



League of Arab States

Chair Letter

DEAR DELEGATES,

Welcome to the League of Arab States (Arab League) at CNYMUN 2025! As conflicts ensue throughout our international community, we are looking forward to facilitating internal stability and diplomacy to promote global peace. Your chairs for this conference will be Athan Varghese and Jasmine Kobayashi.

ABOUT THE CHAIRS

Athan is currently a senior at Fayetteville-Manlius High School and is very excited to be chairing at CNYMUN this year. This is his third year of being involved in MUN and his second year chairing at CNYMUN. Outside of being President of FM's Model UN club, he's involved in FM's Diversity Coalition, Medical Club and has a part-time job at a bakery. In his spare time, he loves to watch soccer, support Liverpool FC, and listen to rap music, especially by artists from the United Kingdom. He is eager to hear the Arab League delegates' ideas on important issues in committee and is always available to answer any questions.

Jasmine Kobayashi is currently a junior at FM High School, and she is very excited about her third year participating in the Model UN club as well as her first time chairing. Outside of the MUN, she is involved with the school's Medical Club, Diversity Coalition, AAPI Club, conducting research and volunteering at her local hospital in her spare time. Apart from academic activities, you will often find Jasmine playing volleyball, traveling, playing piano, listening to Beyoncé, and purchasing new clothes and makeup products to add to her collection. Currently, she owns around 100 lip products and is eager to discover more. She is beyond excited to welcome CNYMUN 2025's Arab League delegates and looks forward to creating new memories.

ABOUT THE COMMITTEE

Your topics for the League of Arab States at CNYMUN 2025 will be:

1. Coordinating Efforts to Encourage Stability in the Israel-Palestine Region
2. Alleviating the Humanitarian Crises of the Ongoing Yemeni Civil War

The League of Arab States, also referred to as the Arab League, is an organization made up of Arab nations in Africa and the Middle East. It was formed

in 1945 by the signing of the Alexandria Protocol, with the seven founding members being Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Yemen. Today, the League is made up of 22 member states, including nations such as Algeria, Morocco, Somalia, and the Palestinian Authority.

The goals of the Arab League, which should be heavily considered whilst debate is ongoing in committee, have been to foster political and economic cooperation between its member states, address humanitarian issues within the region, and protect each nation's sovereignty and cultural identity.¹

There are seven observer states in the Arab League, each participating in committee discussions with a few limitations. Observer states are not permitted to vote and will be asked to leave the room during voting sessions. Resolution proposals are also exclusive to Arab League members. The purpose of observer status is to allow non-Arab states to give input on topics that come up in discussions.

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

Following CNYMUN tradition, the debate will be conducted in Harvard style, meaning delegates will not be allowed to use pre-written clauses and/or resolutions during committee. Doing so will make a delegate ineligible for awards.

To be eligible for awards, delegates must submit a 1-2 page position paper via email that addresses both topics before the start of the conference. Position papers should outline the stance of your delegation, and display an understanding of the topics, demonstrating research and knowledge of your organization's goals. When deciding on awards, the chairs will look favorably upon delegates who have put significant effort towards research/preparation, collaborate with other delegates during committee sessions, stay within their nation's policies, and get their voice heard without being overbearing.

¹ "Arab League." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, inc. www.britannica.com/topic/Arab-League; "The Arab League." *Council on Foreign Relations*, Council on Foreign Relations, 25 May 2023, www.cfr.org/background/Arab-League.

Furthermore, for the first time, CNYMUN is implementing a tiered structure of committees to ensure similar experience levels for all committee members. The League of Arab States is designated as an advanced committee, and we would like the debate to reflect that. In turn, the 'Best New Delegate' award will not be offered to any delegates in this committee.

Additionally, note that for award purposes, there will be no bias for or against members and observer delegates.

We understand that the topics presented in this committee involve very recent and polarizing events. However, delegates are expected to voice their perspectives solely based on country policy. Discussions of particular issues must be handled with extreme seriousness and without the implementation of personal beliefs or biases.

We also recognize that topics concerning regional conflict within the Middle East consist of constantly developing situations. **The events discussed in this chair letter are up to date up until August 30th 2024. Delegates are expected to be well researched and well aware of any further developments since then and be prepared to discuss them in committee.**

Please share position papers before the conference begins. To contact your chairs about any research, position papers, committee inquiries, or other questions, our emails are listed below. We also encourage you to scan our lengthy delegate preparation resources – and award structure – on www.cnymun.org. We wish you luck, and look forward to what CNYMUN 2025 will bring!

Athan Varghese
25avarghese@fmschools.org

Jasmine Kobayashi
26hkobayashi@fmschools.org

TOPIC 1: COORDINATING EFFORTS TO ENCOURAGE STABILITY IN THE ISRAEL-PALESTINE REGION

Conflict within the Israel-Palestine region has been one of the most tumultuous and controversial geopolitical issues of the past century, with constant cycles of violence between Israelis and Palestinians resulting in a heavy number of civilian casualties and political strife between the two groups. The past year has seen conflict in the area severely escalate. An assault on Israeli settlements by the militant group Hamas on October 7th, 2023 ended with around 1200 Israelis killed and 250 taken hostage in the Gaza Strip resulting in the most devastating terrorist attack conducted on Israeli soil.² The subsequent Israeli military response into Gaza has resulted in the deaths of over 40000 Palestinians at the time of writing and the creation of one of the worst humanitarian catastrophes in recent years.³ 1.1 million Palestinians face acute food insecurity as the threat of famine becomes more prevalent in the region due to the impacts of the Israeli assault.⁴ Negotiations for a ceasefire are ongoing between both sides, with nations such as the USA, Egypt, and Qatar acting as mediators. The Arab League must act in order to alleviate the situation in Gaza, and encourage stability in the region to pave the way for not only a ceasefire to the current Israel-Hamas war, but peace and political cohesion moving into the future.

The area that makes up the modern day Israel-Palestine region, often referred to historically as the Holy Land or the Levant, has been one of great political and religious turbulence for centuries. It has been considered the ancient homeland of the Jewish people as well as containing sites holy to the three major Abrahamic religions. Due to the area's religious significance, the Crusades were fought from

² Byman, Daniel, et al. "Hamas's October 7 Attack: Visualizing the Data." *CSIS*, www.csis.org/analysis/hamass-october-7-attack-visualizing-data.

³ Gritten, David. "Un Says Gaza Aid Operation Temporarily Halted Due to Evacuations." *BBC News*, BBC, 26 Aug. 2024, www.bbc.com/news/articles/cr40d32zqz4o.

⁴ "Gaza Strip: Famine Is Imminent as 1.1 Million People, Half of Gaza, Experience Catastrophic Food Insecurity : IPC - Integrated Food Security Phase Classification." *IPC Portal*, www.ipcinfo.org/ipcinfo-website/alerts-archive/issue-97/en/.

1096 to 1291 by European Christians to wrestle the Holy Land away from Muslim control.⁵

Over the past century, much of the tension in the region can be attributed to the controversy surrounding the formation of the modern-day state of Israel in 1948 following the growth of the Zionist movement. Zionism, the ideology holding that a Jewish state should be established in the region of Palestine, began to gain traction in the early 20th century due to the belief that the prevalence of anti-semitism made it impossible for Jews to assimilate into Europe.⁶ After the First World War, Zionism became an increasingly mainstream belief after initially only being held by a minority of Jews, gaining significant popularity in Britain.⁷ The Balfour Declaration was written in 1917 by British Foreign Secretary Arthur James Balfour expressing support for establishing a Jewish homeland in Palestine.⁸ The decision to do so had been especially egregious for Arab leaders under the context of the Hussein-McMahon correspondence, a series of letters sent between Hussein ibn Ali, the emir of Mecca, and Sir Henry McMahon, the British High Commissioner of Egypt, during World War I. The British appeared to show support for an independent Arab state east of Egypt, a stance effectively contradicted by the Balfour declaration.⁹ The League of Nations gave Britain a mandate to Palestine in 1920 and affirmed the Balfour declaration, resulting in increased Jewish immigration and the building up of Jewish settlements in the region.¹⁰

Jewish immigration to Palestine saw a further increase in the 1930s following the rise of Adolf Hitler in Nazi Germany.¹¹ The growth of the Jewish

population in the region greatly antagonized the Palestinian Arabs due to fears of the region coming under full Jewish control and influence, resulting in a rise of ethnic tensions.¹² The British struggled to maintain control over their mandate in a series of Arab revolts during the 1930s.¹³

As the true scale of the Holocaust was revealed after the conclusion of the Second World War, both American and European support for the Zionist movement had become widespread. The death of 6 million Jews at the hands of Nazi genocide resulted in a profound, global support to secure Jewish security by establishing their own nation-state.¹⁴ In 1947, the UN proposed a partition plan that consisted of a Jewish state alongside a Palestinian one with Jerusalem as an internationalized zone; the resolution was accepted by the Israelis but rejected by Arab Leaders.¹⁵ The state of Israel, created in the borders of the Palestinian mandate, was then formally established in 1948 and recognized by US President Harry Truman.¹⁶ Consequently on the following day, five Arab nations – Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria – declared war on Israel, which resulted in the Arab forces being defeated and Israel holding territory up to the Sinai desert, more than what was allotted to them by the UN partition plan.¹⁷

The 1948 Arab-Israeli war resulted in what has been referred to as the Nakba (“catastrophe” in Arabic) which entailed 850,000 Palestinians being expelled from their homes and forced to become refugees.¹⁸ Since then, the issue of Palestinians being displaced as a result of conflict in the region has continued to be a prominent issue, with many today being refugees or the children of refugees residing in Jordan, Lebanon, the West Bank and Gaza.¹⁹ In response to the vast scale of the displacement originating from the Nakba, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

⁵ “The Crusades: Definition, Religious Wars & Facts - History.” *History.Com*, A&E Television Networks, www.history.com/topics/middle-ages/crusades#what-were-the-crusades;

“Levant.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., www.britannica.com/place/Levant.

⁶ “Zionism.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, www.britannica.com/topic/Zionism.

⁷ *Ibid*.

⁸ “Balfour Declaration.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Balfour-Declaration>.

⁹ “Hussein-McMahon Correspondence.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., www.britannica.com/topic/Husayn-McMahon-correspondence.

¹⁰ “Zionism.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, www.britannica.com/topic/Zionism.

¹¹ *Ibid*

¹² *Ibid*

¹³ *Ibid*

¹⁴ *Ibid*.

¹⁵ *U.S. Department of State*, U.S. Department of State, history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/creation-israel.

¹⁶ *Ibid*.

¹⁷ “Zionism.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, www.britannica.com/topic/Zionism.

¹⁸ *Ibid*

¹⁹ “Palestinian Refugees - Where We Work.” Anera, 19 Jan. 2024, www.anera.org/where-we-work.

(UNRWA) was set up in 1949 to set up refugee camps for Palestinians within the aforementioned countries and territories.²⁰ Many of these camps have since evolved into permanent settlements, most of which are debilitated by overcrowding and poor living conditions.²¹ In 1978, the UN emphasized the right of return of the Palestinian people, highlighting that it is in line with protecting fundamental human rights that the Palestinian diaspora should be able to return to their native homeland – a resolution that should be upheld moving forward to promote stability in the region.²² Since 1949, Israel has fought wars with Arab factions on five other occasions including the ongoing Israel-Hamas war, highlighting the severe tensions that have existed amidst the development of the Zionist project within the Arab world.²³

Despite the ongoing conflict, significant diplomatic breakthroughs have been made in the past with the promise of making peace in the region more viable. In 1979, the Camp David Accords were signed – a peace treaty brokered between Egypt and Israel ending the long-standing state of war between the two countries.²⁴ The landmark moment also entailed Egypt recognizing Israel as a legitimate state, the first of any Arab nation to do so.²⁵ 1993 saw the signing of the Oslo Accords, an agreement which saw Israel gain recognition from the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO),²⁶ a secular organization set up by the Arab League in 1964 to centralize Palestinian opposition to Israel.²⁷ The Oslo Accords also saw

²⁰ “What Is UNRWA and Why Is It Important for Palestinians?” Al Jazeera, Al Jazeera, 2 Feb. 2024, www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/2/1/what-is-unrwa-and-why-it-is-important-for-palestinians.

²¹ “What Are Palestinian Refugee Camp Conditions Like?” *Anera*, 8 Nov. 2022, www.anera.org/blog/what-are-palestinian-refugee-camp-conditions-like/.

²² “Right of Return of the Palestinian People - Question of Palestine.” United Nations, United Nations, www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-210170/.

²³ “Arab-Israeli Wars Summary.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., www.britannica.com/summary/Arab-Israeli-wars.

²⁴ The Camp David Accords, 40 Years Later, US Embassy in Israel, il.usembassy.gov/the-camp-david-accords-40-years-later.

²⁵ *Ibid*

²⁶ “Zionism.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica., www.britannica.com/topic/Zionism.

²⁷ “Palestinian Liberation Organization.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica.,

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Palestine-Liberation-Organization>

Israel recognize the Palestinian Authority (PA), a governing body in control of the West Bank and Gaza stemming from the PLO to further Palestinian self-determination.²⁸ In recent years, the Abraham Accords were signed in 2020 to establish relations between Israel and the UAE, Bahrain, and Morocco.²⁹

Despite the successes of the Camp David and Oslo Accords in holding promise for peace in the Middle East, it must be noted that the efforts put forward by each side in the conflict were soon undermined by the actions of extremists. Following the signing of the Camp David Accords, in 1981 the Egyptian President Anwar Sadat was assassinated by Islamic extremists, believed to be due to their disagreement with his peace negotiations with Israel.³⁰ Similarly, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated by Jewish extremist Yigal Amir in 1995, who disagreed with his signing of the Oslo Accords.³¹

Whilst these diplomatic agreements have helped heal the tensions between Israel and the Arab World, conflict has persisted in the region to this day. Militant groups have grown in prominence and continue to spearhead opposition to Israel – the most significant of these being Hamas and Hezbollah. Hamas is an Islamic militant group founded in 1987 that opposed the PLO’s secular approach and increasing cordiality with Israel.³² In contrast with the PLO which began to advocate for a two-state solution in the 1990s, Hamas sought the dissolution of the Israeli state, fighting wars with Israel on numerous occasions, and has used violence and terrorism to achieve its goals, as demonstrated by the events of October 7th.³³ In the 2006 Palestinian elections, Hamas won the majority of seats in the legislative body of the PA, resulting in severe tensions with the

²⁸ *Ibid*

²⁹ “Zionism.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica., www.britannica.com/topic/Zionism.

³⁰ “The President of Egypt Is Assassinated | October 6, 1981.” History.Com, A&E Television Networks, www.history.com/this-day-in-history/the-president-of-egypt-is-assassinated.

³¹ “Yitzhak Rabin: ‘He Never Knew It Was One of His People Who Shot Him in the Back.’” The Guardian, Guardian News and Media, 31 Oct. 2020, www.theguardian.com/world/2020/oct/31/assassination-yitzhak-rabin-never-knew-his-people-shot-him-in-back.

³² “Hamas.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica., <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Hamas>

³³ *Ibid*.

PLO who had been the party in control.³⁴ In 2007, Hamas gained control over the Gaza strip in an armed confrontation with the PLO, whilst the PA had continued to hold control over the West Bank.³⁵ Since then, Hamas has been the de facto governing body of the Gaza Strip – not holding any further elections and continuing to exhibit military opposition to Israel. Hezbollah, a political ally of Hamas, is also an Islamic militant group that emerged in 1982 with the aim to resist the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.³⁶ It has become a significant political party in Lebanon since, receiving logistical support and backing from the Iranian government.³⁷ The organization has historically been in conflict with Israel, fighting a guerilla campaign to drive Israeli forces out of Southern Lebanon until withdrawal in 2000, as well as fighting Israeli forces to a standstill in the 2006 Lebanon War.³⁸

Iran and Hezbollah have both been forces that have provoked fears of an escalation in the current Israel-Hamas War. On July 30th, 2024, Fuad Shukur, a top military commander of Hezbollah, was assassinated by Israel.³⁹ Hours later, Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh was also assassinated by Israel in Tehran, the Iranian capital.⁴⁰ While Iran has seemed to postpone their retaliation, on August 25th Hezbollah launched more than 300 rockets and a significant number of drones into the Israeli border, targeting military bases and stations, displaying support for Hamas and the Gazan population under siege.⁴¹ Whilst both sides stopped short of engaging in all-out war, the incident has been the most strenuous in terms of escalating tensions in the region since October 7th.⁴²

Another aspect of tensions in the area aside from military conflict has been questions surrounding Israel's treatment of Palestinians in its occupied

territories. According to the human rights organization Amnesty International, Israel enforces a set of laws that maintain a “system of apartheid”, furthering segregation between Israelis and Palestinians and promoting state-backed violence by settlers against Palestinians, incidents of which have greatly increased since October 7th.⁴³ In 2023, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) recorded the demolition of 1128 buildings, displacing 2249 Palestinians in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, highlighting how Israeli laws and authorities have dispossessed Palestinians of their land and livelihoods.⁴⁴ Issues are also to be found in the Israeli prison system and its inequitable treatment of Palestinians. Around 9500 political prisoners are held in Israeli prisons, and 3660 are held as administrative detainees – someone held in prison without any specific charge or trial.⁴⁵ Many Palestinians who have been released from Israeli prisons have reported incidents of torture and ill-treatment, claiming to have been beaten and being denied medical treatment during their detainment.⁴⁶ In July 2024, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the UN's top court, declared that Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories, and the building of 160 settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem since 1967, as violating international law.⁴⁷ All in all, the Israeli government has failed to uphold its democratic values of equitability between Israelis and Palestinians, this mistreatment contributes to tensions in the area by fueling anti-Israel sentiment amongst the Arab World. The Arab League must advocate for Palestinian rights, seeking to do so in a manner that promotes peace between Palestinian factions and Israeli settlers.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ “Hezbollah.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica.,<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Hezbollah>

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Guerin, Orla. “Relief as Hezbollah and Israel Seem to Step Back from Brink.” *BBC News*, BBC, 26 Aug. 2024, www.bbc.com/news/articles/c4gv4zede8jo.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid

⁴³ “Human Rights in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory.” *Amnesty International*,

www.amnesty.org/en/location/middle-east-and-north-africa/middle-east/israel-and-the-occupied-palestinian-territory/report-israel-and-the-occupied-palestinian-territory/.

⁴⁴ Ibid

⁴⁵ “Palestinian Prisoner's Day: How Many Are Still in Israeli Detention?” *Al Jazeera*, Al Jazeera, 25 Apr. 2024, www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/4/17/palestinian-prisoners-day-how-many-palestinians-are-in-israeli-jails.

⁴⁶ Ibid

⁴⁷ Berg, Raffi. “ICJ Says Israeli Occupation of Palestinian Territories Is Illegal.” *BBC News*, BBC, 19 July 2024, www.bbc.com/news/articles/cjerjzxlpvdo.

In addition to recognizing the importance of de-escalating tensions, the Arab League's main priority as of now must be to alleviate the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Gaza. The Israeli military response with the aim to destroy Hamas to the events of October 7th has been widely criticized. The Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) have been accused of launching an offensive that is disproportionate in terms of casualties and damage to infrastructure, indiscriminate of whether civilians are affected, and catastrophic in its humanitarian consequences. The Israeli offensive into Gaza has consisted of aerial strikes and ground assaults that have seen at least 40000 Palestinians killed according to the Hamas Health Ministry⁴⁸, as well as shutting off electricity and cutting off food, water, fuel and medicine supplies by October 9th.⁴⁹ Though UN agencies have been let in to provide aid, Israel's repeated expansion of its evacuation orders and its targets continues to shrink the humanitarian safe zone, disrupting the UN's ability to administer aid due to safety concerns.⁵⁰ Since the beginning of the war, up to 88.5% of Gaza has been given evacuation orders, designating those areas as targets for the Israeli offensive, leaving only 15.8 sq miles of land that lacks critical infrastructure for the 1.8 million residents of Gaza.⁵¹ Israeli bombing campaigns also saw the destruction of 76 healthcare facilities by the end of 2023, highlighting how the war has resulted in the destruction of essential infrastructure.⁵² This combination of relentless military operations that destroy infrastructure in addition to resulting in the deaths of thousands of Palestinians, the cutting off of food and supplies, and the shrinking of the humanitarian zone has created the disastrous consequences seen in Gaza today. Palestinians,

⁴⁸ Gritten, David. "Un Says Gaza Aid Operation Temporarily Halted Due to Evacuations." *BBC News*, BBC, 26 Aug. 2024, www.bbc.com/news/articles/cr40d32zqz4o.

⁴⁹ Molana-Allen, Leila, et al. "Gaza Cut off from Food, Water and Fuel as Israel's Punishing Bombardment Continues." *PBS*, Public Broadcasting Service, 11 Oct. 2023, www.pbs.org/newshour/show/gaza-cut-off-from-food-water-and-fuel-as-israels-punishing-bombardment-continues.

⁵⁰ Gritten, David. "Un Says Gaza Aid Operation Temporarily Halted Due to Evacuations." *BBC News*, BBC, 26 Aug. 2024, www.bbc.com/news/articles/cr40d32zqz4o.

⁵¹ *Ibid*

⁵² "Human Rights in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory." *Amnesty International*, www.amnesty.org/en/location/middle-east-and-north-africa/middle-east/israel-and-the-occupied-palestinian-territory/report-israel-and-the-occupied-palestinian-territory/.

particularly children, are facing the impacts of famine and circumstances that have seen the re-emergence of polio, a disease that could spread very quickly without adequate vaccination, especially in the context of a ravaged healthcare sector.⁵³

Negotiating a ceasefire is necessary to achieve long-term peace in the region; and to end the suffering experienced by the people of Gaza as well as the Israeli hostages. but despite the devastation caused by the conflict, talks have so far been unsuccessful. One of the main barriers to coming to a resolution has been the issue of returning hostages that were kidnapped on October 7th. It has been hypothesized that Hamas's intentions when taking hostages were to use them as bargaining chips in exchange for freeing Palestinians held in Israeli prisons⁵⁴, but reluctance on the part of the President of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, to give into the demands of an organization deemed to be terrorists, as well as their desire to carry out their objective to completely destroy Hamas, has resulted in very limited progress.⁵⁵ The US, Egypt, and Qatar have all been nations that have attempted to mediate a deal between the two sides, yet the desire from Hamas to only bring about a deal that results in a complete ceasefire and a significant prisoner swap, and Netanyahu's desire to prolong negotiations and fight until "total victory" has stalled talks.⁵⁶ To ensure lasting peace in the future, the Arab League must facilitate discussion between the two sides that provides significant concessions to be made in order to save as many lives as possible.

⁵³ Gritten, David. "Un Says Gaza Aid Operation Temporarily Halted Due to Evacuations." *BBC News*, BBC, 26 Aug. 2024, www.bbc.com/news/articles/cr40d32zqz4o.

⁵⁴ Byman, Daniel, et al. "Hamas's October 7 Attack: Visualizing the Data." *CSIS*, www.csis.org/analysis/hamass-october-7-attack-visualizing-data.

⁵⁵ "The US Diplomatic Strategy on Israel and Gaza Is Not Working | Daniel Levy." *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 27 Aug. 2024, www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/article/2024/aug/27/israel-gaza-us-diplomacy.

⁵⁶ Al Jazeera Staff. "US, Qatar and Egypt Say Mediators Will Work to Finalize Gaza Ceasefire Deal." *Al Jazeera*, Al Jazeera, 16 Aug. 2024, www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/8/16/us-qatar-and-egypt-say-media-tors-will-work-to-finalise-gaza-ceasefire-deal.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1. What steps can be taken to facilitate ceasefire talks between Hamas and Israel that takes into consideration the demands of both sides?
2. How can the Arab League advocate for the rights of Palestinians living in refugee camps and under Israeli occupation? In what ways can the threat posed to Israel by militant factions such as Hamas and Hezbollah be eradicated?
3. What procedures could be implemented to administer humanitarian relief in Gaza?

HELPFUL SOURCES:

Under cover of war, extremists are seizing Palestinian land – they hope permanently | BBC

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c624qr3mqrzo>

Israel is at war with Hamas. Here's what to know || CNN

<https://www.cnn.com/2023/10/16/middleeast/israel-hamas-gaza-war-explained-week-2-mime-intl/index.html>

Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Timeline | CFR Education
<https://education.cfr.org/learn/timeline/israeli-palestinian-conflict-timeline>

Arab States Are Giving Palestinians the Cold Shoulder. Here's Why. | Politico

<https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2024/02/21/why-arab-states-wont-support-palestinians-qa-00142277>

What is Hezbollah and why is Israel attacking Lebanon? | BBC

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-67307858>

TOPIC 2: ALLEVIATING THE HUMANITARIAN CRISES OF THE ONGOING YEMENI CIVIL WAR

The Yemeni Civil War is one of the most deadly humanitarian crises in the current day, bringing the population to the brink of starvation, and leading to one of the worst cases of cholera outbreak ever recorded. Although this conflict has endured for over a decade, the effects of the war on the Yemeni people are beyond devastating. The population has been displaced by over 4.5 million people in the last ten years, which is 14 percent, and over 21.6 million people are reported to require severe humanitarian assistance, which is two thirds.⁵⁷

As a result, countless famines have struck the nation, the United Nations estimates a death toll of 337,000 civilians from lacking food supply, basic infrastructure, and health accessibility in the present day which is only projected to increase.⁵⁸ To make matters worse, the civil war has also contributed to a large-scale cholera outbreak which lasted 6 years from 2016-2022.⁵⁹ Not only did this crisis lead to further suffering and an increase in the deaths of civilians, but it severely hindered the facilities with proper sanitation and a clean water supply which were crucial to the improvement of patients before and after the outbreak.⁶⁰ Food insecurity and health accessibility continue to remain unresolved issues for the majority of Yemeni people. The matter should be immediately and urgently addressed through humanitarian efforts and cooperation in the Arab League.

Since the late 20th century, disagreements among North and South Yemen, once separate countries, have divided the region. The 1969 coup d'etat intertwined South Yemen and the Soviet Union to develop a close relationship. In exchange for valuable

⁵⁷ The UN Refugee Agency. 21 Mar. 2024, www.unrefugees.org/news/yemen-crisis-explained/.

⁵⁸ "Report from Yemen: The Fate of the Children." *National Public Radio*, 14 Sept. 2023, www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2023/09/14/1196420876/theres-a-glimmer-of-hope-on-yemens-war-front-yet-children-are-still-dying-of-hun.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ Ng, Qin Xiang et al. "Yemen's Cholera Epidemic Is a One Health Issue." *Journal of preventive medicine and public health = Yebang Uihakhoe chi* vol. 53,4 (2020): 289-292. doi:10.3961/jpmph.20.154

support facilities and anchorages,⁶¹ The USSR provided significant foreign aid, among other support to influence the South Yemeni population through education and ideological manipulation. This marked the region to become the only communist state in the entire Middle East until the Soviet Union collapsed in 1990. Meanwhile, a military officer in North Yemen, Ali Abdullah Saleh, arose as the president to unite the two contradictory regions. Although his government made efforts to maintain relations after declaring Yemeni as one nation, his policies failed to recognize the Zaidiyyah population in the north; an Islamic sect that laid the groundwork for the Houthi movement.⁶²

While the Houthi movement aimed to govern all of Yemen and resisted Saleh's corruption, the southern region had objectives to keep the two regions independent.⁶³ Each region gained external support from different nations, including the Houthi movement being supported by Iran, and the south receiving aid from Saudi Arabia. Simultaneously, the Arab Spring Movement influenced both regional pacts, causing civilians to grow collective resentment towards Saleh's orders and forced reunification.⁶⁴ Tensions rose until a series of protests commenced in the Yemeni capital, calling for President Saleh to step down in January of 2011.⁶⁵ Despite the efforts of a diverse coalition of protesters from both north and south, Saleh was never removed from power and the unrest continued. Following the years after the major protests, the country further divided into loyalists and opposition to President Saleh, who continued to use corruption to remain in office.⁶⁶

The civil war officially broke out on September 16th, 2014 when the destabilized Yemeni capital was attacked and absorbed by the Houthis. A broker-peace deal proposed by the United Nations

shortly after was agreed upon by the northerners, but was ultimately rejected when they possessed the presidential palace in January 2015.⁶⁷ Moreover, the new president Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi, as well as his government were forced to resign and were replaced by a five-member Houthi presidential council.⁶⁸ Hadi then attempted to revoke the resignation following his exile to Saudi Arabia, but the nation was left in a severely destabilized political state with no certainty of who to leave in charge.⁶⁹ Consequently, a new major sect known as the Southern Transitional Council (STC) formed in the Yemeni port of Aden in May 2017.⁷⁰ This modern political group continued to fight for their intention to keep the Southern state separate, which resulted in developing close ties with the UAE. As part of a power-split deal, the STC in 2020 earned five cabinets in the new Yemeni government run by Hadi; thus, indicating their neutral alliance against the Houthis.⁷¹

Since the Battle of Sanaa in 2014, Yemen has endured a long decade of uncontrollable political outrage, with significant humanitarian consequences. In March of 2015, the Saudi-led coalition of nine countries entered the war at the request of President Hadi.⁷² This intervention is now responsible for the decimation of essential civilian objects including hospitals, agricultural infrastructure, water systems, and roads.⁷³ Furthermore, the air campaign led by Saudi Arabia specifically targeted agricultural sectors; a key factor to the severe hunger crises that have intoxicated the country. This phenomenon has led to generational childhood malnutrition, with 49 percent of children under the age of five facing food

⁶¹ Cigar, Norman. "South Yemen and the USSR: Prospects for the Relationship." *Middle East Journal*, vol. 39, no. 4, 1985, pp. 775–95. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4327184>.

⁶² Edroos, Faisal. "Yemen: Who Was Ali Abdullah Saleh?" *Aljazeera*, 5 Dec. 2017, www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/12/5/yemen-who-was-ali-abdullah-saleh.

⁶³ *Aljazeera*. 20 Sept. 2019, www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/9/20/who-are-south-yemens-separatists.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*.

⁶⁵ Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Yemeni Civil War". *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 18 Jan. 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Yemeni-Civil-War>.

⁶⁶ Montgomery, Marcus. "A Timeline of the Yemen Crisis, from the 1990s to the Present." *Arab Center Washington DC*, 19 Feb. 2021, arabcenterdc.org/resource/a-timeline-of-the-yemen-crisis-from-the-1990s-to-the-present/.

⁶⁷ United Nations. press.un.org/en/2020/sc14103.doc.htm. Accessed 11 Sept. 2024.

⁶⁸ *Ibid*.

⁶⁹ "What's going on in Yemen and is the war getting worse? | Start Here." *YouTube*, 14 Feb. 2022, www.youtube.com/watch?v=SWwIA0Ebbzc.

⁷⁰ Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Yemeni Civil War". *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 18 Jan. 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Yemeni-Civil-War>.

⁷¹ "New Yemen gov't sworn in after Saudi-brokered power-sharing deal." *Aljazeera*, 26 Dec. 2020, www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/12/5/yemen-who-was-ali-abdullah-saleh.

⁷² "Saudi-led Coalition." *ACLEDA*, acleddata.com/yemen-conflict-observatory/actor-profiles/saudi-led-coalition/.

⁷³ "Saudi-led attacks devastated Yemen's civilian infrastructure, dramatically worsening the humanitarian crisis." *The Washington Post*, www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2021/02/22/saudi-led-attacks-devastated-yemens-civilian-infrastructure-dramatically-worsening-humanitarian-crisis/.

insecurity in the current day.⁷⁴ Another aspect of the food insecurity in Yemen is the weakening of the economy. Due to the disagreements between the Houthis and the Internationally Recognized Government of Yemen, different areas of the country enforce their own customs and taxes.⁷⁵ The Houthis in particular impose double tariffs on any imported products. Not only does this increase taxes on the traders, it significantly increases the prices of essential commodities; which include grains, food products, and more.⁷⁶

Though the food crisis in Yemen has been a key issue prior to the conflict, it has correlated to the lack of health accessibility in the country. Given that 19.1 million people lack access to only 52 percent of functioning health facilities,⁷⁷ The effects of the war have increased the mortality rate, as well as made the population vulnerable to chronic diseases. On October 6th, 2016, The Ministry of Public Health and Population reported the first 11 cases of cholera after further investigation of suspected patients.⁷⁸ By April 2017, the scale of the outbreak expanded to over 1.1 million cases, calling for international funding and aid from organizations such as the WHO and HPF.⁷⁹ This became the most serious cholera outbreak ever put on record, taking over 4,000 lives within the 6-year time frame since 2016.⁸⁰ The factors that caused this outbreak to lead to such serious circumstances varied. For one, the shortage of health services left most of the population without adequate recovery. Additionally, environmental alterations such as increased rainfall, flooding, and winds contaminated the water sources of Yemen, aiding the spread of cholera-filled insects and bacteria.⁸¹

⁷⁴ "9 years into the conflict in Yemen, millions of children are malnourished and stunted." *UNICEF*, 26 Mar. 2024, www.unicef.org/press-releases/9-years-conflict-yemen-millions-children-are-malnourished-and-stunted.

⁷⁵ Nassar, Afrah. "Yemen's War Economy: A Key Factor in the Ongoing Conflict." *Arab Center Washington DC*, 20 Sept. 2023, arabcenterdc.org/resource/yemens-war-economy-a-key-factor-in-the-ongoing-conflict/.

⁷⁶ Wenner, Manfred W. and Burrowes, Robert. "Yemen". *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 30 Aug. 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Yemen>.

⁷⁷ *USAID*. www.usaid.gov/yemen/global-health.

⁷⁸ "Yemen: Cholera Outbreak - Oct 2016." *Relief Web*, reliefweb.int/disaster/ep-2016-000107-yem.

⁷⁹ *ibid*

⁸⁰ "Acute Diarrhea and Cholera Outbreak in Yemen Exacerbated by Decade of Conflict – IOM Warns." *UN Network on Immigration*, 21 June 2024, www.iom.int/news/acute-diarrhea-and-cholera-outbreak-yemen-exacerbated-decade-conflict-iom-warns.

⁸¹ Ng QX, De Deyn MLZQ, Loke W, Yeo WS. Yemen's Cholera Epidemic Is a One Health Issue. *J Prev Med Public Health*. 2020 Jul;53(4):289-292. doi:

Right as the severity of the cholera outbreak started to diminish, another major health crisis emerged: the COVID-19 pandemic. On top of pre-existing diseases such as measles and diphtheria, the coronavirus added another layer of concern regarding inadequate healthcare facilities and equipment. In 2018, a study revealed that 40 percent of healthcare workers in Yemen were not trained to handle disaster preparedness.⁸² This reality turned into a crisis when the country, at a time when 80 percent of the population depended on humanitarian assistance, faced the highly contagious air-borne virus.⁸³ With so few healthcare professionals to care for such a largely vulnerable society, the United Nations gave an estimate of 55 percent of the population who are projected to be infected by COVID-19.⁸⁴ Concerns of severe famines were raised when 43 percent of food imports were suspended due to the impacts of the virus.⁸⁵ Since the nation relied on almost 90 percent of food from other countries, the price of food generally skyrocketed, and the population was forced to the brink of starvation.⁸⁶ In 2021, more than half of the population suffered from extreme hunger, which was declared the most emergent case of famine in the entire world of its time.⁸⁷ The pandemic was proven to be the biggest escalation of food insecurity the country had seen, with detrimental impacts on the future generations of the country.

As Yemen recovers from the devastating effects of COVID-19, the country is still facing the issues of large-scale malnutrition and limited access to health services amidst a raging civil war. With this taken into consideration, the delegates of the Arab League are expected to collectively create solutions to protect

10.3961/jpmph.20.154. Epub 2020 Jun 10. PMID: 32752599; PMCID: PMC7411249.

⁸² Alsabri, M., Alhadheri, A., Alsakkaf, L.M. *et al.* Conflict and COVID-19 in Yemen: beyond the humanitarian crisis. *Global Health* 17, 83 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12992-021-00732-1>

⁸³ "Covid-19 Devastates Already Desperate, Ravaged Yemen." *Global SDG*

Integration, sdgintegration.undp.org/covid-19-devastates-already-desperate-ravaged-yemen.

⁸⁴ *Ibid*.

⁸⁵ Rahmat, Zainab Syyeda *et al.* "Food Insecurity during COVID-19 in Yemen." *The American journal of tropical medicine and hygiene* vol. 106,6 1589-1592. 15 Jun. 2022, doi:10.4269/ajtmh.22-0059

⁸⁶ "Report from Yemen: The Fate of the Children." *National Public Radio*, 14 Sept. 2023, www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2023/09/14/1196420876/theres-a-glimmer-of-hope-on-yemens-war-front-yet-children-are-still-dying-of-hun.

⁸⁷ *Ibid*.

and recover the Yemeni people facing food shortages, promote accessible healthcare, and compromise foreign intervention to relieve internal tensions. Forming diplomatic relations while abiding by individual country policies will be crucial in resolving problems considering how closely-knit the alliances of the Yemeni Civil War have become. Rather than initiating solutions to the internal conflict itself, our focus for this topic will be on relieving the individual struggles of the populations that have endured greatly for the past decade.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1. How can already existing aid be improved to nourish the Yemeni population while they face food insecurity?
2. What can we learn from the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, and how can we ensure that the spread of future diseases can be prevented?
3. How can we balance the economic systems of the Arab region so that the Yemeni population has access to basic healthcare and commodities?
4. In what ways can alliances outside of the Arab world contribute to reaching internal stability within the nation?

HELPFUL SOURCES:

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