



Educator's Guide

Resolution 181: The Zionist Dream Comes True

On November 29, 1947, the UN passed Resolution 181, or the “Partition Plan.” This plan was to divide the land into two states: one Jewish and one Arab. The Jews reluctantly accepted the plan while the Arabs rejected it, and civil war ensued. This video explores the background and complexities of this UN resolution. What led up to the resolution and what were the considerations and reactions to it? How did the Jewish and Arab communities react to the resolution, and why was this resolution one of the most remarkable in the history of the United Nations?

Link to video:

<https://unpacked.education/video/resolution-181-the-zionist-dream-comes-true/>

Further Reading

1. Daniel Gordis, *A Concise History of a Nation Reborn*, chapters 6-8
2. Martin Gilbert, *Israel: A History*, chapters 7-10,
3. Neil Caplan, *The Israel-Palestine Conflict - Contested Histories*,
4. Hussein Ibish, “A ‘Catastrophe’ that defines Palestinian identity”,
<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/05/the-meaning-of-nakba-in-israel-palestine-1948-gaza/560294/>

Review - Did the students understand the material?

1. What was the Peel Commission and what purpose did it serve?
2. What did the UN Partition Plan propose?



3. Who accepted the UN Partition Plan and who did not?
4. On what date did the UN vote on and accept the Partition Plan?
 - a. May 14, 1947
 - b. November 29, 1947 (correct)
 - c. May 14, 1948
 - d. November 29, 1948
5. Which two countries, who hardly agreed on much at the time, both voted in favor of the Partition Plan?
 - a. U.S. and Great Britain
 - b. USSR and Great Britain
 - c. U.S. and USSR (correct)
 - d. France and Great Britain

Discussion Questions

1. What might the Middle East look like today if the Arabs had accepted the UN resolution back in 1947?
2. Famous Israeli diplomat, Abba Eban, famously said: “The Arabs never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity.” Do you think the Arab decision not to accept this plan is reflective of this quote? Do you think this line should be about Arab leaders exclusively, or do you think some would suggest this about Israeli leaders?
3. The land that the Jews were offered was largely desert and excluded areas of religious and historical significance. Ultimately, why did they accept the UN plan despite this?
4. How might the events like the Peel Commission and UN Resolution 181 and its aftermath have planted the seeds for the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict?



Reflection Questions

1. Israeli author Amos Oz wrote that his father told him at the time: “Bullies may bother you at school...but from now on, from the moment we have our own state, you will never be bullied because you are a Jew.” What do you think he meant by this? Do you think this statement is true today? Does it apply to Jews in Israel only, or Jews around the world?
2. Imagine being alive in 1947. As a Jew, what would the Partition Plan have meant to you? In the 21st century, how can you internalize a deep appreciation for Israel?
3. Imagine being alive in 1947. What do you imagine the Arabs living in the land were feeling at the time of the Partition Plan? Can you empathize with their feelings, or is this too foreign and difficult to process?