

PRAYING FOR THE WORLD ONE COUNTRY AT A TIME

“God so loved the world...” shouldn’t we? STATE OF PALESTINE

Information compiled by Judy Benson
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Source: [Wikipedia](#), [World Bank data](#), [AP news](#)



Location: Palestine, recognized officially as the **State of Palestine** by the United Nations and 138 member states, is a de jure sovereign state in Western Asia, claiming the West Bank and Gaza Strip as its territory.

Capital: Jerusalem is the proclaimed capital, although Ramallah is currently the administrative center, located north of Jerusalem

Overview: In 1948, Britain withdrew from its mandate over Palestine. The UN proposed partitioning the area into Arab and Jewish states; the Arabs resisted, their armies were defeated and the state of Israel was declared. The Arabs and the Israelis fought wars in 1967 and 1973, followed by peace treaties with Egypt in 1979 and Jordan in 1994. Israel took control of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip following the 1967 war, and subsequently administered those territories through military authorities. Palestinian and Israeli officials signed various accords in the 1990s that created an interim period of Palestinian self-rule. Today the West Bank and Gaza remain officially Israeli-occupied. Conflict resolution has been thwarted by the expansion of Israeli settlements in Palestinian territory and attacks and incitement to violence by both sides. The peace process historically was predicated on a “two-state solution.” This was undermined when the US recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel in 2017, cut off aid, and proposed a Mideast plan that overwhelmingly favored Israel, allowing it to annex parts of the West Bank. The problem for Israel: given its then majority Arab population, it could not be both a democracy and a Jewish state. Note: the Biden Administration has restored US aid.

Population: 5,051,953. Official language: Arabic

Religion: 93% are Muslim (Sunni); 6% are Christians; 1% other

Government: Mahmoud Abbas is President of the State of Palestine and the Palestinian National Authority. He is the leader of Fatah, the moderate secular political party, which is opposed by the militant Islamic party, Hamas. Elections have been called for later this spring.

Economy: The lack of progress towards peace and reconciliation continues to create an unsustainable economic situation. The Palestinian economy faced triple crises in 2020: the COVID-19 outbreak: a severe economic slowdown, and a political standoff with the Government of Israel that disrupted clearance revenues. Consequently, GDP for the year contracted nearly 8%. Foreign aid is now essential.

Prayers for: Progress towards resolving the “intractable” Arab-Israeli conflict, so that the Palestinians and the Israelis may know peace and prosperity for all the people of this consequential region.