



HSC Chair Report

The Aftermath of the Palestine Conflict of 1948: The Creation of Israel and the
Palestinian Refugee Crisis.

Chair: Mai Le

Deputy Chair: David Muresan

Personal Statements

Chair – Mai Le

Dear Delegates, My name is Mai and I'm 17 years old. I live in Arnhem, The Netherlands and I have always loved MUN's. MUNISS will be my 10th conference, 2nd one to chair and I'm super excited to be chairing the Historical Security Council along with my co-chair Dave! For me, MUN's have always been great to meet new people and make new friends, as well as the interesting debating throughout the conference. HSC is a great committee to put your debating skills into practice and considering some countries also have Veto, it definitely is a perfect committee to picture yourself in the actual United Nations.

Anyhow, I can't wait to meet everyone and listen to all the amazing debating!



Deputy Chair – David Muresan

Hello Delegates, my name is Dave and I am 17 years old. I was born in Târgu Mureș, Romania, but am now living in Hamburg, Germany. This year's MUNISS will be my first time chairing at a conference, and my fourth official conference overall. I am very excited to be your chair in the Historical Security Council. I find this committee especially great because it gives all of us a chance to better understand how past events were handled, and to come up with a solution based on our generation's modern thinking. I'm looking forward to hear what everyone comes up with, and what fruitful debate comes from it!



Introduction

It has been a topic that has been in the news a lot recently, especially since October 7th. The conflict regarding the ground on Palestine and Israel's soil has been an ongoing conflict for years already, resulting in a huge humanitarian crisis that is still happening. Violence and crime have still not resolved the issue and the conflict still relies on the question to whom the land actually belongs. After the second World War, there was a large increase in Jewish immigration, mainly from Eastern Europe where the numbers began swelling in the 1930's with the Nazi persecution. So, in 1947, the United Nations proposed to partition Palestine into two independent States. One conforming of Palestinian Arab and the other Jewish, with Jerusalem internationalized. However, to the opposite attempt of the United Nations to unite both nations, escalating tensions between both parties led to violence. In 1948 the declaration of the state of Israel took place, though afterward, Arab states intervened in support of the Palestinian Arabs, causing the conflict to escalate into a full-scale one.¹

The outcome has led to the establishment of Israel as an independent state, but the violence during the conflict has caused millions of deaths among men, children, women as well as millions of refugees who have fled the countries, in search of safety. The conflict remains unresolved however, despite many previous attempts.

¹ Dpr. (2023, 20 oktober). *History of the Question of Palestine - Question of Palestine*. Question Of Palestine. <https://www.un.org/unispal/history/>



Glossary

- **Apartheid** = the implementation and maintenance of a system of legalized racial segregation in which one racial group is deprived of political and civil rights. It was specifically a system to keep caucasian people from non-caucasian people separated in South Africa from 1950 until the 1990's.
- **Arab** = a person who originates from the Arabian Peninsula. Someone who speaks Arabic as their mother tongue.
- **BDS/boycotting** = BDS stands for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions. It's a movement that aims to put economic and political pressure on Israel to change its policies towards Palestinians. Boycott means to refuse buying products or services that come from Israel or companies that support Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories. Divestment involves urging institutions like universities, pension funds, or governments to withdraw their investments from companies that are involved in Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories. And sanctions refers to calling for governments to impose sanctions or penalties on Israel until it complies with international law and respects Palestinian rights.
- **Colonialism** = Colonialism refers to systems of domination, land, economic and population control by one country, power, or empire, over another, in the latter's indigenous land, to the detriment, exploitation, and abuse of the indigenous population.
- **Freedom fighter** = a person who takes part in a revolutionary struggle to achieve a political goal, especially in order to overthrow their government.
- **Holocaust** = The Holocaust is the term used to describe the Nazi genocide of over six million Jews and other minorities during World War Two, 1939-1945.
- **Intifada** = Intifada means 'uprising' in Arabic. This refers to two or three periods in the history of the conflict in which Palestinians rose up against the Israeli occupation.
- **Israel** = Israel has been a fully recognised and legally established state since 1948.
- **Jewish** = The term Jewish generally refers to someone of the Jewish faith, but Jewish is also an ethnicity; There are Mizrahi and Sephardi Jews, who herald from North Africa, the Middle East and southern Spain, there are African Jews, particularly from Ethiopia and Eritrea, and numerous other origins.
- **Muslim** = Muslim refers to people who follow the religion of Islam.
- **Nakba** = This Arabic word refers to the 1948 catastrophe or devastation for Palestinians. After Israel accepted the 1947 UN partition plan and declared their independence, the Palestinians rejected the offer, for colorful reasons, and the girding countries declared war on Israel. Israel won that war, and during that war around 750,000 Palestinians were expelled or fled from their homes, all hoping to return.
- **Occupation** = The occupation refers to Israeli control of the West Bank and East Jerusalem which is illegal under International Law and has persisted since the 1967 six-day-war.
- **Palestinian** = Palestinian refers to someone who identifies as Palestinian due to their heritage or nationality.



- **Refugees:** Refugees are people who are fleeing, or have been pushed out of their home towns or countries due to threats to their life which may be political, social, economic, or environmental.
- **Zionism:** Zionism is Israel's national ideology. Zionists believe Judaism is a nation as well as a religion, and that Jews earn their own state in their ancestral motherland, Israel, in the same way the French people earn France or the Chinese people should have China. ²

² *A GUIDE TO VOCABULARY ON THE TOPIC OF ISRAELPALESTINE.* (z.d.). Solutions Not Sides. Geraadpleegd op 23 februari 2024, van <https://solutionsnotsides.co.uk/sites/default/files/2023-04/ISRAEL-PALESTINE%20VOCAB%20GUIDE.pdf>



Issue Explanation

The conflict has been ongoing for many years already. However, the situation escalated regionally but was also a shock globally on the 7th of October 2023. The 7th of October is known to be the official Jewish sabbath day, the end of the weeklong Jewish festival of Sukkot. Hamas, known to be the largest and most capable militant group in Palestinian territories and one of the territories major political parties as well as other Palestinian armed groups launched the Operation al-Aqsa Flood. This operation consisted of land and air attacks into various border areas of Israel. Rockets were launched into coastal towns of Ashdod and Ashkelon and it has been estimated that between 3-5000 rockets were launched during that first day.³ The attack had killed more than 1400 Israelis as well as 240 being taken hostage by Hamas. Israel has responded with widespread bombardment of the Gaza Strip and a ground incursion, killing and injuring tens of thousands of Palestinians.⁴ The current issues with the conflict lies in the thousands of Israelis as well as Palestinian deaths, injured and displaced. Israel states on January 7th to have successfully destroyed the fighting force of Hamas in Northern Gaza and is shifting its focus to the central and southern parts of the territory. Nearly two million Gazans, further than 85 percent of the population, have fled their homes since Israel began its military operation. Attacks on medical structure and a lack of introductory inventories have reduced the number of performing hospitals to only nine, all of which are in the south, and the World Health Organization has advised of complaint spread in addition to mounting mercenary casualties.

Right now, the Israel-Palestine conflict is causing a humanitarian crisis. The primary concern in the conflict lies in the increases in loss of life. The safety of civilians in both territories lies in a lot of danger, as well as those being held hostage by the militants in Gaza. Since also, the two sides have traded diurnal rocket fire, and Israel ordered further than one million Palestinian civilians in northern Gaza to void ahead of a ground irruption that began on October 28. Israeli forces have encircled Gaza City, cutting it off from southern Gaza and squeezing Hamas. Hundreds of thousands of civilians remain in the city. Gazan health officials say the war has killed 10,000 Palestinians, including more than 4,000 children. The territory is also desperately low on water, fuel, and supplies as Israel has rejected humanitarian pauses and limited the amount of aid that can enter. The relegation of millions more Palestinians presents a dilemma for Egypt and Jordan, which have absorbed hundreds of thousands of Palestinians in the history but have defied accepting anyone during the current war.⁵ Israeli strikes have caused enormous damage to buildings and civil infrastructure. The ongoing military and political conflict cause

³ *Fact Sheet: Israel and Palestine Conflict (19 October 2023) - occupied Palestinian territory.* (2023, 20 oktober). ReliefWeb. <https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/fact-sheet-israel-and-palestine-conflict-19-october-2023>

⁴ Beauchamp, Z. (2023, 9 november). What are Israel and Palestine? Why are they fighting? Vox. <https://www.vox.com/2018/11/20/18080002/israel-palestine-conflict-history-overview-map>

⁵ *Israeli-Palestinian Conflict | Global Conflict Tracker.* (z.d.). Global Conflict Tracker. <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/israeli-palestinian-conflict>



both parties to continue firing air and artillery strikes that can be devastating to the civilians.

However, the unsolved question of the Israel-Palestine conflict can also lead to consequences globally, such as affecting the global economy. Conflicts in the Middle East tend to lead to spikes in oil prices – think of the OPEC oil embargo of 1973-1974, the Iranian revolution of 1978-1979, the Iran-Iraq War initiated in 1980, and the first Persian Gulf War in 1990-91. Since the region accounts for nearly a third of global oil production, any insecurity can produce market queries grounded on enterprises about interruptions to global oil production. This query is reflected in the threat premium in oil production requests. This is the price paid for oil production traded ahead of time in the futures markets versus the real-time price of oil production. It reflects the gains that bookmakers anticipate to admit from buying and dealing oil production during a time of conflict, as well as the hedging requirements of businesses that produce and consume oil production and their enterprises about force and demand. And so, the effect of the rearmost Israel-Hamas conflict on global oil production requests will depend on the involvement of other major indigenous powers. However, the effect will presumably be limited and arguably exclusive to countries with direct trade exposure to Israel or Palestine, if the conflict remains between Israel and Hamas. But if the conflict spreads to major oil production-producing nations in the region similar as Iran, the global economy could face severe impacts as energy costs for businesses and homes could spike if force is intruded. Advanced energy prices would hinder central banks' attempts to constrain inflationary pressures in most advanced and arising economies. However, it would push up the cost of borrowing and refinancing by governments, companies and people, if this leads to a "tighter for longer" financial policy that keeps interest rates elevated. ⁶ The world we currently live in has already been tensely polarized and this conflict can lead to an increase even. With the role of media and social media playing a crucial role in today's society, it has already become noticeable that two sides have been formed, pro-Israel or pro-Palestinian. Anti-Semitism, including death threats to Jewish groups and organizations in the United States, is on the rise in disgusting ways. Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands have turned out in pro-Palestinian demonstrations from London to Kuala Lumpur. ⁷

⁶ Bianchi, D. (z.d.). *How the Israel-Hamas war could affect the world economy and worsen global trade tensions*. The Conversation. <https://theconversation.com/how-the-israel-amas-war-could-affect-the-world-economy-and-worsen-global-trade-tensions-215930>

⁷ *The Five Global Dangers from the Gaza War*. (z.d.). Wilson Center. <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/five-global-dangers-gaza-war>



History of the Topic

Palestine was a nation that had been placed under the UK administration by the League of Nations in 1922 along with many other Ottoman territories. All these territories became independent however, except Palestine. In the British Mandate it expressed support for the establishment in Palestine to be a national home for the Jewish people. During the Mandate, from 1922 to 1947, large-scale Jewish immigration, mainly from Eastern Europe took place, the numbers swelling in the 1930s with the Nazi persecution. Arab demands for independence and resistance to immigration led to a rebellion in 1937, followed by continuing terrorism and violence from both sides.

Although the United Kingdom tried various ways to bring independence and peace to both sides, they did not succeed and so proceeded to hand the issue of Palestine over to the United Nations. The United Nations proposed to terminate the Mandate and instead partition Palestine into two independent States consisting of a Palestinian Arab one and the other to be Jewish with Jerusalem internationalized. One of the two envisaged States proclaimed its independence as Israel and in the 1948 war involving neighboring Arab States expanded to 77 percent of the territory of Mandate Palestine, including the larger part of Jerusalem. Over half of the Palestinian Arab population fled or were expelled. Jordan and Egypt controlled the rest of the territory assigned by resolution 181 to the Arab State.

In the 1967 war, Israel occupied these territories (Gaza Strip and the West Bank) including East Jerusalem, which was subsequently annexed by Israel. In June 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon with the declared intention to eliminate the PLO. A cease-fire was arranged. PLO troops withdrew from Beirut and were transferred to neighboring countries. Despite the guarantees of safety for Palestine refugees left behind, a large-scale massacre took place in the Sabra and Shatila camps. In September 1983, the International Conference on the Question of Palestine (ICQP) adopted the following principles: the need to oppose Israeli settlements and Israeli actions to change the status of Jerusalem, the right of all States in the region to existence within secure and internationally recognized boundaries, and the attainment of the legitimate, inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. In 1987, a mass uprising against the Israeli occupation began in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (the intifada). Methods used by the Israeli forces resulted in mass injuries and heavy loss of life among the civilian Palestinian population. In 1988 the Palestine National Council meeting in Algiers proclaimed the establishment of the State of Palestine.

In 1991 a Peace Conference was however convened in Madrid to aim at achieving a peaceful settlement through direct negotiations along the Israeli and Arab States. The multilateral track negotiations were to focus on region-wide issues such as the environment, arms control, refugees, water, and the economy. A series of subsequent negotiations culminated in the mutual recognition between the Government of Israel and the PLO, the representative of the Palestinian people, and the signing in 1993 of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements (DOP or "Oslo Accord"), as well as the subsequent implementation agreements, which led to the partial withdrawal of Israeli forces, the elections to the Palestinian Council and the Presidency of the Palestinian Authority, the partial release of prisoners and the establishment of a functioning administration in the



areas under Palestinian self-rule. The involvement of the UN has been essential both as the guardian of international legitimacy and in the mobilization and provision of international assistance. The visit by Ariel Sharon of the Likud to Al-Haram Al-Sharif (Temple Mount) in Jerusalem in 2000 was followed by the second intifada. Israel began the construction of a West Bank separation wall, located mostly within the Occupied Palestinian Territory, ruled illegal by the International Court of Justice. In 2002, the Security Council affirmed a vision of two States, Israel and Palestine. An unofficial Geneva peace accord was promulgated by prominent Israelis and Palestinians in 2003. In 2005, Israel withdrew its settlers and troops from Gaza while retaining control over its borders, seashore and airspace. Following Palestinian legislative elections of 2006, the Quartet conditioned assistance to the PA on its commitment to nonviolence, recognition of Israel, and acceptance of previous agreements. After an armed takeover of Gaza by Hamas in 2007, Israel imposed a blockade. The Annapolis process of 2007-2008 failed to yield a permanent status agreement. Escalating rocket fire and air strikes in late 2008 culminated in Israeli ground operation “Cast Lead” in Gaza.

Though with tensions still present from both sides, after many years of violence and attacks, there continued to be increasingly more attacks. Recently on the 7th of October Palestinian armed groups in Gaza launched thousands of rockets toward Israel and breached through the perimeter fence of Gaza at multiple locations, entering into Israeli towns and killing and capturing Israeli forces and civilians. The Israeli military declared “a state of war alert,” and began striking targets in the Gaza Strip, including residential buildings and health care facilities. Since then, thousands of people have been killed and more than one million have been displaced, as parts of Gaza have been reduced to rubble.⁸ There has not seemed to be a reduction of the problem ever since it occurred, as the conflict has only escalated more. As of right now, despite the many Israelis that have been released, many are still being held hostage including children and the elderly. Israeli forces are still firing attacks with the goal to find every Hamas leader. The conflict has led to an increase in civilian deaths and injuries including large numbers of Palestinian women, children and men. In the Gaza Strip, airstrikes and a lack of medical supplies, food, water and fuel have virtually depleted an already under-resourced health system. Hospitals have been operating far beyond capacity due to rising numbers of patients as well as displaced civilians seeking shelter. The provision of essential health services – from maternal and newborn care to treatment for chronic conditions – has been severely compromised.⁹

⁸ Dpr. (2023b, oktober 20). *History of the Question of Palestine - Question of Palestine*. Question Of Palestine. <https://www.un.org/unispal/history/>

⁹ *Conflict in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory*. (2024, 20 februari). <https://www.who.int/emergencies/situations/conflict-in-Israel-and-oPt>



Any Previous Attempts

Despite the tremendous efforts and attempts that have been exerted since the 1991 Madrid Peace Conference in order to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, peace still does not seem close enough. As of right now, tension among Palestinians and Israelis continue to increase as well as leading to a more polarized world than we have ever known before. Previous attempts to solve the issue consisted of the agreement that had been negotiated between both Israeli and Palestinian leaders in Oslo, Norway to set out a process of a mutually negotiated two-state solution to be implemented at the end of the decade. The process seemed to have shown initial promise and even slight progress, but dissatisfaction and distrust led to the breakdown and delay of the process. The process however was difficult to restart again after frustration and provocation led to the breakdown and delay of the process in 2000. In 1993, Israel also held a number of negotiations with the Palestine Liberation Front (The PLO), an organization that is committed to establishing an independent Palestinian state and violent resistance to Israel, in Oslo.

The PLO stated to fete Israel's right to live and accepted the judgments that called for lasting peace with Israel in exchange to its pre-1967 borders), and renounced terrorism and violence. Days latterly they inked a protestation of Principles(known as the Oslo Accords), agreeing to set up Palestinian tone- government over five times ' time in exchange for Palestinian cooperation in matters of Israeli security. Accommodations continued as Israel and the PLO worked to apply a two- state result on the ground. In May 1994 a deal concluded in Cairo led to the pullout of Israeli forces from the metropolises of Gaza and Jericho that same month and set up the Palestinian Authority(PA) to carry out mercenary functions in those areas. The PA's independent governance was extended to six other metropolises in 1995, after the conclusion of the Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip(known as Oslo II). A seventh megacity, Hebron, was to be handed over in 1996. This agreement also resolve the West Bank and the Gaza Strip into three types of home areas under Palestinian administration and security(" Area A "), areas under Palestinian administration but common Israeli- Palestinian security(" Area B "), and areas under Israeli administration and security(" Area C "). In October 1998, five times after the Oslo Accords were inked and final status accommodations were supposed to take place, Netanyahu and Arafat concluded the Wye River Memorandum. Under this agreement, Israel was to continue a partial pullout from the West Bank while the PA was to apply a crackdown on Palestinian violence. The agreement was suspended the following month, still, after opposition in Netanyahu's coalition hovered a vote of no confidence in the Knesset, Israel's legislative body. Despite the suspense of the agreement, the Knesset suggested no confidence anyway, and early choices were held.

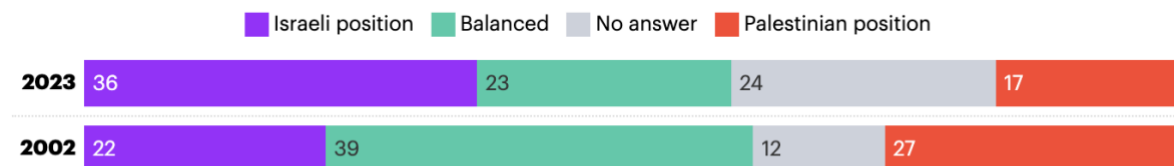


Media Contribution

When taking a look at the opinion of the general public, with Americans for example, it is noticeable how opinions have changed compared to the previous years. Media plays a crucial role in giving both sides a voice and a platform to share globally how the situations are like in the region. Social media especially can have a big influence on the opinions around the globe, with both Israeli and Palestinian sources present, both showing different sides of the result or consequences of the war. Social media has made graphic information way more accessible but has also allowed the public to form an opinion, based on both sides of the conflict, considering the media is more transparent nowadays. In surveys conducted by YouGov, some opinions have noticeably shifted substantially though in conflicting ways. There seem to be more positive perceptions of the Palestinian people, however, there also seems to be less support for a Palestinian State.

Who do Americans think countries around the world are more sympathetic to: **Israel** or **Palestine**?

We would like to know your impression, even if you are not very sure about it. Is it your impression that more countries in the world are more sympathetic to the Israeli or the Palestinian position, or is it roughly balanced? (%)



YouGov

Program on International Policy Attitudes, University of Maryland (via Roper Center): May 1 - 5, 2002 (802 U.S. adults)
YouGov: October 24 - 28, 2023 (1,000 U.S. adult citizens)

Source 1: YouGov's first conducted survey. ¹⁰

Consistent with that finding, just 47% of Americans say Palestinians should have their own state, down from 68% found by a 2009 Fox News/Opinion Dynamics poll. The share of Americans opposed to a Palestinian state hasn't changed much, but there has been a big increase in the share who say they don't know, to 35% from 19%. (Although the latest poll used the same wording as prior polls, differences in methodology could account for some of the increase in Americans selecting neutral options such as "no answer" or "don't know.")

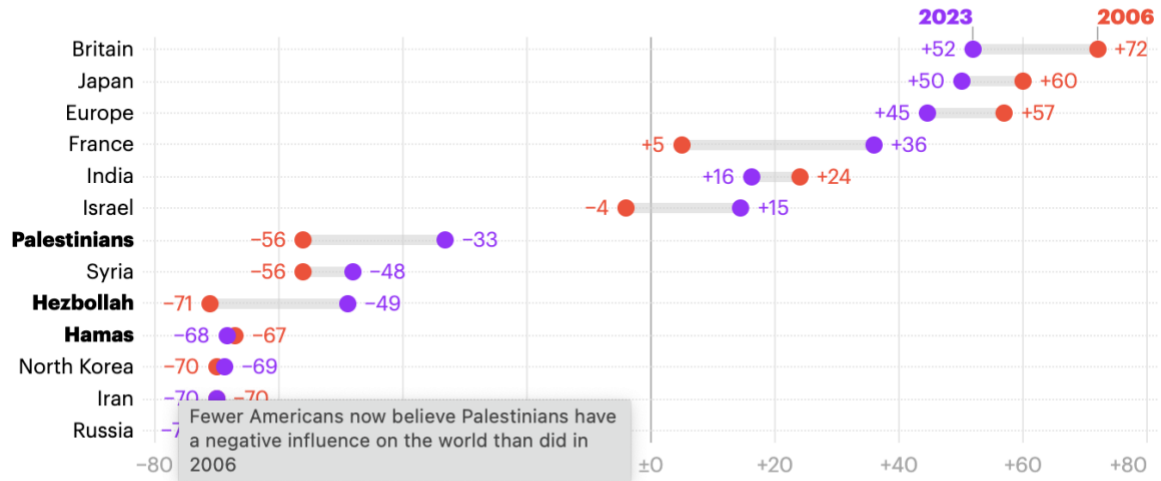
¹⁰ Orth, T., & Bialik, C. (2023, 17 november). *Polls from the Past: How opinion has changed on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict*. YouGov.

<https://today.yougov.com/politics/articles/47887-polls-from-the-past-how-opinion-changed-israeli-palestinian-conflict>



Fewer Americans now believe Palestinians have a negative influence on the world than did in 2006

Please tell me if you think each of the following are having a mainly positive or mainly negative influence in the world. (Displaying the net score: the percentage point difference between the share who say "mainly positive" and the share who say "mainly negative.")



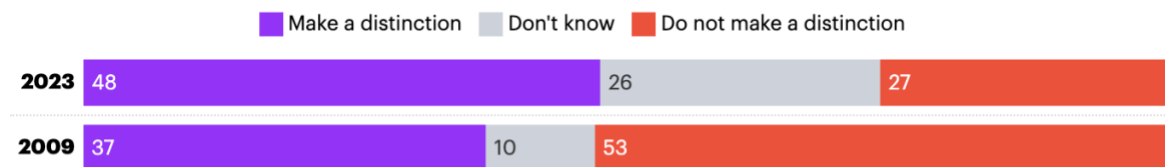
Note: Responses of "don't know" are not shown.

YouGov Search for Common Ground/Program on International Policy Attitudes (via Roper Center): October 31 - December 11, 2006 (1,004 U.S. adults)
 YouGov: October 24 - 28, 2023 (1,000 U.S. adult citizens)

Source 2:

More Americans now make a distinction between Hamas and the Palestinian people than did in 2009

Do you personally make a distinction between Hamas and the Palestinian people, or not? (%)



YouGov McClatchy/Ipsos-Public Affairs (via Roper Center): January 6 - 12, 2009 (1,054 U.S. adults)
 YouGov: October 24 - 28, 2023 (1,000 U.S. adult citizens)

Source 3:

Out of the conducted surveys, it becomes quite clear how the opinions of the American public have shifted, in both positive and negative ways for the Palestinian people and so, opinions still seem to differ a lot. US citizens remain on balance to be more sympathetic towards Israel, however there have also been Democrats who have begun to move towards the Palestinian cause. It is seemingly noticeable that the age factor has also played a role in the differing opinions, as younger Americans have more support for the Palestinians than Israel. Meanwhile, among those over 65, support remains overwhelmingly one-sided for Israel. The issue of the Israel-Palestine conflict has thus proven to be from multiple sides, due to the role of media and the influence social media has nowadays on the audience, especially influencing



the younger audience as their opinions are completely opposite to the elderly Americans.¹¹

For now media production has been a big influence nowadays, but in the past, it did not have a big contribution to the issue. This part is solely important to how social media has played a role in the conflict nowadays, but in the past it was focused a lot on newspapers or such.

¹¹ *How public opinion on the Israel-Hamas war has shifted.* (z.d.). Financial Times.
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