

# 4th SPD

*Novice  
General  
Assembly*



**TOPICS:** The Lasting Effects of British Decolonization in Palestine

**CHAIRS:** Christian Riethmiller, Heather O'Brien

*LAIMUN XXVIII*

*December 3-4*

# LAIMUN XXVIII

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**LAIMUN XXVIII**

*December 3-4*

## Letter from the Secretaries-General

Dear Delegates,

On behalf of our entire staff, it is our pleasure to welcome you to Session XXVIII of the Los Angeles Invitational Model United Nations (LAIMUN) conference. LAIMUN XXVIII will take place on Saturday, December 3 and Sunday, December 4 of 2022 at the Mira Costa High School (MCHS) campus.

Our staff, composed of over 100 MCHS students, has been working tirelessly to make your debate experience the best it can be. You will find your dais members to be knowledgeable about the issues being debated and MUN procedure. We pride ourselves in hosting a conference that is educational and engaging, and we hope you take advantage of that as you prepare and debate.

At LAIMUN, we value thorough research and preparation. We ask that delegates write position papers following [these directions](#). The deadline to submit position papers to be considered for Committee and Research Awards is Friday, November 25 at 11:59 PM PT. The deadline to submit to be considered for Committee Awards is Thursday, December 1 at 11:59 PM PT.

We also encourage all delegates to read the [LAIMUN Rules of Procedure](#) for conference-specific information and as a reminder of points and motions that can be made during committee.

Feel free to reach out to our staff with any questions or concerns you may have. Delegates can find their chairs' contact information next to their committee profile and the Secretariat's email addresses on the staff page. Any member of the LAIMUN staff will be happy to assist you.

We look forward to seeing you in December!

Sincerely,

Allyssa Lessinger and Brady Stephens  
Secretaries-General, LAIMUN XXVIII  
[secretarygeneral@mchsmun.org](mailto:secretarygeneral@mchsmun.org)



## Introduction to the USG

Hi Delegates! My name is Tucker and I'm the Under-Secretary General of General Assembly committees. This is my fourth year in the Mira Costa Model UN program and I am ecstatic to welcome you all to LAIMUN XXVIII.

I'm so excited to see various diplomatic strategies in committee regarding the pressing issues we encounter on a global scale. Our chairs will hold the delegates to high standards of research, diplomacy, speeches, and solutions.

At LAIMUN, we have a strict no pre-written resolutions policy—resolutions can only be worked on at your chair's discretion. Please verify that your work is authentic to ensure all delegates experience a fair and accurate simulation of a United Nations conference.

The Mira Costa Model UN program has provided me with incredible opportunities and lasting memories; I hope that LAIMUN XXVIII will be a memorable experience for you as well! Mira Costa MUN provides a profound opportunity for delegates to gain knowledge, confidence, speaking skills, and most importantly, a new understanding of international relations and current events. All LAIMUN XXVIII staff have worked hard to provide the best experience for everyone in attendance and we wish you the best of luck throughout your preparation!

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to [GA@mchsmun.org](mailto:GA@mchsmun.org) or other members of the Secretariat. I can't wait to see you in December!

Regards,

Allyssa Lessinger and Brady Stephens  
Secretaries-General

Tucker Gauss  
Under-Secretary General

## Introduction to the Dias

Hello Delegates! My name is Christian Riethmiller, and I am very excited to be your co-chair for 4th SPD at LAIMUN XXVIII. I am currently a senior at Mira Costa High School, and this is my fourth year in the Model UN program. I also participate in other school activities outside of MUN. I am the President of the Young Republicans Club here at Mira Costa, and I am also on the swim team. I also love watching sports, such as baseball, football, and basketball (I prefer college basketball over the NBA, however). My favorite teams are the Baltimore Orioles (MLB) and the Carolina Panthers (NFL). In my free time, I enjoy hanging out with friends, going to the beach, spending time with my family, and more.

As I previously stated, this is my fourth year in the MUN program, and I have enjoyed the experience so much. I have debated at several different local conferences, including Edison, Surf City, and more. I also traveled to New York City earlier this year to compete in the NHSMUN conference, which was so much fun. This year, I'm a TA for the Intro to MUN class here at Costa. This means that I get to pass down all the tools that I have picked up throughout my time in the MUN program to the freshmen. I have loved the experience so far, and can't wait to continue working with the new generation of Mira Costa MUN. Overall, Model UN has been an incredibly fun and rewarding experience, as I have picked up many helpful skills throughout my time in the program, such as public speaking, diplomacy, and more.

I am so excited to be your co-chair at LAIMUN this year, and I can't wait to meet all of you. I look forward to a great debate!

Sincerely,

Christian Riethmiller

Hello Delegates! My name is Heather O'Brien and I am a sophomore at Mira Costa. I have been in the MUN program since I was a freshman. I have gone to multiple outside conferences, one of which is Surf City. I look forward to chairing this and hearing all the solutions!

Outside of MUN I swim on a club team, Beach Cities Swimming, I am part of the ASL club on campus, Mock Trial Club, and volunteer with "Clean the Beach". Outside of swimming I also do water polo and Volleyball. I enjoy going to the beach and participating in Junior Lifeguards during the summer, which I went to Nationals for. I was a part of the debate club in middle school, and enjoy having polite arguments over relevant topics. I enjoy going to the beach, hanging out with friends, traveling, and reading.

In this debate I am looking forward to a wide range of new solutions and point of views on the problems. I would like to see many subtopics on the solutions and have thought out backups or compromises to other countries' policies. I would like to stay on topic, and see solutions to the problem at hand. I look forward to seeing all of you in person and hearing your ideas. I hope I can help you not only perform at this conference but enjoy it as well. I urge you all to prepare for debate, and I can't wait to see you all in person.

All the best,

Heather O'Brien

## Committee Description

The United Nations General Assembly's Fourth Committee, (also known as the Special Political and Decolonization Committee, SPECPOL, or 4th SPD) is one of the six principal committees of the UN General Assembly. SPECPOL includes every UN member nation. Created in 1949, the Fourth Committee was originally mandated to be responsible for decolonization related issues. The Fourth Committee was combined with the Special Political Committee, the seventh principal committee, in 1993 to form the Special Political and Decolonization Committee.<sup>1</sup>

Currently, the main focus of the 4th SPD is to address a wide array of political issues. Specifically, it addresses decolonization, political refugees, especially Palestinian refugees with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and political conflicts, such as the Report of the Special Committee on Israeli Practices.<sup>2</sup> SPD also deals with issues such as the conflict-free uses of space and mine action. This committee additionally reviews the articles regarding the University of Peace triennially and biennially.

The purpose of this committee is to create resolutions that ensure a country's national sovereignty is respected and upheld. Delegates in this committee are able to suggest the creation of subsidiary bodies to review issues that do not fall under the mandates of other General Assembly committees. Debate should reflect the objectives of the Fourth Special Political and Decolonization committee and the expectation of supporting countries' territorial jurisdiction.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/47/233](https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/47/233)

<sup>2</sup>United Nations, "United Nations General Assembly." <https://www.un.org/en/ga/fourth/>.

## Topic A: The Lasting Effects of British Decolonization in Palestine

### I. Background

Much of the Middle East's history revolves around the small region of land known as Palestine. Palestine's history has been plagued by frequent violence and conflict, due to its extreme significance to several major global religions, as well as its unique regional location<sup>3</sup>. The word "Palestine" comes from the Greek word, *Philistia*, which dates back to several Greek writers' descriptions of the region. Ever since the Ottoman Empire collapsed during the First World War, Palestine generally referred to the geographic region located between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. Today, much of this land is considered to be a part of Israel. Theoretically, Palestine currently includes the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. However, control over this particular region is a controversial and complex subject.

There is no official global consensus for Palestine's borders, and many territories within the region have been occupied by Israelis for years. Over one hundred and thirty-five members of the United Nations currently recognize Palestine as an independent state. However, other countries, such as Israel and the United States, do not make this distinction. The Ottoman Empire ruled much of the region from about 1517 to 1917. After the First World War ended in 1918, the British took control over the region. The League of Nations then issued a document granting

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<sup>3</sup> Al Jazeera. "Uptick in Israeli-Palestinian Violence Explained in 600 Words." *Israel-Palestine Conflict News* | *Al Jazeera*, Al Jazeera, 14 Apr. 2022, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/4/14/whats-behind-the-uptick-in-israeli-palestinian-violence>.

Britain administrative control over the region, which included provisions for establishing a Jewish national homeland in Palestine, which came into effect in the year of 1923. After over two decades of British rule, the United Nations proposed a plan in which the Palestinian territory would be split into two sections, an independent Arab state and an independent Jewish state. The proposition also stated that Jerusalem would become an international territory, rather than an independent Jewish or Arab capital. The plan was welcomed by Jewish leaders, but many Palestinian Arabs, some of whom had been resisting the Zionist movement as well as British control over the region, strongly opposed it. Palestinian Arabs argued that they represented most of the population within the region, and therefore they deserved more territory. They began to form volunteer armies and militant groups throughout the region. Less than a year after the plan for Palestinian partition was introduced, Britain withdrew itself from the region, and Israel declared itself to be an independent state. Arab militant groups immediately moved in to attempt to prevent the establishment of the Israeli state. What is known today as the 1948 Arab-Israeli War followed this, also involving the nations of Jordan, Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and Lebanon. The conflict came to an end in July of 1949, with Israel in control of over two-thirds of the former British Mandate, with Egypt taking control of the Gaza Strip and Jordan taking control of the West Bank. The war marked the beginning of a new chapter in the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians, which has now evolved into a territorial contest tangled with diplomatic, political, and economic issues.

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was formed in 1964, with the purpose of establishing a Palestinian Arab state on the land that had previously been ruled by Britain. In

April of 1967, clashes between the Israelis and the Palestinians worsened after Israel and Syria engaged in a military battle which resulted in the destruction of six Syrian fighter jets. In the wake of the conflict, Egypt was provided intelligence by the Soviet Union to its northern border with Syria, in order to prepare its military for a full-scale invasion. The information was false, but it prompted Egypt's President Gamal Abdel Nasser to advance the Egyptian military into the Sinai Peninsula, where they expelled a United Nations peacekeeping force that had, for over a decade, guarded the border with Israel<sup>4</sup>. Subsequently, Israel Defense Forces launched an aerial attack against Egypt on June 5th, 1967. The conflict came to an end with both nations claiming that they had acted in self-defense. This series of events came to be known as the Six-Day War, and it resulted in major territorial gains for Israel. By the time the conflict had ended, Israel had seized control of the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, the Sinai Peninsula, and the Golan Heights.

In the years following the Six-Day War, Palestinian anger and frustration began to build up over the Israeli occupation of Gaza and the West Bank. In the year of 2006, a Sunni Islamist militant group, known as Hamas, won the legislative elections in Palestine. In 2007, Hamas defeated Fatah, the political group that had control over the PLO, in a battle for Gaza. Many countries began to recognize Hamas as a terrorist organization, and the group engaged in several bloody wars with Israel in the following years. The conflict continues to this day, with Israelis and Palestinians still in dispute over territory and borders.

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<sup>4</sup> "First United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF I) - Background (Summary)." *United Nations*, United Nations, <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/mission/past/unef1backgr1.html>.

## II. UN Involvement

The United Nations has played an extensive role in the history of Palestine. The issue was turned over to the UN by the United Kingdom in 1947. The UN initially proposed terminating the Mandate and partitioning Palestine into two separate states, one Jewish and one Palestinian Arab<sup>5</sup>. This proposition also included the idea of internationalizing Jerusalem. One of the two states then proceeded to proclaim its independence as Israel, and it expanded its territory by over seventy-seven percent throughout the 1948 war involving several neighboring Arab states. Over half of the Palestinian Arab population subsequently fled the region, or were expelled. Egypt and Jordan took control of the rest of the territory that had been assigned to the Arab State by Resolution 181.

In Resolution 242, the Security Council attempted to create a plan for lasting peace between the states, including an Israeli withdrawal from the territories that had been occupied throughout the conflict, the end of all states of belligerency, and a fair settlement regarding the refugee crisis. Following Resolution 338 by the Security Council (which called for peace negotiations between all parties involved in the conflict), the Yom Kippur War broke out in the year of 1973. In 1974, the inviolable rights of the Palestinian people were reaffirmed by the General Assembly. The General Assembly subsequently established the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, and granted the status of observer to the PLO in the Assembly and in UN conferences.

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<sup>5</sup> “United Nations Resolution 181.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., <https://www.britannica.com/topic/United-Nations-Resolution-181>.

In the year of 1991, a peace conference was held in Madrid with the objective of reaching a peaceful settlement between the Israelis and the Palestinians through the process of direct negotiations. These negotiations were to be focused on several issues within the conflict, such as refugees, water, the environment, the economy, and more. After a series of negotiations between the two groups, a mutual consensus was reached which recognized the Government of Israel and the PLO, the representative of the Palestinian people, and the 1993 signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements, as well as several subsequent agreements on implementation, leading to the partial withdrawal of Israeli forces, the establishment of an effective administration in the regional areas under Palestinian self-rule, the partial release of prisoners, and the elections to the Palestinian Council and the Presidency of the Palestinian Authority.

### **III. Topics to Consider:**

#### *A. Permanent Settlement*

The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, as well as other legislative bodies within the United Nations, has consistently supported all international efforts that have been aimed at reaching peaceful settlements between the Jewish and Arab states. However, despite decades of conflict and negotiation, there is still a dispute over the control of the Palestinian territory. The conflict remains violent and hostile to this day, with missile strikes and other attacks<sup>6</sup> often occurring between the Israelis and the Palestinians. One

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<sup>6</sup> “Conflict with Israel.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Hamas/Conflict-with-Israel>.

key issue that must be discussed in committee is the creation of a permanent and peaceful settlement between the Israelis and the Palestinians. This could include negotiations regarding peace treaties, border establishments, territorial agreements, and more.

*B. Palestinian Refugees*

One significantly pressing aspect of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the question of Palestinian refugees. Despite various refugee resettlement and compensation initiatives over the years, as well as the tireless work done by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in providing care and assistance for the refugees, the issue is still very relevant. Currently, there are over seven million Palestinian refugees scattered all across the globe<sup>7</sup>. The extreme vulnerability of these refugees, as well as the appalling conditions that they face, it is glaringly clear that the issue requires a lasting and just solution founded on the principles of international law, drawing lessons from other examples of successful conflict resolutions throughout history.

*C. Water Resources*

An extremely pressing and widely disregarded issue within the Palestine situation is the shortage of clean water. Pollution in Palestine caused by rising seawater and raw sewage makes ninety percent of Gaza's water undrinkable. Close to ten percent of Palestinians living in the

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<sup>7</sup> "Palestinian Refugees and the Right of Return." *American Friends Service Committee*, 1 Sept. 2022, <https://www.afsc.org/resource/palestinian-refugees-and-right-return>.

West Bank do not have access to piped potable water systems. Palestinian water networks are also frequently destroyed during periods of armed conflict, causing dire droughts that leave millions of people without access to water. The problem is also worsened by poor infrastructure and leaking pipes. It is very clear that nonpartisan action must be taken in order to provide aid to the Palestinian people in regards to the water crisis, as it is a severe and pressing human rights issue that has been further exacerbated by the long-lasting territorial conflict. It is imperative that this issue is discussed and combatted in committee, as the lives of millions of Palestinians are dependent on a solution to the crisis.

#### **IV. Case Study**

On May 10th, 2021, a major outbreak of violence began between the Israelis and the Palestinians. The conflict began when Hamas issued Israel an ultimatum to withdraw its forces from both Sheikh Jarrah and the Temple Mount complex by 6pm. The ultimatum expired without a response from Israel, and both Hamas and PIJ subsequently launched rockets from the Gaza Strip into Israel, hitting a school and several Israeli residences. Israel then launched a missile striking campaign against Gaza. After ten days, over nine hundred and fifty targets had been destroyed, and at least two hundred and fifty-six Palestinians, including sixty-six children, were killed. At least thirteen Israelis were killed as well, including two children. Thousands of Palestinians were displaced as a result of the conflict. On May 13, a ceasefire was proposed by Hamas, but rejected by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. On June 16, fighting resumed when incendiary balloons were launched into Israel from Gaza, triggering the Israeli Air

Force to launch multiple airstrikes targeting the Gaza Strip. The violence and carnage caused by the 2021 conflict between Israel and Palestine was the result of a major escalation in tensions that had been building up over previous years, and was a gruesome wake up call for the international community to continue trying to resolve the long-lasting conflict.

**V. Guiding Questions:**

1. What can be done to alleviate the long-lasting political tensions between Israel and Palestine?
2. How can a more stable form of government be established within Palestine, after a history ridden with colonization and imperialism?
3. What can the international community do to help Palestinian refugees?
4. How can disagreements over borders be solved?
5. What role do surrounding nations play in the conflict?
6. How can food and water resources be provided to those in need because of the conflict?

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