



GA4

STUDY GUIDE

2024



COLOMBO MODEL UNITED NATIONS

2024

Committee Mandate

The Fourth General Assembly, commonly known as the Special Political and Decolonisation Committee, is one of the six committees that make up the United Nations General Assembly. This committee was created to tackle issues about decolonisation and the sovereignty of member states, reviewing and questioning the operations of peacekeeping forces and overlooking the UNRWA and Israeli Activities related to Palestine.

The main goals of the fourth general assembly are to:

- Ensure that special UN political missions, such as the UNPKF and UN fact-finding missions, are under proper management
- Promote human rights with particular emphasis on indigenous people
- Make recommendations related to decolonisation following the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.
- Evaluate border and territorial disputes.

Agenda

Practice Debate 1 Topic: Addressing methods of state building after coups d'état with special attention to Sub-Saharan Africa

Practice Debate 2 Topic: Discussing the implications of the UNPKF in politically vulnerable regions.

Conference Topic: Discussing the Israel-Palestine conflict and the role played by external stakeholders.

Message from the Head Table:

Delegates, as the Head Table, welcome you to the 4th General Assembly of the 30th Session of COMUN. We commend you for joining this committee and are thrilled to have you here.

The 4th General Assembly tackles various issues, ranging from the seemingly more nuanced to the most controversial, and we look forward to seeing the different perspectives and unique solutions you bring to the table.

Before we dive into the debate, we want to spotlight a few key things. Firstly, the study guide. For any good discussion, information and awareness is critical. This study guide will serve as the basis of your information for the upcoming debates, as it contains a plethora of crucial information and general knowledge you must know before researching about your country. We highly recommend reviewing this carefully to avoid any critical points mentioned. Keep in mind that this guide serves as a guide, and delegates are expected to be well-versed in their foreign policy and other states' policies to bring about a heated debate.

As for the debate itself, we encourage delegates to put their best foot forward in terms of research and come well-prepared for the perils they may face during the topic. Whilst the issues may be controversial, we want to emphasise the importance of solid yet respectful debate. General Assembly 4 considers viewpoints from all backgrounds. As such, we insist on delegates bringing up any points they feel will benefit the discussion whilst respecting their peers.

Finally, we'd like to talk about you, the delegates. As stated, the General Assembly 4 considers all viewpoints, meaning every single view on the given topics. No delegates should feel that they cannot or should not voice their opinion based on the hand they have dealt, as the debate is open to all points.

With these points in mind, we wait excitedly to see delegates thrive in the fields of debate, transcend the boundaries of MUN, and transform the MUN experience into an unforgettable one.

Kind regards,

Head Table

General Assembly Four

COMUN 2024

PRACTICE DEBATE 1:

Addressing methods of state building after coups d'état with special attention to Sub-Saharan Africa.

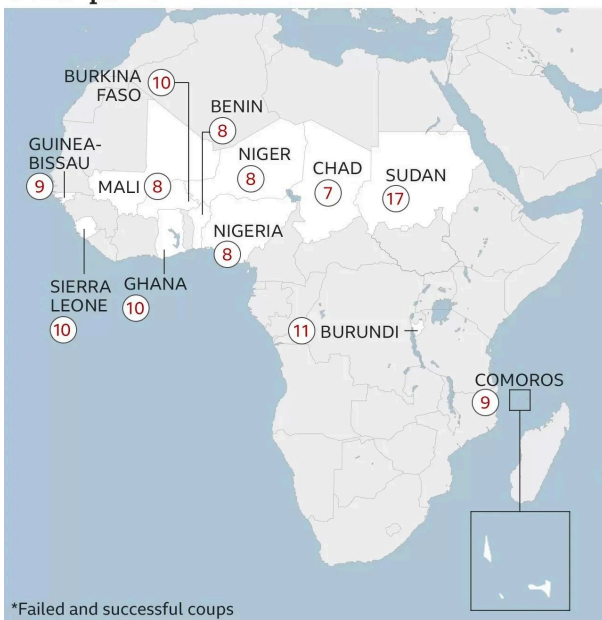
Topic Introduction

With the end of the Second World War came the end of European colonial rule in Africa. Starting from the Scramble for Africa in 1885, African nations have fought for independence for decades, fighting against their colonial overlords for their sovereignty. In recent history, however, a more internal threat has faced the sovereignty of these nations in the form of coups. Amid the growing influence of Pan-Africanism, many African countries struggle with constant warfare and civil unrest due to political instability. Many of these coups began with the aim of taking down brutal dictators who had gained power after the fall of European colonialism in the region. However, many military coups have emerged across the Sub-Saharan region. Sub-Saharan Africa is a complex and incredibly diverse region with peoples of hundreds of different ethnic, cultural and historical backgrounds. Maintaining a government that pleases people of such diversity will be a complex job, but maintaining stability and peace during times of peril will be the key to preserving prosperity and unity through regional division. It is essential to understand the definition of a coup d'état, and for this study guide and debate, it will be defined as “the sudden and unlawful seizure of power from a government”.

Background & Context

Below is a map showing the African states with the highest number of coup attempts in recent history.

Countries in Africa with the highest number of coups since 1952*



Since 2020, 7 African countries have had at least one successful coup attempt, namely, Mali, Chad, Guinea, Sudan, Burkina Faso, Niger and Gabon with several more unsuccessful attempts. The causes of these coups vary from country to country, but similarities that can be observed include no democratic governance systems, inefficiencies to mediate conflicts and a rising young population. Mali, Burkina Faso, and Chad are among the top countries affected by terrorism, according to the Global

Terrorism Index 2023, and these countries believed that restoring security was the prime reason for their coup. Gabon saw former president Ali Bongo win his 3rd seven-year term after elections, and coup leaders argued there were credibility issues when holding democratic elections. The coup conspirators in Niger blamed a stagnant economy and a spike in insecurity. In Sudan, the coup was committed with claims that the civilian disputes under the transitional government would further destabilise Sudan.

The real question remains: Are these post-coup countries prospering after a new government has been sworn in? The simple answer is no. One reason for this is the enactment of extremely lenient consequences for these coup leaders. In a lot of these cases, the only repercussions towards these coup leaders are suspension from unions such as the African Union and threats of military intervention, which have shown little to no success in restoring democracy.

Trends have shown that coups are not the best way to bring positive change, leading to further instability, even if the coup showed positive change at the start. In Sudan, international assistance for the economy was severely disrupted, along with attempts to unwind illegal financial deals that have greatly affected the country's economy. Violence between the military and the Rapid Support Forces has also seen a rise, specifically in the Darfur and Blue Nile regions. But all this is not to say the country is hopeless; the Sudanese people have demonstrated against military rule and continue to fight against their restrictions on civil and political rights. Plans have been presented for a civilian-led authority, which includes multiple parties such as rebel groups, unions and protest groups, to shift to elections. However, no proper implementation has occurred, and some sort of aid is required.

Key state actors and non-state actors

Niger

On July 26, the government of Niger experienced a coup, leading to the capture of President Mohamed Bazoum. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) issued an ultimatum to the coup leaders, warning of potential military intervention unless Bazoum was reinstated. Additionally, they suspended relations with Niger and closed its land and air borders with the nation. Subsequently, on August 20, General Abdourahamane Tiani, the primary coup leader and self-declared head of state, outlined his plan for the future during a televised address. He proposed a transition period lasting up to three years and emphasised the importance of an inclusive national dialogue. Furthermore, he asserted that Niger would defend itself if faced with military intervention. While many individuals oppose the coup and remain sceptical of the justifications provided by the leaders, there is a push for a fresh political start through a military-civilian transition.

Mali

In August 2020, Colonel Assimi Goïta led a military coup in Mali in response to nonviolent mass protests calling for the resignation of then-President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, perceived as emblematic of the government's failures, including corruption and instability. Just nine months later, on May 24, the interim president, Bah N'Daw, Prime Minister Moctar Ouane, and other officials were arrested after the appointment of a new government, excluding critical figures from the former National Committee for the Salvation of the People conflict (CNSP), leading to internal tensions. The arrest occurred amid rumours of dissent within the military, raising concerns about potential internal conflicts. The international community, including ECOWAS, the African Union, the UN mission in Mali, France, the European Union, and the United States, has unequivocally condemned the attempted

coup, affirming their support for the ongoing transition in Mali. However, with the dissolution of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission deployed in Mali, civilians recognise that the risk of fighting for territorial control could intensify.

Burkina Faso

Lieutenant Colonel Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba orchestrated a coup in January 2022 alongside Captain Ibrahim Traoré, who headed an artillery unit in the Armed Forces of Burkina Faso. Later in the same year, Traoré, asserting that Damiba had exacerbated Burkina Faso's deteriorating security, declared himself head of state in a second coup that ousted Damiba. Subsequently, Traoré dismissed Damiba's transitional government and legislature, suspended the constitution, and consolidated all power in himself and his junta. Notably, other members of the junta remained aligned with Damiba. Traoré's actions following his assumption of power suggested a lack of strategic planning beyond securing the presidency and reinforcing military rule in a nation recovering from a 27-year military-led authoritarian rule of Blaise Compaoré. The fragmented state of Burkina Faso's armed forces, marked by most military officers refraining from involvement in either coup, underscores the arbitrary nature of power transitions. This situation has fueled ongoing unrest, with multiple unsuccessful attempts to dismantle Traoré's government in 2023, exacerbating the prevailing instability.

Sudan

In April 2019, Sudan experienced a significant political shift as military generals ousted President Omar al-Bashir amidst a popular uprising. An August 2019 agreement aimed to establish power-sharing between the military and civilians, paving the way for future elections. However, in October 2021, a coup abruptly disrupted this arrangement, citing internal conflicts between the military and civilian factions as a threat to the country's stability. The coup prompted widespread pro-democracy protests, with reports of gunfire and injuries outside the military headquarters. The leader of the parliamentary group Rapid Support Forces (RSF), Hemedti, acknowledged the 2021 coup as a "mistake" that failed to bring about positive change in Sudan and instead revitalised remnants of the Bashir regime. However, a power struggle emerged between army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and Hemedti, escalating into a full-fledged conflict by April 15, 2022. The international community, including Saudi Arabia and the US, intervened, conducting negotiations between the army and RSF, urging a ceasefire. Nevertheless, despite verbal commitments to protect civilians, ceasefires were repeatedly violated, with accusations of violations exchanged between the warring factions. On May 31, the army suspended its participation in the talks.

Guinea

In September 2021, Guinea experienced a coup d'état that abruptly ended the rule of President Alpha Condé by the Special Forces of the Guinea Armed Forces, headed by Colonel Mamady Doumbouya. Doumbouya called out President Condé's administration, claiming it was plagued by corruption, human rights abuses, and economic mismanagement allegations. His military detained President Condé, dissolved the government, and suspended the constitution. Doumbouya announced the formation of a National Committee for Reconciliation and Development (CNRD), signalling the military's assumption of power and a smooth transition to eventual civilian rule. The international community, including the African Union and the ECOWAS, strongly condemned the coup, calling for a return to constitutional order. This was also marked by various groups within the nation, notably the "Forces Vives", who organised anti-junta protests, calling out the government and the lack of transparency in the administration.

ECOWAS

Serving as a regional political and economic organisation, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was established to address security concerns by developing a peacekeeping force to manage regional conflicts. It comprises fifteen West African nations that signed the Treaty of Lagos on May 28, 1975. However, despite this mandate, ECOWAS has only authorised the deployment of a peacekeeping force on seven occasions since its inception. Notably, even in the face of recent coup d'états, the most recent deployment of a security or peacekeeping force by ECOWAS occurred in 2017. Initiatives were being imposed in recent years, but none seem to have had a tangible impact within the area, if not for exacerbating the current situation.

France

A pattern in coups that was noticed not just in recent times but also before 2020 was that most of the countries that had undergone coups were former French colonies. The principle of Françafrique can still be seen nowadays through military aid and interventions. The friendly relations between African and French leaders have resulted in displeasure from the African citizens who wish to break free from this argued neocolonialist rule from France. France faced severe backlash from Mali citizens after French forces went through failed military interventions. These anti-French sentiments take many forms within each country; for example, in Niger and Guinea, the military leaders have condoned the actions of citizens who have carried out anti-French rallies, and French media such as France 24 and Radio France Internationale have been suspended in Niger.

Further Reading

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- 3) https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/energy/2023/08/30/what-s-behind-niger-coup-and-others-in-west-africa/ccce08b0-4733-11ee-b76b-0b6e5e92090d_story.html
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PRACTICE DEBATE 2:

Discussing the implications of the UNPKF in politically vulnerable regions.

Topic Introduction

In present times, armed conflicts and wars are widespread across all continents. The purpose of the Geneva Convention is to provide belligerents in an armed conflict with legal obligations to cause minimal harm to civilians. However, more is needed to provide satisfactory protection for said civilians. To tackle this issue, the United Nations Department of Peace Operations exists to launch peacekeeping missions that safeguard civilians in conflict zones.

One of the critical hurdles confronting UN peacekeeping is the evolving nature of conflict zones. The scenarios in which UN peacekeepers are deployed are often intricate internal disputes involving non-state entities, insurgencies, and transnational criminal networks. These conflicts encompass various social, economic, and political layers, which pose a challenge for resolution through military intervention alone. To tackle these issues, peacekeeping operations must become more adaptable and agile, necessitating increased investment in intelligence capabilities and enhanced collaboration with international organisations and civil society.

In confronting these challenges, peacekeeping forces must take a more proactive stance in collaborating with civil society and other non-state entities. Moreover, they should closely align themselves with broader initiatives to advance democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. While peacekeeping has demonstrated cost-effectiveness in promoting peace and stability, its efficacy hinges upon sustained investment and political commitment. This means states should contribute additional resources, actively participate in decision-making processes, and collaborate in addressing the root causes of conflict and instability. An adaptable approach involves strengthening partnerships with regional organisations, particularly in Africa, where a significant proportion of peacekeeping operations are conducted, to uphold diplomatic ties.

Background & Context

The UNPKF has one mission – to provide security and political and peacebuilding support in countries struggling to transition from a state of crisis to peace. Created in 1948 as a way to ensure a ceasefire remains between the newly formed State of Israel and the neighbouring Arab States, the UNPKF now has missions globally, ranging from the deserts of Sub-Saharan Africa to the tropical coasts of Haiti and Liberia.

The UNPKF has significantly improved the livelihoods of the nations it visits. For instance, from 2004 to 2017, the UN mission in the Ivory Coast bore fruit as UNPKF members successfully administered government control over the nation, resulting in elections in 2011 and 2016. Human rights violations decreased dramatically, and gun violence dropped during the force's presence. However, recent developments have made the UNPKF appear less competent and growingly inept in bringing peace.

Many turn to the UNPKF's numerous failures in stopping some of history's most heinous crimes. One such case was the failure of the UNPKF to stop the Rwandan Genocide, which, in 1994, killed almost

800,000 ethnic Tutsis and Hutus in the small African nation. The force also failed to prevent Europe's only recognised genocide apart from the Holocaust, the Srebrenica Massacre, which took the lives of almost 8000 Bosniak Muslim men. UNPKF missions have also been plagued by multiple allegations of sexual abuse and other sexually charged crimes against women and children in the host nations. Around 80 allegations were made against UNPKF soldiers in Africa in 2019 alone, most of them coming from the UNPKF's mission in the CAR. The causing of a cholera outbreak in Haiti by UNPKF soldiers in 2010 after the earthquake left the reputation of the force further tarnished.

One of the biggest problems the UNPKF needs to improve is the framework upon which it is built. The UNPKF maintains a firm non-interventionist policy, ensuring that they stay out of matters that the UN considers "internal affairs." Peacekeepers are regularly informed to only use force as an act of self-defence, making it hard for soldiers to intervene in instances of civilian violence.

Furthermore, the bureaucracy and decision-making process involved in establishing UNPKF missions is an added issue to the UNPKF's inabilities. UN Peacekeeping Missions are authorised through the approval of the UNSC, which not only limits the UNPKF's ability to intervene but also is dependent on the willingness of the permanent member states to act on the issue. National contingent immunity also raises the question about the UNPKF's accountability, as certain states, such as the USA do not allow foreign courts to try their citizens, making accountability for crimes such as sexual abuse much more complex to prosecute.

The lack of involvement from UN member states makes peacekeeping missions even more barebones than they might seem. Donations made by member states fund UNPKF missions, and the soldiers are citizens of donating member states. Suppose these states chose to cut down funding or the number of soldiers they send; in that case, UNPKF missions suffer heavily, either due to a lack of funding to deploy soldiers and give them adequate resources or due to a lack of workforce, making their missions nigh impossible to accomplish given the overwhelming number of civilians they help. Understaffing and underfunding continue to plague UNPKF missions and are a significant reason for their recent failures.

Key State & Non-State Actors

UNIFIL

The United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon, or UNIFIL for short, is a peacekeeping mission established under UNSC resolutions 425 and 426 following the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. Initially, its mandate was concerned with ensuring the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon and assisting the Lebanese government in exercising its authority in its area; however, this mandate was amended multiple times. There have been several controversies and criticisms towards the UNIFIL. For example, both Hezbollah and Israel accuse UNIFIL of being biased and spying for the other party. Another criticism was brought up in 2010 when there was a deadly clash between Lebanese and Israeli forces, and 2 UNIFIL soldiers were filmed escaping the scene and failing to defuse the situation.

UNPROFOR

The United Nations Protection Force, or UNPROFOR for short, was a UN peacekeeping mission stationed in the Balkan region from 1992-1995. The effectiveness of the UNPROFOR has been widely argued for years. These forces contributed to ameliorating the situation in Croatia, specifically

by removing the Yugoslav People's Army from the region in May 1992. They also managed to keep Sarajevo airport open, which enabled support from the UNHCR in the form of humanitarian aid to be flown to the refugees in the area quickly. However, a significant blunder committed by the UNPROFOR was in the town of Srebrenica, where UN peacekeeping officials did not offer support to their forces, resulting in Bosnian-Serb forces occupying the city and committing atrocities such as mass executions and rape within the area.

The P5 Nations

The relationship between UN Peacekeeping missions and the P5 nations has been confusing. For example, China is the only P5 nation in the top 30 nations to provide personnel for UN Peacekeeping missions, but that is not the case in terms of funding, where all 5 P5 nations are ranked in the top 10, with the United States of America providing approximately 28% of the UNPKF's total funds. Moreover, the Russian Federation mainly only provides military observers rather than police or soldiers. The aforementioned points appear to hold back the true potential of the UNPKF, with even more challenges possibly arising. For instance, the United States has called for reform to the UNPKF but has not provided the much-needed support to improve said missions. On top of this, there have been allegations of abuse committed by French peacekeepers (not UN peacekeepers) in the Central African Republic, which has created the perception that all peacekeepers are abusers and serve no purpose in their country among the locals.

Bangladesh

Bangladesh has provided the most significant number of peacekeeping soldiers from any country globally, with its first set of officers being deployed to the United Nations Iran-Iraq Military Observers Group in 1988. Bangladeshi peacekeepers have proven to be primarily valuable and have provided help such as delivering medical aid, protecting civilians and whatnot. Having said that, issues still arise, such as the question of deploying Bangladesh's Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), which is a security force blamed for having committed various crimes such as enforced disappearances and torture, and such groups must be appropriately vetted before partaking in UN peacekeeping missions.

Further Reading

1. <https://www.hrw.org/legacy/summaries/s.bosnia9510.html>
2. <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/our-successes>
3. <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/how-we-are-funded>
4. <https://www.ibanet.org/article/CEBC5F69-A238-49BB-B85A-5E8D878FE485>
5. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N20/081/45/PDF/N2008145.pdf?OpenElement>

CONFERENCE:

Discussing the Israel-Palestine conflict and the role played by external stakeholders

Introduction

The Israel-Palestine conflict is a dispute that initially began in 1947, with the UN Partition Plan for Palestine resulting in the disapproval of multiple countries from the Arab League. The first Arab-Israeli war broke out, and this is, according to many, the actual start of the Israel-Palestine conflict. It is also argued that this conflict started as early as 1920 with the intercommunal conflict of Mandatory Palestine.

In recent years, the conflict had essentially reached a stalemate until the 7th of October 2023. This is when the Hamas militants, along with the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, launched attacks in Israel, killing hundreds, with Israel responding with bombing campaigns in the Gaza Strip and escalating the situation into what it is today. One crucial point to take note of is that this conflict is not just between Israel and Hamas; other vital actors are essential to understanding how this conflict pans out.

Background & Context

One of the central issues in the contemporary Israel-Palestine conflict is the question of statehood and self-determination. The establishment of Israel in 1948 and subsequent territorial changes have left both Israelis and Palestinians with competing national aspirations. The political landscape is marked by the ongoing debate over the two-state solution, with international actors, including the United Nations, advocating for the creation of an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel. The lack of progress in achieving a two-state solution has gained attention to alternative proposals. Some advocate for a one-state solution, emphasising equal rights for Israelis and Palestinians within a single democratic state. However, this idea faces significant challenges, including security, identity, and governance issues.

External stakeholders continue to exert influence on the Israel-Palestine conflict. The United States, a key ally of Israel, has traditionally played a significant role in mediating peace efforts. However, shifts in U.S. administrations have led to variations in approach, with some administrations emphasising a more assertive role in pushing for negotiations. In contrast, others focus on regional dynamics and agreements. The role of Arab states is noteworthy, particularly considering recent diplomatic developments. The Abraham Accords, signed in 2020, marked a historic normalisation of relations between Israel and some Arab countries, including the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain. This shift has altered regional dynamics and introduced new opportunities for cooperation, but it has also raised concerns about prioritising normalisation over the Palestinian question.

International organisations, including the UN and the European Union, continue to play a crucial role in addressing human rights violations and promoting peace initiatives. The situation in the Gaza Strip, marked by periodic conflicts and humanitarian crises, has drawn international attention and calls for accountability for alleged war crimes. The role of NGOs in documenting human rights abuses and providing aid to affected populations remains essential in shaping global perceptions and influencing policy decisions.

The United Nations has been actively engaged in efforts to resolve the Israel-Palestine conflict through diplomatic means and multilateral initiatives. They have consistently advocated for a

two-state solution, emphasising the establishment of an independent and viable Palestinian state coexisting peacefully with Israel. Various resolutions, such as UN Security Council Resolution 242 and 338, have formed the basis for peace negotiations. Additionally, peacekeeping missions have been supported in the region, aiming to maintain stability and protect civilians. Despite these efforts, challenges persist, including issues related to the status of Jerusalem, refugees, and settlements. Geopolitical tensions, differing interpretations of international law, and the complex historical and political context of the conflict have hampered the effectiveness of those initiatives.

Economic disparities between Israel and the Palestinian territories contribute to the complexity of the conflict. The development of Israeli settlements in the West Bank has been a contentious issue, with implications for the viability of a future Palestinian state. Economic cooperation, such as trade and labour relations, also shapes the dynamics between Israelis and Palestinians, influencing both short-term stability and long-term prospects for peace.

Key Terminology

War crimes - According to the Rome Statute, war crimes are defined as “*Grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, any acts against persons or property protected under the provisions of the relevant Geneva Convention.*”

Genocide - According to the UN Office on Genocide Prevention, it is defined as “*acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group.*”

Occupation - According to the ICRC, an occupation of a territory is when “*A certain territory or region is placed under the authority of adverse foreign armed forces. The occupation only extends up to where the authority is enforced.*”

Key State actors and non-state actors

Israel

Since its creation, Israel has fought multiple wars, including the 6 Day War and the Yom Kippur War. With the recent events in 2023, Israel has been taking an extremely aggressive stance towards Palestine, seizing transport routes and blocking access to electricity and water. The Defence Minister of Israel has openly stated that this is a “Complete Siege” on the Gaza Strip in response to the recent Hamas Attacks. Israel has been accused of multiple war crimes ranging from targeting civilian hotspots to attacking medical and foreign aid workers. However, international responses to these attacks have been mixed. The Western states, including the US and the UK, have stated their support for Israel. At the same time, the Arab States of the Middle East have been more vocal about their condemnation of the situation, creating a larger rift between supporters of Israel and those of Palestine.

Palestinian National Authority

The PLA is a Palestinian governing body that has partial control over some regions of the West Bank due to the agreements under the Oslo Accords. After the events of the Battle of Gaza, Hamas took de facto control over the Gaza Strip despite the PLA’s claims over it. The PLA has recently been sidelined in the conflict between Israel and Hamas but continues to exert some level of control over the Bank.

Hamas

Hamas is the radical Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, formed in the 1980s. The recent attack on Israel's south was the most significant in Israeli history and was fueled by general Palestinian dissent for Israeli occupation and influence in the Gaza Strip. Reports claim that Hamas has been funded by Iran, with some protection for its leaders from Turkey. Both Israel and Hamas are officially in a state of war, and with most of the world labelling Hamas as a terrorist group, potential solutions to the conflict are almost guaranteed to end with bloodshed.

USA

The US has shown high, unwavering support for Israel, and this sentiment has stood through the current crisis. Across history, the US has continued to veto critical UNSC resolutions condemning Israel for its crimes against Palestinians and has provided Israel with crucial economic and military aid. Recent events by the current administration, however, could lead to a potential shift in US policy towards Gaza, as US President Joe Biden has expressed his frustration with the Israeli PM before and has been taking a slight halt in support over the last few weeks as of December 2023. It is unclear in what direction US foreign policy will shift in light of the upcoming 2024 Presidential elections.

Syria

Syria has, surprisingly, taken a heavy stance against Israel, calling out the country's attacks on Palestinian hospitals and civilians despite the Syrian government allegedly doing the same. Syrian President Bashar Assad has made multiple speeches at conferences, including the Arab League summit, where he criticised Israel's brutality and criticised normalising relations with Israel. However, it is essential to note that Syria still maintains mixed ties with Hamas but has expressed solidarity with Gaza.

Hezbollah

Hezbollah has always maintained a clear stance on the Israel-Palestine conflict and continues to stand with Palestine and Hamas leadership in Gaza. Israel has stated previously that they are not looking for a conflict with Hezbollah but will respond necessarily if they choose to do so. Hezbollah, on the other hand, has been reluctant to engage in a full-scale war, instead preferring to conduct small-scale border clashes with the IDF whilst forming stronger alliances with the leadership in Gaza. Hezbollah's true motives for the future of the conflict are currently unknown, but constant shootings between the IDF and Hezbollah militants continue to sour already tense relations.

Further Reading

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