

*Martin Bailey compiled the initial version of this lexicon on the conflict, culture, religion and history of the Middle East. Americans for Middle East Understanding (AMEU) published his work in the Link issue of April-May 2002. In that Link we invited comments and additions, and this publication reflects that input, Bailey's continuing effort, and the AMEU staff's contributions. The Style Sheet is also a permanent part of our website, and additions and updates will be on-going.*

*Martin Bailey is a co-convenor of the Media Group of the Middle East Forum, a church-related ecumenical organization that works for balanced reporting on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in mainstream media and religious publications.*

## **The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Lexicon**

**Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades.** Paramilitary group loyal to Yasir Arafat's Fatah organization; founded after the eruption of the second intifada on Sept. 28, 2000, the day Ariel Sharon, then Israel's right-wing opposition leader, went to Jerusalem's Al Aqsa Mosque to press his claim of Israeli sovereignty over Islam's third holiest site. See: **Fatah**.

**Al Haram al Sherif.** English: the Noble Sanctuary. Arabic name for the plaza in Jerusalem where the Dome of the Rock and Al Aqsa Mosque are located. Muslims revere the site as the area where Prophet Muhammad broke his miraculous night journey from Mecca to heaven. Jews revere the area as the location of the First and Second Temples, and refer to the area above and to the east of the Western Wall as Har Ha Moriyya or Har Ha Bayt in Hebrew and as the Temple Mount in English. Some Jewish radicals advocate the construction of a third Temple there. Use Hebrew and Arabic equivalents or use two English equivalents. See: **Western Wall; Temple Mount Faithful**.

**Aliyah.** Hebrew meaning "going up." Refers to the immigration of Jews to Israel. Since 1948, about 2,900,000 Jews have immigrated to Israel. [www.aliyah.-org] See: **Law of Return**.

**Al-Jazeera (or Al-Jazira) Satellite Channel.** Founded in Qatar in 1996, JSC is a 24-hour station dedicated to news, news analyses, talk shows, and documentaries; it has replaced CNN as the major source of news for the Arab world on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Its impact on the Arab world is significant. By beaming scenes of Israel's occupation hourly into Arab homes and schools, it has made its viewers real-time participants in these events, much as CNN made Americans real-time participants in the events of September 11, 2001.

**Allah.** Arabic for God. Not exclusively the God of Muslims, since Arabic-speaking Christians and Jews use the same term. See: **God**.

**Annexation, Annexed Territories.** Following the 1967 war, Israel annexed East Jerusalem and a portion of the West Bank, extending the borders of Jerusalem by some 55 square miles. In 1981, Israel annexed Syria's Golan Heights. Both these annexations are considered illegal under United Nations resolutions. The United States regards the annexed territories as areas to be dealt with in final peace negotiations. Settlements for Jewish residents have been and are being constructed in the annexed areas and in other parts of the West Bank and Gaza. [www.arij.org] See: **East Jerusalem; Golan Heights; Green Line; Occupied Territories; U.N. Resolutions.**

**Anti-Semitism.** Discrimination against, or persecution of, Semitic people. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the term was first used with specific reference to Jews in the 1880s, although for hundreds of years and in many countries Jews and Arabs, who are also Semites, have been denied full rights as citizens and have suffered economic discrimination, social ostracism, and persecution. Historically, anti-Semitism toward Jews has been especially harsh in predominantly Christian nations in Europe, culminating in pogroms, the Inquisition, and the Holocaust. Generally used to describe negative attitudes toward Jews. See: **Semitic Peoples.**

**Arab, Arabic, Arabians.** An Arab is a person whose native tongue is Arabic, generally one who comes from the Middle East or North Africa. Arabs are not a religious group but a linguistic and cultural group of Semitic origin. Arabic is the language used throughout the region and also liturgically by Muslims worldwide. Arabians are people who live in, or have migrated from, the Arabian Peninsula. [www.albab.com/arab/countries/palestine] See: **Israeli Arabs.**

**Arab League.** Confederation of Arab states founded in 1945. Membership comprises 22 Arab states, including Palestine, which was admitted as a full member in 1976. The League, headquartered in Cairo, Egypt, has observer status at the United Nations. Its summit meetings are seen as indicators of the level of Arab unity.

**Areas A, B, C.** The 1995 Oslo II Agreement divided the Palestinian territories, excluding East Jerusalem, into three zones: Area A, comprising disconnected districts, includes 17.2 percent of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and is under the full security and civil control of the Palestinian Authority. Area B, 23.8 percent, is under Israeli security control, while the Palestinian Authority is responsible for some social and civil services. Area C, approximately 59 percent, is under full Israeli occupation. The three areas were theoretically a first step in Israel's withdrawal from the West Bank, as required under U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338. Further significant withdrawals, to be completed by May 1999, never took place. See **Occupied Territories; Autonomous Areas; U.N. Resolutions.**

**Ashkenazi** (plural, **Ashkenazim**). Jews in general are officially divided into Ashkenazim (from Germany, and by extension, Europe) and Sephardim (from

Spain, and by extension, the Middle East and North Africa). Since most Jews of European ancestry are Ashkenazim, the term denotes both sectarian affiliation and geographic origin. Israeli Jews from the Middle East and North Africa, however, are described as Sephardim in sectarian terms, and Mizrachim (Orientals) geographically. In the early years, the Zionist movement was almost wholly Ashkenazi. Of the 717,000 Jews in Israel in 1948, Ashkenazim numbered 80 percent; and of the 37 Jewish leaders on stage when David Ben-Gurion declared the state of Israel in 1948, one was from Palestine, one from Yemen, and 35 from Europe and Russia. By the mid-1960s, Mizrachim surpassed the Ashkenazim, due to immigration and a higher birth rate. Today, due to Russian immigration, their numbers are about equal. See: **Jews, Judaism; Zionism.**

**Autonomous Areas.** As a result of Oslo I in 1993, Oslo II in 1995, and the 1997 Hebron Agreement, seven Palestinian cities in the West Bank, 60 percent of the Gaza Strip, and 80 percent of Hebron are considered autonomous areas under Palestinian jurisdiction. Other parts of the West Bank and Gaza (Areas B and C) are under joint or exclusively Israeli jurisdiction. See: **Areas A,B,C.**

**Balfour Declaration.** Statement issued in a letter on November 2, 1917 by the British Foreign Secretary Lord Arthur Balfour to a private British subject, Lord Lionel Rothschild of the World Zionist Federation. It said: "His Majesty's Government views with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country." Two years later, Balfour, commenting on his declaration, wrote: "For in Palestine we do not propose even to go through the form of consulting the wishes of the present inhabitants of the country, though the American Commission has been going through the form of asking what they are. The four great powers are committed to Zionism and Zionism, be it right or wrong, good or bad, is rooted in age-long tradition, in present needs, in future hopes, of far profounder import than the desires and prejudices of the 700,000 Arabs who now inhabit that ancient land. In my opinion that is right." In 1948, Israel's Declaration of Independence said: "The right [of Jews to national restoration in Palestine] was acknowledged by the Balfour Declaration."

**Borders.** Israel has never officially fixed its territorial borders. When David Ben-Gurion announced the creation of the state of Israel on 14 May 1948, he refused to define its borders, saying, "We are announcing the creation of a state in the Western part of our country." And in his diaries ("Rebirth and Destiny of Israel") he wrote "...we have to set up a dynamic state bent upon expansion" in order to accommodate the ingathering of Jews from around the world. Within Israel today the question of borders is controversial since some Israeli Jews refer to the West Bank as Judea and Samaria and as part of Greater or Eretz Israel.

Israeli peace groups, such as Gush Shalom, call for the pre-1967 borders, or green line, to be accepted as the “border of peace.” Agreements at Taba, Egypt, in January 2001 (later repudiated by Israel) acknowledged the 1967 borders as the basis for lasting peace. [www.Gush-Shalom.org/Jerusalem] See: **Aliyah; Green Line; Peace Organizations; U.N. Resolutions; Zionism.**

**Bypass Roads.** Paved highways built by Israel on confiscated Palestinian land within the West Bank and Gaza to facilitate travel for Jewish settlers to Jerusalem, other Israeli cities, and other settlements. Between 1977 and 1999 Israel built 750 miles of these roads, often dividing Palestinian communities and making it impossible for some farmers to reach their fields. Bypass roads also extend Israel’s de facto borders beyond the green line and around an expanded Jerusalem [www.palestinemonitor.org/factsheet].

**Casualties.** Reporters and editors should also be careful to use equivalent terms for both sides in the conflict. Use “killed” rather than “murdered.” Use names for both Israelis and Palestinians when reporting persons killed and injured.

**Checkpoint.** A barrier built by the Israeli Defense Forces or Border Police to limit the movement of Palestinians. Normally, Israeli citizens and foreigners move through the checkpoints without being stopped. Palestinians with permits frequently experience extreme delays and humiliation at these barriers. On occasions, deaths have occurred at checkpoints when individuals, including pregnant women in labor, have been unable to reach hospitals. Often farm produce, especially from Gaza, has spoiled at checkpoints due to delays of up to several days. See: **Closure; IDF.**

**Christian Zionism.** For more than a century, some evangelical Christians have supported the development of a Jewish commonwealth in the belief that the Messiah will return when Jews are restored to the land of Israel. Various leaders in Israel have courted evangelical leaders in the U.S., including the Rev. Jerry Falwell and the Rev. Pat Robertson who, like Hal Lindsey, anticipate the last great battle, Armageddon. These Israeli leaders generally ignore the Christian Zionists’ theological position that in the end days all Jews will be killed, save for 144,000 who accept Christ. An exception to this evangelical Christian support for the state of Israel has come from the U.S.-based Evangelicals for Middle East Understanding. [www.icej.org; www.emeu.org] See: **Embassy, Christian Embassy.**

**Christianity.** The religion practiced by Christians, the followers of Jesus who was born and lived as a Jew in what is now Israel and the West Bank. According to biblical tradition, Jesus also visited parts of what are now Egypt, Lebanon, Syria and Jordan. [www.cicts.org] For the branches of Christianity, see: **Christians.**

**Christians (Middle East Christians).** The Christian community in Israel and Palestine, and throughout the Middle East, includes four families of churches:

the Eastern Orthodox, within which the Greek Orthodox Church is the largest and most prominent; the Oriental Orthodox, which includes the Coptic Orthodox Church and Armenian Apostolic Church among others; the Catholic family in which the Latin Catholic, Greek Catholic (Melkite) and Maronite Churches are the most prominent; and the Evangelical (Protestant) family that includes Anglicans, Lutherans and numerous smaller groups. Churches of all four of these families participate as members of the Middle East Council of Churches and accept both the Old and New Testaments. Membership of all these churches has declined during the last half century due to emigration from the region. Members of Christian congregations in the Holy Land are sometimes called the “Living Stones” as a reminder that the churches in the area are more than museums; they are the centers of dynamic and living communities of faith that trace their history to Pentecost. Since 1948, the Palestinian Christian community has dropped from approximately 18% to 1.9%. [[www.Al-bushra.org](http://www.Al-bushra.org); [www.mecchurches.org](http://www.mecchurches.org); [www.Sabeel.org](http://www.Sabeel.org); [www.bethlehem-mediacenter.org](http://www.bethlehem-mediacenter.org)]

**Citizenship, Nationality.** An important distinction should be made between citizenship and nationality in Israel. While Israeli Jews and non-Jews (most being Palestinian Arabs) are citizens with the right to vote, Israel distinguishes between citizens who are Jewish nationals and those who are not. In 1952, Israel enacted the Citizenship/Jewish Nationality Law, granting all Jews in the world, and only Jews, the status both of Israeli citizenship and Jewish nationality, meaning that, as soon as they immigrate to Israel, they are automatically eligible for significant rights and benefits provided by the state or by its semi-governmental organizations – rights and benefits denied to non-Jewish nationals, whose families may have lived on the soil for generations. See: **Aliyah**.

**Closed Military Zones.** Areas in the occupied territories and in Israel that are declared by the Israel Defense Forces off-limits to unauthorized persons. These zones need not be of military significance; at times, Israeli officials abort peaceful demonstrations by temporarily designating a site a closed military area. [[www.arij.org](http://www.arij.org)] See: **IDF; Occupied Territories**.

**Closure, Siege, Blockade.** Terms used to describe official Israeli efforts to control the movement of Palestinians. Closure was instituted in March 1993 to deny Palestinians from Gaza and the West Bank, except those with permits, entry into Israel and Greater Jerusalem. More recently, roadblocks have restricted movement between cities and towns within the occupied territories; some Palestinian farmers are even unable to reach their fields because of these “internal checkpoints.” Students, medical doctors, and patients often find it impossible to reach colleges, universities, and hospitals. In August 2001, The New York Times reported that Israel had established 97 “armed blockades” in the West Bank and 32 in the Gaza Strip. Palestinians refer to the effect of this policy as a siege. Some news media use the term blockade. [[www.btselem.org](http://www.btselem.org)] See: **Checkpoint; Collective Punishment**.

**Collective Punishment.** Practice of punishing entire families, communities or groups for the act of an individual. Collective punishment, as practiced by Israel, takes the form of sealing or demolishing Palestinian homes, imposing curfews, erecting roadblocks, confiscating personal property, uprooting olive and other fruit trees (over 34,600 between Sept. 2000 and Feb. 2002), destroying water systems, and closing schools, colleges, markets, roads, and other gathering places. Collective punishment is prohibited by Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. See: **Geneva Conventions**.

**Colonies.** Term used by Palestinians and others for settlements established by the Israeli government in the occupied territories. See: **Settlements**.

**Crusades.** In 1095, Pope Urban II called on Christians of Europe to invade the Middle East for a holy war against the “infidel Mohammedans.” In 1099, a European expedition known as the First Crusade “liberated” Jerusalem, massacring 40,000 of its citizens. This crusade was followed by six others over the next 200 years. In 1187, the Muslim general Saladin (also Salahudin or Salah-al-Din) retook Jerusalem without bloodshed. While massacres occurred on both sides, the far greater barbarity of the Western crusaders is a vivid memory for the peoples of the Middle East, many of whom see the influx of European Jews into Palestine in 1948 as yet another crusade.

**Curfew.** A decree confining people inside their homes. The Israel Defense Forces have kept Palestinian cities and towns under curfews, some for weeks at a time, resulting in serious food shortages and the denial of urgent medical services. As a form of collective punishment, curfews are contrary to the Geneva Conventions. [[www.phrmg.org](http://www.phrmg.org)] See: **Geneva Conventions**.

**De-development.** Term first used by Sara M. Roy to describe the negative economic impact of Israel’s occupation on Palestinian cities and towns. From 1992 to 1996, for example, average unemployment in the occupied territories increased from 3 to 28 percent, and per capita GNP fell 37 percent. By the year 2002, poverty and unemployment in Gaza had reached 50 percent.

**Detention: Administrative and Juvenile.** Administrative detention is detention without charge or trial, authorized by administrative order rather than by judicial decree. It is allowed by international law within rigid limitations. B’Tselem, the Israeli human rights organization, charges that Israel’s practice of administrative detention violates these limitations. Contrary to article 49 of the Geneva Convention, e.g., Israel often holds Palestinians for prolonged periods of time without trying them and without informing them of the suspicions against them. Israeli military order 132 also allows for the arrest and detention of Palestinian children from 14 to 17 years of age, who are confined with adult prisoners and criminal convicts. This practice contravenes the Fourth Geneva Convention and the U.N. Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty. From Sept. 2000 to Feb. 2002, 1,000 Palestinians from inside the green

line have been detained, and 1,850 (including 600-plus children) from Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza Strip. B'Tselem charges that 85 percent of detainees are tortured during interrogations. [www.btselem.org] See: **Geneva Conventions**.

**Dimona.** Site in the Negev Desert where Israel manufactures nuclear weapons. In his book "The Samson Option: Israel's Nuclear Arsenal and American Foreign Policy," investigative reporter Seymour Hersh writes: "By the mid-1980s, the technicians at Dimona had manufactured hundreds of low-yield neutron warheads capable of destroying large numbers of enemy troops with minimal property damage. The size and sophistication of Israel's arsenal allows men such as Ariel Sharon to dream of redrawing the map of the Middle East aided by the implicit threat of nuclear force." Israel has refused to sign the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

**Disputed Territories, Administered Territories.** Terms used by Israel and sometimes the United States to soften or intentionally confuse the status of areas occupied by Israel in 1967. Use "occupied territories." See: **Geneva Conventions; Occupied Territories; Judea and Samaria**.

**Divided City, Undivided City.** Refers to urban areas, especially Hebron and Jerusalem, where Israelis and Palestinians live side-by-side. From 1948 to 1967 Jerusalem was divided. Israelis could not reach places in East Jerusalem, including the Jewish Quarter of the Old City and such holy places as the Western Wall; Palestinians could not reach areas in West Jerusalem, including properties to which they held deeds and keys. Since 1967, Israel has referred to Jerusalem as its "undivided and eternal capital," although it provides disparate public services in the two parts of the city and residents have little interaction. [www.acj.org] See: **East Jerusalem; Jerusalem; Hebron**.

**Druze, Druse.** Members of a secretive religious group which has roots in Christianity and Islam. There are Druze in northern Israel who are Israeli Arabs, as well as Druze in Syria and Lebanon. See: **Israeli Arabs**.

**East Jerusalem.** Sometimes referred to as Arab East Jerusalem, this area was seized by the Israelis in 1967. Under international law it is considered part of the occupied territories. Although it is part of the single Jerusalem municipality, it suffers from lack of public services except for the Jewish Quarter of the Old City and the parts of East Jerusalem where settlements have been constructed. East Jerusalem is the area where most Muslim and Christian residents live and work. It includes the walled Old City and the historic Mount of Olives. Most international N.G.O.s are located in East Jerusalem. Palestinians expect that when their state is formally established, its capital will be in East Jerusalem. [www.passia.org/index\_jerusalem] See: **Jerusalem**.

**Embassy, Consulates, Christian Embassy.** Although Israel considers Jerusalem its capital, most nations do not and maintain their embassies in Tel Aviv. The United States maintains consulates in both West and East Jerusalem.

Although the U.S. Congress has pressed the State Department to move the embassy to Jerusalem, every President since Ronald Reagan has resisted specific requests. In 1989, the United States leased a 7.7 acre site on the Hebron Road south of the Old City for the construction of an embassy. Subsequently the site was discovered to lack a clear title, the land having been confiscated from Palestinian owners including an Islamic foundation (waqf). The so-called **International Christian Embassy** in West Jerusalem, which is unrelated to any government, represents the presence in Jerusalem of certain ideological Christians from abroad who support the policies of the state of Israel. The Christian Embassy is not recognized by the historic churches in the Holy Land, nor does Israel accept the conservative theology of the Christian Embassy. [www.icej.org] See: **Christian Zionism**.

**Fatah.** The leading constituent group of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Founded in 1959, it marks January 1965 as the beginning of its armed struggle to free Palestine. In 1969, Fatah's leader, Yasir Arafat, was appointed chairman of the P.L.O.'s executive committee. See: **P.L.O.**

**Foreign Aid to Egypt.** U.S. aid to Egypt has averaged \$2.2 billion per year over the past 21 years. The money is given as part of an agreement that encouraged Egypt to sign and maintain a 1979 peace treaty with Israel.

**Foreign Aid to Israel.** U.S. aid to Israel takes the form of federal loans and grants, plus tax-deductible donations from organizations and individuals. Federal aid to Israel is unique in that: a) the total annual grant is given at the start of each fiscal year, instead of quarterly, allowing Israel to earn the interest; b) it is given with no strings attached, unlike aid to other countries, which is given for designated purposes; c) as of 1984, the U.S. gives Israel additional funds to pay whatever debt it owes on its loans; d) annual U.S. aid to Israel is far greater than that given to any other country. According to conservative U.S. government figures, total U.S. aid to Israel since 1948 is around 90 billion dollars, or approximately \$15,000 per citizen. In addition, Germany over the years has given Israel some \$31 billion in grants and preferred loans.[www.palestinemonitor.org/factsheet] See: **Jewish National Fund**.

**Fundamentalist.** Term used by religious scholars to designate a segment of any religious community that has adopted a narrow focus on their tradition. In recent decades, the term has become pejorative when used to caricature the policies or practices of those who narrowly employ the fundamentals of their faith to promote a radical political agenda. Properly used, a fundamentalist is an orthodox traditionalist of a particular faith group. When the term is misused, fundamentalist conveys a political style often associated with violence; in this usage, a fundamentalist is blamed for using sacred texts to justify his or her agenda. The term is legitimate in academic discourse, but has become imprecise

in wider discourse. Extremist, radical, or fanatic are more accurate terms. See: **Terrorism.**

**Gaza, Gaza Strip.** One of the most densely populated areas in the world, the Gaza Strip is 25 miles long and five miles wide, lying along the southeastern edge of the Mediterranean Sea. Intended as part of the Arab sector in the 1947 U.N. partition plan, it was occupied and administered by Egypt following the 1947-48 war. Gaza City, the principal urban community, makes up one third of the Strip's 1.02 million residents (1997 census), most of whom are refugees. Israel occupied the Strip in 1967 and constructed numerous settlements there for the exclusive use of Jews. With the exception of those settlements and some closed military zones, the remaining 60 percent of Gaza was incorporated in the Palestinian Authority under the Oslo Accords. Gaza is not contiguous with the West Bank and the "safe passage" road between Gaza and the West Bank which was provided for in Article XI of an agreement signed on May 4, 1994, is currently shut down. See: **Oslo; Settlements; West Bank.**

**"Generous Offer."** Following the failure of the Camp David meetings in July 2000, the Palestinian Authority's President Yasir Arafat has been criticized for refusing the "generous offer" of Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak. The offer, never publicly displayed, would have maintained 69 settlements in 10 percent of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Israel would have retained full military control over another 10 percent of the West Bank, specifically in the agriculturally productive area along the Jordan River. Although described as "temporary control," this 10 percent would remain under Israeli military and civil authority for an indefinite period. All the borders of the West Bank would remain under Israeli control, thus prohibiting freedom of movement internationally. The settlement blocs would be connected by Israeli-controlled roads, effectively dividing the West Bank into four isolated cantons, similar to the Bantustans of South Africa. Because the settlements are established on groundwater aquifers and near the sources of surface water, Palestinians would not control the water supply necessary for a viable state. In addition, Israel resisted the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes within the green line. Israeli peace organizations, including Gush Shalom, describe the offer as impossible and as a "fig leaf." [[www.gush-shalom.org/](http://www.gush-shalom.org/)] See: **Borders; Green Line; Law of Return; Settlements; West Bank.**

**Geneva Conventions, Fourth Geneva Convention.** Four internationally accepted conventions were approved in Geneva following World War II. The Fourth Geneva Convention was adopted on August 12, 1949 with Israel as one of the signatories. It protects individuals who live in a territory occupied by another nation and makes the occupying power responsible for the welfare of the population of any territory it occupies. It protects such residents from coercion, corporal punishment, torture, the confiscation of personal property, and collective punishment. The occupying power is prohibited from transferring any

part of its own population into the occupied territory. This provision has been cited by U.N. resolutions objecting to the creation of settlements in the West Bank and Gaza. Israel takes the position that the Fourth Geneva Convention does not apply to its role as an occupying power. [www.Law-Society.org/Reports/1999/geneva4] See: **U. N. Resolutions**.

**God.** Supreme Being worshipped by Jews, Christians, and Muslims, and known in Arabic as Allah and in Hebrew as G-d or YHWH. Arabic-speaking Jews, Christians and Muslims all use the term Allah. Certain devout Jews do not pronounce the ineffably sacred name of God, Yahweh, or Jehovah, thus the Hebrew spellings above.

**Golan Heights.** Portions of the hilly plateau of southwestern Syria occupied by Israel in 1967. Additional land was seized in 1973. In December 1981, Israel unilaterally annexed the Golan Heights. Under international law the Golan Heights are considered part of the occupied territories. See: **Occupied Territories**.

**Green Line.** Line drawn up by the 1949 Rhodes armistice agreement separating Israel from the West Bank. Since 1967, the green line provides the boundary between Israel and the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, which together with the occupied Gaza Strip, comprises 22 percent of pre-1948 Palestine. When Palestinians signed the Oslo Accords and modified their charter in 1996, they agreed to recognize Israel within the green line, thus conceding 78 percent of historic Palestine to the Jewish state. In some areas, such as north of Bethlehem, Israel has further extended its control, leading to the use of the phrase "creeping green line." See: **Borders; "Generous Offer"**.

**Hamas** (Acronym for Islamic Resistance Movement). Established in 1987 as an outgrowth of the Muslim Brotherhood in Palestine. Engages in social-communal activities as well as armed struggle against Israel's occupation. Led by Sheikh Ahmad Yassin and concentrated in the Gaza Strip and a few West Bank areas. Membership includes tens of thousands of supporters and sympathizers.

**Hebron.** The largest city in the West Bank with approximately 125,000 Palestinian residents. Although 80 percent of Hebron is currently under Palestinian administration (designated H1 in the Hebron Protocol to the Oslo Accords), Israel controls the main access routes. The Old City of Hebron (H2), also under Israeli military occupation, is home to an estimated 35,000 Palestinians, as well as 400 settlers who are protected by 1,200 Israeli soldiers. The traditional burial site for Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, and Jacob and Leah, located in the Old City, is known among Palestinians as the Ibrahimi Mosque and to Jews as the Cave of Machpela. Parts of the mosque were built by Herod the Great sometime prior to 4 B.C. Much of the present structure was built by Crusaders about 1115. The worship area at the burial site was divided by Israel in 1994-95 following the massacre of 29 Muslims at prayer by Baruch

Goldstein, a settler with dual American and Israeli citizenship. Two outside observer groups are present in H2: the Temporary International Presence in Hebron (TIPH) and the Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) organized by three U.S. peace churches, the Mennonites, Brethren, and Friends. Hebron is some 45 miles south of Jerusalem. [[www.cpt.org](http://www.cpt.org)] See: **Crusades, Holy Land, Holy Places; Oslo; Settlers; West Bank.**

**Hezbollah.** An Islamic political movement and party, active mainly in Beirut, the Beqa' Valley, and South Lebanon. Starting in 1983, Hezbollah carried out attacks against Israeli forces occupying South Lebanon, which led ultimately to Israel's withdrawal in May 2000.

**Holy Land, Holy Places, Holy City.** Popular designation for Israel, the West Bank, and portions of Jordan, Syria and Lebanon, where the biblical events and Prophet Muhammad's visit to Al Aqsa Mosque took place. Jerusalem itself, especially the Old City, is regarded by Jews, Christians, and Muslims as uniquely significant and is referred to as the Holy City. Certain sites are known as Holy Places, generally those identified with the lives and activities of King David, the Hebrew prophets, Jesus, Mary, and the disciples, and Prophet Muhammad. The Western Wall is regarded by Jews worldwide as the focus of liturgical life, and thus of enormous significance. Christians consider the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in the Old City, the Garden of Gethsemane at the foot of the Mount of Olives, and the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem as of major importance. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, also known as the Church of the Resurrection, is believed to have been constructed over the places where Jesus was crucified and where he rose from the dead. The Dome of the Rock and Al Aqsa Mosque on Al Haram al Sherif comprise the third holiest place in the Muslim world. Some sites are revered by members of all three faiths, e.g., the burial place of Abraham in Hebron, the tomb of Joseph in Nablus, and Rachel's Tomb in Bethlehem. [[www.Al-Bushra.org](http://www.Al-Bushra.org)] See: **Al Haram al Sherif; Western Wall.**

**Home Demolitions.** Practice of forcibly removing families from their homes and destroying their dwellings. The government of Israel and some Israeli municipalities have carried out home demolitions as punishment for an alleged criminal act by a member of an extended family or because the house was constructed or enlarged without a building permit. (Building permits, which cost over \$30,000, are routinely denied, so that it is not unusual for Palestinian families to live eight or nine to a room.) Demolitions are carried out with the help or supervision of the Israeli army or police. Home demolitions are a breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. From 1967 to 1999, Israel demolished over 8,500 Palestinian homes. [[www.palestinemonitor.org](http://www.palestinemonitor.org); [www.cpt.org](http://www.cpt.org); [www.batshalom.org](http://www.batshalom.org)] See: **Geneva Conventions.**

**Humanitarian Crisis.** Sometimes used by the Western media to describe shortages of medical supplies, food, and water in the West Bank and particularly Gaza. While the phrase implies a natural disaster or unavoidable consequence of war, shortages of medical supplies and food in the occupied territories generally are a direct result of Israeli policies. Interfering with food and medical supplies for a civilian population is forbidden by the Fourth Geneva Convention, and technically is a “war crime.”

**IDF (Israel Defense Forces).** The conscripted army of the state of Israel, in which both men and women serve. Certain Jewish religious groups are exempted from service. Military service, which is universal except for Israeli Arabs, is the basis for educational, health and other social services. [www.idf.il/English] See: **Yesh Gvul**.

**Intifada (or Intifadah).** Arabic word meaning “a shaking off,” used as the designation of an uprising among Palestinians from 1987 until 1993. The uprising that was touched off by Ariel Sharon’s visit with 1,000 troops to Al Haram al Sherif on September 28, 2000, is known as the Al Aqsa, or second, intifada, because Muslim youth considered themselves to be defending the mosque located on Al Haram al Sherif. During the six years of the first intifada, approximately 1,500 Palestinians and 35 Israelis were killed; during the first year and a half of the second intifada, 1,000-plus Palestinians and 200-plus Israelis have been killed. [www.electronicintifada.net; www,birzeit.edu] See: **Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades**.

**Islam, Islamic, Islamist.** The religion practiced by Muslims who believe in One, Unique and Incomparable God, Creator of the universe. They acknowledge a chain of prophets, beginning with Adam and including Noah, Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Job, Moses, David, Solomon, Jesus, and the final prophet, Muhammad. One of three monotheistic religions that trace their roots to Abraham, the others being Judaism and Christianity. The three major groups within Islam are the Sunnis, Shi’a, and Alawites. The Sunni branch accounts for 90 percent of the one billion Muslims in the world and includes Wahabi Islam, which originated in Saudi Arabia in the 19th century. Alawites are found in Syria, and the largest concentration of Shi’a is in Iran. Islam is one of the fastest growing religions in the U.S. and throughout the world. Islamic is the generally appropriate adjective, as in Islamic architecture. Islamist is often used to refer to individuals or groups with political concerns. [www.cair-net.org;www.globalministries.org].

**Islamic Jihad.** Palestinian organization formed in mid-1980s by Fathi Shiqaqi and Abdulaziz Odeh. Advocates armed struggle for the liberation of Palestine. See: **Jihad**.

**Israel, Israelis, Israelites.** The modern nation established in 1948, Israel is sometimes referred to as the Jewish State, although about 18 percent of the

population is not Jewish. The citizens of Israel are Israelis; Israeli can be used as an adjective to describe a person, place, or thing (example: the Israeli city, Tel Aviv). The Israelites were a biblical people among the descendants of Abraham. Historically, the term Israel referred to the ancient Jewish kingdoms and sometimes to the Jewish people as a whole. [[www.info.gov.il/eng](http://www.info.gov.il/eng)] See: **Jewish State**.

**Israeli Arabs.** Arabic-speaking citizens of Israel. In 2001, there were an estimated one million Israeli Arabs, the vast majority of whom identify themselves as Palestinians. Most Arab families in Israel have resided in the area since before the state's formation in 1948. See: **Citizenship, Nationality**.

**Jerusalem (including East Jerusalem).** The English word designating the city holy to Jews, Christians and Muslims. Most of the sacred sites of the three religions are in the walled Old City, which comprises Jewish, Muslim, Christian and Armenian Quarters. Although claimed by Israel as its capital, Jerusalem is not recognized as such by the United States and most other nations. The Knesset and principal government offices are located in West Jerusalem. Although a part of a single municipality since 1967, East Jerusalem, under international law, is considered part of the occupied territories. Prior to the 1967 war, Jordanian East Jerusalem's municipal borders comprised approximately 1,500 acres, and the Israeli West Jerusalem municipality approximately 10,000 acres. Immediately after the war, Israel annexed parts of the West Bank and unilaterally extended the boundaries of the city by more than 50% to approximately 17,500 acres. Jerusalem in Hebrew is Yerushalayim and the Arabic is Al-Quds. [[www.gush-shalom.org/Jerusalem](http://www.gush-shalom.org/Jerusalem); [www.jerusalem.muni.il](http://www.jerusalem.muni.il); [www.acj.org](http://www.acj.org)] See: **East Jerusalem; Divided, Undivided City**.

**Jewish National Fund.** A subordinate body of the World Zionist Organization, the J.N.F. entered into a "covenant" in 1961 with the government of Israel. Today, the J.N.F. in the U.S. is a tax-exempt corporation that raises millions of dollars annually for the "afforestation, reclamation, and development" of the land of Israel, including the lands occupied by Israel. To date, the J.N.F. owns 93% of the land inside Israel, most of which was confiscated from Palestinians. By law, non-Jews cannot own, reside, or work on land acquired by the Jewish National Fund.

**Jewish Neighborhoods or Jerusalem Neighborhoods.** A term sometimes used as a euphemism for settlements, especially those located within the extended borders of Jerusalem. See: **Jerusalem, Settlements**.

**Jewish State.** Occasionally used as a synonym for Israel, especially when emphasizing the official nature of Israel's monolithic religious character. "The Jewish State" is also the English translation of the 1886 book "Der Judenstaat" by Theodor Herzl, an Austrian-Jewish writer and founder of the World Zionist Organization. The more accurate translation of the German is "The Jews' State."

The distinction is important: "Jewish" refers to the culture of the state, as reflected by its majority; in this sense, Israel is a Jewish country, as the United States may be said to be a Christian one. If Herzl had this sense in mind, he would have used the German "*Der Jüdische Staat*." But he used the possessive "*Der Judenstaat*," meaning it was to be a state owned by all Jews, no matter where in the world they lived. According to Herzl, the Arabs would be expelled and an exclusive state belonging to Jews would result. See: **Aliyah; Israel; Zionism**.

**Jews.** Followers of the religion known as Judaism, although the designation includes "secular" as well as "cultural" Jews. [[www.ou.org/about/judaism2](http://www.ou.org/about/judaism2); [www.ajc.org](http://www.ajc.org)] See: **Judaism**.

**Jihad.** Incorrectly translated "holy war," jihad is more precisely a "striving," or "struggle" of a Muslim to keep the faith, to achieve self-control or personal development, or to improve the quality of life in society. This jihad, called the "greater jihad," has spiritual implications for devout Muslims, and is a fairly common name given to children born in a time of struggle. The Qur'an also speaks of a jihad of arms, the "smaller jihad," which permits fighting as a means of self-protection, not unlike what Christians call a "just war," which is fought against tyranny or oppression. There is no such thing as "holy war" in Islam; the Arabic term *harb muqaddasa*, which translates holy war, cannot be found in the Qur'an or in the sayings of the Prophet known as the Hadith. The word was adopted by a political movement, the Islamic Jihad. See: **Islamic Jihad**.

**Judaism.** The religion practiced by Jews. In the U.S., Judaism is made up of Conservative, Reform, Orthodox, and Reconstructionist congregations. In Israel, Reform, Conservative, and Reconstructionist congregations have no legal standing. Israeli Jews include large numbers of Ultra-Orthodox, as well as many who are "secular," i.e., do not belong to congregations and whose religious practices may be limited to certain religious holidays. [Conservative: [www.uscj.org](http://www.uscj.org); Reform: [www.uahc.org](http://www.uahc.org); Orthodox: [www.ou.org](http://www.ou.org); Reconstructionist: [www.jrf.org](http://www.jrf.org)]

**Judea and Samaria.** Biblical names for the southern and central areas of Palestine, now in the West Bank; used by some settlers and other Israelis who hope or expect Israel to annex the occupied territories as a permanent part of the state of Israel. [[www.yesha.org.il](http://www.yesha.org.il)] See: **Occupied Territories; West Bank**.

**Kibbutz, Moshav.** A kibbutz (plural, kibbutzim) is an Israeli community, originally agricultural but increasingly industrial, in which most property is collectively owned. Early in the development of Israel, the kibbutzim gave the country a socialist flavor and orientation. A moshav (plural, moshavim) is a cooperative community of small farmers in Israel, who own their own property and possessions, organize their work cooperatively, and market their produce jointly.

**Knesset.** Israeli parliament and the building in which it meets. The Knesset, a unicameral legislature, functions in a modified parliamentary system, with a separate national election for the Prime Minister who is both head of government and a member of the Knesset. The President, also elected separately, serves as the mostly ceremonial head of state. The two major parties are the relatively liberal **Labor Party** and the more conservative **Likud** Party. When, as at present, no party has a majority in the 120-member Knesset, some of the numerous small, special interest parties – excluding the Arab ones – are invited to form a coalition government, thus giving these parties a disproportionate influence. [www.Knessetgov.il/main/eng].

**Koran.** See: **Qur'an**.

**Law of Return, Right of Return.** In 1950, the Israeli Knesset adopted the **Law of Return** giving any Jew in the world the right to move to and settle in Israel. The **Right of Return** is the right of all Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and is based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Articles 13, 15, and 17) adopted on December 10, 1948, and Resolution 194 adopted by the U.N. General Assembly on December 11, 1948 as a condition of Israel's entry into the U.N. The state of Israel, however, opposes the return of Palestinian refugees, fearing that their presence would change its character and demographics as a Jewish State. [www.untreaty.un.org/] See: **Aliyah; Refugees; Jewish State**.

**MK.** Member of the Knesset. An elected representative in the Israeli parliament, which is known as the Knesset. [www.info.gov.il] See: **Knesset**.

**Madrasa.** Arabic word for a school that is often, but not necessarily, involved in the teaching of religion.

**Martyr** (in Arabic, **Shadid**). In religious terms, a witness to one's faith, including one who witnesses with his or her death (martyrdom). In political terms, one who dies in the struggle for freedom and is honored as a hero. See: **Suicide Bomber**.

**Middle East.** Land area of Southwest Asia and Northeast Africa, often from Turkey to Yemen and Iran to Egypt; sometimes includes North Africa to Morocco. Formerly known as the Near East, a term used by the British whose empire once reached to the Far East (East Asia). Some geographers prefer Southwest Asia.

**Mosque.** Muslim place of worship, commonly including a minaret from which the call to prayer is announced or broadcast. Generally dominated by a room facing Mecca, so marked by a qibla or niche toward which Muslims face during prayers. In the United States there are about 2,000 mosques, Islamic schools and Islamic centers. In Jerusalem the mosque most sacred to Muslims is Al Aqsa Mosque located on the compound known as Al Haram al Sherif or Noble Sanctuary, and known to Muslims as the "Farthest Mosque." Properly

speaking, the Dome of the Rock, also located on the Haram, is not a mosque although sometimes it is incorrectly referred to as the Mosque of Omar. The Caliph Omar, who conquered Jerusalem in 638 C.E., was offered an opportunity to pray in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre but rejected the invitation knowing that his followers would designate the Church as a mosque. Instead, Omar prayed just outside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre where the Mosque of Omar was later built. [www.islam.org] See: **Islam**.

**Muslim.** Follower of the religion of Islam. Muslim (plural, Muslims in English, Muslimoon in Arabic) is the preferred spelling (do not use Moslem) as a more accurate transliteration of the Arab word. Do not use Mohammedan; Muslims do not consider themselves disciples of Muhammad in the sense that Christians consider themselves disciples of Jesus, and Muhammad is not part of the deity. There are 1.2 billion Muslims worldwide, of whom an estimated 6 million live in the United States. About 20 percent of all Muslims live in Arabic-speaking countries; Indonesia is the nation with the largest Muslim population. Demographers estimate that in 2025 one-fourth of all people in the world will be Muslims. (Note: Do not use Arab as a synonym for Muslim; some Arabs are Christians or Jews, and the majority of Muslims are non-Arabs.) [www.cair-net.org] See also: **Islam**.

**Nakba** (also **Naqbaa** or **Nakbah**) “The Catastrophe.” Al Nakba is the term used by Palestinians for the impact on them and their national aspirations of what Israelis call their War of Independence, 1947-48. At that time, 757,000 Palestinians became refugees and 419 villages were destroyed. The Nakba is marked by ceremonies each year on May 15. The Israeli analyst Meron Benvenisti has used words like “ethnic cleansing” to describe the actions of Israeli troops in more than 30 documented massacres.

**Near East.** Term no longer in general use in the U.S. Once used, especially by the British, to designate area now known as the Middle East. Sometimes used by academics, especially archaeologists. See: **Middle East**.

**Neutral Broker, Honest Broker.** Avoid using these terms to describe the role claimed by the U.S. in relation to the peace process. Neutrality in this area is questioned in light of the United States’ disproportionate financial and military aid to Israel and to the frequent assertion of a “special relationship” between the U.S. and Israel. See: **Foreign Aid to Israel; Special Relationship**.

**Occupied Territories.** Territories occupied by Israel in 1967, specifically Gaza (which had been governed by Egypt), the West Bank and East Jerusalem (which had been under Jordanian jurisdiction), the Golan Heights (which had been part of Syria), and the Sinai (which was later returned to Egypt). Under terms of the Fourth Geneva Convention, no occupying power may legally seize territory by war nor transplant its own population into the occupied territories. As part of the Oslo Accords, Israel accepted U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 that called

for its withdrawal from these territories. [[www.Gush-Shalom.org](http://www.Gush-Shalom.org); [www.LawSociety.org](http://www.LawSociety.org)] See: **East Jerusalem; Gaza; Geneva Conventions; Golan Heights; West Bank.**

**Orient House.** Office building used by the Palestinian Authority in East Jerusalem. Seized by Israel on August 10, 2001, along with eight other P.L.O. offices in East Jerusalem. [[www.pna.net](http://www.pna.net)] See: **East Jerusalem.**

**Orthodox, Orthodox Christians, Orthodox Jews.** The word orthodox, when applied to religious groups such as Christians and Jews, signifies an historic theological position. For some, the word signifies theological or liturgical purity. When used with a capital letter, Orthodox designates particular groups, such as the Greek Orthodox Church or Orthodox Judaism. See: **Fundamentalist.**

**Oslo, Oslo Accords.** Following secret negotiations in Oslo, Norway, Israel and the P.L.O. signed the "Declaration of Principles on Interim Self Government" (DOP) on September 13, 1993. Implementation of the first stage occurred in May 1994. This was followed by the Taba Agreement (Oslo II) in 1995, the Hebron Agreement in 1997, and several other protocols. Together these documents represent the "Oslo Accords."

**P.A., P.N.A.** The Palestinian Authority or Palestinian National Authority designate the elected governmental officials and agencies authorized under the Oslo Accords. Yasir Arafat was elected president of the P.N.A. on January 20, 1996. [[www.pna.net](http://www.pna.net)] See: **P.L.C.; Palestine.**

**P.L.C.** The Palestinian Legislative Council of 88 members was elected on January 20, 1996 from 16 electoral districts. The P.L.C. was created pursuant to the Oslo Accords. The P.L.C. has no responsibility for foreign affairs or agreements with foreign governments. [[www.pal-plc.org](http://www.pal-plc.org)] See: **Oslo.**

**P.L.O.** The Palestine Liberation Organization was established in May 1964 when the Arab League authorized a body to represent stateless Palestinians. Yasir Arafat became the chairman in 1969. It was recognized by the United Nations in 1974 as the representative of the Palestinian people and gained a role as a U.N. observer in that year. The same year, an Arab summit recognized the P.L.O. as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. In 1993, Israel recognized the P.L.O. The P.L.O. is the official Palestinian signatory to the Oslo Accords. [[www.nad-plo.org](http://www.nad-plo.org)] See: **Oslo, P.N.C.**

**P.N.C.** The Palestine National Council is the legislative body of the P.L.O.; its 669 members represent Palestinians worldwide and elect an Executive Committee of 18 members. Among the major actions of the P.N.C. were the signing of the Palestine National Charter in 1964, the Palestinian Declaration of Independence on November 15, 1988, and, in agreement with the Oslo Declaration of Principles, the modification of the Charter on April 21, 1996, which recognized the state of Israel.

**Palestine** Located from biblical times on the eastern edge of the Mediterranean, the area was first designated as Palestine by the Romans in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century. Although the 1947 U.N. Resolution 181 provided for a Palestinian state on 43.5 percent of Mandate Palestine, Palestinians still remain stateless. [www.passia.org; www.ARIJ.org] See: **P.L.O., Palestinian Authority, West Bank.**

**Peace Organizations.** Organizations with activist peace and/or human rights agenda have developed among Israelis and Palestinians. Some collaboration, including demonstrations, brings both groups together. Israeli peace groups include: **B'Tselem** [www.btselem.org], **Bat Shalom** [www.batshalom.org], **Coalition of Women for Peace** [www.coalitionofwomen-4peace.org] **Gush Shalom** [www.gush-shalom.org/-/english], **Peace Now** [www.peace-now.org.il/english], **Rabbis for Human Rights** [www.rabbishr.org], **Women in Black** and **Yesh Gvul** [www.yesh-gvul.org/English]. Palestinian groups include: **Al Haq** [www.alhaq.org], **Palestinian Center for Human Rights** [www.pchrgaza.org], **Bir Zeit Human Rights Action Project** [www.birzeit-edu/hrap], **Addameer** [www.addameer.org], **International Center of Bethlehem** [www.annadwa.org], **Palestine Human Rights Information Center** [www.ariga.com/human-rights], **Law** [www.LawSociety.org], **Rapprochement Center** [www.rapprochement.org], **Sabeel Liberation Theology Movement** [www.sabeel.org], and the **Wi'am Conflict Resolution Center** [www.planet.edu/~alaslal].

**Permits.** Documents issued by Israeli authorities authorizing everyday acts such as travel by residents of the West Bank and Gaza into Israel for work or transit, building, and the importing and exporting of goods. Residents of the West Bank or Gaza who wish to travel abroad must apply for and receive special permission to reach the Tel Aviv airport and other border crossings. Israel also issues identification papers to Palestinians living within the extended borders of Jerusalem and has sometimes withdrawn those IDs, as when students go abroad to study or when a Jerusalem-born Palestinian marries a resident of the West Bank or Gaza. [www.LawSociety.org] See: **Borders, Closure, Checkpoint.**

**Philistine, Filistin, Filistini.** The Philistines are an ancient people who, in biblical times, were rivals of the Israelites. *Filistin* is pronounced the same way, but is the Arabic word for Palestine. *Filistini* (plural, *Filistiniun*) is the Arabic word for a Palestinian. Philistine is not a synonym for *Filistini* and should not be used in that way.

**Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (P.F.L.P.).** A leftist faction of the P.L.O. founded in 1967 by Dr. George Habash, a Christian Palestinian. In 1988, the P.F.L.P. supported the P.N.C.'s declaration of a Palestinian state, based on U.N. Resolution 181 (Palestine Partition of 1947), but it opposed the P.L.O.'s signing of the Oslo Accord of September 1993.

**Qur'an.** Preferred spelling (over Koran) for the Islamic scriptures made up of 114 suras (chapters) that are divided into ayas (verses). The Arabic word means "recitation." Muslims believe that the Prophet Muhammad received the Qur'an in a series of revelations from God through the angel Gabriel. See: **Islam; Muslim.**

**Ramadan.** The ninth month in the Muslim calendar, considered holy by Muslims because it was during that month that the first revelations of what became the Qur'an were received by the Prophet Muhammad in 610. Muslims mark the month of Ramadan with fasting and discipline of character during daylight hours and break the fast after sunset with a special meal. The period ends with a celebration, the *Eid al Fitr*, which lasts several days. Because the Muslim calendar is based on the lunar cycle, Ramadan begins about eleven days earlier each year. [[www.cair-net.org](http://www.cair-net.org)] See: **Islam; Muslim.**

**Refugees.** Individuals who flee from or are driven from their homes, especially in time of war, and are unable to return. The United Nations defines a Palestinian refugee as a person "whose normal residence was Palestine for a minimum of two years preceding the conflict in 1948, and who, as a result of this conflict, lost both his home and his means of livelihood and took refuge in 1948 in one of the countries where the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (U.N.R.W.A.) provides relief. Refugees within this definition and the direct descendants of such refugees are eligible for Agency assistance" under certain circumstances. A total of 757,000 refugees were estimated in 1948 and several hundred thousand additional persons became refugees in 1967. By 1999, the U.N. had registered 3.5 million refugees living in camps or assimilated into the populations in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank and Gaza. In 1948, the United Nations recognized the right of all refugees to return to their homes (Resolution 194). Today, 33 percent of all Palestinian refugees live within 59 camps maintained by U.N.R.W.A. [[www.badil.org/Refugees/Palestinians\\_refugees](http://www.badil.org/Refugees/Palestinians_refugees)] See: **Law of Return , Right of Return.**

**"Relative Calm," "Comparative Quiet"**. Terms used at times by the media to describe periods when few, if any Israelis are killed, even though, during the same periods, more than a few Palestinians were killed. Media reports should reflect the reality of the situation on both sides.

**Rubber-Coated Steel Bullets.** This is more accurate than "rubber bullets." It is important to distinguish live fire from rubber-coated steel bullets. Often the Israeli army will use the latter when confronting Palestinian stone throwers. The mainstream media customarily refers to these bullets as "rubber-coated," giving the impression they are more humane. In fact, they are steel bullets with a thin rubber coating and they can cause more extensive damage than uncoated bullets when lodged in a person's head or abdomen, particularly a young person's. The

U.S. government has criticized the Israeli government for their use and misuse. [[www.btselem.org/files/ERubber.rtf](http://www.btselem.org/files/ERubber.rtf)] See: **IDF**.

**Salahadin Brigade.** Named for Muslim general who defeated the Crusaders. Military wing of the Popular Resistance Committees, composed of members of Hamas and Yasir Arafats's Fatah organization. See: **Fatah, Hamas, Crusades**.

**Samaria.** Area in the West Bank near Nablus where a religious group known as Samaritans have lived since biblical times. The group, now estimated to number fewer than 550, worship in Hebrew and still practice animal sacrifice. They consider themselves Palestinians and are integrated into Palestinian society. See: **Judea and Samaria**.

**Security Measures.** Term often used by Israel to justify such acts as shelling Palestinian cities and villages, bulldozing homes, uprooting olive and fruit trees, preventing foodstuff and medical supplies from entering besieged areas, and destroying sources of water. Such acts do not promote security, and often are provocative. A better term would be punitive measures.

**Semitic Peoples.** Members of ethnic and religious groups who by tradition are believed to be descendants from Noah's son Shem (or Sem). Both Jews and Arabs are of Semitic origin. Numerous Semitic languages are used in the region.

**Sephardim, Mizrahim.** See: **Ashkenazi, Jews**.

**Settlements.** Originally any new Jewish development in Israel, but now more frequently used to describe the ring of residential communities constructed around Jerusalem and scattered in strategic areas throughout the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and the Golan Heights. Israelis refer to those within the green line as "Jerusalem neighborhoods," but this is contested by Palestinians and others who note that the status of East Jerusalem is not yet resolved. Most settlements were constructed on confiscated Arab land and at least partially at the expense of the Israeli government. Sometimes called "colonies," these settlements, built for Jews only, often are massive apartment blocks or suburban homes, and are a source of international controversy and Arab anger. Since the Oslo Accords were signed in September 1993, 19,000 new housing units were added, including 3,000 under Prime Minister Ehud Barak. In all, there are now 194 settlements in the West Bank, including Jerusalem, and 18 in the Gaza Strip. [[www.ARIJ.org](http://www.ARIJ.org); [www.fmep.org/home.html](http://www.fmep.org/home.html); [www.gush-shalom.org](http://www.gush-shalom.org)] See: **Geneva Conventions**.

**Settlers.** Jews who have chosen to live in subsidized homes and communities known as settlements, many within commuting distance from Jerusalem or Tel Aviv. By August 2000, there were 400,000 settlers living in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and in Gaza. The estimated annual increase of settlers (natural growth and new additions) is 8 percent. Although the first settlers, in the Jordan Valley and the Golan Heights, were Laborites and generally secular, later settlers near Jerusalem, and in Hebron, were more likely to be Ultra-Orthodox

and highly ideological. The Hebrew words for settler, *mityashev* or *mitnachel*, can mean either a dweller or the possessor of an inheritance. [www.yesha.org.il] See: **Settlements**.

**Shabbat.** Jewish day of worship, beginning at sundown on Friday and continuing until sundown Saturday.

**Special Relationship.** The frequently cited “special relationship” between the United States and Israel originated with President John F. Kennedy. Kennedy inherited tense relations with Egypt’s Nasser, who appeared to favor the Soviet Union. With strife in Vietnam creating anxieties about Communist expansion, Washington was eager for a dependable ally in the Middle East. Since then, the United States, abetted by a strong pro-Israel lobby, has given enormous military and economic aid to Israel, along with diplomatic assistance by vetoing over 40 U.N. resolutions critical of Israel. See: **Foreign Aid to Israel**.

**Suicide Bomber.** Often used by the Western media to describe a Palestinian who detonates explosives strapped to his or her body. Such a Palestinian does not see this as an act of suicide, which is prohibited by Islam. Rather, it is seen as a legitimate means of defense on the part of an occupied people and, as such, worthy of Islam’s most exalted honor, that of martyr. Palestinians speak of a “martyrdom operation” as opposed to “suicide bombing.” See: **Martyr**.

**Tanzim** (“Organization” in Arabic). A quasi-military militia associated with the P.L.O.’s Fatah organization. Members number in the tens of thousands, most of them residents of the occupied territories. The tanzim see themselves as graduates of the intifada, who are in the vanguard of organizing protests against Israel’s occupation. They are under the control of local commanders, with branches throughout the occupied territories, and are especially strong within the universities of Bethlehem, Bir Zeit, and An-Najah. They also conduct first aid and civil defense courses on a regular basis.

**Targeted Killings, Interceptions.** Terms used by Israel to describe its policy of executing Palestinians without bringing them to trial. These Palestinians are killed by Israeli death squads or missile-firing helicopters. The Israeli military also uses the phrase “target bank” to refer to the list from which the security cabinet selects its next target. Palestinians and human rights groups condemn the practice, and use the term “assassinations” or “extra-judicial executions.”

**Temple Mount.** English term used by Israelis for the site of the First and Second Temples, assumed to be the current location of the Dome of the Rock and Al Aqsa Mosque (the Noble Sanctuary.) The Hebrew terms are *Har Ha Moriyya* or *Har Ha Bayt* with the Arabic equivalent *Al Haram al Sherif*.

**Temple Mount Faithful.** A militant Jewish organization determined to “liberate” the Temple Mount (Noble Sanctuary) from what they believe is an Arab occupation by destroying the Dome of the Rock and Al Aqsa Mosque or

moving them to Mecca, after which they plan to rebuild the Third Temple. [www.templemountfaithful.org] See: **Al Haram al Sherif; East Jerusalem.**

**Terrorism.** An act causing extreme fear, dread, fright. Can refer to a mode of governing (military action, sometimes called state-sponsored terrorism) or a mode of opposing government (armed resistance, sometimes called a poor man's way of waging war). Military action is often justified on the grounds of national security, while armed resistance is often justified on human rights grounds. The United Nations recognizes the legitimacy of "armed struggle" as a means towards self-determination, or restoring a lost independence (e.g., General Assembly Resolution 2246). Israel, however, asserts that all acts of resistance by Palestinians are illegitimate acts of terrorism. Journalists should be aware that to use the term "terrorism" for every act of violence from the Palestinian side is to reveal a pro-Israeli bias in their reporting, since this is not the way Palestinians describe actions taken to force Israel to change its 35-year occupation. A better word to use may be "resistance," as in: "A group of Palestinians believed to be members of Hamas ambushed a bus carrying Jewish settlers in a destructive and deadly continuation of Palestinian resistance designed to force Israel to abandon its occupation policies." The same is true of Israeli actions; it is better to describe them as military actions, as in: "The Israeli military bulldozed 12 Palestinian homes today in an effort to break Palestinian resistance." Judging whether such acts of a state or a resistance group are contrary to international conventions is the task, not of journalists, but of tribunals such as the International Court of Justice in The Hague, the U.N. Human Rights Commission, and countries that signed the Geneva Conventions. In December 2001, for example, more than 100 signatories of the Geneva Convention gathered in Switzerland to reprimand Israel for "indiscriminate and disproportional violence" against Palestinian civilians in the occupied territories, and urged it to abide by international law. See: **Martyr; Suicide Bomber.**

**Transfer; Transfer Agreement.** **Transfer** is a euphemism for ethnic cleansing. Reference is often made to the Zionist master plan, Plan Dalet (Plan D), the name given by the Zionist High Command to military operations in April-May 1948 that resulted in the expulsion of 757,000 Palestinians and the destruction of 419 of their villages. The idea is still prevalent. In a February 2002 poll by the Israeli newspaper Maariv, more than a third of Israelis surveyed said they supported the idea of "transfer" of Palestinians out of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to Arab countries. Prime Minister Ariel Sharon himself has said that, "The Palestinians already have a state—it's called Jordan." The **Transfer Agreement** refers to the negotiated arrangement in 1933 between Zionist organizations and the Nazis to transfer some 50,000 able-bodied Jews, and \$100 million of their assets, to Palestine in exchange for stopping the worldwide, Jewish-led boycott that threatened to topple Hitler's regime in its first year. [www.feature-group.com/transfer] See: **Nakba; Refugees; Zionism.**

**U.N. Resolutions.** Both the General Assembly and the Security Council have adopted numerous resolutions dealing with Israel and the Palestinians. In 1947, the General Assembly offered a partition plan for Palestine as Resolution 181. In 1948, UNGA Resolution 194 declared the Palestinian refugees' right of return. In November 1967, the Security Council's Resolution 242 called on Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories and for Arab countries to recognize Israel and end the state of war. When war broke out again in October 1973, UNSC 338 called for peace negotiations and reaffirmed 242. Those two Security Council resolutions were cited in the Oslo Accords signed by Israel and the P.L.O. and are the agreed-upon basis for final status negotiations. In September 2000, UNSC 1322 called on Israel to abide by its responsibilities under the Fourth Geneva Convention [[www.untreaty.un.org/](http://www.untreaty.un.org/)]. See: **Geneva Conventions; Occupied Territories; Refugees.**

**Unrecognized Villages.** A significant number of Palestinian villages in Israel, which pre-date Israel's founding, exist without formal recognition from the Israeli government. They are provided with no public services and are subject to the confiscation of any land not under cultivation. They have been befriended and to some extent protected by several sympathetic groups of Israeli Jews.

**Wars.** Israel and her Arab neighbors have fought several wars. Fighting broke out in 1948 after the United Nations offered a Partition Plan for Palestine that was unacceptable to the Arabs, because, while the population of the proposed Jewish state was to be only half Jewish with the Jews owning less than 10% of the Jewish state land area, the Jews were to be established as the ruling body. The Arab states had sent arms into Palestine and had allowed volunteers to go across the border before the British left, and on the day that the state of Israel was proclaimed (May 16, 1948), they sent their regular armies into Palestine. Zionist leaders, on the other hand, seeking territorial expansion for the emergent Jewish state, had resorted to military action well before the end of the British Mandate. What Israel calls the War of Independence is known among Palestinians as the Nakbah, or Catastrophe. Jordan thereafter annexed and administered the West Bank (including East Jerusalem), and Egypt administered Gaza. In 1956-57, Israel, in collusion with Britain and France, attacked Egypt in the Suez war and captured the Sinai and Gaza Strip. Calling the invasion a dangerous threat to international order, President Eisenhower forced Israel to relinquish most of the land it had seized. The Arab countries refer to it as the Sinai War. In 1967, Israel launched a surprise attack against Egypt. Former Israeli prime ministers David Ben-Gurion, Menachem Begin and Yitzhak Rabin, former Israeli Defense Minister Ezer Weizman, and former member of the Israeli general staff Mattityahu Peled have all said that the attack was not due to any military threat from Egypt. This is known as the "Six Day War," and it ended with Israel occupying the West Bank (including East Jerusalem), and parts of the Golan Heights. In 1973, Egypt and Syria attacked Israel in order to regain

territory occupied by Israel since the 1967 war. This is variously known as the October, Ramadan, or Yom Kippur War. The Arabs failed, but it turned out to be a catalyst that ended in 1979 with the signing of a peace treaty between Israel and Egypt, and the return of the Sinai to Egypt. On June 6, **1982**, Israel invaded Lebanon. Israel's northern frontier with Lebanon had been quiet since July 24, 1981, yet when the Israeli Ambassador to London was shot on June 3, 1982, Prime Minister Menachem Begin used the incident to justify the invasion of Lebanon. In 2000, Israel withdrew from southern Lebanon, except for Shaaba Farms, a disputed strip of mountainous territory running along Lebanon's southeast border with the Golan Heights. See: **Gaza, Golan Heights, Green Line, Intifada, Nakba, Occupation, Refugees.**

**West Bank** (including **East Jerusalem**). Area captured by Israel in 1967. Following the end of the British Mandate in 1947, and until 1967, the area was administered by Jordan and became known as the West Bank (of the Jordan River). [[www.ARIJ.org](http://www.ARIJ.org)] See: **East Jerusalem; Green Line.**

**Western Wall** (once called Wailing Wall). Hebrew: *Kotel*. Site revered by Jews who come to pray and lament the destruction of the First and Second Temples. The wall, with some stones in distinctive Herodian style, was part of a retaining wall built by Herod the Great in 20 B.C. to support the platform of the Second Temple. The modern plaza facing the wall was created after Israel conquered the Old City in 1967 and demolished hundreds of Palestinian homes. Do not use Wailing Wall. See: **Jerusalem.**

**Yesh Gvul** (Hebrew meaning "There is a limit"). Israeli peace group, founded in 1982, to support soldiers who refuse assignments of a repressive or aggressive nature. During current intifada two other support groups have been founded, one by disabled army veterans and one by wives of reserve soldiers. By February 2002, over 250 reservists refused to serve in the West Bank and Gaza Strip because Israel's policies there involved "dominating, expelling, starving, and humiliating an entire people." [[www.yesh-gvul.org/english](http://www.yesh-gvul.org/english)] See **Peace Organizations.**

**Yesha Council.** Organization of Jewish settlements in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem; seeks politically to prevent any government from compromising on the continued development of settlements; at times settlement members take the law into their own hands in an attempt to drive Palestinian farmers from their land. [[www.yesha.org.il](http://www.yesha.org.il)]. See: **Settlements; Settlers.**

**Zion, Zionism, Zionists.** Zion is a biblical name variously referring to Jerusalem as a whole, the temple area, and to the location of David's palace. In the New Testament and for many Christians, Zion refers to the future locus of God's kingdom—sometimes with apocalyptic implications. The term Zionism was first used in 1890 in its modern context as a movement to resettle Jews in historic Palestine and to create the state of Israel. Theodor Herzl provided a

strong impetus to the movement as early as 1881 and in 1895 wrote a pamphlet in German, "Der Judenstaat." Political Zionism is a form of Jewish nationalism that regards all Jews worldwide as part of a national entity called "the Jewish people." Central to this concept is the belief that anti-Semitism is, as Chaim Weizmann, the first president of Israel, called it, a "bacillus" that infects every Gentile, whether he knows it or not. The Jewish philosopher Ahad Ha'am, also known as Asher Ginzberg, represented the more conciliatory form of Zionism. In 1891, he acknowledged that Palestine was not a land without a people and that it could accommodate only a small number of Jews from around the world. Those who did settle in Palestine, said Ha'am, must respect the rights of the Palestinian majority. In 1975, the U.N. General Assembly passed Resolution 3379 declaring Zionism "a form of racism and racial discrimination." In 1991, due to diplomatic lobbying by the United States, the 1975 resolution was repealed. Contemporary Zionists are those who have associated themselves with the goals of the modern state of Israel, some through cultural, economic and political means, some through military and other violent strategies. [www.wzo.org.il] See: **Christian Zionism; Jewish State.**

Version 5/25/2002