

## General Assembly

**Topic A: Repercussion of the recognition by the United States of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.**

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### INTRODUCTION

Jerusalem is a holy city, at the same time for Christianity, Judaism and the Muslim faith. Among the Jewish population, 8% are defined as Jaredí or ultra-Orthodox, 12% as religious, 13% as a religious traditionalist, 42% non-religious or secular. Jerusalem is dwelling on approximately one million residents. However, as part of a mixed ethnicity background Jerusalem has always been influenced by international powers.

Having this in mind Jerusalem is at the center of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and its status is one of the most challenging issues to resolve. The partition plan of Palestine of 1947, then under British command, provided for its partition into three entities: a Jewish State, an Arab State, and Jerusalem as a "corpus separatum" under a particular international regime. Moreover, this partition took into account only territorial matters, never taking into account the mixed ethnicity or the subsequent conflicts.

A fundamental law approves in 1980 the status of Jerusalem as the "eternal and indivisible" capital of Israel. In addition, Israel, is the product of the influence of international powers and has been always one great conflict in the region, because Jews consider Jerusalem to be their ancient capital for more than 3,000 years for religious and political reasons. The international community does not perceive Israeli jurisdiction in Jerusalem and regards East Jerusalem as an occupied territory. All foreign embassies are installed in Tel Aviv. The Palestinians want to establish there the headquarters of their future state., but there is always the internal conflict from biased points of view in correlation to the territorial partition with personal profit.

## **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

In 1947 The United Nations partition plan envisaged Jerusalem as a separate international city. It was until May of 1948, when Israel proclaimed its independence, and in December of that same year declared Jerusalem as its capital.

The Armistice border in 1949, saw Jordan in control of the Eastern half, which included the famous Old City; and Israel in control of the Western half. Jordanian legislation indicated that this action did not prejudice the final settlement of the Palestinian issue.

With the triumph of the Six Day War (June 1967), Israel conquered the Old City of Jerusalem. The Security Council resolution 252 (1968) the Council considered "that all legislative and administrative measures and actions were taken by Israel, including expropriation of land and properties thereon, which tend to change the legal status of Jerusalem are invalid and cannot change that status."

In 1980, Israel declared the annexation of the Old City and reiterated that its indivisible capital was Jerusalem. The Security Council of the United Nations declared it a violation of international law, and for this reason a resolution was made condemning Israel's annexation of East Jerusalem (Resolution 481). For this matter, the countries that had their embassies in Jerusalem had to move them to Tel Aviv.

In 1995, the US Congress passed a law requiring America to move the embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Since 1995, every president of the United States, had used the presidential waiver to circumvent the embassy move. Presidents Clinton, Bush, and Obama declined to move the embassy, citing national security interests.

The Israel-Palestine conflict started when the Zionist movement, at the beginning of the 20th century, were encouraged by the anti-Semitism suffered by the Jews in Europe. The region of Palestine belonged at that time to the Ottoman Empire and was occupied mostly by Arabs and other Muslim communities.

After the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire in the First World War, the United Kingdom received an order from the League of Nations to administer the territory of Palestine.

After the foundation of Israel on May 14, 1948, the tension went from being a local issue to a regional issue. The next day, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Iraq invaded this territory. It was the first Arab-Israeli war, also known by the Jews as the war of independence or liberation. After the conflict, the area initially envisaged by the United Nations for an Arab state was cut in half.

For the Palestinians, the Nakba began the so-called "destruction" or "catastrophe": the beginning of the national tragedy. 750,000 Palestinians fled to neighboring countries or were expelled by Jewish troops.

In 1956, a crisis by the Suez Canal would confront the State of Israel with Egypt, which would not be defined in the battlefield but by international pressure on Israel, France, and England. The combats had the last word in 1967 in the Six Day War. What happened between the 5th and the 10th of June of that year had profound and lasting consequences at different levels. It was a crushing victory for Israel against an Arab coalition. Israel captured the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt, the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) to Jordan and the Golan Heights to Syria.

The last Arab-Israeli conflict was the Yom Kippur War in 1973, which pitted Egypt and Syria against Israel and allowed Cairo to recover the Sinai (delivered entirely by Israel in 1982), but not Gaza. Six years later, Egypt becomes the first Arab country to sign peace with Israel, an example only followed by Jordan.

## **CURRENT RELEVANCE**

In the company or the absence of global recognition, Jerusalem has operated in fact as Israel's capital since 1949, and all state agencies are placed here, most of them in West Jerusalem. The international community maintains its embassies on politically neutral territory in coastal Tel Aviv but handles all its official business with Israel in Jerusalem, Kaing necessary a continuous commute for diplomats designated to Israel.

One of the most controversial questions in the Israeli-Palestinian struggle has been the last status of Jerusalem. As there has not been

an Israeli-Palestinian peace deal, the US has had to avoid confirming Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, although Palestinians demand Jerusalem as their capital. A unilateral decision would cause the international consensus to break, and also to presume a concern that was assumed to be left to negotiations.

It should be noted that Trump's decision on Jerusalem was based on the Embassy of Jerusalem Law that the US Congress approved in 1995 persuading the federal government to move the US Embassy in Jerusalem and recognize that that city is the capital of Israel.

However he did not mention it, Mr. Trump signed the same national security postponement witnessed by his forebears, which will allow the administration to preserve the embassy in Tel Aviv for an additional six months.

Palestinian leaders have stated that they will no longer admit an American monopoly on brokering a peace mediation between Israel and the Palestinians. Mahmoud Abbas, president of the Palestinian Authority, never agreed to reach a Peace Agreement with Israel and the creation of a Palestinian State, because it would mean the end of his mandate, and of the copious income that he subtracts for his benefit. Hamas categorically denies the existence of Israel and intends to "erase it from the map".

The Israeli government has celebrated Trump's promise to follow through with the embassy move. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu esteemed Trump for making a choice and named the move a "substantial action approaching peace, for there is no peace that doesn't involve Jerusalem as the capital of the State of Israel.

If the United States gave Israel sovereignty over Jerusalem, it would finally lose the credibility it has built by acting as an impartial mediator in a peace process with the Palestinians.

In the absence of a negotiated agreement between Israel and the Palestinians, moving the embassy to Jerusalem runs the risk of unleashing massive protests unnecessarily, fueling tensions and making peace more difficult to achieve.

On the other hand, these repercussions extend to countries bordering on those affected, as is the case of Lebanon, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank,

Syria, and Jordan, who assist Palestinian refugees. These refugees have already taken to the streets to protest the American announcement. The protests spread to Lebanon where half a million Palestinian refugees reside, with second-class citizenship status, and even attempted to attack the US embassy in Beirut. Also, demonstrations against Trump were registered in other Muslim countries of the Middle East and in Europe itself.

## **INTERNATIONAL ACTIONS**

Moreover, on 11 December the Arab League convened an emergency meeting in which 20 foreign ministers criticized Trump for a measure they perceive as favorable to Israel, and, without specific proposals for action, only urged the nations to recognize the Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital. Undoubtedly, they were not going to face the power that the EU represents, they were just aiming to calm the situation for a while.

President Mahmoud Abbas has switched to other world officers, covering Russian President Vladimir Putin and Jordan's King Abdullah, supporting push Trump to change his mind. The Palestine Liberation Organization has recommended it would consider abolishing its acknowledgment of Israel and calling off all agreements between Israelis and Palestinians, should the move take place.

The EU retains its embassy in Israel in Tel Aviv and its response to the Palestinian Jurisdiction in Jerusalem.

Pope Francis and the Chinese foreign ministry joined the unison of voices cautioning that the move could trigger an influx of violence across the region. At a meeting in Brussels, Secretary of State Rex W. Tillerson was severely condemned by European associates.

Saudi Arabia, for its part, had expressed before Trump's announcement that the measure "would have a harmful impact on the peace process." Jordan joined to warn of "serious consequences" and the head of the Arab League, Abul Gheit, indicated that the decision would "nurture fanaticism and violence." Turkey assured that this would be "a huge catastrophe."

## **UN ACTIONS**

The UN General Assembly has approved with 128 votes in favor, nine against and 35 abstentions a resolution to reject the American recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. The decision, taken during an emergency session, reiterates that all fails on the status of Holy City is without effect and must be revoked.

Trump, on the other hand, threatened with financial aid to the countries that vote in favor of the resolution. Not taking into account the international relation with the region.

The UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, affirmed after Trump's declaration that the final status of Jerusalem would be resolved only by negotiations between the parties and stressed the need to move towards a two-state solution. Always aiming to the common good.

Upon confirmation of the veto by the United States and 14 votes in favor, the next option for Palestinian diplomacy will be a resolution of the United Nations General Assembly. It has been circulated that could be even in the framework of an extraordinary session of the plenary body of the United Nations, convened urgently by the Member States of the Arab League. The discussion that takes place there will allow a new measurement of forces (in which, as is customary, Israel and the United States can only count on the votes of Mashall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, and Palau).

## **POINTS TO DISCUSS**

- What led the United States to make that decision?
- What benefits are sought in this decision?
- Who is intended to help the recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel? (To which country?)
- Consequences presented to Israel, Palestine and the United States.
- Possible stages in case of a war conflict declared by Palestine
- Possible strategic alliances
- Actions described by the US government to counteract this action
- Trade agreements that can be pretended between the USA and Israel
- Global repercussions in the economic, political, social and cultural spheres
- UN actions to control the conflict
- Acts of Palestinian against Jerusalem being the capital of Israel
- How this affects the Palestinian people based on their beliefs
- How the international law will influence this decision
- To what extent it would damage the possible peace agreements that had been made years ago.
- Historical background after the six-day war conflict
- Actions taken by extremist terrorist groups

How it has influenced with other nations?

What type of perspective it has the American people with this decision about their president?

How it has influenced with the health sector?

- Talking about the people of both nations

How it has impacted on the culture of all the nations involved?

How is this going to impact in the modern world?

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