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**VIENNA INTERNATIONAL
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(HISTOMUN)**

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Preparation Paper

Security Council 22 May 1948

Decision on Palestine

General overview of the world at the time

This is the year 1948, the 22nd of May. The United Nations consist of 58 Members, it is only slightly older than the so-called "Cold War", the atmosphere of hostility between the Soviet-bloc and Western countries. The US advances the build-up of Europe by means of the Marshall-Plan, an aid package connected to the demand for democratic reform. The **Union of Soviet Socialistic Republics** are neither willing to accept this help for themselves nor for the territories under their control. The US ended World War II with two atomic bombs, also a message to the former ally Stalin, who tacitly supports the communists under Mao Zedong in the **Chinese** Civil War against the struggling government of Chiang Kai-Shek. The legacy of World War I, the Class-A-mandates the United Nations took over from the League of Nations, are abolished. While large parts of the globe remain colonies, the impetus for sovereignty bears it's first fruits. **The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland** leaves Palestine, Transjordan and India into independence, which forces the former world power to accept it's new role as the junior partner in the "special relationship" towards the **United States of America**. These "Big Four" were joined by **France**, nominally a winner of World War II, becoming the Permanent Five, equipped with the power to veto any resolution.

Under its presidency the P5 and Argentina, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Syria and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic face a difficult task: to settle a conflict in a region the superpowers are eager to control, full of oil, the history of colonialism and the presence of those who could escape the Shoah, loaded with religious and ethnic tensions, while one in their midst belongs to the very group of Arab countries that attacked the newly founded Jewish state.

Will internal conflicts impede a solution? Will the holy city of Jerusalem come into the heritage of peace promised by its name?

It is up to you to influence the course of history.

Remember: you represent not only a state, you do so in the light of a the historical setting sketched out in the lines above. Don't base your position on knowledge not available to the person you represent at the time.

The situation in Palestine, a timeline:

1882: first wave of immigration of Jews to Ottoman-ruled Palestine

1915: Sharif Husayn ibn Ali, ruler of the Hejaz, and Sir Henry McMahon, British High Commissioner in Egypt exchange letters in which Arab independence is promised in exchange for Arab support against the Central Powers. The exact boundaries were not clear in regard to French interests and regions "not purely Arab".

1916: The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and France sign the Asia Minor Agreement (better known as Sykes-Picot-Agreement) in which they define their spheres of influence and control, which causes controversy in regard to the promises of the Husayn-McMahon correspondence. Parts of Palestine are planned to be administered by the signatories, later including Russia

1917: Arthur James Balfour expresses the British governments support for the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine in a letter to Lord Rothschild

1920: At the San Remo Conference Britain receives the mandate over Palestine, approved by the League of Nations July 1922, where the "Balfour-Declaration" is incorporated. Transjordan, created 1921 as an administrative division, is exempt from these provisions September 1922. The Haycraft Commission blames violence against Jews on Arabs discontent with Zionism.

1922: British High Commissioner Sir Herbert Samuel appoints arrested riot-leader Haj Amin al-Husseini to mufti of Jerusalem

1924: The exact boundaries of the Mandate of Palestine are finalized, most of the Golan goes to French-Syria

1936-39: The Jewish self-defence organization Hagannah which protected Jews during the Arab riots of

1928/29 is legalized by the British authorities in order to fight the "Arab Uprising"

1937: The Peel Commission plans partition of the Mandate into a Jewish and an Arab part, the latter was to become part of Transjordan; this plan included exchange of population.

1938: The Woodhead Commission dismisses all plans for partition as impracticable.

1939: The McDonald White Paper restricts immigration of and land-transfer to Jews.

1945: In the light of the British policy of upholding the 1939 White Paper, Hagannah and terrorist groups like Irgun join forces against the British, the most notable attack was the bombing of the King David Hotel, where the British Military Command was located.

April 1947: The United Kingdom request the United Nations to set up a Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP). UNSCOP recommended Palestine to be partitioned.

29 November 1947: UNGA Resolution 181 is adopted (33 in favour, 13 against, 3 abstentions) and divides Palestine into a Jewish state, an Arab state and a UN-administered Jerusalem.

1947-148: Terrorist attacks from both sides define this period, including the "massacre at Deir Yassin"

14 May 1948: The mandate ends, at midnight the state of Israel is proclaimed.

15 May 1948: The armed forces of Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Transjordan and Iraq attack Israel.

Links:

We will try to find information that addresses the very need of every delegates country assignment. Though you should be aware of the positions of your allies or enemies, the information provided here is rather general, and not country-specific. As this conflict is quite hot and controversial, you might stumble over sources that are very one-sided. Keep this in mind and use them only in accordance with your countries stance in relation to the respective bias. (Also take into account the bias that might occur in UN-documents and that it may shift with time)

<http://www.un.org/depts/dpa/gpal/>

<http://www.palestinefacts.org/index.php> (quite biased)

<http://www.palestine-un.org/>

<http://www.un.dk/seminar/palestine%20book%20june2002.pdf>

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