

ISRAEL AT SIXTY

From Modest Beginnings to a Vibrant State

1948–2008

- *web extra* -

1948-2008: Sixty Years of Seeking Peace and Security

1948-52: Mass immigration from Europe and Arab countries.

1956: Sinai Campaign

1967: *Six-Day War; Jerusalem reunited.*

Khartoum Resolution, September 1, 1967- “no peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel, no negotiations with it”...

1968-70: *Egypt’s War of Attrition against Israel*

1973: *Yom Kippur War*

Nov. 19, 1977: In response to an invitation by Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat becomes the first Arab leader to travel to Israel and discuss the prospects of peace between the two nations. Likud forms government after Knesset elections, end of 30 years of Labor rule.

Sept. 17, 1978: *Camp David Accords* After 12 days of closed negotiations between the Israelis and Egyptians at Camp David, the two delegations sign the Camp David Accords. This is made up of two sections: the first creates a framework for autonomous rule by the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip; the second deals with the future of peace between Israel and Egypt, calling for a peace treaty to be agreed upon within three months that will include a full Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai.

March 26, 1979: *Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty:* Israel and Egypt sign a treaty which calls for both nations to demilitarize the Sinai Peninsula; for Israel to withdraw to the pre-1967 border, giving up military bases, settlements, roads and the Sinai oil fields; and for Egypt to ‘normalize’ relations with Israel. Other Arab countries attack the agreement, and Sadat is assassinated by Muslim extremists in 1981. Nevertheless, the treaty holds.

1981: Prime Minister Menachem Begin and President Anwar Sadat awarded Nobel Peace Prize. Israel Air Force destroys Iraqi nuclear reactor just before it is to become operative.

1982: Israel’s three-stage withdrawal from Sinai Peninsula completed. Operation Peace for Galilee removes Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) terrorists from Lebanon.

1984: *Operation Moses,* immigration of Jews from Ethiopia.

1985: *Free Trade Agreement* signed with United States.

1987: Widespread violence (Intifada) starts in Israeli-administered areas.

1988: Likud government wins elections.

1989: Four-point [*peace initiative*](#) proposed by Israel. Start of mass immigration of Jews from former Soviet Union.

Oct. 30-Nov.1, 1991: Israel attacked by Iraqi Scud missiles during Gulf war. [*Middle East peace conference convened in Madrid*](#); The United States and USSR co-host a conference in Spain to set the framework to negotiate peace between Israel and Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the Palestinians, the first time direct and open peace talks are held between Israel and these four partners since 1949. The three-day conference sets in motion bilateral talks between Israel and each of its neighbors, as well as multilateral talks, about issues such as trade, resource development and conflict-prevention. Ultimately, however, no agreements develop from the Madrid process. See: [*“The Madrid Framework,”*](#) Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 01/28/99.

1991: Operation Solomon: Ethiopian Jews airlifted to Israel

1992: Diplomatic relations established with China and India. New government headed by Yitzhak Rabin of Labor Party.

Sept. 13, 1993: After secret negotiations between the Israelis and Palestinians in Oslo following the Madrid Peace Conference, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat shake hands and sign the [*“Declaration of Principles”*](#) On Interim Self-Government Arrangements,” better known as the Oslo Accords. The agreement calls for the transfer of power in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to the Palestinians, beginning with an interim phase, leading to self-government and elections among the Palestinians, and culminating with a final-status agreement in which a permanent Palestinian state will sign an end-of-conflict agreement with Israel. The negotiations phase of the Accords include Rabin and Arafat exchanging letters in which Arafat pledges that the PLO recognizes Israel and commits itself to peace, while Rabin states that Israel recognizes the PLO as a legitimate party in the negotiations for peace. The “land for peace” strategy is heavily employed in these accords. The Oslo Accords are carried out through phased meetings.

1993: Full diplomatic relations with the [*Holy See*](#). Morocco and Tunisia interest offices set up.

May 4, 1994: [*Gaza Strip and Jericho area*](#). In what is also known as the Cairo Agreement, Israel and the Palestinians outline Israel’s initial withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho, as well as the creation of the Palestinian Authority. Although Israel is removing all of its forces from these areas (and later from Palestinian cities in the West Bank), Yasser Arafat’s PA fails to meet the security conditions requiring it to crack down on terror groups such as Hamas and Palestinian

July 25, 1994: The Washington Declaration: King Hussein of Jordan and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin meet publicly in Washington, D.C. for the first time and take important steps toward implementing a peace treaty. The official state of war between the two countries is ended; each nation agrees to follow U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 to seek a total and lasting peace; and Israel acknowledges Jordan’s special role in the oversight of Muslim holy places within Jerusalem. The two leaders also focus on future economic cooperation between Israel and Jordan.

Oct. 26, 1994: Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty: After a series of meetings, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Jordanian Prime Minister Abdul-Salam Majali sign the Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty. The basic provisions of the treaty delineate the international border; prohibit hostilities between the two nations; agree upon water usage from shared bodies of water; allow for freedom of movement between the two countries as well as access to religious sites within Jerusalem; and formally normalize all relations between Israel and Jordan. Diplomatic relations begin Nov. 27, 1994, and additional bilateral agreements are signed in the coming years in areas such as environment, trade and tourism.

Nov. 4, 1994: [*Prime Minister Rabin assassinated*](#) at peace rally. Shimon Peres becomes prime minister.

Sept. 28, 1995: Oslo II: The Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, known as “Oslo II” or “Taba,” broadens and supersedes the 1994 Gaza-Jericho Agreement. This agreement deals with many aspects of the transition to Palestinian autonomy, including how Israel will leave Palestinian-populated areas in the West Bank and Gaza; the provision for Palestinians to elect the newly established Palestinian Council; and the division of the area into three sections based on which group retains responsibility for security divided into Areas A, B and C. Israel also releases Palestinian prisoners as a sign of goodwill.

1996: Fundamentalist Arab terrorism against Israel escalates. *Operation Grapes of Wrath*, retaliation for Hizbullah terrorists’ attacks on northern Israel. Trade representation offices set up in *Oman* and Qatar Omani trade representation office opened in Tel Aviv. Likud forms government after *Knesset elections*. Binyamin Netanyahu elected PM.

Jan. 17, 1997: *Hebron Protocol*: The redeployment of Israeli soldiers from Hebron, the last remaining Palestinian city under Israeli control, is orchestrated in the Hebron Agreement. The protocol is signed by Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. This marks the first time Israel’s Likud party government has supported territorial withdrawal in the West Bank (also known as Judea and Samaria), until then widely considered a Labor party policy.

1998: Israel celebrates its *50th anniversary*. Israel and the PLO sign the *Wye River Memorandum* to facilitate implementation of the Interim Agreement.

Sept. 4, 1999: *Sharm-el-Sheikh Memorandum* This memorandum addresses the delay in implementation of the Oslo Accords created by Palestinian non-compliance with security obligations and the subsequent Israeli refusal to redeploy troops in the face of a growing terror threat from Area A (which is under full Palestinian administrative and security control). At this time, Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister *Ehud Barak* meet to reaffirm their commitment to the Oslo Peace Process and set a new deadline, Sept. 13, 2000, for the completion of peace talks. Ehud Barak (left-wing One Israel party) *elected prime minister*; forms coalition government.

2000: *Visit of Pope Paul II.*

Israel withdraws from the Security Zone in southern Lebanon.

Israel admitted to UN Western European and Others Group (WEOG).

July 11-25, 2000: Camp David Summit: To keep to the schedule set by the Sharm el-Sheikh Memorandum, Arafat and Barak meet with President Clinton at Camp David. In an effort to achieve peace once and for all, Barak offers a series of concessions including Israeli withdrawal from the entire Gaza Strip and 95 percent of the West Bank; the subsequent creation of an independent Palestinian state in the aforementioned areas; the dismantlement of all Israeli settlements in those areas given to the Palestinians; land compensation outside of the West Bank for settlements to remain under Israeli sovereignty; and Palestinian rule over East Jerusalem and most of the Old City (excluding the Jewish Quarter) and ‘religious sovereignty’ on the Temple Mount. In exchange, the agreement called for Arafat to declare an end to the conflict and a prohibition of future claims on Israeli land. Arafat rejects the proposal and makes no counter-offer. The summit ends in failure, but a Tri-Lateral Statement is issued delineating the principles of future talks.

Jan. 22-27, 2001: Taba Conference: In the midst of the Second Intifada, and as a follow-up to the Camp David Summit, the Israelis and Palestinians meet for a final attempt to come to an agreement on a Palestinian state. Israel offers 94 percent of the West Bank in addition to Israeli land, culminating in an offer of 97 percent of the total land area requested by the Palestinians. The ‘right of return’ is also considered. However, the conference ends again in a standstill, and an Israeli-Palestinian Joint Statement is issued asserting that the two parties have never before been so close

to an agreement and expressing hope for the future. Renewed violence (so-called *Second Intifada*). Prime Minister Barak resigns.

2001: *Ariel Sharon* (Likud) *elected Prime Minister*; forms broad-based unity government. The Sharm-el-Sheikh Fact-Finding Committee report (*Mitchell Report*) issued. Palestinian-Israeli Security Implementation Work Plan (*Tenet ceasefire plan*) proposed. Rechavam Ze'evy, Minister of Tourism, assassinated by Palestinian terrorists.

2002: Israel launches *Operation Defensive Shield* in response to massive Palestinian terrorist attacks. Israel begins building the *anti-terrorist fence* to stop West Bank terrorists from killing Israeli citizens.

March 28, 2002: The Arab Peace Initiative: Leaders of Arab nations come together at the Beirut Summit, where Saudi Arabia proposes a plan for peace between Israel and the Palestinians. This plan is known as the Saudi Initiative, or the Arab Peace Initiative. The plan calls for Israel to withdraw completely to pre-1967 borders; supports the 'right of return' for all Palestinian refugees and their descendants; and the creation of a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital. The Arab states in attendance pledge not to exercise military action to end the hostilities, and state that if Israel agrees to the aforementioned stipulations without modification, the Arab countries will in return consider the Arab-Israeli conflict to be over and normalize relations with Israel. Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres responds to the initiative on behalf of Israel, stating that Israel views the plan as encouraging, but that the agreement must be discussed directly with the Palestinians and that no accord can come to fruition unless terror activities are ceased, a condition not mentioned in the Arab Initiative.

June 24, 2002: Bush's Vision for the Middle East: In a Rose Garden Speech, President George W. Bush outlines a new plan for peace between Israel and the Palestinians, with the possibility of a sovereign Palestinian state established in the near future. This policy calls for new Palestinian leadership (specifically acknowledging the corruption and unwillingness to stop terrorism that characterized Arafat's regime) and a reformulated democratic government for the Palestinians. The president also calls upon the Palestinians, as well as other Arab states supporting or tolerating terrorism, to cease those activities. The plan focuses mainly on the impediments to the peace process posed by the Palestinians since the Israelis had repeatedly offered and acted upon various concessions for peace, and on greater democratization throughout the Arab world.

Apr. 30, 2003: *Roadmap*. Based upon President Bush's speech of June 24, 2002 and principles of the Oslo Accords, this plan is supervised by the Quartet: the United States, the European Union, the Russian Federation and the United Nations. It calls for serious alterations in the Palestinian government and results in the appointment of Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas. The Roadmap, which charts progress toward a final-status agreement through a series of benchmarks relating to security and political progress, is still the official blueprint towards peace between Israel and the Palestinians, with the Quartet meeting intermittently to track the progress of the plan.

June 4, 2003: Peace Summit at Aqaba: Sharon and Abbas meet in Jordan to reaffirm their commitment to the Roadmap. Sharon promises withdrawal of Israeli troops from Palestinian areas, and Abbas pledges an end to the Intifada and the Palestinian culture of hate against Israel. The prospects of the summit are shattered Aug. 19, 2003, after Palestinian terrorists carry out a suicide bombing in Jerusalem. As a result, on Sept. 1, 2003 the Israeli Cabinet decides to wage war against Hamas and other terrorist groups, and halts the diplomatic process with the Palestinian Authority until it proves it is taking concrete measures to stop terrorism

Dec. 18, 2003: Fourth Herzliya Conference: At this conference, Prime Minister Sharon presents a plan for Israel's unilateral disengagement from the Gaza Strip and northern Samaria in exchange for

peace. The Israeli Cabinet approves the plan on June 6, 2004 and the Knesset (Israeli Parliament) approves it on Oct. 25, 2004. The disengagement plan, a major sacrifice for peace, calls for evacuating nearly 9,000 Israeli residents living in Gaza and the West Bank. Israel also proposes the disengagement plan in hopes of stimulating progress in the peace process on the Palestinian side.

Aug. 15-Aug. 23, 2005: Gaza and West Bank *Disengagement Plan*: In an effort to relieve the security threats against Israelis living in Gaza and to try to put the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks back on track, Israel unilaterally pulls all of its citizens out of the Gaza Strip and the northern West Bank. This dramatic move costs Israel approximately \$2 billion, and includes the evacuation of all of the roughly 9,000 Israelis living in the affected areas in addition to exhuming and transferring all graves in Gaza to Israeli territory. On Sept. 12, 2005, the last Israel Defense Forces soldier departs the Gaza Strip, marking a historic step towards peace by Israel.

2006: After *Prime Minister Sharon* suffers a stroke, *Ehud Olmert* becomes acting prime minister. Following elections on 28 March, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert forms *new government* led by the Kadima Party.

Israel carried out military operations against *Palestinian terrorists in Gaza* after kidnapping of Israeli soldier, Gilad Shalit.

The *Second War in Lebanon*, during which Israel carried out military operations against Hizbullah terrorism from southern Lebanon, following missile attacks and kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers: Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev.

2007: *Shimon Peres* elected President by the Knesset. *Israel declares Gaza "hostile territory"* following Hamas violent takeover of Gaza Strip.

Nov. 27, 2007: Annapolis Summit: Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas sign a joint statement in Annapolis, Md. to lay the groundwork for peace talks. The joint document delineates broad principles of agreements and commitments to peace and stipulates that both sides will establish steering committees, led by the heads of their delegations to the Annapolis talks, that will meet continuously starting Dec. 12, 2007. Both sides agree to meet on a bi-weekly basis and express hope to reach a final peace agreement by the end of 2008.

Jan. 22, 2008: Israel Continues to Provide Humanitarian Aid and Electricity to Palestinians in Gaza: Despite the increased number of ongoing rocket and mortar fire from Palestinian terrorist groups in Gaza; over 4,000 missiles and rockets were fired since Israel unilaterally withdrew from Gaza in August 2005, the country continues to seek peace with the Palestinians. Israeli foreign minister Tzipi Livni said on Jan. 24, 2008 *"The goal is to end the conflict between our two nations, our two peoples, by the creation or giving the answer to the national aspirations of the Palestinians by creating a Palestinian state. Just as Israel is homeland for the Jewish people, the Palestinian state is and should be by its own creation a homeland for the Palestinians."*