



OPERATION OF AL-AQSA STORM

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the "Operation of Al-Aqsa Storm," a significant military operation initiated by Hamas against Israel on October 7, 2023. The operation signifies a substantial alteration in the dynamics of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as Hamas combatants penetrated Israel's principal defence line for the first time, extending the theatre of conflict beyond Gaza. This study examines the strategic, geopolitical, and humanitarian ramifications of the conflict, analysing its impact on regional power dynamics and global perceptions of the Israeli-Palestinian issue. The document evaluates possible outcomes, including increased escalation and revived peace negotiations, and analyses how the operation disrupts the entrenched status quo, affecting both psychological warfare and regional alliances. The humanitarian impact, characterised by extensive displacement and devastation, is a significant element examined in conjunction with the overarching geopolitical ramifications that this conflict may have on the future stability of the Middle East.

KEYWORDS: Operation Al-Aqsa Storm, Hamas, Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, Gaza, Geopolitical Implications, Regional Security

INTRODUCTION

Historical Background

The complex and often acrimonious relationship between Israel and Palestine may be traced back to the conflict's historical roots. The struggle over land, resources, and power has led to generations of violence and political stagnation in the region. The Israel-Palestine dispute is difficult and difficult to resolve because of the parties' opposing claims to the same area, historical grudges, and current security concerns (Meir, 2022).

When looking at the origins of this dispute, it's important to consider all of the



different causes that have played a role. The Israel-Palestine conflict has been marked by a number of pivotal events and turning points, from the founding of the State of Israel in 1948 to the subsequent successive wars and peace negotiations. Peace to Prosperity: US Policies Towards the Israel-Palestine Conflict, 2022). The displacement of Palestinians, the occupation of Palestinian territories, and the ongoing construction of Israeli settlements in the West Bank have all contributed to the deepening of animosity and the entrenching of the conflict. The war has been made more complicated by the involvement of outside parties, such as the United States, the United Nations, and neighboring Arab states. The international community has played a key role in defining the history of the Israel-Palestine conflict, from diplomatic efforts to broker peace deals to military interventions. Reference: (Bilgin, 2020)

Understanding the complexity of the Israel-Palestine conflict requires addressing the underlying causes and frustrations on both sides. The impact of religion and national identity, as well as the longstanding historical and cultural links to the area, have all played a role in keeping the problem from being resolved. Recognizing the histories and stories of both Israelis and Palestinians, including their claims to the land and their hopes for statehood, is crucial for making any real headway toward peace (Pratiwi et al., 2022).

A permanent resolution to the Israel–Palestine issue remains elusive despite decades of negotiations, peace efforts, and brief periods of relative calm. History, politics, and society all have a role in maintaining tensions and making a lasting peace unlikely. Regular conflicts, rocket fire, and airstrikes contribute to an atmosphere of fear and misery among Israeli and Palestinian inhabitants. The difficulties in reaching a solution are compounded by the lack of trust between the two sides and the absence of a shared vision for peaceful cohabitation (Rija et al., 2022).

The dispute between Israel and Palestine has been difficult to resolve. A durable deal has proven elusive due to the parties' varied interests and demands, as well as their mutual suspicion and hate towards one another. Border security measures intended to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict have repeatedly stalled or failed. A thorough and enduring deal has proven elusive due to the parties' mutual mistrust and enmity. The signing of the Oslo Accords in the 1990s, which sought to build a framework for a peace process, provided a glimmer of hope, however. The progress made was unfortunately undermined by following violence and dispute, which led to a resumption of hostilities (What were the Oslo Accords between Israel and the Palestinians? 2023).



THE WARS FOUGHT BETWEEN THESE TWO

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been ongoing for many years, and there have been numerous wars, conflicts, and skirmishes between the two sides. Here is a list of some of the major wars and conflicts fought between Israel and various Palestinian groups:

1947–1948 Arab–Israeli War: This war, also known as the 1948 Palestinian exodus or the Nakba, resulted in the establishment of the State of Israel and the displacement of over 700,000 Palestinians (Ammar-Shehada & Bracke, 2023).

Suez Crisis (1956): While not primarily an Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Israel occupied the Gaza Strip during this crisis, marking the beginning of its direct administration of the territory (Ayumia et al., 2022).

1967 Six-Day War: Israel launched a preemptive strike against Egypt, Jordan, and Syria, resulting in the occupation of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Sinai Peninsula, Golan Heights, and East Jerusalem (Chaczko, 2022).

1967–1970 War of Attrition: Egypt and its allies launched a campaign of guerrilla warfare against Israeli forces occupying the Sinai Peninsula. The war ended with a ceasefire and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from some areas of the Sinai (Eiran, 2022).

1973 Yom Kippur War: Egypt and Syria launched a surprise attack on Israel on Yom Kippur, the holiest day in the Jewish calendar. The war ended with a UN-brokered ceasefire and the return of the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt (Solomon, 2020).

1978–1982 South Lebanon Conflict: Israel invaded Lebanon in response to attacks by Palestinian militants. The war ended with an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon and the establishment of the UNIFIL peacekeeping force (Mahmudah et al., 2020).

1987–1993 First Intifada: The First Intifada, or the Palestinian uprising, was a series of protests and demonstrations against Israeli occupation. The uprising ended with the Oslo Accords, which established the Palestinian Authority (Topor, 2022).

2000–2005 Second Intifada: The Second Intifada, or the Al-Aqsa Intifada, was a wave of violence and unrest that erupted after a visit by Israeli politician Ariel Sharon to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. The uprising ended with the establishment of a ceasefire (Maulana & Wang, 2022).

2006 Lebanon War: Israel launched a military operation against Hezbollah in Lebanon following the group's capture of Israeli soldiers. The war ended with a UN-brokered ceasefire (Goreau-Ponceaud & Madavan, 2022).

2008–2009 Gaza War: Israel launched a military operation against Hamas in



Gaza following the group's rocket attacks on Israel. The war ended with a ceasefire (Wang, 2022).

2012 Operation Pillar of Defense: Israel launched a military operation against Hamas in Gaza following the group's rocket attacks on Israel. The war ended with a ceasefire (Eran-Jona et al., 2022).

2014 Operation Protective Edge: Israel launched a military operation against Hamas in Gaza following the group's kidnapping and murder of three Israeli teenagers. The war ended with a ceasefire (Eran-Jona et al., 2022).

2019 Gaza Strip–Israel crisis: A series of clashes between Israeli forces and Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip resulted in the deaths of dozens of Palestinians and one Israeli soldier (Alashqar et al., 2023).

2021 Gaza War: Israel launched a military operation against Hamas in Gaza following the group's rocket attacks on Israel. The war ended with a ceasefire (Mofaz et al., 2023).

2023 Hamas Attack: On October 7, 2023, the Palestinian Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) launched an unexpected attack on Israel. Parts of the heavily fortified separation fence between Gaza and Israel were breached, and settlements along the Gaza border were targeted (Israel Shows Raw Footage From Hamas Attacks on Oct. 7 - The New York Times, 2023).

2023 Israeli Response: In response, Israel declared war on the Gaza Strip, launching a bombing campaign. Over 700 Palestinians have been reported dead, and more than 4,000 injured. The conflict has disrupted air traffic at Ben Gurion Airport, with many airlines cancelling flights. (Israeli strikes Gaza refugee camp Jabalia, which it says is Hamas ... - NPR, 2023)

It is important to note that these are just the major wars and conflicts between Israel and Palestine. There have been many other smaller-scale conflicts and clashes between the two sides.

THE PEACE AGREEMENT SIGNED

There have been several peace agreements signed between Israel and Palestine, but none of them have been fully implemented. The most notable agreements are:

The Oslo Accords (1993-1995): Secret meetings were held between Israeli and Palestinian negotiators in Oslo, Norway, to reach these agreements. On September 13, 1993, they concluded with the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements (DOP) on the White House lawn. The Palestinian Authority (PA) was established by the DOP, and it was given control over Gaza and Jericho. To add to the urgency, the deadline for



negotiating a final status agreement was shortened from ten years to five (Pratiwi et al., 2022).

The Camp David Summit (2000): In the summer of 2000, a meeting was held in Camp David in Maryland. Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat, and American President Bill Clinton were all there. No progress was made at the meeting on the final status of Jerusalem, the status of refugees, or the demarcation of borders (Topor, 2022).

The Annapolis Conference (2007): Annapolis, Maryland was the site of a conference back in November of 2007. U.S. President George W. Bush, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert also participated. The Annapolis Conference in 2023 may have begun a new peace process, but it achieved little of note.

The Cairo Agreement (2009): This deal was sealed in October 2009 in Cairo, Egypt. It demanded that the Gaza Strip's border crossings with Israel be opened and a ceasefire to be implemented there. The agreement was violated by both sides within a few weeks (Seidner, 2023).

The 2012 Framework Agreement for Peace between Israel and the Palestinian Authority: U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry was the mediator in this agreement. It pushed for the development of a Palestinian state alongside Israel as part of a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The deal was also expected to resolve all final status issues, including those related to Jerusalem, refugees, and borders. This agreement was never implemented, as noted in the Timeline: How the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process Fell Apart in... (PBS, 2023) documentary. Despite the signing of these agreements, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains unresolved. The two sides continue to disagree on the key issues of Jerusalem, refugees, and borders. The conflict has also been complicated by the rise of Hamas, a militant group that controls the Gaza Strip.

THE CURRENT DYNAMIC OF GEOPOLITICS THAT IMPACT THE SITUATION

Regional and International Players:

1. United States: Historically, the U.S. has been a strong ally of Israel, providing military aid and diplomatic support. However, recent administrations have also emphasized the need for a two-state solution.
2. Arab States: Some Arab countries have normalized relations with Israel (e.g., Egypt, Jordan, UAE), while others continue to support Palestinian rights.



3. Iran: Iran opposes Israel's existence and supports Palestinian groups like Hamas and Hezbollah.
4. European Union: The EU supports a two-state solution and provides aid to Palestinians.

Resource Control and Security:

1. Water: Control over water resources is crucial. Israel controls most of the water sources in the West Bank, affecting Palestinian access.
2. Security: Israel cites security concerns for its actions, including checkpoints, walls, and military operations. Palestinians view these as oppressive measures.

Global Economy and Trade:

1. The conflict impacts regional stability, trade routes, and energy supplies. Any escalation could disrupt global markets.
2. Suez Canal: The Suez Canal, a vital maritime route, is near Gaza. Conflict in the area could affect shipping and oil transport.

Public Opinion and Activism:

1. Boycotts: The BDS movement (Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions) calls for boycotting Israeli goods and companies linked to settlements.
2. Civil Society: Grassroots movements advocate for peace, human rights, and justice for both Israelis and Palestinians.

THE OPERATION OF AL-AQSA STORM (DELUDE)

Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, Hamas's armed wing, launched Operation Al-Aqsa Storm, an unprecedented attack against Israel. The Gaza Envelope colonies were attacked by a huge group of militants on October 7, 2023, leading to the deaths of several troops and settlers and the abduction of hundreds more. Launching thousands of missiles at Israeli towns and settlements was the first step in the plan. Notably, Hamas fighters entered the occupied Palestinian territory via both water and air. Netanyahu responded by declaring war and beginning Operation Iron Swords, which has resulted in heavy fatalities, population displacement, and material destruction throughout the Gaza Strip. (<https://rasanah-iiis.org/english/position-estimate/operation-al-aqsa-storm-flood-reasons-consequences-and-expected-scenarios/>)



THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THIS CONFLICT DIFFER FROM PREVIOUS WARS LAUNCHED BY HAMAS AGAINST ISRAEL. HERE ARE SOME KEY POINTS:

1. Changing the Rules of Engagement:

Operation Al-Aqsa Storm shifted the battleground beyond the Gaza Strip. Unlike previous confrontations, the al-Qassam Brigades took the battle into territories controlled by the Israeli occupation. By storming the wall separating Gaza from the so-called Gaza Envelope, they breached Israel's primary defense line from the Gaza flank.

2. Territorial Control:

The Gaza Strip serves as a buffer zone between Gaza and Israel, neutralizing threats from Gaza. However, during this operation, the al-Qassam Brigades extended the conflict into Israeli-controlled territories, challenging the status quo.

3. Implications and Scenarios:

The ongoing conflict raises questions about how it may conclude. Different scenarios exist, but the breach of Israel's defense line signifies a significant shift in the conflict dynamics.

The operation's name, "Al-Aqsa Storm", carries symbolic weight. It refers to the 2022 Al-Aqsa clashes, during which Israeli police raided the Al-Aqsa Mosque following clashes between Palestinians and police. The choice of "flood" underscores the intensity and impact of this offensive, echoing the urgency and significance of defending the Aqsa Mosque. (<https://rasanah-iiis.org/english/position-estimate/operation-al-aqsa-storm-flood-reasons-consequences-and-expected-scenarios/>)

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2023/)

HOW IT WILL CHANGE THE SITUATION?

Operation Al-Aqsa Storm has significantly altered the dynamics of the conflict between the Palestinian resistance and Israel. Let's delve into the reasons, consequences, and expected scenarios:

1. Changing the Rules of Engagement:

Unlike previous rounds of confrontation that occurred solely within the Gaza Strip, Operation Al-Aqsa Storm has shifted the battleground. The al-Qassam Brigades infiltrated the territories controlled by the Israeli occupation, breaching Israel's primary defense line from the Gaza flank.

By storming the wall separating the Gaza Strip from the so-called Gaza Envelope, Hamas fighters took the battle into Israeli territories. This strategic move challenges the status quo and disrupts Israel's buffer zone. (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/oct/08/israel-hamas-gaza-palestinian-territories>)

2. Consequences and Implications:

The prolonged war has brought the Palestinian cause to the forefront, weakening Israel's deterrence force. The world is closely watching the conflict, and its ramifications extend beyond the Middle East. Israel's response, Operation Iron Swords, has resulted in casualties, displacement, and destruction in the Gaza Strip. The fundamental relationship between the Israeli occupation and occupied Palestinians is likely to be permanently altered due to the events of October 7, 2023 (<https://www.arabnews.com/node/2388206>)

3. Psychological Warfare and Perception Shift:

The audacity of Hamas fighters breaching the Gaza Envelope and infiltrating Israeli territories has sent shockwaves through Israel's security establishment. It challenges the perception of invincibility that Israel has maintained for decades. The symbolism of the al-Qassam Brigades' fighters waving their flags atop the



breached wall has resonated with Palestinians and their supporters worldwide. It signifies defiance and resilience against the Israeli occupation.

4. Regional and International Reactions:

The conflict has drawn attention from neighboring countries and international actors. Arab nations have expressed solidarity with the Palestinian cause, condemning Israel's actions. The United Nations and other global bodies have called for an immediate ceasefire and a return to negotiations. The situation has escalated tensions in an already volatile region.

5. Humanitarian Crisis and Displacement:

The ongoing hostilities have exacerbated the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip. Civilians, including children, have been caught in the crossfire, facing displacement, trauma, and loss. The destruction of infrastructure, homes, and essential services has further strained an already fragile situation.

6. Long-Term Implications:

The events of Operation Al-Aqsa Storm may reshape the dynamics of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It could lead to a reevaluation of security strategies, territorial control, and the role of armed resistance. The international community's response will play a crucial role in determining the path forward. Calls for a two-state solution, recognition of Palestinian statehood, and addressing root causes are likely to gain prominence.

In summary, Operation Al-Aqsa Storm is not merely a military operation; it represents a seismic shift in the conflict narrative. Its consequences will reverberate for years to come, impacting lives, geopolitics, and regional stability.

WHAT WILL BE THE FUTURE?

The future following Operation Al-Aqsa Storm remains uncertain, but several potential scenarios may unfold:



1. Escalation and Further Conflict:

If diplomatic efforts fail to de-escalate the situation, there could be a continuation of hostilities. Both sides may intensify military actions, leading to more casualties, destruction, and displacement. Escalation could strain regional stability and draw in other actors, potentially widening the conflict.

2. Renewed Peace Negotiations:

The international community may exert pressure on both Israel and Hamas to return to the negotiating table. Ceasefire talks could resume, aiming for a lasting resolution. Past peace agreements, such as the Oslo Accords, may be revisited, with renewed efforts to address core issues like borders, settlements, and the status of Jerusalem.

3. Shifts in Public Opinion and Solidarity:

The events of Operation Al-Aqsa Storm have galvanized global attention. Public opinion may sway in favor of the Palestinian cause, leading to increased advocacy and support.

Protests, diplomatic initiatives, and boycott movements may gain momentum, influencing policy decisions.

4. Humanitarian and Reconstruction Efforts:

Regardless of the conflict's outcome, humanitarian aid and reconstruction will be crucial. Rebuilding infrastructure, providing medical assistance, and addressing trauma will be priorities.

International organizations and NGOs will play a vital role in alleviating suffering and rebuilding communities.

5. Long-Term Geopolitical Implications:

The conflict's resolution will impact regional dynamics. It could strengthen or weaken alliances, alter security strategies, and redefine borders. Neighboring countries, especially those with vested interests, will closely monitor developments.

In summary, the future hinges on diplomatic efforts, international pressure, and



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the willingness of both parties to seek a sustainable solution. The path forward remains uncertain, but the hope lies in dialogue, empathy, and a commitment to lasting peace.



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