

# The Israel-Palestine Imbroglia- an Asian Minority Ethnic Perspective of the Formative Civilizational and Universally Instructive Humanitarian Lessons.

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## ABSTRACT

It is widely acknowledged that **colonialism** in many of the nations that are free today is solely responsible for the borders drawn arbitrarily creating a stark separation of the ethnic and sub-ethnic populations of societies with their primal co existential group separations. The **Israel-Palestine region** in the Middle East which was under the British sphere of influence before the end of World War Two, is one such case. It is a tragic one as large numbers of Palestinians especially, and Israelis have become victims of the imbroglia that had risen. There has been no lack of effort by the contending nations, the **United Nations**, the United States, the Palestine Liberation Organisation, a few Arab states and others, to end armed conflict and broker peace. The situation in the region remains tense. Israel has continued to build settlements in formerly Palestine land. The question of Israeli **apartheidism** and accusations of subtle attempts at ‘**Judaising**’ (conversion to Judaism faith) the Palestinian people have been voiced. Opposition and armed retaliation from Palestinian armed groups against Israel, and that of the state of Israel on the Palestinians have mounted. A perspective from that of the Asian marginalised, minority groups relating to the context of the Palestinians with the powerful Israeli state, can well be, that **democratic PRINCIPLES and undertakings for equitable governance** for all citizens constitute the constructive pathway for peace, stability and prosperity for one and all. Documented sources, researched theses and articles, and media reports on the conflict are the primary sources of data for this study. The conclusions that were derived were that the principle of full equality for the two contending communities is in question and that it needs to be upheld. **Dialogue**, allowing for the evolving of the spirit of co-existence, enabling secure futures towards ensuring legacies centred on humanitarianism for future generations, and for Israel and Palestine returning to the spiritual teachings of their respective faiths- **to honour human life**, can be the decisive factors for peace and stability in the above region.

**Keywords:** Israel-Palestine conflict, settlements, ‘Judaising’, United Nations, spiritual teachings, spirit of co-existence.

## INTRODUCTION

At the outset, a point for **common reflection-**

The Central Pragmatic Global Mission-Task – *Only a POLITICAL SOLUTION will end the “senseless and costly cycles of violence” between Israelis and Palestinians*, as unequivocally stated by the UN Middle East envoy, Tor Wennesland, in a briefing to the Security Council (UN News, 27 May 2021).

This paper is an attempt to look at the tragic and ongoing Palestine-Israel conflict from the lens of a minority-ethnic Malaysian researcher. At the outset, it is stressed that this **conflict in the Middle East, as in a number of post-colonial states today, is largely an outcome of colonialism.**

It is arguable that the intentions of past colonialists were solely altruistic, or simply the aggrandising drive for the expansion of the empire, of one colonial power entity raging and pillaging lands superseding the other colonial power. The British had laboured to expand their influence in the mid-nineteenth and twentieth

centuries, competing with their ‘brother’ European colonialists, the Portuguese, Dutch, Spanish and Americans.

It cannot be denied that the colonialists brought a vast degree of material and modern development to the countries they overpowered and ruled. One significant benefit and good that was provided was education, economic opening of their territories, and generally widespread and good health services and practices.

But, nevertheless, as much as it is claimed by one Dutch academic, Piet Emmer (NST, 22.2.2022, p.2) that, “...**colonialism introduced modern civilisation**”, which has a grounded basis as discussed above, however the social and political ‘damage’ as seen by **history** as a larger picture in the twenty-first century and the earlier millennia, is that **colonialism can be defined as “corporate barbarism”** (ibid).

History records that the colonisers had come down hard with their guns, and religious faiths, on the local, native peoples who were generally people of a simple nature, organising and living their lives in accordance with the vagaries of mother nature.

Nevertheless, the colonisers also introduced forms of **Aristotelian governance** which primarily were characterised by top-down leadership, aristocracy and citizen participation. Variations of this have been adopted today in the formerly colonized countries ([https://www.philosophybasics.com/movements\\_aristotelianism.html](https://www.philosophybasics.com/movements_aristotelianism.html))<sup>[2]</sup>.

The **social and psychological transformations** that were to come about in the lives of the colonised natives are mainly two-fold. A segment of the society grew to accept the new modernistic ways and became subjected to the ostentatious ideals of the colonisers; and, the others struggled to retain their socialised and traditional ways while quite reluctantly adopting the modern teachings and ‘enjoying’ the social benefits that the colonialists invariably imposed on to their everyday lives. The resulting political dichotomy, social dialectics and tensions in their outlook and philosophy of life continue to this day.

The relationships thus, between groups of people, with one exhibiting power, wealth and authority and the other consigned by the prevailing state politics of the times to a position of subjugation, often resulted in that relationship tending to a state of perennial group conflict.

International bodies like the United Nations, the European Union, the Peace Research Institute in the Middle East (PRIME), the Foundation for Middle East Peace, UNSCO-Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy and numerous non-governmental organisations striving for **Israel-Palestine peace** referred to as Arab-Israeli Peace Projects, are constantly involved even today, in bringing about peace to the above conflicting inter-state relationship imbroglio.

## STUDY OBJECTIVES

It is a universally acknowledged fact that the Palestine-Israel conflict has been ongoing for over a century. In this context, the writer intends to look at,

1. the developments that have led to the above conflict and the ensuing persistent imbroglio, and
2. to understand the conflict with a humanely objective lens from a minority perspective, and attempt to forward a workable resolution of the said conflict.

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

After the First World War, in 1947, the United Nations working with Great Britain primarily, established the state of Israel with its borders as shown in the map below. It is a well-established point of knowledge that

Israel was earlier part of the **Turkish-ruled Ottoman Empire** in the Middle East region. Israel was essentially ‘born’ into the consciousness of the global society in the modern era as a country, although being grounded as it were, on the **archaeological findings** and evidence from the distant past, of the land of the Biblical Moses and his struggles to establish a home for the ethnic Jews residing in the above region.

### UN 1947 Palestine-Israel Partition



**Source:**[https://www.google.com/search?rlz=1C1RLNS\\_enMY986MY986](https://www.google.com/search?rlz=1C1RLNS_enMY986MY986) & sxsrf=APq-W BviS NFUqZrHM8XYu 0VEzOpjPXR2Sg:

As the renowned historian, Paul Johnson (1988), notes, “...the first chapter of Genesis (Christian Bible), unlike any other cosmogony of antiquity, fits perfectly well, in essence, with modern scientific explanations of the **origin of the universe**, not least the ‘**Big Bang**’ theory”.

The above historian goes on to illustrate that the “... Israelite-Hebrews were in control of **Shechem** (a major city in Biblical times) throughout the time their brethren were in Egyptian bondage”. Biblical narrative (Genesis 12:6) talks of the above city as the first city where the Christian patriarch Abraham, is regarded as the scriptural father of the Hebrew people. The progenitors of the Christian diaspora today built the original central shrine there, and established the city as the capital of Israelite Canaan (The name “**Canaan**” appears throughout the Bible, where it corresponds to “**the Levant**“, in particular to the areas of the Southern Levant that provide the main settings of the narratives of the Bible: the Land of Israel, Philistia and Phoenicia, among others... The word ‘**Canaanites**’ serves as an ethnic catch-all term covering various indigenous populations—both settled and nomadic-pastoral groups—throughout the regions of the southern Levant or Canaan. It is by far the most frequently used ethnic term in the Bible).

The **significance of the city of Shechem** then establishes the fact that there was a continuous existence of a sizeable Israelite population in Palestine (the area in the Middle East of Palestine and Jewish people), as the above historian points out, who had been living there all through the period from the time of Abraham’s arrival there and the Jewish people’s escape from Egypt, does then establish the accounts in the Biblical Book of Exodus (of the Jewish people from the slavery they were subject to by the Pharaoh rulers of Egypt then), to have moved to their new lands and settled there, to be well credible. As Johnson notes, the Israelites in Egypt “...always knew they had a homeland to return to, where part of the population was their

natural ally...” (ibid, p.23; [https:// www. cambridge. org/core/books/cambridge-ancient-history/758C7424211FB4CC893DE9292EA35029](https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/cambridge-ancient-history/758C7424211FB4CC893DE9292EA35029))

Further, archaeological evidence dating back to the biblical period from around 1175 B.C.E. attests to the discovery of the increase in the number of settlements in the lands that were later to become the Israel state, that is, from 30 to 250 settlements from around 1000 B.C.E. This rapid expansion could well have been due to the occupation of the lands in question by the upward surge of new Jewish peoples rather than to natural population growth [Rendsburg, Gary A. (Ed), (2021); Israel Finkelstein et al. (2012)].

This discussion above can be said to show that the **Jews were also rightful occupiers and owners of the Palestine-Israel land**, as it stands today.

Britain, after the First World War in 1918, together with the victorious allied powers, took it upon themselves to delineate a part of the land west of the river Jordan known as Palestine, but also called Israel by the Jews. The world body that was formed to establish and maintain world peace, the League of Nations, then endorsed this action which was mainly undertaken by Britain, which entrusted the latter to establish in the said land then referred to as Palestine, **“a national home for the Jewish people”**. The mandate by the global body then, nevertheless, provided that the civil and religious rights of all communities living in that land, **INCLUDING** most particularly, that of the **PALESTINIANS**, were to be safeguarded and allowed to thrive.

## **FREEDOM! -WHAT OF ITS UNIVERSALITY?**

Human society has often laboured to define and establish what **freedom would mean for the common man**. Freedom in name, without the **living and functioning rights** as the ‘authority’ that deems it its duty or right to pass down certain attributes of freedom, but itself retains a ‘higher level’ of that value of freedom and authority for itself, is then a corrupted form of freedom.

The paramount issue and question of freedom revolves around a state’s authority to provide on an equitable platform, individual (for the legal citizen and others), and community rights to be enjoyed commonly. That is, state political freedom would inevitably require the legal provision of social and legal rights within a set of rules and institutions in a social-cultural context.

With the focus then on the individual and the communities living in a state, that universal list of rights and freedoms can specify the boundaries (limitations) of the state, and that of the citizen, for its legitimate (taken as legal authority for equitable freedoms) enforcement.

Taking a page from the history of American society, freedom for the slaves of the south of the nation meant that the blacks, as the whites, had the common and equal right to live their lives and to participate in government. Hence, in the recent past, there was a black president of the United States, Barack Obama. But, as witnessed today, there might be liberty legally provided for the once former black slaves (American-born), but the battle for further CIVIL rights, an equal democracy and equality for all basic rights, is clearly a continuing, tragic saga (Foner, Eric. 2019, pp.41-54).

The United States President, in his recent visit in July 2022 to Israel and the West Bank region contiguous to the former state, affirmed his country’s commitment to the “two-state solution”- the long-deliberated political solution in which an independent Palestinian state importantly, and Israel can coexist. The President is said to have stated that he understands the ‘sufferings’ and empathises with the pains experienced by the Palestinians. He noted that **“...(the) indignities like restrictions on movement and travel or the daily worry of your children’s safety are real, and they are immediate”** (Estrin, Daniel., Asma Khalid. 15.7.2022, [https:// www. npr.org/ organization/](https://www.npr.org/organization/) ).

What, of course, is the **cardinal task** of the day is to translate these positions into everyday realities.

The question arises then, as to whether the state authority Israel, which clearly has considerable political and military powers than most other states in the Middle East region, has provided for equitable rights and freedoms for the Jewish-Israeli and Palestine peoples in the territories it 'governs'. It is starkly apparent that this is not so.

The fear of encirclement and persecution as experienced in the past during the German Nazi era and the expulsions its people faced in their historic past can well be the dominant factor for the Israeli government to have limited the freedoms of the Palestinians and Arabs in its state.

The **United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)** proclaimed by this world body on 10 December 1948, Resolution 217A, sets out clearly fundamental human rights to be **UNIVERSALLY** protected. While requiring that all mankind act towards one another “... **in a spirit of brotherhood**” (Article 1, UDHR), it declares that every human person is entitled to all rights and freedoms, “... without distinction of any kind, such as **RACE, COLOUR, SEX, LANGUAGE, RELIGION**, political ...no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty “ (Article 3, UDHR).

How well is the above Declaration given substance on the ground, by all parties to the above said conflict? If the persistent conflict involving guns, bullets and 'stones' is to be given our full attention, then there appear to be issues which show that rights and freedoms are not as one code for all humanity.

How this can be understood and resolved for the involved people and all mankind to draw lessons from it, with all cultural nuances 'imbedded' in it given their full consideration, and with all nations committing to the universal norms set by the United Nations, then this issue of human freedoms **WILL NOT REMAIN a perennial conundrum**. What is further lacking is the open, non-nationalistic and universalistic quality of leadership, locally and internationally, which presently appears clearly restricted to certain predetermined, national, vested goals, and a refusal to look at the larger picture.

This latter quality can have vast implications for good for the global society, if it is given its due place today.

If one were to look at the costs of this conflict in terms of the numbers of the common Palestinians and Israeli residents particularly of the land, who have often been wantonly brutalised, while the political echelon and their families have often been well-protected, one can only become deeply astounded.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) recently reported that 5,600 Palestinians died between 2008 and 2020 and 115,000 were injured. In that same period, around 250 Israelis had died and 5,600 were injured. In 2014, a cruelly violent year in the Middle East history, the Israeli military, in response to the kidnapping and murder of three Israeli teenagers and to retaliate the Hamas rocket attacks, carried out a seven-week long military campaign that saw 2000 people, mainly Gazans lose their lives.

Palestinian civil protests along Gaza's borders in 2018, saw the Israelis using their superior military strength which resulted in injuries to more than 28,000 Palestinians. (McCarthy, Niall. 12.5 2021. The Human Cost of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict over the Past Decade).

In this above scenario, the **NAKBA**, basically in Arabic meaning, 'disaster', and 'cataclysm', is also said to be the '**Palestinian Catastrophe**', which is seen by many as the destruction of Palestinian society and homeland as it stood before 1947. More than 7 million Palestinians are said to be people displaced from the

time of the 1948 Arab-Israeli war.

The deleterious costs of this conflict are further accentuated and clearly underscored when the NAKBA is tragically viewed as that which transformed Palestine from a majority Arab society “into a new state that had a substantial Jewish majority”. As the UN Special Commission on Palestine, Minority Report (<https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/0/07175DE563852568D3006E10F3>; Khalidi, Rashid. 2020, p. 75), has categorically noted, “Partition both in principle and in substance can only be regarded as an anti-Arab solution”.

It is not possibly too far-fetched to point out, observing the course of history as of the above period in that land, that the **taking over of formerly Palestinian occupied lands and properties** left behind by the Arab-Palestinians, who were forced to leave their homes out of the fear that the 1948 war Israeli victors may bring further harm to them, and also they having to face the constant physical onslaught of territorial occupation and expulsion (as it is commonly taking place in this present modern age), illustrates the painful reality of the actual seizures of lands of belonging to others. This accentuates the dominant aggressiveness of the western and abundantly supported Israeli nation to inflict further losses in territorial space on the already weakened Palestinians. This, today has come to be referred to as **Political Zionism** (ibid, Khalidi, R. p. 76).

**Table 1: Vital Casualty Statistics of the Israel-Palestine Conflict (1860 to the present).**

[As of 2021, the official IDF (Israel Defence Forces) figure for the number of Israelis who have lost their lives in defence of Israel is 23,928].

Event	Year(s)	Jews/Israelis		Arabs/Palestinians	
		Killed <sup>o</sup>	Wounded <sup>^</sup>	Killed <sup>o±</sup>	Wounded <sup>^</sup>
Arab Riots	1936-1939	415		5,000	15,000
War of Independence	1948	6,373	15,000	10,000	
Sinai Campaign	1956	231	900	3,000	4,500
Six Day War	1967	776	2,586	18,300	
Yom Kippur War	1973	2,688		19,000	
Terrorism/Other	1860-Present	9,927			
TOTAL:		24,981	36,602	91,361	78,038

**Source:** [www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/total-casualties-arab-israeli-conflict](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/total-casualties-arab-israeli-conflict). Total figures include Arab riots from 1920 to the present.

## POLITICAL ZIONISM

Zionism as a national revival movement of the Jews essentially made its appearance in the European socio-political scene, in the late 1880s. It had its roots, it is often observed, in the pressures the Jews were subject to. They were forced to assimilate totally with the local European cultures and ethnics, or risk brutal persecution.

In the Jewish religion, the name **Eretz Israel is actually the name for Palestine**. For centuries, it was regarded and revered as a place of holy pilgrimage, but “... never as a future secular state”. The Jews were to return as by Jewish tradition and religion, to Eretz Israel as a “sovereign people” with the coming of the promised Messiah at ‘the end of times’. They were then to live in a Jewish theocracy, as obedient servants of God, NOT as a dominating, warring society.

Historical evidence shows that Palestine, had been under Turkish rule until 1918, and that Zionists (Jewish peoples governed by the ideology of Zionism)[3] made up only about five per cent of the country's population. However, Zionism, after the Nazi annihilation of Jews, "secularised and nationalised Judaism" which is the religion of the Jews.

Before the British occupation of Palestine in 1917 as the colonial authority in that region, the population of the Jewish immigrant community was rather small there. With time and with the rise in expectations for a secure and cogent political future, the Zionist elders specifically began on a mission of establishing a Jewish state in Palestine. The official motivation was that Jews will have to no longer undergo persecutions and pogroms which were globally acknowledged to have taken place. The Zionists were driven by reaching back to a distant past, invoking a form of spiritual-Christian right for the religious redemption of an 'ancient homeland'.

However, Middle Eastern scholars today point out that nineteenth century Western colonialism imbued with their Christian Protestant missionary zeal, and governments of the Occident competing amongst themselves to carve out portions of the declining Ottoman Empire in the region, so as to create a "**pietist**" **Christian (also known as Pietistic Lutheranism, a movement within Lutheranism, a branch of Christianity, that combines its emphasis on biblical doctrine with an emphasis on individual piety and living a vigorous Christian life) Palestine**[4]

The **British helped fuel the Zionism project** henceforth, aggressively commencing on their project of claiming and establishing the Palestine biblical territory as that of the Israelis. "Nothing, neither rocks nor Palestinians, were to stand in the way of the national 'redemption' of the land the Zionist movement coveted" (Pappe, I. 2007, pp. xiv-xviii, 10-12). The Bedouin-desert-dwellers who were largely nomadic pastoralists, were seen by the Jews who had started to arrive in the land from around 1882, as strangers and intruders, on their biblical land. And thus, inconsequential beings to be conquered and removed.

The Biblical narratives and beliefs that have contributed to generations of Jews having grown up with the belief that the Palestinian land was their holy land, had captured their imagination beyond any sense of understanding of the socio-political realities of the time, and of their very own largely intrusive immigration and attempts at occupation of the then twentieth century Palestine.

## BALFOUR DECLARATION

As discussed above, the British had been primarily instrumental in the creation of the Israeli state. With the Ottoman and also the British Empires in decline in the early twentieth century and onwards, the Jewish persecutions in Europe then, and for the religious motivations of the West we saw above, the British Foreign Secretary Arthur James Balfour, in 1917 informed the leader of the British Jewish community of the British government's intention of settling the Jewish diaspora in a state of their own. Thus, the Balfour Declaration saw its birth setting out the position of the colonial government in the Middle East region. It states that,

"... on behalf of His Majesty's Government, the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted to, and approved by, the Cabinet.

"His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.

"I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation".

The British, working under the confidence they assumed as the sole power of influence and arbitrators of a vast portion of the Middle East, opened the door to the tragic conflict between the two peoples. The Jews having been promised a national home as one part of the equation as such, the Palestinians on their part clearly had their native-born aspirations for the fulfilment of their natural rights as the people of the land and the attainment of their territorial nationhood and independence. The British attempted to establish a political structure as the self-proclaimed practitioners of benign democracy, that was to represent both communities on an equal footing and provide a parity. This was despite the fact all parties involved in the negotiations being aware that the Palestinians made up between eighty and ninety percent of the total population in the 1920s in the land.

## ISRAELI NATIONAL INCREMENTALISM

The Zionists had begun embarking on an active incrementalistic programme after their experiences particularly, of the attacks by the Palestinian resistance groups, in the twentieth century.

The primary goal and perspective of incrementalism was for policy makers to move forward with bringing gradual 'additions' to their state of affairs, constituting new nation hoods having suffered losses to their earlier national boundaries as a result of colonialism particularly, but nevertheless, to avoid making changes before they really engaged themselves and rationally thought through the issues of state. The growing Jewish immigration, a marked incremental development in itself, into the land of Palestine, and the expansion of Jewish settlements there, compounded by the Zionist leadership adopting a harder stance of non-co-operation with the British and by possibly a clearly intended extension, the Palestinians, led to the Palestinian uprisings of 1929, and another in 1936. Ilan Pappé (ibid, p.14) emphasises that the British tended to be influenced by the Jewish lobby and refused to implement their earlier proposal of the democratic principle of parity in the new government to be established. The Palestinians had been willing then to give up the cardinal democratic principle of majoritarian politics, being the larger population group, which would have rightly given them the weight of majority rule.

The Palestine uprisings led the British government to set up the Peel Royal Commission in 1937 to study the causes of the unrest and to make viable proposals for the resolution of the on-going conflict between the two communities. The British Mandate of 1917 however, was not to be questioned. Its primary recommendation was the partition of Palestine into two states. The Palestinian Arab Higher Committee, the then governing body for Arab-Palestinian affairs denounced the plan, and counter proposed for a Palestine that was to remain a unitary state as 70 percent of the total population there was Palestinian, and further, 90 percent of the land then was under Palestinian control. When their demand went unheeded, another Palestinian uprising erupted in October, 1937.

As much as it was deemed unworkable, for the reason "that the political, administrative and financial difficulties involved... to create independent Arab and Jewish states inside Palestine are so great that this solution is impracticable" (A Survey of Palestine, vol.1. p. 47), the partition idea of the Peel Commission was accepted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1947.

The Zionist leadership under David Ben Gurion (first prime minister of Israel), even before the above UN decision in 1947 and possibly contributing to it, having had initially accepted the Peel Commission proposal for a two-state partition, in 1942 reversed their stand unilaterally and adopted a maximalist policy, coveting a larger geographical space and hence, all of Palestine for itself. Ben Gurion, being the shrewd politician that he was, and intensely driven by the Zionist project for a purely Jewish state as a safe haven for the Jewish ethnic community from any future persecutions, and as a base for Jewish nationalism, devised various plans with his aides. These plans, implemented on the departure of the British, envisaged the complete control of the Palestinians such that the latter will not in any way be a threat physically to the Jews.



**History** records that Transjordan's (Jordan today) King Abdullah 1 ibn Hussein aspired to rule over a larger Arab population. His nation's native population was only about 200,000 Arabs in 1921 when he assumed the throne. He began to expand his territory by collaborating with the Zionists, giving him an ignominious nickname, the "falcon in a canary's cage" (Khalidi, R.2020. p.76). He quietly approved the British Peel Commission proposal to partition Palestine, as the Commission had authoritatively approved the annexation of part of the Arab land to Transjordan. The Arab Legion (in 1946 it became the Jordan Arab Army) was then reputed as the best-trained and best-equipped army in the Arab world and the driving force in Jordanian nationhood that helped construct Jordanian national identity (<https://www.encyclopedia.com/humanities/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/arab-legion>). Through the 1948 Israeli-Arab war, Abdullah was able to retain the West Bank land for Transjordan, denying it for the Palestinians.

As Rashid Khalidi (2020, p.77; Shlaim, 'Collusion Across the Jordan', p.139) notes quoting the historian Avi Shlaim that the British had "colluded directly with the Transjordanians and indirectly with the Jews, to abort the birth of a Palestinian Arab state".

**Ben Gurion** as the unchallenged leader of the Jew Zionists, devised a final, most **insidious and Machiavellian plan**, officially referred to as the 1948 Plan Dalet, or Plan D. It is said that this plan enabled the Jews to acquire their coveted Palestinian land finally. This was done with harsh punitive actions- the systematic and deliberate expulsion of the Palestinians from their homeland, even if the latter had indicated that they will collaborate and negotiate for equitable outcomes, with the dominant Jewish antagonists (ibid, Pappé, I. p. 28,39).

The world wonders whether there can be an ultimate, definitive and equitable resolution to this on-going Israeli-Palestine conflict. Loss of life and property to all parties, especially the weaker Palestinians, is immense. With the constant incursions on the Palestinian villages to establish Israeli settlements, which essentially began 73 years ago in 1948, it can be objectively noted that Israel had continued its policy of occupation, invasions, and incursions.

As of 2021 Jewish settlers in the NEW Palestinian land totalled 27,000 Israelis. It is estimated that in the very near future that population will increase to 100,000 (NST Leader,13.10.2021, p.2). The United Nations (UN) it is noted, has passed innumerable resolutions against Israel, but none has been complied with (NST Leader, 16.3.2022, p.2). Questions have been raised as to whether Israel is an apartheid regime, judging from its long history of occupation coupled with atrocities against the mainly stone-throwing Palestinians acknowledged broadly by the international community as reflected in the UN resolutions.

Security is clearly the paramount consideration of Israel, being completely surrounded by the Arab states, and particularly, with the HAMAS (and FATAH) Palestinian organisations<sup>[5]</sup> carrying out attacks on Israel. The Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) had on its part continuously waged a campaign to establish a well-defined Palestinian state. Its efforts, having not borne the desired outcomes led to the formation of the more rigid and exacting organisations such as the Hamas, Hizballah, Islamic Jihad and others.

## **ANTISEMITISM, JUDAISM AND NATIONALISM**

Israel has been openly inviting Jews from around the world to migrate to Israel. They 'encouragingly' tell them that Israel is their 'home'. The implications and repercussions to the socio-economic-political climate of the original nations of residence of the migrating Jewish community, is hardly given any thought by Israel. There can well be considerable economic loss there from the vacuum left behind in the trades and businesses previously undertaken by the Jews.

In quiet complicity with British colonial overlords in the Middle East region in 1948, after its United

Nations' sanctioned formation, Israel had expelled 750,000 Palestinians from their lands and homes to provide for the exodus of European Jews who, it is acknowledged, were inhumanely persecuted, to be settled on Palestinian land. **Today, after the expulsion of more Palestinians, it is estimated that around five million Palestinians are languishing in refugee camps outside their original homeland.**

The incongruous and apparently inharmonious Israel's Law of Return it has enacted, clearly appears to apply to ONLY Jews. Not to Palestinians to be part of the mother land they were born in. The Jerusalem Post, a world established news organisation, says that 100,000 out of a identified 200,000 Jews in Ukraine mainly, can soon become Israeli citizens.

Recriminations from the contending parties that Israel has been involved in a campaign of apartheidism, and the Israelis accusing their adversary as anti-semitic. As seen from the REAL and continuous expansion of land settlements, any criticism of Israel, does not warrant an accusation of antisemitism to be cast on the Palestinians in entirety. This is because antisemitism can be viewed as the utter hate, bigotry and base regard held for the Jews. Nevertheless, Palestinians have expressed their willingness to 'co-exist' with the Israelis in a two-state-administration scenario.

The Leader (newspaper editorial) (NST, 22.3.2022, p.2) poses- has Israel a long-term and grand plan to Judaise everything in Palestine? It quotes the renowned British newspaper, 'The Guardian', a rare acknowledgement by the British media of the plight of the Palestinians, that it is part of "the quest for a greater Israel. Settler ideology has made the sanctity of the land a central tenet and effectively turned the Palestinians into aliens on their own soil". The Jewish homeland project is observed to be an open, uninhibited Israeli venture today, with the World Zionist Organisation (WZO) actively helping to settle the influx of Jews from Russia, the Commonwealth of Independent States and Ukraine. All this does not obscure the Israeli illegal settler colonialism policy. These **settlements in occupied Palestinian lands have been deemed illegal under international law** (ibid, p.2; NST Leader, 23.3.2022, p.2)

This **Jewish settler colonialism policy** is borne of a long and real history of insecurity and persecution. In response then to this past, the Jews have developed a strong streak of an aggressive nationalism. The colonial constructed reality given to them is feared will collapse, as increased opposition and retaliation from the dispossessed Palestinians keeps mounting.

Palestinians, on their part, consider themselves as a people with national links to their ancestral homeland which the Jews are denying them of their rightful Palestinian peoplehood. Historically, it is relevant that the Palestinians and their elders have lived in the present Israel-Palestine region for many centuries, if not many millennia. The Jews, it is also a known fact, migrated to the above land from Europe and Arab countries. This was part of a colonial programme sanctioned by the Western, war-victorious countries (Khalidi, Rashid. 2020, pp. 246,7).

The **nationalistic fervour of the Palestinians is based on their claim and stand that they are indigenous peoples of the land**, while the Jews, having immigrated to it mainly in the twentieth century from Europe, are seen as settlers.

The two communities continue to mutually deny each other's national existence, having both domiciled in the land **for centuries**.

**To resolve the impasse, total equality** under the UN charter for both the peoples, can be the only reasonable and meaningful way forward (ibid). The Palestinian BDS (Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions) movement does not explicitly call for the demise of the State of Israel. However, equality and the 'right of return' when accorded to the Palestinians, especially to those who were expelled from their lands after the 1948 War, would involve millions of Palestinian refugees and their descendants. They will then outnumber the Israelis

([www.heyalma.com/Israel...](http://www.heyalma.com/Israel...)).

The question of the demographics of the land tilting towards the Palestinians can be a factor for Israel to unfortunately adopt a introvertive outlook in the resolution of the conflict.

The socio-political context in the region concerned is clearly not one that fits into the probable position put forward by the anthropologist, Ernest Gellner. As he observes, "...Nations as a natural, God-given way...as an inherent ... political destiny, are a myth. ...nationalism which sometimes takes pre-existing cultures and turns them into nations, sometimes invents them, and often obliterates pre-existing cultures" (Khalidi, R. 2020, p.246). With the Palestinians and Israelis, **history** shows that they are clearly **two peoples and cultures** which have existed and 'progressed' from time immemorial, up to the present times. **Their existence FOR NATIONHOOD DE JURE is of RIGHT.**

## FORGING A COMMON PEACE.

As the state of Israel appears to be the distinctive antagonist entity in the Middle East conflict, and being a legal state under the United Nations, its survival is undeniable in the geo-political realities of today. With a clear new commitment to hold on to its official territory, minus the illegal land settlements, it needs to physically and humanely- in offering the fruits of its world-renowned technological achievements to its Arabic neighbours particularly, can continue to project itself resolutely for its survival, against any form of destructive jihad.

Israel can stand as a legitimate state and a free society, based on humane values and the principles of human rights. This it needs to project and exemplify, not just promote, to the global society.

The stark history of the Jewish past and the wanton persecution they had endured as history tells us, is a historical fact that all states, particularly the Muslim-pro-Arab leaning ones, need to come to terms with in our common global existence today. Hypocrisy- recognising Israel as a growing world nuclear power on one hand, and on another, advocating its demise on political-religious grounds, needs to be eliminated as a/the God of any faith cannot be seen to accept the latter on simple humanitarian and logical grounds. An openness central to a geo-political pragmatism with the interests of the national citizens at heart unreservedly upheld by state political leaders enabling nations to work collectively to obtain the best from one another, needs to be the measured modus operandi of all societies.

It can be vehemently noted that, "**The Jews were EXORCISED from Germany (in the middle twentieth century) because they epitomised the rootlessness of modern times and the ultimate historical origins embedded in the Bible**". The Nazis adopted a policy of anti-Judaism, and with utter demagoguery went on to build "... a (new) racial civilisation by extinguishing the authority of the Jews ... The Nazi notions of race and of inferior groups who had no right to live belonged in the tradition of European colonialism..." (Confino, A. 2014. pp.11,129). This was then the beginnings of the Nazi Holocaust that mankind can attempt to understand further for its unparalleled inhumane and barbaric nature, (Johnson, P. 1987, pp.510-512). "Hitler's persecution of the Jews, (an undeniable historical fact), was the last in the series of catastrophes" and massacres of the Jews, "... which helped to make the Zionist state" (ibid, p.520). Global recognition as such, as reflected by the United Nations Charter granting Israel its constituent and integrant state existence (UN General Assembly Resolution 181, commonly known as the UN Partition Plan for Palestine, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israel\\_and\\_the\\_United...](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israel_and_the_United...)), simply requires mankind to accept its accorded legal and RIGHTFUL place in the global society, as enjoyed by all others generally.

The **two-state approach** should be pursued vigorously. The Israeli position has largely been that Palestinians should have the right to return to Palestinian territory if a two-state solution is achieved. Israel and its allies (the United States and a few European nations) have also criticized the U.N. and Arab

countries for not integrating these refugees. This has led to pressure being directed on Israel for the refugee problem. The Israeli government points out that they absorbed 600,000 Jews from Arab countries after 1948, many of whom were pressured to leave and/or were forced to abandon property and leave valuables behind, from Arab territories and whose descendants now number in the millions ([www.heyalma.com/israel/guide/.....](http://www.heyalma.com/israel/guide/.....), Solutions,...).

The **'right to return'** of Arab and Palestinian emigrants needs to be undertaken seriously by the powerful Israel government. For the factors discussed above, regarding its security and future as a sovereign state, Israel needs to fall back to its founding ideals. Its founding fathers, apart from the insular Zionists, past and present, believed, it is noted, that Israel as their new country should embody nationalism, justice and morality. There are Israelis today who believe that Israel can exist side by side with a Palestinian state.

The position of the mutually regarded holy city of Jerusalem can be resolved peaceably, allowing both communities and others from every part of the world to access it, the city being governed by both Israelis and Palestinians. Modern technology can be fully utilised to well ensure good security for all parties involved. The underlying principle of just rule and governance needs to be simply spiritual.

As it is said that Israel has had a historical mission to be "a light unto the nations", as in the words of the prophet Isaiah of its holy Book, the government has to revisit its origins as a state proclaimed to be birthed with divinity, and work towards,

1. **Israeli state security**, and
2. **for their Palestinian brothers to have a dignified and stately livelihood**. It is commonly noted that the Palestinians today live in demeaning and degrading conditions. Fareed Zakaria (Washington Post, May 20, 2021, Opinion: The only way to solve the Israeli-Palestine problem), emphasises that Israel has no substantive reason today to fear for its survival. Its economy, technological industry and security forces are top notch in the region, compounded by its position as being the only nuclear power in the Arab region. The Arab nations, Palestine and Israel itself today can further positivise the opportunity that presents itself following that the Arab Emirates and Bahrain have normalised relations with the once regarded life-enemy, Israel, and also that major nations such as Russia and India look favourably upon her. As a liberal democracy, Israel can further advance on the trajectory of simple morality, establishing a legacy for its future generations that not only security was paramount but together with it, justice for all peoples it cohabited the land with.

## IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The **'power of the gun'** today subtly underlies and rules international deliberations and dialogue. As discussed in this paper, international bodies with their existing global manifestos, and all well-meaning nations NEED to find ways to institute RIGHT actions for all occasions and for all times.

Minority and marginalised groups live in continuous trepidation all over the world, considering how physical and coercive powers appear to be constantly employed to 'bring people into line'. Today, it is vividly seen that a small nation, Ukraine, can be attacked without any clear provocation on its part, by a 'Goliath' world power, Russia. The geopolitics in this war involving the opposing powers of the above protagonist, be that as they be, do not warrant the slaughter of Ukrainian civilians. Positive lessons so clearly seen from the above for minority communities, in China, Myanmar, Palestine, Ethiopia, Sudan, Ukraine, Malaysia, Indonesia, Kenya, Yemen, Kashmir, Sri Lanka and other regions, are significant in the pursuit of global peace, **by rational, truly peace-minded individuals** recognised by the world community.

There can clearly be no possibility of peace for the peoples in the Israeli-Palestine region without a **humanely aspired sense of co-existence** for mutual well-being.

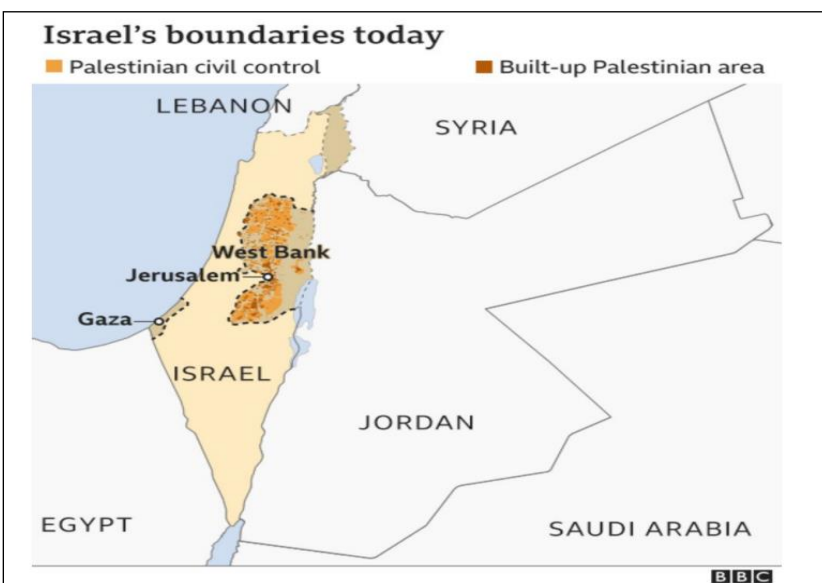
Israel needs to return to its **pre-1967 borders**, without the Arab lands annexed after the 1967 war, which were seen as the officially sanctioned and marked areas of influence and control of the two contending peoples, as Barrack Obama, as the then President of the United States had aptly proposed and succinctly declared. Some swapping of territory to account for settlements that had taken root since the war, was to be mutually worked out. This would have eradicated or minimised the constant fears of encroachment, expulsion and human loss of life by the Palestinians. Obama had emphasised that Israel’s insistence on building new housing settlements on Palestine land was problematic, and that “... the dream of a Jewish and democratic state cannot be fulfilled with occupation” (Cohen, Tom. permanent CNN, 20.5.2011).

Together with the above issue being deliberated, the Oslo Agreement of 1993 can be revisited, for an equitable resolution of the outstanding and trying issues- of **the right of return of Palestinian immigrants; Jerusalem; and Israeli settlements.**

**ISRAEL-PALESTINEPRE-1967BORDERS**



Source: [www.https://the Atlantic.com>archive>2011/05> what Obama me by ‘1967 lines’...](https://the Atlantic.com>archive>2011/05> what Obama me by ‘1967 lines’...)



Source: <https://www.google.com/search?q=map+israel%27s+borders+today&rlz=1C1RLNSenMY986 MY986&oq=map&aqs>

The UN needs to be unreservedly committed in situations where one needs to **‘call a spade, a spade’**. Its structure and terms of reference **MUST** be restudied and enhanced. One possible way will be for the larger group of non-veto powered members to find ways to go on the offensive to curtail the powers of the nuclear powered, veto-vote nations, once and for all. **ECONOMIC AND TRADE COLLABORATION** avenues could necessarily be explored to stop the big powers from employing ‘bullying’ tactics and bring them ‘to their senses’, in dealing with crucial world issues which **IMPACT** vast sections of human beings.

The 30-year-old **Public Committee Against Torture (PCATI)**, in Israel itself, has recently finally decided to refer the government to the **International Criminal Court (ICC)**, to investigate Israel’s treatment of the Palestinians. There have been serious accusations of apartheid and war crimes against Israel, for the poor human rights accorded to the Palestinians for the last few decades.

The **Rome Statute** that created the ICC after second world war, is claimed by the Israel western, supposedly “civilised” nation apologists, that it cannot adjudicate Israel as the latter is not a party to the **Rome Statute** [6]. The recent report by the **United Nations Human Rights Council’s (UNHCR)** that has clearly accused Israel for the conflict and the illegal settlements built, and being built regularly, on Palestinian land, and particularly on the basis of the fact that the ICC has acknowledged that Palestine is a party to it, thence, Israel can be charged and be asked to account for its actions, and make reparations for the Palestinians (The Leader, 12.6.2022, p. 4).

**There can be only ‘one colour’ to truth anywhere in the world, for humanity to truly go forward.**

The apathetic regard for the deleterious state of affairs of the Palestinians by the Israeli government exposes the double standards and the warped stand held by the western powers and others, particularly with regards the **principles of human rights**. This is as juxtaposed to the active attention given to the current Ukrainian war and the sufferings being endured by the Ukrainian people, and the strong condemnation of the Russian state. The support for the existential situation of Palestinians, and censure of the Israeli state is strikingly, morally diminished.

It can be noted at this juncture that more than a dozen **Arab states** under the aegis of the United States government under the leadership of President George W. Bush in 2007, attempted peace talks to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian crisis. It failed because Israeli did not stop building settlements in Palestinian land, and also because of the conflict and factionalism among the Palestinians. The further role the Arab states can further play for the **common good of the people in the Middle East** is promising.

The Palestinian question and the politicisation of the lives of other **minorities anywhere** in the world, clearly reflect unconscionable and unjust conduct of elected leaders, and they present instructive lessons for national governments and minority citizens of the countries involved, to ensure pressure is put on their political representatives to ascertain that **their progenies’ constitutional and democratic rights** are not jeopardised and abused (Mohammed Rafik Mhawesh. 2022).

If man is seen to generally aspire to want to be just happy, to attain to a state of well-being, it basically can be said to reflect the “...**deeper yearning (of one’s) soul, for a balanced, serene and orderly life**” (Muhammad S. B. 2022, p. 12). Is this in any reasonable measure, realisable fully by the people of Palestine primarily? The constant, persecuted and tense daily life in the Israeli-Palestine region, demands of all mankind to help, in any constructive way possible, to bring life-giving, simple stability to the region and its peoples.

Too often today it is manifested that the above much aspired social-political scenario by a still large group of the global population, is persistently thwarted by wanton falsehoods motivated by movements driven by waves of **populism and fundamentalism**. The erosion of **democratic principles and institutions** for

reasoned debate, appears to be often replaced by “... the wisdom of the crowd”, cushioned by today’s widely **prevalent media-centric culture** (Kakutani, M. 2018, pp.14,18,23). This has impacted the Middle East region, as it has Asian countries with minorities, bringing to the fore the all-embracing role of elected representatives of diverse populations and efforts to bring back **truth and the unequivocal sense of humanism**, together with its attendant **democratic principles**, to the **DIALOGUE TABLE**, undertaken *passionately and truly earnestly* by the parties involved and the international community.

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## FOOT NOTES

[1] The writer is a post-graduate alumnus of Universiti Utara Malaysia, Sintok, Kedah DA, Malaysia.

[2] Although much of Aristotle's work was lost to Western Philosophy after the fall of the Roman Empire, the texts were reintroduced into the West by medieval Islamic scholars like Averroes and Maimonides ...It became the dominant philosophic influence on Scholasticism and Thomism in the early Middle Ages in Europe. It's basically that scholasticism began as medieval philosophy taught in the Catholic (and only) universities in Europe. After the 13th century and the rise of Aquinas shortly after, the study of Thomas's writings began to be much more widely practiced in Dominican circles. Scholasticism continued in Europe without Aquinas's writings, but it became a very derogatory term for the branches of theology that had nothing to do with everyday life. The most famous example of criticism against scholasticism is debating "how many angels could dance on the head of a pin." It died shortly before the Protestant Rebellion, for the most part. Thomism, meanwhile, has become almost its own school of philosophy. It's studied mainly by the Dominican order and those associated with it and it focuses almost exclusively on the writings of Aquinas, most notably the Summa Theologiae. If you hear of modern Catholic philosophers, if they're truly orthodox, 80+% of them are probably Thomists. The Thomistic school relies heavily upon Aristotelian philosophy and logic and is generally very academic and difficult to understand for the average person (Tony Powers. <https://www.quora.com/What-is-the-difference-between-Scholasticism-and-Thomism>).

[3] Zionism is Israel's national ideology. Zionists believe Judaism is a nationality as well as a religion, and that Jews deserve their own state in their **ancestral homeland, Israel**, in the same way the French people deserve France or the Chinese people should have China. It's what brought Jews back to Israel in the first place, and also at the heart of what concerns Arabs and Palestinians about the Israeli state.

Jews often trace their nationhood back to the biblical kingdoms of David and Solomon, circa 950 BC. Modern Zionism, building on the longstanding Jewish yearning for a "return to Zion," began in the 19th century — right about the time that generally secular nationalism started to rise in Europe.

A secular Austrian-Jewish journalist, **Theodor Herzl**, was the first to turn rumblings of **Jewish nationalism**, into an international movement around 1896.

Herzl witnessed brutal **European anti-Semitism** first hand, and became convinced the Jewish people could



never survive outside of a country of their own. He wrote **essays** and **organized** meetings that spurred mass Jewish emigration from Europe to what's now Israel/Palestine. **Before Herzl, about 20,000 Jews lived there; by the time Adolf Hitler came to power in Germany, the number was about eight times that.**

Though Zionists all agree that Israel should exist, they've long disagreed on what its government should look like. In the most general terms, the Zionist left, which dominated the country's politics until the late 1970s, is inclined to trade Israeli-controlled land for **peace with Arab nations**, wants more government intervention in the economy, and prefers a secular government over a religious one. The Zionist right, which currently enjoys commanding positions in the Israeli government and popular opinion, tends to be more sceptical of "land-for-peace" deals, standing for more economic libertarian policies, and is more comfortable **mixing religion and politics.**

**Arabs and Palestinians commonly oppose Zionism**, as this explicitly Jewish character of the Israeli state means that Jews have privileges that others don't. For instance, any Jew anywhere in the world **can become an Israeli citizen** (a right not extended to any others). Arabs, then, often see Zionism as a species of **colonialism and racism aimed at appropriating Palestinian land and systematically disenfranchising the Palestinians** that remain. Arab states actually pushed through a UN General Assembly resolution labelling Zionism "a form of racism and racial discrimination" in 1975, though it was **repealed 16 years later.**

The above position of the UN can go to show the quality of the weight of justice administered by the above international body, and the real influence of some nations closely linked with Israel. (Adapted from VOX News, What Is Zionism? by Zack Beauchamp@zackbeauchampzack@vox.comzack@vox.com May 14, 2018, 10:20 am).

[4] The land which would become Israel was for centuries part of the Turkish-ruled Ottoman Empire. After World War One and the collapse of the empire, territory known as Palestine – the portion of which west of the river Jordan was also known as the land of Israel by Jews – was marked out and assigned to Britain to administer by the victorious allied powers (soon after endorsed by the League of Nations). The terms of the mandate entrusted Britain with establishing in Palestine "a national home for the Jewish people", so long as doing so did not prejudice the civil and religious rights of non-Jewish communities there.

[5] **Hamas** is the Arabic acronym for the Islamic Resistance Movement, originating in 1988 after the first **Palestinian Intifada**, or uprising against Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. **Its charter desires the destruction of Israel.**

The PLO is regarded as an umbrella political organization representing the world's Palestinians, that is, the Arabs and their descendants who had lived in the then mandated Palestine before the creation of the State of Israel in 1948. It was formed in 1964 to centralise the leadership of various Palestinian groups that were then operating as clandestine resistance movements. After the Six-Day War in 1967, it became a crucial organization for the determination of the Palestinians' future. It started to engage in a protracted guerilla warfare with Israel up to the 1990s. It transformed into a secular body and began negotiations with Israel, without its Charter giving a particular emphasis to Islam and seeking a peaceful resolution to the conflict. This saw the rise of splinter movements such the Hamas, Fatah, Islamic Jihad and others claiming a direct link with the Koran, emphasizing that the Islamic nature of Palestine and its basis and centrality to the religion of Abraham, was the ordained direction of Palestine (Spencer, R. 2019, p.137; 2:130, Koran; www.britannica.com/Palestine).

[6] The idea of a system of international criminal justice re-emerged after the end of the Cold War. Attempts for its formation had essentially been mooted with the manifestation of the inhuman atrocities witnessed that were committed by man against man. However, while negotiations on the ICC Statute were underway at the

United Nations, the world was witnessing the commission of heinous crimes in the territory of the former Yugoslavia and in Rwanda. In response to these atrocities, the United Nations Security Council established an ad hoc tribunal for each of these situations. These events undoubtedly had a most significant impact on the decision to convene the conference which established the ICC in Rome in the summer of 1998([chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglefindmkaj/https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/Publications/understanding-the-icc.pdf](https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/Publications/understanding-the-icc.pdf)).