal Status of East Jerusalem*).
Gaza Strip	The Gaza Strip, also known simply as Gaza, is the smaller of the two Palestinian territories. Geographically, unlike the West Bank, it is positioned on a rather flat coastal plain. The overall living conditions in Gaza are incredibly poor due to the impact of various factors, including its dense and rapidly increasing population with one of the highest growth rates in the world; insufficient services for electricity, sewage, and water; and most definitely the recent Israeli strike threatening and ending many Palestinian lives ("Gaza Strip | Definition, History, Facts, & Map").
International Law	International law is one of the UN's greatest achievements, being essential to promote and advance economic and social development as well as international peace and security. It is preserved through various conventions, standards, and treaties that make up the foundation of the law governing relations among nations. Albeit the UN's work in justice is not often recognized, it creates a profound impact on citizens worldwide ("International Law and Justice | United Nations"). Furthermore, it is stated in Article 33 and 13 of the UN charter that the UN acts as an organization responsible to peacefully settle international disputes through "arbitration and judicial settlement," encouraging the progressive development of international law and its systematization (*United Nations Charter (full text)*). With respect to the context of territorial annexation, International Humanitarian Law is the set of principles and rules highly valid to consider to ensure the regulations of means and methods of warfare. Moreover, it safeguards the humanitarian protection of civilians, combatants, and prisoners of war. A key document is the 1949 Geneva Convention for the Protection of War Victims. Judicial settlements of disputes take place in the International Court of Justice ("International Law and Justice | United Nations").
Palestinian Authority	The Palestinian Authority (PA) was established in the mid 1990s as a product of the Oslo Accords, a series of agreements between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). It is an interim government, or temporary government functioning between permanent governments. The PA was founded as a governing body of parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It works to manage local affairs, provide public services, and represent Palestine in negotiations or discussions with Israel. It is led by a President, and its legislative body is named the Palestinian Legislative Council. With the complexity of political situations within the region, ongoing tensions and conflicts become a challenge that affects the PA's ability to exercise its authority and responsibility ("What

	is the Palestinian Authority and what is its relationship with Israel?").
Two-state Solution	The term "Two-state Solution" refers to a proposed framework to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by establishing two separate states for two separate populations. In other words, officiating Israel as the land of the Jewish people, and Palestine as the land of the Palestinian people. Following the fall of the Ottoman Empire in 1922, both Jews and Arabs asserted their determination to gain sovereignty of historical Palestine. 1948 marked the first try at separating the land, resulting in a state of Israel, but no state of Palestine. At the time, the West Bank and Gaza Strip respectively fell under Jordanian and Egyptian rule. In the 1967 six-day war, Israel gained occupation over the West Bank and Gaza Strip as well as other Arab Territories, leading to the proposal of the Two-state Solution in the Oslo Accords ("Two-state solution | Definition, Facts, History, & Map").
Peace Process	A peace process is a series of sociopolitical and diplomatic efforts aimed towards resolving a certain armed conflict. Peace processes typically involve formal and informal approaches, including various actors over a long period of time ("Peace Processes"). It is generally a mixture of politics, diplomacy, negotiations, advocacy, mediation, and dialogue ("RRW: What is a peace process?").
Zionism	Zionism is a Jewish nationalist movement aiming for a Jewish national state in Palestine. It originated in the 19th century, gained political momentum through Theodor Herzl, and eventually led to the creation of the State of Israel in 1948. The movement encountered opposition from Arabs and led to ongoing geopolitical tensions ("Zionism | Definition, History, Examples, & Facts")

History of The Topic:

I.   *Introduction*

Indeed, factors in relation to politics, international law, and economic development may be considered to approach the discussion of this topic. However, sustainable and real change can only be achieved if the roots of the conflict are truly understood. Even with the passing of time and the evolution of worldly views, Israel's occupation and annexation of Palestine will always be traced back to its ideological foundation that motivated the dispute in the first place. Despite its intricacy, history is the key needed to unlock the strategies to explicate Israel's policies in the occupied territory of Palestine and take further action to reverse them (Kamel).

II.   *Historical Context*

    A. Early Origins

Israel's history of territorial occupation and annexation, better phrased as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, dates back to the late nineteenth century. The United Nations adopted the Partition Plan, or Resolution 181 in 1947. The goal of this plan was to divide the British Mandate of Palestine into Arab and Jewish States.
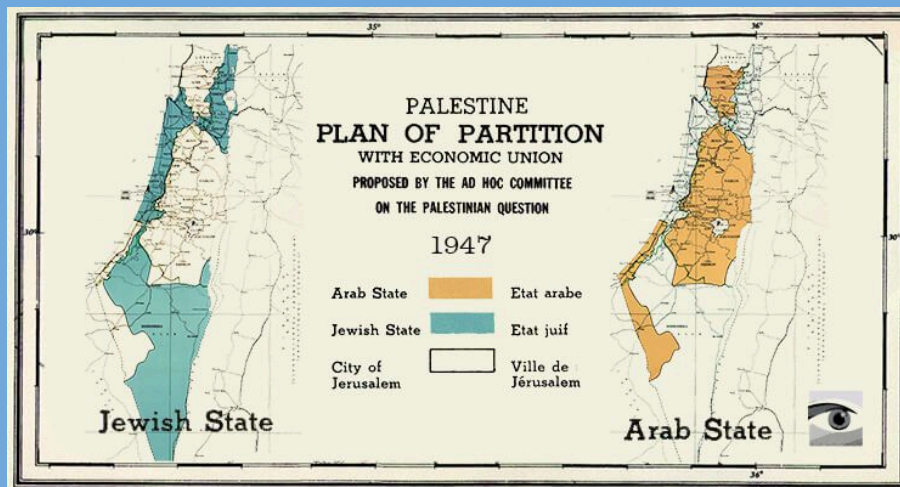

fig 1: (Lipman)

1. **Historical Claims and Territorial Disputes:** The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict is an outcome of historical claims to the same land. Jerusalem is an example of the land both Israelis and Palestinians have cultural, historical, and religious ties to. Thus, both nations feel entitled to the land and claim it as their own, leading to further conflicting accounts or perspectives ("The State of Palestine and the Emergence of Israel: Roots of Conflict"). Moreover, the disputed or occupied territories include the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip. Said territories are subject to the legal power or jurisdiction of both Israel and the Palestinian Authority (PA). However, the delegation of responsibilities in each governing body often overlaps. This has created a complex governance situation in the Occupied Territories. Israelis living in East Jerusalem fall under Israel's civil and criminal law system, while Palestinian residents of Jerusalem are also subject to Israeli civil and criminal law. In the West Bank, Israelis living in settlements are subject to Israeli civil and criminal law, while Palestinians living in different areas fall under a mix of Israeli military law, PA civil law, and Israeli military law. Due to the close association between religion, ethnicity, and nationality, categorizing most of this violence solely on the basis of religious identity proved to be challenging ("Israel and The Occupied Territories - The Occupied Territories - United States Department of State").

2. **Establishment of Israel:** Following the war of 1948, Israel was established as an internationally recognized Jewish state. Its declaration of independence took place on May 14, 1948, and was quickly recognized by the United States, the Soviet Union, and various other governments. However, the new nation faced an immediate invasion by the armies of five Arab states; Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, and Transjordan. Israel then experienced various challenges, including a refugee crisis, security issues, as well as Jewish immigration including Holocaust survivors and Sephardic Jews. Waves of controversy were caused by the Law of Return, giving Jews or people with a Jewish lineage the right to relocate to Israel and receive Israeli citizenship ("Israel - Armistice, Refugees, Conflict").

B. Impact of the 1967 Six-Day War

Subsequent to the Six Day War, the defeat of the Arab countries called for serious losses, including casualty numbers reaching thousands for Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. Meanwhile, Israel's casualties reached 700. The loss of weaponry and equipment crippled the Arab armies. Furthermore, the Arab countries' defeat demoralized both the public and the government of the region, leading to announcements of resignation as well as mass demonstrations. Moreover, the Six-Day war marked the beginning of a new elevation to the tensions between Israel and Palestine, leaving hundreds of thousands of people displaced from their homes, and one million Palestinians in the Israeli occupied and ruled territories ("Six-Day War | Definition, Causes, History, Summary, Outcomes, & Facts").

fig 2: (Oren)

III. *Social and Humanitarian Aspects*

A. Displacement and Challenges Faced by Populations

1947 marked the beginning of a tragedy known as the *Nakba,* which is unfortunately still a reality to many Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied territories. Similar to the everlast of the dispute itself, some Palestinian refugee families have been displaced for over 73 years and are being left to live in refugee camps throughout the region. This includes camps in Lebanon as

well as in the occupied Palestinian territory. Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza and its annexation of East Jerusalem led to the 54-year-long military interference. The 1967 Six-Day War impacted more than the military sector, changing every aspect of daily life for Palestinian civilians. The occupation has restricted movement, imposed discriminatory control, and threatened homes and livelihoods. Palestinians in Gaza have lived for 14 years under stifling blockade, collective punishment, and repeated military assault. Unfortunately, Palestinians are typically denied healthcare access by the circumstances in which they live, on their underlying civil and political rights ("What are the issues facing Palestinians today?").

B. Human Rights Violations in Occupied Territories

Even prior to the escalation of Israel's military occupation, Palestine was governed in a state of "Israeli apartheid." In 2021, Palestinian families in an occupied neighborhood in East Jerusalem named *Sheikh Jarrah* demonstrated against Israel's plan to forcibly evict them from their homes to make room for incoming Jewish settlers. A majority of these families residing in *Sheikh Jarrah* are refugees who were also forcibly displaced during 1948; the time of Israel's establishment. Israeli authorities then used excessive and deadly force, resulting in thousands of Palestinians being injured, arrested, and put into detention ("Israel's apartheid against Palestinians"). The system of apartheid implemented by the Israeli government and military forces has robbed Palestinians of their rights described in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). In fact, it has violated numerous articles such as article 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, and many more ("Universal Declaration of Human Rights | United Nations"). This system of apartheid was continued and reached its climax on May 2021. More discrimination, killing, and injuries surfaced, privileging Jewish Israelis at the expense of Palestinians. Following the human rights violations carried out in the apartheid system, the escalation of the conflict carried out starting October 2023 has undoubtedly violated human rights. Despite Israel's motivation to execute airstrikes to capture *Hamas,* the Palestinians are viewed as "human shields." Moreover, arbitrary arrest rates were at an all-time high, facilitating further inhumane and degrading treatment of prisoners ("Israel/OPT: Horrifying cases of torture and degrading treatment of Palestinian detainees amid spike in arbitrary arrests").

fig 3: ("Sheikh Jarrah and al-Naqab: Intensification of Israel's Implementation of its Displacement, Apartheid, and Colonial Enterprise")

IV.   Economic Factors

As of November 2023, one month after the onset of the Israeli-Palestinian war, Gaza faces unimaginable levels of destruction, and the Palestinian economy suffers amidst constant air strikes and military attacks. Already, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians have been forced into poverty due to a tremendous socioeconomic shock ("Israel-Gaza war 'devastating' Palestine economy, UN warns"). Around the same time, the Palestinian GDP dropped by 33% due to Israel's continuous aggression and raids in both the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. To combat this reported change in the Palestinian economy as of 2023, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics has developed an Economic Forecast for the upcoming year, 2024. This was established after collaboration with the Advisory Committee for Economic Statistics, along with the Ministry of Finance and the Palestinian Monetary Authority. This forecast identifies three different scenarios, each with its own expectations and key assumptions:

1. **Baseline Scenario of the Current Situation:** This scenario assumes that the political and economic situation of 2023 will persist throughout 2024. In other words, Israel will continue its aggression on the Gaza Strip and West Bank, and existing repercussions will endure. If this scenario were to come true for the State of Palestine, a further decline of 5% in the GDP is expected. Moreover, unemployment rates will also continue to climb.

2. **Recovery and Reconstruction:** The second scenario is built around the assumption that all current forms of violence and aggression against Palestinians by Israelis will come to an end. This scenario predicts the gradual return of the political and economic situation as it was before the conflict's escalation. If this scenario were to be true in 2024, the Palestinian economy may finally reach a state of 0.5% stability in the GDP compared to

its condition in 2023. However, there is a large possibility that unemployment rates will decrease to just 30%.

3. **The Continuation of Aggression:** The final possible scenario presented is that Israel's attack on Palestine will worsen. This entails that the political and economic situation will deteriorate. The occurrence of this would lead to the GDP declining by 10% in 2024. At the same time, unemployment rates would increase by 42% compared to the 31% decline in 2023 (Awad).

V. Cultural Considerations

1. **Zionism:** The fact is, Zionism is a belief emphasizing that Arabs did nothing for the development of the region. Furthermore, the belief supports the notion that Israel brought civilization to the region. The highlight of their belief is the claim that their race is superior. With this claim, they believe that in some way, they contributed to every land they walk on, bringing vitality to the economic and commercial life of all other people.

2. **The Arabs:** The Arabs, encompassing Palestinians and other regional groups, hold a pivotal role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Their aspirations for statehood and self-determination collide with Israel's territorial claims, leading to enduring struggles marked by displacement, occupation, and complex negotiations. This protracted conflict continues to shape the political landscape, generating intermittent bouts of unrest and diplomatic efforts ("THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF IDENTITY PERCEPTION: AN ANALYSIS IN THE FRAMEWORK OF INSTITUTIONS Büle").

The bottom line here is that **people want peace.** Religion does not determine that.

Over the long years that this conflict has haunted the nations of Israel and Palestine, religion has always been at the core of it all. Whether it concerns the sanctity of holy sites or religious apocalyptic narratives, religion always holds a position of significance. This destroys the potential for any peace agreement from both sides, as the differences in their beliefs have already dictated how they approach the dispute. On one side, extremely religious and conservative Jewish Zionists believe that they are the ones bestowed with the responsibility to guard and define the way the Jewish state "should be." Meanwhile, Islamist groups in Palestine and worldwide voice their concerns and passions for the liberation and protection of "holy sites," along with the violence and hatred against Israel and the Jewish people as a whole. It can be said that extremist groups in both Israel and Palestine see themselves as guardians of their respective religions. Rumors, worsening socio-economic conditions in the Arab and Islamic community, and the rise of religious radicalism amongst the youth are all factors contributing to the religious tension in the conflict. Although ironic, the Arab Spring has also posed a threat to the peace

between Arabs and Israelis, because regimes that were challenged by extreme political views compromised peace agreements based on religious ideology.

fig 4: (Feldman)

The significance of religion is amplified, particularly in the fight over Jerusalem. Throughout history, Jerusalem has been ruled by many different groups, being deeply rooted in both Jewish and Islamic traditions. Moreover, West Bank settlements are also tied to religious beliefs, with Orthodox Jews settling to fulfill certain biblical prophecies, and fundamentalist Islamic teachings envisioning a future where the entire land of Israel and Palestine is under Islamic rule. In short, this conflict is violence justified by religion (Mostafa). Israel's annexation of occupied territories in Palestine is an enigma of historical, political, social, economic, and cultural factors.

Timeline: [Include a minimum of 5 key dates with a description. Max 10]

Date	Description
October 30, 1917: Fall of the Ottoman Empire	After being in decline since the start of World War I, the Ottoman Empire's army entered war in 1914 on the side of the Central Powers, including Germany, Austria, and Hungary. It was defeated in 1918, leading to subsequent events that left a lasting impact on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
November 2, 1917: The Balfour Declaration	A public statement issued by the British government expressing support for the establishment of a "national home for the Jewish people in Palestine." This declaration marked the start of international recognition of the aspirations of the Zionist movement to establish a Jewish state in Palestine.

1918-1948: The British Mandate	Following World War I, the League of Nations granted Britain the mandate to administer Palestine. Conflicting national aspirations created further tensions between Jewish and Arab communities. What's more, the British mandate facilitated Jewish immigration, aggravating the political and demographic challenges faced in the region.
November 29, 1947 - UN Partition Plan	The UN General Assembly passed Resolution 181, which calls for the separation of Palestinian territory into two states: one Jewish and one Arab. Furthermore, this resolution describes establishing an international body run by the UN to manage Jerusalem. During this time, the conflict and violence between the Jewish and Arab communities in the Palestinian territories escalated. The Jewish leadership accepted the plan, but the Arab leadership rejected it. This led to the Arab-Israeli War of 1948-1949.
May 15, 1948 - March 10, 1949: Arab-Israeli War	The Arab-Israeli war is the first armed conflict of many occurring between Israel and its Arab neighboring countries in the Arab-Israeli conflict. It is often deemed the "war of freedom and independence" by Israelis, as the war led to the establishment of the independent State of Israel– *and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians.* This signals the start of the Palestinian refugee crisis, also known as the "Palestinian expulsion and flight."
December 11, 1948: The UN addresses Palestinian displacement	During the Arab-Israeli War, around 700,000 Palestinian refugees left their homes in a tragic event called the nakba ["catastrophe."] Israel emerged victorious from the war, keeping the land given by the United Nations and taking control of some areas meant for a future Palestinian state. Israel gained West Jerusalem, Egypt gained the Gaza Strip, and Jordan took the West Bank, East Jerusalem, including the Old City with its historic Jewish quarter. Moreover, during this time, the UN passed Resolution 194, calling for the return of Palestinian refugees. Subsequently, discussions arose about the right of Palestinian refugees and their descendants to return, with ongoing debates over the details, which continue to this day.
June 5, 1967 - June 10,	During the Six-Day War, Israel won control over the West Bank,

1967: The Six-Day War	the Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights, and the Sinai Peninsula. Israeli casualties numbered 700 compared to the adversaries' nearly 20,000. Israel remained in the Sinai Peninsula until April 1982.
November 22, 1967: UN Security Council Resolution Calls for Israeli Withdrawal	The UN Security Council adopts Resolution 242, which urges Israel to withdraw from recently occupied territories and to end acts of hostility while also recognizing the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence of all states in the region, promoting peaceful coexistence within clearly defined borders. This resolution introduces the principle of exchanging land for peace.
October 3, 1973: The Yom Kippur War	During the Yom Kippur War, Egypt and Syria attempted to recapture the Israeli-held Sinai Peninsula and Golan Heights, leading to increased tensions between the United States (supporting Israel) and the Soviet Union (supporting Egypt and Syria). The conflict resulted in an oil embargo by OPEC against Israel's supporters, causing a sharp increase in oil prices. The fighting ceased with a UN-mediated ceasefire, and Resolution 338 was passed, calling for enforcing Resolution 242.
September 1, 1978: The Camp David Accords	Israel and Egypt signed the Camp David Accords, paving the way for a potential peace treaty between the two nations. The agreement also binds the Israeli and Egyptian governments, as well as other involved parties, to enter into discussions regarding the future of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.
March 26, 1979: Israel Withdraws From the Sinai Peninsula	Egypt and Israel signed a historic peace treaty, marking the first peace agreement between Israel and an Arab nation. The treaty requires Israel to withdraw from the Sinai Peninsula and abandon its settlements in the region. This move resulted in the end of hostilities between Egypt and Israel, paving the way for normalized diplomatic and trade relations between the two countries. The Israeli prime minister and the Egyptian president have exchanged letters, reaffirming their shared commitment as outlined in the Camp David Accords.

December 1, 1987: The First Intifada	An Israeli driver caused a fatal accident resulting in the deaths of four Palestinians, sparking the first intifada in the West Bank and Gaza. The following six years saw around 200 Israelis and 1,300 Palestinians lose their lives. In the same year, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, a Palestinian cleric, founded Hamas as a branch of the Muslim Brotherhood. Hamas promoted the idea of jihad to reclaim land for Muslims, eventually leading to the United States labeling it a foreign terrorist organization in 1997.
July 31, 1988: Jordan Surrenders Claims on the West Bank and East Jerusalem	King Hussein of Jordan gave up Jordan's claims to the West Bank and East Jerusalem in favor of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). In December, PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat renounced violence, accepted Israel's right to exist, and acknowledged UN Security Council Resolution 242, along with the principle of land for peace. The United States initiated direct discussions with Arafat in response to his statement but halted talks after a Palestinian terrorist incident against Israel.
September 13, 1993: The Oslo Accords	Negotiations held in secret in Norway led to the Oslo Accords, resulting in the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements. Israel and the PLO officially acknowledged each other by exchanging letters before signing the accords. They agreed to establish the Palestinian Authority to oversee the Gaza Strip and West Bank administration temporarily. Additionally, Israel committed to initiate the withdrawal from certain areas of the West Bank, although significant portions of territory and Israeli settlements remain under the exclusive control of the Israeli military. The Oslo Accords set the goal of reaching a peace agreement by 1999. Palestinian leader Arafat, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1994 for their work on the Oslo Accords.
May 4, 1994: The Gaza-Jericho Agreement	The Gaza-Jericho Agreement marked the start of the Oslo Accords, involving Israel's retreat from Gaza and Jericho, transitioning authority to the newly established Palestinian Authority. Key elements include the structure and duties of the Palestinian Authority, its legislative powers, a local police force, and Israeli-PA

	relations. In addition, Arafat returned to Gaza after an extended period away.
September 28, 1995: The Oslo II Accords	Israeli and Palestinian negotiators signed the Interim Agreement, also known as Oslo II, which granted the Palestinians authority over more parts of the West Bank. This agreement outlines the security, electoral, public administration, and economic frameworks to govern these areas until a final peace deal is achieved in 1999.
July 11, 2000 - July 25, 2000: Camp David Summit	President Bill Clinton gathered Israeli and Palestinian leaders for negotiations at Camp David. Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak signaled the readiness to agree to Palestinian sovereignty over approximately 91 percent of the West Bank and specific areas of Jerusalem. This potential deal included a land exchange where Israel would transfer some land to Palestinians as compensation for the remaining 9 percent of the West Bank, which would become part of Israel. Despite two weeks of intensive talks, an agreement was not reached. In the end, President Clinton attributed the failure to Arafat. Clinton presented proposals to both sides before leaving office, but further discussions did not yield any breakthroughs either.
September 28, 2000: The Second Intifada	Israeli politicians, including the divisive retired Israeli general Ariel Sharon, visited the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif, sparking violent demonstrations by Palestinians who perceived the visit as an attempt to alter the status quo at the sacred site. This event signaled the start of the second intifada, lasting until 2005 and characterized by even more violence compared to the first intifada, resulting in the deaths of four thousand Palestinians and one thousand Israelis.
June 23, 2002: The Beginning of Israeli West Bank Barrier-Building	Israel started constructing a security barrier in the West Bank to safeguard Israeli cities and towns against terrorist attacks. The barrier, varying between a wall and a fence, sparked controversy due to its intrusion into West Bank territory to protect settlements. This resulted in Palestinians being isolated from Jerusalem, with villages divided and some unable to access work or school due to the barrier's path. Despite the fact that Israel's Supreme Court mandated changes to the barrier's route, it still hampered

	Palestinian mobility and trade in specific regions.
August 15, 2005: Israeli Disengagement with Gaza	Israel started an independent removal of settlers and military personnel from the Gaza Strip. Despite the withdrawal, the Israeli military still held authority over Gaza's borders, airspace, and coastline, except for the Gaza-Egypt border, which was controlled by Egypt. Following Israel's withdrawal, various militant groups like Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad launched rockets from Gaza into southern Israel.
January 29, 2006: Hamas Expands its Power in Gaza	Hamas won over Fatah in Palestinian elections, which led to the suspension of aid to the Palestinian Authority by the United States and other countries due to Hamas being labeled a terrorist organization. Subsequent attempts by Fatah and Hamas to co-govern the West Bank and Gaza Strip were unsuccessful, ending in Hamas seizing control of the Gaza Strip in 2007.
December 27, 2008: Israel Attacks the Gaza Strip	Israel attacked the Gaza Strip following nearly eight hundred rocket attacks from Gaza on Israeli towns in November and December. Although the war lasted less than a month, it killed hundreds of civilians, in addition to hundreds of combatants, which sparked international criticism.
July 8, 2014 - August 26, 2014: Operation Protective Edge	Following back-and-forth assaults on innocent Israeli and Palestinian civilians by extremists from both sides, Israel conducted a "military operation" in the Gaza Strip. The mission, known as Protective Edge, continued for fifty days resulting in the deaths of approximately two thousand Gazans, sixty-six Israeli soldiers, and five Israeli civilians. In contrast to previous conflicts in 2008-2009 and 2012, Palestinian rockets began being aimed at major Israeli cities. The conflict came to an end when the United States, in coordination with Egypt, Israel, and other regional authorities, mediated a ceasefire agreement.
March 25, 2019: The U.S. Recognizes Israeli Sovereignty Over the Golan Heights	The Trump administration acknowledged Israel's control over the Golan Heights, an area that Israel officially annexed from Syria in 1981. This made the United States the first country, apart from Israel, to endorse Israel's authority over the region.

September 15, 2020: Relations between Some Arab Countries and Israel Are Normalized	Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates decided to establish diplomatic ties with Israel, becoming the first Arab nations to do so in more than twenty-five years. In exchange, Israel declared a halt to its intended annexation of territory in the West Bank. Following suit, Morocco and Sudan also joined the accord and normalized their relations with Israel.
2021: Israel-Hamas Crisis	Palestinians in East Jerusalem were evicted. This led to tensions with Israel and violence at al-Aqsa Mosque. The escalation resulted in casualties on both sides, with over two hundred deaths in Gaza and at least ten in Israel. The Biden administration stepped in to negotiate a ceasefire, while also reinstating some U.S. assistance and diplomatic relations with the Palestinians.
2022: A Deadly Year in Israeli-Palestinian Conflict	Israel initiated a counterterrorism campaign in the West Bank following attacks by Palestinians on Jewish Israelis. The escalation in violence marked the most lethal year for both parties since 2005, with the situation worsening later in 2023.
Oct 7, 2023: Surprise Attack on Israel Launched by Hamas	In 2023, there was increased violence between Israelis and Palestinians, resulting in clashes in the West Bank. In the same year, Hamas unexpectedly attacked Israel, causing significant casualties and leading to a war between the two ("Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Timeline | World101").

Global Reform Efforts:

UNGA Resolution 181
This resolution encapsulates the decision made by the Assembly to partition Palestine into one Arab and one Jewish state. Jerusalem is placed under a special regime. This led to further conflict, extending the dispute rather than resolving it.

UNGA Resolution 194
In 1949, following the 1948 war, the Assembly established the Conciliation Commission for Palestine known as the UNCCP to guide the parties towards a final settlement whilst also reinforcing the rights of Palestinian refugees to return and receive compensation. Moreover, the Palestine refugee agency, UNRWA, now reporting to the GA through SPECPOL, was also established the same year.

UNSC Resolution 2253

Adopted on July 4, 1967, this resolution aims to combat the threat of ISIL or ISIS by imposing sanctions on individuals and entities associated with the group. Its objectives include disrupting ISIL's activities, strengthening global counter-terrorism efforts, promoting international cooperation, dismantling ISIL's financial networks, and upholding human rights and international law in counter-terrorism measures.

UNGA Resolution 3236

In 1974, the General Assembly was brought back to the question of Palestine, adopting Resolution 3236. This resolution reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people as per the UDHR. Thi included the rights to self-determination, national independence, and sovereignty, as well as the right for Palestinians to go back to their residences and possessions.

The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

Shortly after the adoption of Resolution 3236, the General Assembly established the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. The topic of Palestine and associated matters has been the focus of many resolutions and decisions agreed upon during the Assembly's regular, special, and emergency sessions.

UNSC Resolution 1860

Being adopted on January 9, 2009, this resolution aimed to end the conflict between Israel and Hamas in the Gaza Strip, calling for an immediate ceasefire, the withdrawal of Israeli forces, and the unhindered provision and distribution of humanitarian aid to civilians. It stressed the importance of the peaceful resolution of conflicts and the respect for international humanitarian law.

UNSC Resolution 2334

Reaffirming the international community's stance on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, this resolution emphasizes the illegality of Israeli settlements in Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem. It was adopted on December 23, 2016. Its main objectives include condemning settlement activity as a major obstacle to peace, calling for immediate steps to reverse such activities, and reiterating support for a negotiated two-state solution, with Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security within recognized borders ("General Assembly - Question of Palestine").

UNGA Resolution 77/24

This resolution, adopted on November 30, 2022, aimed to establish a Special Information Programme on the Question of Palestine and the Department of Global Communications of the Secretariat.

UNGA Resolution 77/23

This resolution, adopted on December 9, 2022, aimed to reaffirm the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, condemning Israeli settlements in the occupied territories as illegal under international law, and calling for the resumption of peace negotiations based on a two-state solution. Establishing the Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat, this resolution also stressed the importance of upholding human rights and international humanitarian law in the region ("Compilation of UN Resolutions and Decisions Adopted in 2022 – DPR publication (A/AC.183/L.2/Add.44)").

Topics your Resolutions Should Address:

Legality and International Law

Delegates may propose the establishment of an impartial international legal mechanism to assess the legality of Israel's actions according to relevant international law, providing a transparent and objective framework for adjudicating disputes. In addition, delegates could advocate for the implementation of confidence-building measures and mutual recognition between Israel and Palestine, fostering trust and paving the way for constructive negotiations towards a comprehensive peace agreement. Finally, they might suggest the deployment of international peacekeeping forces to monitor compliance with any agreements reached and to ensure the protection of civilians and human rights in the affected territories. These solutions aim to address the legal, political, and security dimensions of the issue, fostering a conducive environment for the peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Humanitarian Impact and Human Rights

Furthermore, delegates might propose the establishment of humanitarian corridors to ensure the unimpeded delivery of aid and essential services to the affected Palestinian population, mitigating the humanitarian crisis and alleviating suffering. Delegates could advocate for the creation of international monitoring mechanisms to oversee the protection of human rights in the occupied territories, including the rights to freedom of movement, access to healthcare, and education. Moreover, they might call for the establishment of dialogue channels between relevant stakeholders to address specific humanitarian issues and promote cooperation in meeting the needs of vulnerable populations. These solutions aim to address immediate

humanitarian needs while laying the groundwork for long-term sustainable development and peace-building efforts in the region.

Regional Stability and Security

Moreover, delegates may also propose the convening of multilateral diplomatic initiatives aimed at de-escalating tensions and promoting dialogue between Israel and neighboring states, fostering trust and cooperation to address shared security concerns. Additionally, delegates could advocate for the implementation of confidence-building measures, such as the establishment of demilitarized zones or joint security arrangements, to reduce the risk of conflict and enhance stability in the region. Moreover, they might call for enhanced international cooperation and support for conflict prevention and resolution efforts, including the deployment of peacekeeping forces or the establishment of mediation mechanisms to facilitate peaceful resolution of disputes. These solutions aim to mitigate the risks of escalation and promote a conducive environment for regional peace and stability.

Diplomatic and Negotiation Efforts

Finally, the delegates may propose the resumption of direct, bilateral negotiations between Israel and Palestine, facilitated by a neutral mediator or international organization, to address core issues such as borders, settlements, and the status of Jerusalem. Delegates could advocate for the establishment of a multilateral framework for peace talks, involving regional stakeholders and international partners, to ensure comprehensive and inclusive negotiations that address the interests and concerns of all parties involved. Moreover, they might call for the implementation of confidence-building measures and goodwill gestures to build trust and create a conducive environment for successful negotiations, including the cessation of provocative actions and unilateral measures by both sides. These solutions aim to reinvigorate the peace process and advance towards a sustainable, negotiated settlement to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Countries & Party Stances: [6 countries & parties minimum, 100 words minimum for each description]

Asia

Iran

Iran's significance in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict lies in its historical support for militant groups like Hamas and Islamic Jihad, rooted in anti-Israeli sentiment and a commitment to Palestinian resistance. This support reflects Iran's broader geopolitical interests, seeking to challenge Western influence and assert itself as a leader in the Islamic world. However, Iran's

involvement has led to diplomatic isolation, economic sanctions, and regional tensions with Israel and its allies. Despite potential shifts in Iranian politics, its stance on the conflict remains entrenched, with continued support for Palestinian groups likely as part of its broader regional agenda.

Jordan

Jordan's significance in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict stems from its historical involvement, shared borders with Israel and the West Bank, and significant Palestinian population. As one of only two Arab states to have signed a peace treaty with Israel, Jordan has played a key role in past peace negotiations and advocates for a two-state solution based on pre-1967 borders. The stability and security of Jordan are closely linked to the resolution of the conflict, with potential implications for its economy, refugee population, and regional standing. Jordan's future plans likely involve continued diplomatic efforts to advance peace and stability in the region.

Europe

France

France holds significance in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict due to its historical involvement and ongoing diplomatic efforts. As a key player in European and international diplomacy, France has consistently advocated for a two-state solution and facilitated peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. Its historical ties to the region, coupled with its commitment to upholding international law and human rights, underscore its role as a mediator and peace broker. France's involvement in the conflict has implications for its regional influence and credibility as a peacemaker. In the future, France is likely to continue its diplomatic initiatives and support for a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

The United Kingdom

The United Kingdom plays an incredibly important part in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict because of its historical ties to the region, along with its continuous diplomatic engagements. As a former colonial power and mandate holder in Palestine, the UK has played a role in shaping the conflict's dynamics. While maintaining close relations with Israel, the UK recognizes the rights of Palestinians and supports efforts for a two-state solution. Its involvement includes diplomatic initiatives, humanitarian aid, and support for Palestinian development. The UK's stance on the conflict impacts its regional standing and relations with key stakeholders. In the future, it is likely to continue diplomatic efforts aimed at achieving a just and lasting peace.

Latin America

Brazil

Brazil's significance in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict lies in its historical involvement and diplomatic influence. As a major regional power with a sizable Palestinian diaspora, Brazil has maintained diplomatic relations with both Israel and the Palestinians and has periodically engaged in peace initiatives. While advocating for a two-state solution, Brazil's stance on the conflict reflects its commitment to multilateralism and human rights. Brazil's role is affected by its domestic politics, including shifts in government and public opinion. In the future, Brazil is likely to continue supporting diplomatic efforts for peace and advocating for Palestinian rights on the international stage.

Argentina

Argentina's significance in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict comes from its historical support for the Palestinian cause and its sizable Arab displacement, including Palestinian communities. Argentina has recognized Palestine as a state and consistently advocated for Palestinian rights in international forums. Its stance reflects a commitment to multilateralism and human rights principles. Argentina's involvement is influenced by domestic politics and regional dynamics. In the future, Argentina is likely to continue supporting Palestinian aspirations and advocating for a peaceful resolution to the conflict, while also navigating its relations with Israel and other regional actors.

North America

The United States of America

The United States holds an imperatively significant influence in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, given its historical involvement and role as a key mediator. Looking back in history, the US has facilitated peace negotiations, hosted landmark agreements, and provided substantial economic and military support to Israel. Its stance has often aligned closely with Israeli interests, though with occasional shifts in policy. However, US involvement has also faced criticism for perceived bias and failure to achieve lasting peace. Looking ahead, the US aims to continue promoting negotiations for a two-state solution while navigating regional complexities and balancing its strategic interests in the Middle East.

Canada

Canada is a nation of high significance amidst the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, holding the role of a diplomatic actor advocating for a two-state solution and promoting peace initiatives. While maintaining strong ties with Israel, Canada also recognizes the rights of Palestinians and provides humanitarian aid to Palestinian territories. Historically, Canada has engaged in diplomatic efforts and supported international resolutions aimed at resolving the conflict. Canada's involvement reflects its commitment to promoting peace, security, and human rights in the Middle East. Looking forward, Canada plans to continue its diplomatic efforts, supporting

negotiations for a peaceful resolution while navigating regional complexities and maintaining a balanced approach to the conflict.

Oceania

Australia

Australia holds limited direct significance in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict but has historically supported a two-state solution and occasionally engaged in diplomatic initiatives for peace. While maintaining strong ties with Israel, Australia also recognizes the rights of Palestinians and provides humanitarian aid. Its involvement has been primarily diplomatic, with statements supporting peace negotiations and occasional criticism of Israeli settlements. Australia's stance reflects its commitment to stability in the Middle East and adherence to international law. Looking ahead, Australia plans to continue its diplomatic efforts, supporting peaceful resolutions while balancing regional relationships and domestic interests.

New Zealand

Another nation that holds a significant role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is New Zealand. The nation has contributed to global reform effortsthrough its diplomatic engagement and advocacy for a two-state solution. While maintaining balanced relations with Israel and the Palestinians, New Zealand has occasionally criticized Israeli settlement expansion and supported Palestinian rights in international forums. Its involvement reflects a commitment to multilateralism and promoting peaceful resolutions to global conflicts. Although geographically distant, New Zealand is affected by regional instability and humanitarian concerns in the Middle East. Looking ahead, New Zealand plans to continue its diplomatic efforts, supporting peace negotiations and humanitarian aid initiatives while navigating regional complexities and maintaining principled engagement.

Independent Groups

Hamas

Hamas is a Palestinian militant group and political organization that controls the Gaza Strip. It plays a significant role in the conflict through its armed resistance against Israeli occupation and control, as well as its governance of Gaza. Hamas rejects the existence of Israel and advocates for the establishment of an Islamic state in historic Palestine. Its actions, including rocket attacks on Israel and involvement in armed conflicts, have profound implications for the dynamics of the conflict and efforts to achieve peace.

Palestinian Authority (PA)

The Palestinian Authority is the governing body of the Palestinian territories in the West Bank, established through the Oslo Accords. Led by the Fatah party, the PA has a significant role in representing Palestinian interests in negotiations with Israel and managing domestic affairs. While officially committed to a two-state solution, the PA faces challenges such as internal divisions, governance issues, and limited control over territory due to Israeli occupation. Its actions and policies influence the trajectory of the conflict and efforts to achieve Palestinian statehood.

Questions to Consider

1. What measures should be taken to address the legal status of Israel's annexation of occupied territories under international law?
2. How can humanitarian concerns, including access to aid, services, and protection, be effectively addressed in annexed territories?
3. What strategies can be implemented to ensure regional stability and security in light of annexation and its implications for dynamics of the Middle East?
4. How can diplomatic efforts be enhanced to promote dialogue and negotiations between Israel and Palestine, with the aim of achieving just and lasting peace?
5. What steps should be taken by the international community to respond to annexation, uphold international law, and hold relevant parties accountable for their actions?

Recommended Websites to Use

- Full Background Information on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict:
  https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/israeli-palestinian-conflict
- Full Timeline of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict:
  https://world101.cfr.org/understanding-international-system/conflict/israeli-palestinian-conflict-timeline
- Compilation of UN Resolutions and Decisions Adopted in 2022 on the Question of Palestine:
  https://www.un.org/unispal/document/compilation-of-un-resolutions-and-decisions-adopted-in-2022-dpr-publication-a-ac-183-l-2-add-44/
- List of Resolutions and Information on The Question of Palestine and the General Assembly: https://www.un.org/unispal/data-collection/general-assembly/

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Topic 2: The Question of Achieving Economic Decolonization in Francophone Africa - Nami

TOPIC INTRODUCTION:

The question of achieving economic decolonization in Francophone Africa continues to be a pivotal issue with great significance in the contemporary global landscape, deeply rooted in a history defined by colonial exploitation. During the colonial era, colonised regions in Africa experienced the extraction of natural resources and faced the imposition of economic structures that only benefited colonial powers. Even after gaining independence, many of these nations continue to struggle with economic dependencies and structures from their history.

Today, these issues are exacerbated by an economic landscape that often disadvantages developing nations. Economic decolonization in Francophone Africa involves global cooperation in dismantling present systems that continue to perpetuate unequal economic relations. The pursuit of economic autonomy comes in response to persistent disparities in wealth, resources, and influence. Former colonial relations, especially with the French Republic, have left a long-lasting impact on the economic structures of these nations. Even in the present day, Francophone African countries often find themselves at a disadvantage in economic relationships, seeing unfavourable trade terms and experiencing debt burdens that hinder their ability to invest in necessary social and economic development within their own nations. These countries aim to reduce their vulnerability to external economic shocks and fluctuations by aiming for greater economic self-sufficiency. Economic decolonization can also be seen as a strategy for nations to assert their own economic interests and have more equity in an international marketplace. This can involve advocating for fair trade practices and promoting a more inclusive and balanced economic and trade system.

This goal of economic decolonization for former colonies is part of a broader global conversation on post-colonial justice reparations and aims to create a more balanced and sustainable international economic order. The efforts towards economic decolonization are essential to addressing the legacy of historical exploitation and creating self-determination.
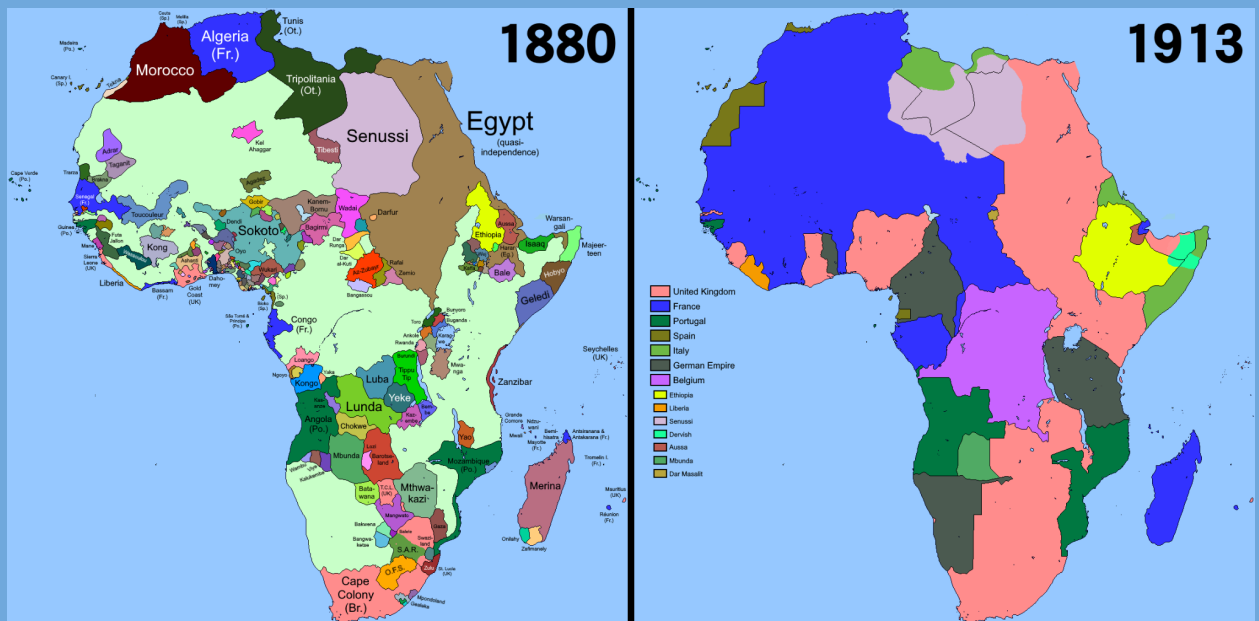
KEY TERMS:

Term	Definition
Colonisation	Colonisation is defined as the acquisition, establishment and expansion of control over territories and populations by a foreign power. The coloniser's political, social, and economic systems are typically imposed on the occupied region, and the impacts of colonisation extend well beyond the period of establishment.
Decolonisation	Decolonisation refers to the processes or actions taken to undo or reverse the effects of colonisation. This often includes efforts to restore and maintain local culture, autonomy, and dismantle unjust political, economic and social systems.
Francophone Africa	Refers to French-speaking countries within Africa that share historical ties with France due to colonisation.
Neocolonialism	Neocolonialism refers to the continued indirect influence and power of former colonial powers over previous colonies and lower-income countries. Neocolonialism differs from traditional colonialism and does not function through direct means of territorial control.
Economic Decolonisation	Economic decolonisation is achieving economic independence and autonomy for formerly colonised nations, which typically depend on external economic stakeholders, such as other nations or multinational financial institutions.
Self-determination	Self-determination is a principle protected by international law and is considered a fundamental human right. It emphasises autonomy and the right of a nation to determine its own political status, seek economic liberties, and preserve cultural traditions.
Reparations	Reparations are financial or other means of compensation provided to individuals or groups of people to address historical or current injustices. Reparations are typically relevant to injustices related to slavery, systematic discrimination, and colonisation.

History of The Topic:

In the late 19th century, France and other European powers began building empires overseas, starting a wave of colonisation that continued to have a long-lasting impact on many regions of Africa. This colonial era was defined by the development of European control, economic exploitation, and the elimination of colonial establishments. Local economies of colonised African nations were often reshaped or discarded entirely to serve and benefit the economic interests of the colonisers, with little regard for the development or well-being of indigenous populations.

While French presence in Africa dates back to the 17th century, the beginning of French dominion over the region would begin later on in the year 1830 with the invasion of Ottoman Algiers. During what would be referred to as the "Scramble for Africa", the seven Western European powers composed of Belgian, the British Empire, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, and Spain would invade, annexe, divide and colonise most of Africa. This period of time between the years 1833 and 1914 was also an era known as "New Imperialism."

Comparison of Africa in the years 1880 and 1913 - Image via Anon

Economic exploitation and inequality during this period of time worsened as colonies became sources of agricultural and mining resources. This contributed significantly to the wealth of colonising nations. This extraction of resources came at a cost to the local population, where funds earned were never reinvested back into the local infrastructure or institutions, leading to economic disparity that would have long-lasting consequences for the impacted nations.

During the mid-20th century, rising sentiment against imperialism and the shifting post-World War II geopolitical landscape resulted in a surge of decolonisation movements across Africa. The 1950s and 60s saw many African nations gaining independence, led by leaders such as Leopold Sedar Senghor (Senegal) and Félix Houphouët-Boigny (Côte d'Ivoire) during negotiations.

Despite gaining political independence, Francophone African nations still face numerous challenges in gaining autonomy and removing neo-colonial ties. Economic relations with their former colonisers through means of currency, trade agreements, and political dependencies put them at a disadvantage. This lasting economic dependency, alongside inherited debt burdens and hinders the ability of these nations to begin independent economic growth. In response to the goals of economic decolonisation and deconstruction, many African nations have sought regional cooperation as a means to foster economic growth and political stability. Organisations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), composed of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo, were formed to promote collaboration among member states.

Image of ECOWAS logo via ECOWAS

Today, organisations and movements within Francophone Africa continue to call for economic reform, fair trade practices, and the reduction of neocolonial influences. Efforts are being made to address issues of corruption, promote sustainable development, and diversify economies for inclusive growth, with varying degrees of success. The region is undergoing demographic and economic shifts, with an emphasis on overcoming historical legacies and fostering a path toward economic independence.

Timeline:

Date	Description
1885 - The Berlin Conference	The Berlin Conference marked the formal establishment of European colonial rule in Africa. European powers, including France, gathered to partition and establish control over the continent, disregarding local boundaries and ethnic divisions.
1960s - Independence	The 1960s saw a significant wave of independence for many Francophone African nations. In this decade, numerous countries, including Senegal, Mali, Cameroon, and Togo, gained sovereignty from their colonial rulers. This marked a crucial turning point in the history of the region.
1970's - Currency Reform	A currency reform was implemented in many Francophone African countries. The CFA Franc, tied to the French franc and later the euro, continued to be used, but modifications were put in place. The currency arrangement has been both a symbol and a source of economic ties with France.
1980s - Structural Adjustment Programs	During the 1980s, many Francophone African nations adopted Structural Adjustment Programs under the guidance of international financial institutions. These programs aimed at economic liberalisation and stabilisation but often led to social challenges and increased dependence on external aid.
2001 - New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)	In 2001, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) was launched as an African-led initiative to address development challenges on the continent. Although not exclusive to Francophone Africa, NEPAD showed a collective effort to promote good governance, economic growth, and sustainable development.
2013 - France-Mali Intervention	In 2013, the French military intervention in Mali aimed to counter insurgent threats and stabilise the region. The intervention highlighted France's continued military involvement in its former colonies and raised questions about the post-colonial involvement.

Global Reform Efforts:

UNGA Resolution 1803 (1962):
This resolution on Permanent Sovereignty over Natural Resources affirmed the right of nations to freely determine their economic, social, and cultural policies. It has been relevant to discussions on economic decolonisation and resource management in Francophone Africa.

UNGA Resolution 39/7 (1984):
This resolution addressed the debt crisis in developing countries, including many in Francophone Africa. It called for debt relief measures to alleviate the economic burden on these nations.

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD):
UNCTAD has consistently advocated for fair trade practices and economic policies that benefit developing nations. Through conferences, reports, and resolutions, UNCTAD has addressed issues such as debt relief, trade imbalances, and the promotion of sustainable economic development in Francophone Africa.

UNCTAD's Debt Management Conference:
UNCTAD organizes conferences on debt management and sustainable finance. These discussions address the economic challenges faced by developing nations, including those in Francophone Africa, and explore strategies for managing debt burdens while fostering economic growth.

African Union (AU) and NEPAD:
The AU, along with NEPAD, has been essential in creating regional strategies for economic development. The AU's Agenda 2063 outlines goals for the continent, emphasising economic transformation, industrialisation, and self-reliance.

Chad and France - 2013:
During the 1960s, as France sought to develop its nuclear capabilities, a series of nuclear tests were conducted in the Sahara region of what is now Chad. These tests, known as the "Gerboise" series, took place between 1960 and 1961 in the Reggane and Tanezrouft areas. The environmental and health impacts of these tests, both immediate and long-term, have been a source of concern. As a result, in 2013 the Chadian government, led by President Idriss Déby, called for France to take responsibility for the health and environmental consequences of the nuclear tests and to financially compensate the victims. Chad argued that the nuclear tests had

led to adverse health effects on the local population and that there had been insufficient acknowledgement of the environmental impact. This issue prompted diplomatic discussions between Chad and France. President Déby called for dialogue and cooperation to address the concerns raised by the Chadian government. The matter did not result in a formal legal action or lawsuit, but it brought attention to the historical legacy of nuclear testing in the region and the potential responsibility of the former colonial power.

Topics your Resolutions Should Address:

Below, there are several topics that resolutions can include. They are placed in this background guide to help delegates focus their research.

Corruption and Governance Policies

Numerous countries in Central and West Africa struggle with issues related to corruption, bribery and widespread distrust of the government. Resolutions should address systems and lack of strong legislation in African countries that allow for abuse of office.

Economic Aid

Many higher-income countries have tried aiding African Francophone countries in funding, which has led to an aid-dependent economic model. This has led many corrupt governments to view aid as a source of income rather than a tool for development. African countries can work towards prioritizing promoting private sector development, entrepreneurship, and increasing the ability of citizens to obtain upwards social mobility. This leads to nations moving towards more sustainable economic growth and independence.

Development models

A suggested solution is for Francophone African countries to adopt a model similar to the Marshall Plan, which was essential for the rebuilding of European economies after World War II. Through comprehensive assistance aimed at economic development and strengthening democratic institutions, similar positive impacts could be seen. This would require significant investment and cooperation from donor countries to support infrastructural development, education, and governance reforms. Extra precautionary measures are needed to ensure that models proposed would be in the best interest of the lower income nations.

Countries & Party Stances:

Here is some baseline information on some countries that have prominent stances on this use, this research can be used to help guide delegates with the research process.

Africa:

Chad

As a former French colony and due to previous historical involvement, much of Chad's economy has been influenced by colonial policy and French interest. Chas was under French colonial rule from the late 19th century till gaining independence in 1960. Under colonial rule, Chad's economy centered around the extraction of natural resources and labor, which is still persistent today. Chad is facing many economic and developmental challenges. This includes a reliance on primary commodities such as oil, making its economy less diversified and vulnerable to market fluctuation. Limited infrastructure, political instability and government corruption are also barriers preventing economic development.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), historically known as the Belgian Congo, was under French colonial rule in 1882, and under Belgian colonial rule from 1908 till 1960. Under these times, the Democratic Republic of the Congo experienced mass exploitation of natural resources, forced human labor, and political repression. In spite of gaining political independence in 1960, the DRC still struggles with ties to its colonial history. According to the World Bank, the DRC is one of the five poorest nations in the world, struggling with political instability, corruption, and armed conflict, exacerbated by a lack of stable infrastructure.

Côte d'Ivoire

Also known as the Ivory Coast, Côte d'Ivoire was former French colony until gaining independence in 1960. During the colonial period, the country's natural resources were heavily exploited, particularly coffee and cacao. This led to a lack of diversification in the country's economy, resulting in economic consequences prevalent to today. In recent years, however, the Ivory Coast has seen massive economic growth, becoming one of the fastest growing economies in Africa. This has been attributed to the expansion beyond the traditional agricultural sector, and the regional cooperation within West Africa.