

Simulation Cards - 1947

Jewish people

Background: *Zionism is the national movement of Jews and Jewish culture that before 1948 supported the creation of a Jewish homeland in the territory defined as the Land of Israel, and now supports the return of Jewish people to Israel. Jewish immigration to Palestine was relatively limited until the 1930s, when Hitler came to power. As a minority, Jews have been persecuted all over the world throughout their history. The most extreme persecution occurred during the Second World War. The Nazi policies and the Holocaust brought the need for a Jewish homeland into sharp focus for both Jews and for the rest of the world. The Jews who tried to flee Germany and other Nazi occupied countries were often turned back due to immigration limitations at the borders of every country, including the United States, Britain, and Palestine. Many of those who were sent back to their country of origin ended up in death camps where they were systematically murdered. All together 6 million Jews were killed in war.*

Position: Although some Zionists held the opinion that there could be Arab-Jewish cooperation and a bi-national state, many were determined to set up an exclusively Jewish state. You as a Zionist believe that, having gone through one of the great catastrophes of modern history, the Jewish people are entitled—and in the urgent need after the Holocaust—to a state of their own; a land where they can gather Jewish refugees who are unable to leave the displaced persons camps of Europe. Your bottom line is a sovereign state with full control over immigration. The land of Israel is significant and necessary because God promised this land for Jewish people 3000 years ago. Palestine—the land of Israel—is the national homeland for you; this is based on historical ties and religious traditions linking the Jewish people to the Promised Land.

Palestinian people

Background: *Palestinians are the modern descendants of the people who have lived in Palestine over the centuries, and who today are largely culturally and linguistically Arab due to Arabization of the region. The prevailing view is that Palestinian identity originated in the early decades of the 20th century. The first demand for national independence of the Eastern Mediterranean region was issued by the Syrian–Palestinian Congress on 21 September 1921.*

Position: You as Palestinian people are strongly against the new state of Jewish people in the territories of Palestine. You seek your own country and you do not want the land, where Palestinians have lived for centuries, to be divided. In general, before the mass migration of Jews to Palestine the Jews and Palestinians lived peacefully together, despite this general peace once the first influx of Jews started arriving to the land of Palestine, you sought to cease Jewish immigration and to set up a secular Palestinian state. However, when World War II started, it became impossible to stop Jewish migration into Palestine. Tensions and conflicts between Palestinians and Jews are becoming stronger every day. By the year 1947, you know you will oppose any partition plan. You know that Palestinians have strong support from Arab countries and you may consider starting a war against the Jewish people.

Soviet Union

Background: *The Soviet Union was a socialist state on the Eurasian continent that existed between 1922 and 1991, governed as a single-party state by the Communist Party. The Union was ruled by Joseph Stalin in 1947. Although the past leaders of the Soviet Union had previously rejected Zionism as a reactionary movement, “bourgeois nationalism,” and “socially retrogressive,” they later changed their stance away from ideology and towards pragmatism, believing that a Jewish state would provide a strategic foothold in the Cold War.*

Position: You, as a Soviet Union foreign policy decision maker, take a pro-Zionist approach, hoping that the new nation will become socialist and, consequently, reduce Britain’s power in the Middle East region.

United States of America

Background: *During both of the World Wars the United States of America fought in the name of democracy. Harry S. Truman was a president of the United States in 1947.*

Position: During World War II, the United States was anxious to maintain good relations with Saudi Arabia. President Franklin D. Roosevelt had promised King Saud that the United States would not make any policy decisions about Palestine without consulting the Arabs, though Roosevelt tried to enlist Saud's support for allowing Jewish immigration to Palestine. However, by the end of World War II Roosevelt had died, and was replaced by Vice President Harry S. Truman. You, as the US foreign policy decision makers at the end of WWII, understand that the political reality has changed as a result of the mass murder of Jews during the Holocaust. Harry Truman had demonstrated a clear position of support for the Zionist cause even before WWII. Following the war the United States has committed to large-scale support for helping the Jewish people following the revelations of Nazi atrocities. On the one hand, you have a great deal of national interest in Middle East and you do not want to compromise your good relations with the Arab countries, on the other hand, the post-war situation and the Holocaust tragedy have caused you to support the Zionists' aim of having a Jewish state in their historical land.

Arab Countries

Background: *The Arab League was founded in 1945 with the aim of being a regional organization of Arab states with a focus on developing the economy, resolving disputes, and coordinating political aims. Each country in the Arab League was given one vote in the council. The first major action of the Arab League was the joint intervention into the newly established state of Israel in 1948, allegedly on behalf of the majority Arab population who were being uprooted as the State of Israel emerged.*

Position: You are a representative of the Arab League, an association of the neighboring countries Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Transjordan (later renamed as Jordan), and Saudi-Arabia. The Arab League supports the Palestinian population.

You are strongly against any partition plan for two countries with a divided city of Jerusalem—and you are bitterly opposed to the idea of the establishment of a Jewish state. In your point of view, Jews have no right to come here to establish a new state. You strongly affirm the right to independence of Palestine. You do not want the Palestinians to lose their land, and you are concerned about where they will live if they lose their territory? You fear refugees fleeing to your member states because you do not have the capacity to assimilate them. You are currently establishing a military committee with the mission of analyzing the chance of victory for the Palestinians against the Jews.

European Countries

Background: *At the end of the war, millions of people were homeless, the European economy had collapsed, and much of the European industrial infrastructure had been destroyed. Europe was divided to the Western and Eastern Europe—which followed Communist ideology. Over 60 million people were killed, over 2.5% of the world population. 6 million Jews perished in the Holocaust. Europe was weakened, not only materially, but in morale too.*

Position: You as European countries feel guilty that you did not stop Hitler's policy towards Jews. You understand that Jewish people cannot feel safe in Europe anymore. You decide that you must support the creation of Israel and the ability for Jewish people to have their own country.