
Competing Narratives of Injustice

What Led to 7 October 2023?

AI-Director: Eric Wassink (VidStance.com)
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Introduction

Why did the Hamas-led attacks of 7 October 2023, and Israel's subsequent military campaign in Gaza, produce such sharply different reactions across the world? For many, the answer begins not with the events of one day, but with the long and unresolved history that preceded them.

This article explores the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through the competing narratives of injustice that have shaped it. It traces demographic change in late Ottoman Palestine, the rise of Zionism and Palestinian national identity, and the decisive role of British policy during and after the First World War. Britain's commitments to Arab independence, its arrangements with other imperial powers and the Balfour Declaration created expectations that could not easily be reconciled. The resulting mistrust became one of the conflict's enduring legacies. At the centre of the article is 1948: remembered by Israelis as the creation of a Jewish state and refuge after centuries of persecution, and by Palestinians as the Nakba, the catastrophe of mass displacement. It also considers the displacement of Jewish communities from Arab countries, the territorial and political consequences of 1967, Palestinian political fragmentation, the rise of Hamas, the failures of the Oslo process and the worsening humanitarian conditions in Gaza.

The purpose is not to declare one historical narrative entirely right and the other entirely wrong. Rather, it is to show why the same events can carry radically different meanings. For Palestinians, the dominant memory is one of dispossession, foreign intervention, displacement and denied national rights. For Israelis, it is one of

persecution, insecurity, national revival and the need to protect a Jewish homeland.

Understanding these narratives does not justify violence against civilians by any party. It does, however, help explain why the conflict has proved so resistant to resolution. The article asks readers to look beyond immediate headlines and consider how historical trauma, competing claims to self-determination and the failure to recognise the other side's suffering continue to shape the present.

1. *The present as a mirror of the past*

The Hamas-led attacks of 7 October 2023 and Israel's subsequent military campaign in Gaza did not emerge from a historical vacuum. They were the latest and most devastating episode in a conflict shaped by competing national projects, displacement, foreign intervention and mutually reinforcing memories of injustice. To understand why the events of 7 October were interpreted so differently around the world, it is necessary to look at the history that preceded them.

For many Palestinians and their supporters, the conflict is fundamentally a colonial struggle in which an indigenous population was displaced and subjected to continuing systems of control. In this view, the establishment of Israel in 1948 was inseparable from the forced displacement of Palestinians and from the political decisions of Britain and other external powers. [20974][20975]

For many Israelis and their supporters, the central story is different. Israel is understood as a Jewish state created after centuries of persecution, culminating in the Holocaust, and as a necessary refuge in which Jews could exercise collective self-determination. From this perspective, the country has repeatedly faced existential threats and has a right to defend its population against armed organisations that seek to destroy it. [20978][20980]

These perspectives do not merely describe different interpretations of the same history. They shape the meaning attached to almost every major event: the arrival of Jewish immigrants, the British Mandate, the United Nations partition proposal, the 1948 war, the Palestinian refugee question, the occupation of territories after 1967, the Oslo peace process and the wars involving Hamas.

The conflict is therefore not only a dispute over territory. It is also a dispute over legitimacy, identity and historical responsibility. Each side tends to see its own violence as defensive or unavoidable and the other side's violence as evidence of an underlying project of domination or destruction.

The result is a political landscape in which historical trauma continues to influence contemporary judgments. The Palestinian memory of the Nakba—the mass displacement associated with the 1948 war—remains central to Palestinian identity and political demands. Israeli memory is shaped by persecution, antisemitism, the Holocaust, attacks on Jewish communities and the conviction that Jewish security cannot safely be entrusted to others. The displacement of Jews from Arab and Muslim-majority countries after the establishment of Israel is also part of the Israeli historical narrative. [20977][20978][20979]

The two histories are often presented as mutually exclusive. Yet both have become essential elements of the conflict's political reality.

Demographic change: a long-term transformation

The demographic development of Palestine is central to understanding the tensions that intensified during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. • In the nineteenth century, the population was predominantly Arab, with Muslims forming approximately 80 to 95 per cent of the population. The Jewish population was estimated at around 3 per cent, or approximately 25,000 people. [20988] • By 1914, the Jewish population had increased to approximately 85,000. [20990] • By 1936, it had grown to nearly 400,000, representing roughly one third of the total population. [20986] • In 1947, Jews constituted about one third of the population while owning less than 10 per cent of the land. [20985]

These figures were interpreted in sharply different ways. Zionists saw Jewish immigration as the return of a people to its historical homeland and as the creation of a secure national centre in response to European antisemitism. Many Arabs in Palestine experienced the same process as the rapid transformation of their country by an immigrant population supported by international political power.

The demographic shift therefore became more than a matter of population statistics. It became a question of who had the right to decide the future of the country. For the growing Jewish community, demographic growth represented the possibility of national revival and security. For the Arab majority, it increasingly appeared to threaten political control, land ownership and social continuity. The fact that the Jewish population had reached approximately one third of the total by 1936, while Jewish land ownership remained below 10 per cent in 1947, contributed to conflicting perceptions of both vulnerability and entitlement. [20985][20986]

The aftermath of the 1948 war transformed these figures once again. Approximately 700,000 Palestinian Arabs were displaced, either fleeing or being expelled, according

to the for this article selected video source material. This displacement is remembered by Palestinians as the Nakba, or catastrophe. [20987][20990]

At the same time, around 800,000 Jews were forced out of Arab countries, with most resettling in Israel. [20985] Israeli accounts use this history to emphasise that the establishment of Israel was followed not only by Palestinian displacement but also by the uprooting of Jewish communities across the region. Palestinian accounts generally reject the idea that the two experiences can simply be equated, pointing to differences in causes, circumstances and political consequences. [20977][20978][20979]

The demographic legacy remains visible in the contemporary population between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, where the source material describes approximately seven million Jews and seven million Arabs. [20993] The balance underlines why questions of political control, equality, self-determination and national identity remain so contested.

2. The rise of Zionism and the formation of national identities

Jewish historical narratives connect the Jewish people to the land through biblical history and the emergence of Hebrew tribes around the first millennium BC. [20985] This historical connection was given a modern political form by Zionism, which developed in late nineteenth-century Europe. Zionism sought to establish a national home for the Jewish people at a time when antisemitism and exclusion were widespread.

The First Zionist Congress, convened by Theodor Herzl in 1897, marked a significant stage in the organisation of the movement. [20991][20992] Jewish immigration to Palestine increased from the late nineteenth century and is identified in the source material as beginning in 1882. By the end of that century, approximately 30,000 Jews had settled in Palestine. [20991]

New Jewish communities were established, including Tel Aviv, founded in 1909. [20992] These settlements represented the practical construction of a Jewish national society, with its own institutions, economic networks and political aspirations.

For Palestinians, however, the same developments occurred within an existing Arab society. The population in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was predominantly Muslim and Christian Arab. [20986] A distinct Palestinian national

identity became more strongly consolidated in response to the growth of Zionism, British rule and the arrival of increasing numbers of Jewish immigrants.

This did not mean that Palestinian identity emerged in isolation from wider Arab politics. Palestinian political activity was affected by broader Arab nationalism and by relations with surrounding countries. Nevertheless, the developments of the Mandate period increasingly produced a specifically Palestinian political demand: that the Arab population of Palestine should determine the future of the country in which it formed the majority.

The emergence of two national movements created a structural conflict. Zionism sought a Jewish national home, while Palestinian Arab nationalism opposed the transfer of political power to a movement that it regarded as externally supported and increasingly dominant. Both movements understood the land as central to their collective identity, but they attached different meanings to history, immigration and sovereignty.

3. Britain's contradictory promises

The role of Britain during and after the First World War became one of the main sources of Palestinian mistrust. British policy was interpreted as inconsistent, imperial and driven more by strategic interests than by a stable political settlement. [20978][20979]

The onset of World War I saw the Ottoman Empire align with Germany, placing Palestine, Syria, and Iraq at the forefront of military strategies. Britain aimed not only to defeat Germany but also to dismantle the Ottoman Empire, which had ruled these regions for centuries. The Suez Canal, a crucial route for British trade and military logistics to India, became a focal point for British interests, influencing their decisions in the region throughout the war.

As Britain faced military setbacks, such as the disastrous Gallipoli campaign, they sought new alliances. British officials in Cairo approached Sharif Hussein of Mecca, offering support for Arab independence in exchange for an uprising against the Ottomans. This led to a series of letters exchanged between Hussein and British High Commissioner Henry McMahon, wherein Britain appeared to promise Arab independence across vast territories, although ambiguities regarding specific regions, including Palestine, left room for interpretation and future disputes.

Simultaneously, Britain was negotiating with France and Russia through the Sykes-Picot Agreement, which divided the Ottoman territories between the British and French empires. This secret pact directly contradicted the promises made to

Hussein, as it predetermined the fate of the region without Arab input. The existence of this agreement remained hidden until it was revealed by Russian revolutionaries, further complicating the situation for Britain.

In 1917, as the war reached a critical juncture with Russia on the verge of collapse, Britain sought to secure Jewish support for the Allied cause. Key Zionist figures, including Chaim Weizmann, advocated for a British declaration supporting a Jewish homeland in Palestine, arguing it would galvanize Jewish communities in America and Russia. This culminated in the Balfour Declaration, issued on November 2, 1917, which expressed Britain's support for establishing a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine, while also stating that the civil and religious rights of non-Jewish communities should not be harmed.

The declaration was significant not only for its content but also because Britain did not yet control Palestine, which was still under Ottoman rule. This promise to a minority population in a land promised to others set the stage for future conflicts. Following the war, the Allied powers incorporated the Balfour Declaration into international law, granting Britain a mandate over Palestine, which led to protests from Arab leaders who felt betrayed by the abandonment of McMahon's promises. [20988][20989]

The Declaration created expectations that could not easily be reconciled. Arab leaders understood British promises as pointing towards independence. Zionists viewed the Balfour Declaration as an important international recognition of the Jewish national project. For the Arab population of Palestine, the prospect that Britain might facilitate a Jewish national home raised the fear that an external power was preparing to determine the political future of the country without the consent of its Arab majority.

The British Mandate did not resolve these tensions. Instead, it became the framework within which Jewish immigration increased, Palestinian opposition intensified and the two national movements competed for political authority. British involvement was therefore remembered by Palestinians as a form of colonial intervention and by many others as an example of a power making promises to different parties while prioritising its own strategic interests. [20978][20979]

The colonial legacy also affected the wider region. The source material links Western involvement to the weakening of democratic development in the Middle East and argues that international law and institutions have often been subordinated to geopolitical interests. The United States is criticised in this context for lacking neutrality. [20974][20975][20976]

British policy shifted again in 1939. The White Paper restricted Jewish immigration and promised the creation of an Arab-majority state within ten years. [20985] This change frustrated the Zionist movement, particularly at a time when the persecution of Jews in Europe was intensifying. It also did not satisfy Palestinian Arab aspirations, because the political future remained controlled by Britain and the promised state was not immediately established.

The policy reversal reinforced the perception among both sides that Britain had repeatedly used their aspirations for its own purposes and then abandoned them when circumstances changed.

4. From revolt to partition

Tensions reached a new level during the Great Arab Revolt of 1936. [20986] The revolt reflected growing opposition to British rule, Jewish immigration and the political project associated with the Zionist movement. It also demonstrated the difficulties facing Palestinian leadership, which had to confront British power while trying to organise resistance within a divided political environment.

In 1937, the Peel Commission proposed partition. [20985][20988] Partition represented an attempt to turn competing national claims into separate political entities. Yet it also confirmed the fears of both sides: Palestinians faced the division of a country in which Arabs remained the majority, while Zionists faced uncertainty over the territorial scope and security of a future Jewish state.

The Holocaust transformed the international context. The destruction of European Jewry intensified the demand for a Jewish sanctuary and strengthened support for the establishment of a Jewish state. [20978] For Palestinians, however, the fact that they had not caused the persecution of European Jews did not make them responsible for its consequences. They experienced the international response as a process in which the Palestinian population was expected to bear the political and territorial cost of a European crime.

In 1947, the United Nations proposed a partition plan. [20985][20986] The proposal became a decisive moment in the conflict. Supporters regarded partition as a practical response to two incompatible national projects. Opponents saw it as an unjust allocation of land and political authority, particularly given the demographic balance and patterns of land ownership described above.

The disagreement over partition was not simply a disagreement about borders. It concerned the legitimacy of dividing the country, the right of each population to

national self-determination and the status of communities that would find themselves inside a state dominated by the other national movement.

5. 1948: independence, war and the Nakba

On 14 May 1948, the State of Israel was declared. [20987] War followed, and approximately 700,000 Palestinians were displaced. [20987][20990] Palestinians remember this as the Nakba: a foundational rupture in which communities were emptied, families were separated and the possibility of returning to their homes was denied. The interpretation of the displacement remains one of the central historical disputes.

The ethnic-cleansing interpretation argues that displacement was not merely an unintended consequence of war but formed part of a premeditated strategy connected to a settler-colonial project. This interpretation refers to military archives and pre-war planning as evidence that the removal of Palestinians was integral to the creation of a Jewish state. [20974][20975][20980]

The opposing interpretation argues that displacement resulted primarily from Arab resistance, the outbreak of war and the urgent need to create a Jewish refuge after the Holocaust. According to this view, the chaos of war contributed significantly to the displacement and it should not be understood exclusively as the outcome of a pre-existing plan. [20978][20982]

The difference between these interpretations is not a minor historical disagreement. If displacement is understood as deliberate policy, the founding of Israel is connected to an ongoing structure of dispossession. If it is understood primarily as a consequence of war and Arab hostility, Israel's creation is more closely associated with survival and self-defence.

The displacement of Jews from Arab countries forms an important part of the second narrative. Around 800,000 Jews were forced out of Arab countries, with most resettling in Israel. [20985] This history is used to challenge accounts that present Jewish displacement as the only population movement associated with the conflict. It is also used to emphasise that the creation of Israel did not occur in a regional environment in which only Palestinians experienced insecurity and uprooting.

However, the existence of two histories of displacement does not resolve the question of responsibility or equivalence. The source material notes that there is substantial debate about whether the Jewish and Palestinian experiences can be equated. [20977][20978][20979] Each community views its own displacement through a distinct historical and political framework. The events of 1948 therefore

created two foundational narratives: Israeli independence and Palestinian catastrophe. These narratives have remained central to the political identities of both communities and continue to shape their responses to later events.

Key turning points, 1948-2023

1948: Israel is established; approximately 700,000 Palestinians are displaced. [20987]

1949: Armistice Agreements establish the Green Line as the de facto boundary. [20993]

1964: The Palestine Liberation Organisation is formed. [20987]

1967: The Six-Day War creates a new stage in the territorial and political conflict. [20985][20993]

1970: The PLO is expelled from Jordan. [20987]

1973: The Yom Kippur War becomes a turning point in the regional conflict. [20991]

1978-79: The Camp David Accords mark a major stage in diplomatic relations between Israel and an Arab state. [20987]

1987: The First Intifada brings Palestinian opposition to international attention. [20987]

1993: The Oslo Accords attempt to establish a framework for peace but fail to resolve the central disputes. [20985][20987]

2000: The Second Intifada begins. [20991]

2005: Israel withdraws from Gaza. [20987]

2006-07: Hamas wins elections and takes control of Gaza. [20987]

2020: Israel normalises relations with the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain. [20987][20988]

7 October 2023: Hamas launches a major offensive, followed by Israel's military campaign in Gaza. [20987]

6. After 1948: borders, occupation and competing political projects

The Armistice Agreements of 1949 established what became known as the Green Line. [20993] It functioned as the de facto boundary between Israel and the territories that remained outside Israeli control at that time.

The political consequences of 1948 included the continuing Palestinian refugee question, the consolidation of Israel and the fragmentation of Palestinian political life. Palestinian political demands were often absorbed into broader Arab-nationalist projects. The source material also points to internal divisions and leadership weaknesses, including what it describes as a gerontocracy. These weaknesses limited the ability of Palestinian leaders to develop a unified and effective political strategy and were exploited by outside actors. [20974][20977]

The Palestine Liberation Organisation was formed in 1964. [20987] In 1970, the PLO was expelled from Jordan, another event that affected the geographical and political organisation of the Palestinian movement. [20987]

In 1967, the Six-Day War marked another decisive turning point. [20985][20993] The war intensified the conflict over territory and placed the future of the Palestinian population within a new framework of military control and competing claims to sovereignty.

The Yom Kippur War of 1973 was followed by a period of diplomatic change. [20991] The Camp David Accords of 1978-79 represented a major stage in the development of formal relations between Israel and an Arab state. [20987] Yet diplomatic progress between states did not settle the broader Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The First Intifada began in 1987. [20987] It brought Palestinian opposition to occupation and political subordination back to international attention. The uprising demonstrated that the Palestinian issue could not be resolved solely through agreements between Israel and neighbouring Arab governments.

The Oslo Accords of 1993 created expectations of a political settlement, but the peace process failed to overcome deep power imbalances and ideological rigidity. [20974][20982] Critics argue that Oslo left the fundamental structures of control and inequality unresolved. Others place greater responsibility on Palestinian rejectionism, Israeli policies or the failure of both leaderships to make the compromises required for peace.

The Second Intifada began in 2000. [20991] Israel withdrew from Gaza in 2005, but the broader conflict continued. [20987] Hamas won elections in 2006 and took control of Gaza in 2007. [20987] Hamas's position and armed activity became central to Israeli security concerns, while the political division between Gaza and other Palestinian territories further weakened the prospect of a unified Palestinian strategy.

In 2020, Israel established normalisation agreements with the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain. [20987][20988] These developments showed that relations between Israel and Arab states could improve even while the Palestinian question remained unresolved. For Palestinians and their supporters, such normalisation could therefore appear to bypass the underlying conflict rather than solve it.

7. Gaza and the human cost of the conflict

Gaza became a particularly concentrated expression of the wider conflict. Its political isolation, humanitarian conditions and relationship with Hamas formed the background to repeated confrontations and competing interpretations of violence.

The Great March of Return in 2018 illustrates the difficulty of separating civilian protest from armed politics in Gaza. The movement is presented in the source material as a civilian-led response to humanitarian conditions and the demand for the right of return, although its interpretation was complicated by Hamas's involvement. [20978][20979]

For Palestinians and critics of Israel, the protests represented opposition to blockade, deprivation and the denial of basic political rights. The involvement of Hamas did not, in this view, remove the underlying civilian grievances. For Israel, the presence and influence of Hamas contributed to the security risks surrounding the protests and to the argument that apparent civilian actions could be connected to an armed organisation.

The same competing narratives shaped reactions to later military operations. Critics of Israel argued that the high civilian death toll, destruction and restrictions placed on Gaza amounted to disproportionate force, collective punishment and a broader strategy of control. [20974][20977] Israeli security perspectives argued that civilian casualties were a tragic consequence of fighting in densely populated areas and of armed groups operating near or within civilian infrastructure, rather than evidence of an intention to target civilians. [20979][20982]

These arguments became even more sharply opposed after 7 October 2023. The Hamas-led attack was interpreted by Israel and its supporters as an existential security threat and as confirmation of the danger posed by Hamas. Israel responded with a military campaign in Gaza. [20980] Critics interpreted the campaign within the longer history of displacement, occupation, blockade and systemic inequality, arguing that the response intensified the humanitarian crisis and represented collective punishment. [20974][20975][20977]

The immediate events were therefore absorbed into pre-existing narratives. For many Israelis, 7 October reinforced the belief that security must be guaranteed through military strength and that concessions can create greater danger. For many Palestinians and their supporters, the subsequent campaign reinforced the belief that Israel's military power operates within a system in which Palestinian civilian life is treated as less valuable and Palestinian political demands are denied.

The human cost is not only measured in deaths and destruction. It also includes the persistence of fear, displacement, political fragmentation and the inability of either population to imagine that the other's national project can be reconciled with its own.

8. Why the conflict remains unresolved

The conflict has resisted settlement because the core questions have never been resolved to the satisfaction of both populations.

Who has the right to self-determination? Does Jewish self-determination require a specifically Jewish state, or can it be achieved only through a political system that gives equal status to Jews and Palestinians? Can Palestinian self-determination exist while Israel retains decisive control over territory and security? How should the refugee question be addressed? Who bears responsibility for the displacement associated with 1948? And can the two peoples recognise each other's historical trauma without surrendering their own claims?

Some interpretations argue that Palestinian ideology, in its current form, is fundamentally incompatible with the existence of a Jewish state. [20981] In this view, the conflict cannot be resolved unless Palestinian political forces accept Jewish national self-determination and renounce the aim of eliminating Israel.

Other interpretations argue that the central obstacle is not Palestinian ideology alone but the unequal distribution of power. From this perspective, peace cannot be achieved through demands placed primarily on the weaker side while Israel retains military, territorial and political dominance. [20974][20976]

The failures of peace negotiations have strengthened both conclusions. Israelis may see failed diplomacy as proof that Palestinian leaders are unwilling or unable to accept Israel's existence. Palestinians may see it as proof that negotiations have been structured around an unequal relationship and have not addressed the continuing consequences of displacement and control. [20974][20982]

The two-state solution has consequently been described by some critics as an "Orwellian hoax": a formula that appears to promise self-determination while leaving

unresolved the deeper structures of power and dispossession. [20974][20976] Others continue to view two states as the most realistic way to protect the national aspirations of both populations.

An alternative approach would involve dismantling structures of supremacy and establishing equal rights and mutual recognition. [20974][20976] Yet the feasibility of such a solution remains uncertain. Both societies have developed political identities around historical grievance, security and national survival. The ideological positions of both sides have become deeply entrenched, while the leaderships have repeatedly failed to produce a settlement capable of overcoming the legacy of violence.

Conclusion

The events of 7 October 2023 can only be understood against the history that preceded them. The conflict grew through demographic transformation, competing national movements, British promises and policy reversals, the 1948 war and the displacement of Palestinians, the uprooting of Jews from Arab countries, territorial changes after 1967, Palestinian political fragmentation, failed diplomacy and the repeated humanitarian crises in Gaza.

This history does not provide a simple justification for the actions of either side. It does, however, explain why the same events produce radically different moral and political conclusions. For Palestinians, the central history is one of dispossession, foreign control, displacement and the denial of national rights. For Israelis, it is one of persecution, national revival, insecurity and the struggle to maintain a Jewish refuge in a hostile environment. The conflict continues because each narrative contains experiences that the other side often treats as either irrelevant or illegitimate. The challenge is therefore not only to negotiate borders or security arrangements. It is to confront the historical memories that shape the political present and to acknowledge that neither population can build a durable future by denying the other's existence, suffering or national aspirations.

The two histories remain intertwined. Until a political framework addresses both Palestinian self-determination and Jewish security, the legacy of the past will continue to shape the present—and the possibility of another violent turning point will remain.

Video sources

20974 - The Hundred Years' War on Palestine: A Lecture by Dr. Rashid Khalidi - 01:34:57

20975 - The Potential and Limits of International Law in Achieving Accountability in Gaza by Noura Erakat - 01:47:32

20976 - Memory, Inequality and Power: Palestine and the... - 01:38:38

20977 - Sari Nusseibeh on Palestine: what next? - 00:46:14

20978 - i24news sits down with Prof. Anita Shapira - 00:10:00

20979 - "That's NONSENSE!" Historian Exposes 9 Lies on Israel-Palestine | Benny Morris - 01:32:59

20980 - 11th Eminent Speaker Series Talk by Prof Efraim Inbar - 01:12:44

20981 - Dr. Einat Wilf: Palestinianism has to die, in order for people to live. - 01:36:08

20982 - Israel-Palestine Debate: Finkelstein, Destiny, M. Rabbani & Benny Morris | Lex Fridman Podcast #418 - 04:57:15

20985 - Did Jews steal Palestine? - 00:18:40 20986 - The 5,000-Year History Behind the Israel-Palestine Conflict - 00:30:35

20987 - The History Behind Today's Israel-Palestine Conflict - 00:13:16

20988 - The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict explained on a map - 00:33:46

20989 - Britain Promised Palestine Three Times. One Decision Changed the Middle East Forever - 00:12:23

20990 - How the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Began | History - 00:06:29

20991 - The ENTIRE History of Israel (Documentary) - 01:50:13

20992 - How Israel Was Created - 01:04:40

20993 - The ENTIRE History of Palestine | Documentary - 02:26:26

BOX - METHODOLOGICAL JUSTIFICATION: THE HUMAN-AI
ARCHITECTURE

FROM EXECUTION TO ARCHITECTURE

The production of this report serves as another practical case study in the evolution of modern work. A first similar report was published about the impact of AI. The text of this report, largely compiled by AI from video sources, shows that the successful application of Artificial Intelligence is not a replacement for human agency, but a mandate for its evolution. The human researcher involved transitioned from a traditional "executor" of analysing and writing tasks to a "Director" or an "Architect of Outcomes". In an era where AI can process vast transcripts and draft complex analyses, the human value-add has shifted to Meta-Cognition - identifying which geopolitical and economic problems are worth exploring - and Strategic Synthesis - combining disparate AI-generated insights into this coherent and relevant report. This collaboration represents a "Human-in-the-Loop" methodology, where the algorithm provides the analytical muscle while the human provides the ethical and strategic compass.

DATA ACQUISITION AND AUTOMATED TRANSCRIPTION

The foundation of this research was a curated selection of high-level video content (YouTube).

To manage the scale of the data, a custom PHP-based automation was developed to interface with the TranscriptAPI.

- The Process: This script systematically retrieved raw transcripts, ensuring that metadata - such as video titles, author information, and precise timestamps - was preserved.

- The Goal: By automating the "execution" of data retrieval, the researcher was freed to focus on the "architecture" of the inquiry.

INTERROGATIVE ANALYSIS (THE Q&A FRAMEWORK)

Rather than allowing the AI to generate generic summaries, a rigorous interrogative method was employed using GPT-4o. The AI was asked to collect information about some ten different topics and contributed to this selection based on the video sources.

The AI was strictly constrained to the provided transcript. This ensured that the resulting data remained grounded in the primary source material, preventing "hallucinations" and preserving the unique nuances of the expert speakers.

The outputs were consolidated into a structured CSV format, creating a searchable and verifiable knowledge base for the final drafting phase.

The results of the AI analyses on the videos from a playlist are available via these links:

Perspectives and History

NARRATIVE SYNTHESIS AND EDITORIAL REFINEMENT

The final stage involved the synthesis of these structured insights into the report. This was performed using Gemini 3 Flash and GPT 5.1 and 5.2, acting as a sophisticated research assistants.

- Strategic Synthesis: The AI integrated the collected data with the broader available full transcripts. The human architect guided this process by defining the narrative arc and ensuring that the tone remained professional and aligned with British English (UK) standards.

- Citations and Verification: A systematic referencing system was maintained throughout, ensuring that every claim in the report can be traced back to the original video source via the consolidated reference list. However, some hallucinations were noticed, so the referencing may contain errors.

THE SYNERGY OF INTELLIGENCE

This methodology demonstrates that the future of high-level research lies in the synergy between human and machine. The AI provided the speed and scale necessary to process thousands of minutes of video to an acceptable non-scientific report, while the human researcher provided the Empathy, Ethics, and Strategic Vision required to turn raw data into a meaningful contribution to the discourse on in this case the situation in Palestine.

ABOUT VIDSTANCE.COM

This report, more information about this report, the video sources and other reports (work in progress) are available on vidstance.com. VidStance captures, structures this "oral living knowledge." It is also a tribute to the creators of high-quality content published on YouTube; their work provides intellectual raw material for the public debates of the 21st century.

An AI roadmap to a solution?

The article itself was required to remain strictly within the two supplied texts compiled from the research. For that reason, the AI did not introduce a proposed solution: doing so would have involved adding ideas and recommendations that were not present in those sources. In a separate follow-up exercise, that restriction was removed. The AI was then invited to draw on its broader knowledge and to suggest a gradual process for addressing the conflict. The framework below is therefore not presented as a finding derived from the source material, but as an independent, AI-generated (GPT-5.6 Terra Low Effort Thinking) proposal intended to stimulate further discussion.

A gradual resolution process: a practical framework

A durable settlement cannot begin with a final-status agreement imposed on populations that do not trust one another. It would need to proceed in stages, with each stage producing tangible improvements in safety, rights and daily life—and with progress independently verified before moving to the next.

1. Secure an enduring ceasefire and protect civilians

The first requirement is a sustained ceasefire, accompanied by:

- the release of all hostages and the return of remains; • protection for civilians and civilian infrastructure; • full, reliable humanitarian access to Gaza; • an internationally monitored mechanism for reporting and investigating ceasefire violations; • a clear ban on attacks directed at civilians, whether by states or armed groups.

This would not resolve the political conflict, but it would create the minimum conditions in which political work is possible.

2. Replace emergency governance with accountable Palestinian administration

Gaza needs an administration capable of providing public services, reconstruction and security without being controlled by an armed faction. Any transitional arrangement should be Palestinian-led, but supported and monitored internationally. Its mandate should be limited and practical:

- restore hospitals, water, electricity, housing and schools; • administer reconstruction funds transparently; • rebuild civil policing under human-rights standards; • prepare for legitimate Palestinian elections; • prevent armed groups from using civilian institutions and infrastructure for military purposes.

This would require political reconciliation or coordination between Palestinian institutions in Gaza and the West Bank. It would also require a credible path towards renewed, democratic Palestinian representation—not simply an externally designed authority with no public legitimacy.

3. Build reciprocal security arrangements

Israeli security concerns are real, particularly after 7 October. Palestinian security concerns are also real, given military operations, settler violence, detention, displacement and the lack of reliable protection under occupation. A phased arrangement could include:

- internationally monitored demilitarisation or strict control of heavy weapons in Gaza; • security guarantees for Israeli communities near Gaza; • a gradual replacement of military control with trained Palestinian civil-security institutions; • internationally supervised border arrangements; • protection for Palestinians from settler violence and unlawful displacement; • a verified halt to settlement expansion in territory intended for a future Palestinian state.

The principle should be reciprocity: Palestinians should not be asked to accept permanent insecurity in exchange for distant political promises, and Israelis should not be asked to accept security assurances that cannot be verified.

4. Improve freedom of movement and economic life

Peace is unlikely if Palestinians continue to experience political promises without meaningful improvements in ordinary life. Early measures should therefore include:

- more predictable movement of people and goods between Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem; • reliable access to employment, education, medical treatment and trade; • reconstruction and economic investment in Gaza; • protection of Palestinian property and livelihoods; • measures to reduce arbitrary restrictions while maintaining proportionate, independently reviewable security checks.

This should not be treated as a substitute for political rights. Economic development without sovereignty can reduce immediate hardship, but it does not settle the core conflict.

5. Establish a credible political horizon

The process needs a clearly stated destination. The most workable framework remains two states: Israel and a sovereign, viable Palestinian state living alongside one another, with equal security and international recognition. That framework would require negotiations on:

- borders, broadly based on the 1967 lines with mutually agreed land swaps; • Jerusalem, with arrangements that protect the connection of both peoples to the city; • security guarantees for Israel and Palestine; • settlements and territorial continuity; • Palestinian refugees, including recognition of suffering and a negotiated combination of return, resettlement and compensation; • mutual recognition of both peoples' right to self-determination.

A political horizon must have deadlines and consequences for obstruction. An indefinite "peace process" with no destination would only reproduce the failures of earlier negotiations.

6. Address accountability and historical harm

No agreement will be trusted if it requires either side to forget its losses. A gradual process should include:

- independent investigation of serious violations of international law; • compensation and reconstruction mechanisms for civilians; • official acknowledgement of suffering, including the Holocaust, the Nakba, antisemitism, attacks on Israeli civilians and Palestinian displacement; • educational and public-history initiatives that do not require either side to abandon its identity, but reject denial of the other's humanity.

Acknowledgement is not the same as agreeing on every historical interpretation. It means accepting that neither people can be expected to build peace on the erasure of its own trauma.

7. Use international guarantees, not international management alone

Outside powers should support rather than replace Israeli and Palestinian agency. An international contact group—potentially involving Arab states, European states, the United States and relevant international institutions—could provide:

- funding for reconstruction; • monitoring and verification; • security assistance; • diplomatic guarantees; • consequences for parties that undermine agreed steps.

Regional states would be especially important because normalisation with Israel should be linked not merely to bilateral interests, but to measurable progress towards Palestinian self-determination.

The underlying principle

A gradual process should not ask Palestinians to postpone freedom indefinitely in exchange for improved living conditions. Nor should it ask Israelis to accept unverified security assurances in exchange for territorial concessions. It should instead make both principles advance together:

Palestinian rights and self-determination + Israeli security and recognition

Neither is sufficient without the other. The goal is not to make the two narratives identical, nor to decide whose historical suffering matters more. It is to create institutions, borders and guarantees that make continued violence less likely and equal human dignity more possible.