

## Maps and Timelines of Israel *Speaker Notes*

### **Introduction (Slides 1-4)**

[Note to teacher: This is a brief summary of what is elaborated upon in the lesson plan.]

Slide 1 shows a poster of Palestine produced in the 1920s. “Palestine” or the “Holy Land” is what people in the West used to call *eretz Yisrael*. In the 1920s, “Palestinians” generally were understood to be the Jews of Palestine. Most Arabs in Palestine considered themselves as members of specific clans or families or part of the wider Arab world, in particular residents of “greater Syria.”

Slides 2-4 take us back to depict the changing boundaries of *eretz Yisrael* during the pre-modern period. The Jewish people have had a continuous presence in the land from ancient times to the present. This presence and long history in the land is critical to understanding the attempt to reestablish a nation-state in Palestine that began in earnest in the late 1800s.

### **The 1800s (Slides 5 and 6)**

1848-1890—Nationalism—the belief that a people who share a common culture should be an independent nation—grows throughout Europe.

Massive Jewish casualties from pogroms in Eastern Europe. Persecution and periodic attacks continue through the 1900s.

First Aliyah (approximately 25,000 individuals.) Large-scale immigration from Russia, Romania and Yemen. Jews begin to set up communities on purchased land.

In the face of increased antisemitism in both Eastern and Western Europe, Zionism (Jewish nationalism), the belief that the Jewish people have a right to their own land, strengthens.

Theodore Herzl, one of the founders of the movement, convenes the First International Zionist

Congress which declares “The aim of Zionism is to create for the Jewish people a home in the land of Israel secured by law.”

### **The 1900s (Slides 7 and 8)**

Establishment of the Jewish National Fund (JNF), dedicated to purchasing land for Jews in Palestine.

Second Aliyah. Large-scale immigration, mainly from Russia and Poland, in the wake of further pogroms. Approximately 30,000 individuals.

Bar Giora, the first Jewish self-defense organization formed to protect the communities in Palestine from Arab raiders.

Tel Aviv, the first modern all-Jewish city, is founded on Jewish-purchased land near Jaffa.

### **The 1910s (Slides 9 and 10)**

World War I begins. Germany, Austria and Turkey wage war against Britain, France, Russia and eventually the United States.

British promise Sherif Hussein, ruler of Mecca, an Arab state in return for leading an Arab uprising against the Turks. Boundaries of future state are vague; Arabs claim Palestine was included but Sir Henry McMahon, the British high commissioner in Egypt who dealt with Hussein, said it did not.

Britain’s Lord Balfour promises British support for a “Jewish national home in Palestine.” When later incorporated by the League of Nations in the Palestine Mandate, the Balfour Declaration becomes the basis in international law for the Jews’ right to reestablish a homeland in their original, native land.

End of World War I. Britain conquers Palestine and defeats Turkey with the aid of a Jewish brigade. The League of Nations is established in an effort to prevent further wars and to deal with defeated nations. Arab delegates to the League oppose a Jewish state in Palestine.

### **The 1920s (Slides 11 and 12)**

1920—The League of Nations gives Britain a mandate to rule Palestine. According to the Palestine Mandate, Britain is to encourage “close settlement by Jews on the land.” At the San Remo Conference, the Allied powers confirmed the Balfour Declaration pledge establishing a Jewish national home in Palestine.

The Haganah, a Jewish defense organization, is formed in the face of continued Arab attacks on Jewish communities.

1921—Arab riots against Jews in Palestine. British temporarily suspend Jewish immigration to appease the Arabs.

1922—Britain takes approximately 77 percent of the Palestine Mandate—all the land east of the Jordan River—to create “Transjordan,” and installs as ruler its Arab ally, Hussein’s son, Abdullah. Jews are forbidden to live in Transjordan until “practicable.”

Under Arab pressure, Britain begins to issue a series of “White Papers” declaring that only a very small number of Jews will be allowed to enter Palestine. Jews continue to enter Palestine and buy land, but on a limited scale.

1924—The Saud family, with the aid of extremist Muslim allies (Wahhabis), defeats Abdullah’s family (the Hashemites) and takes over Arabia (today Saudi Arabia).

Fourth Aliyah. Large-scale immigration, mainly from Poland. Approximately 67,000 individuals.

1929—Arab rioting throughout Palestine leaves 135 Jews dead and 350 wounded.

New York stock market collapse signals worldwide economic depression. These conditions fuel growth of fascism and communism. Troubled economy also spurs Arab land sales to Jews.

### **The 1930s (Slides 13 and 14)**

1933—Hitler’s rise to power in Germany. Numerous anti-Jewish laws are passed.

1934-1945—In the face of rising antisemitism in Europe as well as British restrictions (and violation of its legal mandate), unauthorized Jewish immigration into Palestine begins in earnest. By the war’s end a mere 115,000 Jews manage to escape Nazi-occupied Europe to Palestine.

1936—Arabs launch violent rioting throughout Palestine against the Jews; over 100 killed.

1937—Britain’s Peel Commission recommends partitioning Palestine into two states, Jewish and Arab, and a British zone around Jerusalem. The plan is accepted with reservations by the Jews but rejected by the Arabs. Further rioting ensues. Facing war with Germany, in need of Arab oil and access to its colonies in Asia, Britain also rejects the plan.

1938—Kristallnacht (Night of Broken Glass). Massive destruction of Jewish property in Germany and attacks against Jews. Mass deportations of Jews to concentration camps.

1939—Britain’s “White Paper” promises Arabs a country and limits Jewish immigration to 75,000 annually over 5 years, after which it is to end altogether. Unable to escape to *eretz Yisrael* and refused asylum elsewhere, millions of European Jews are murdered in the Holocaust.

Hitler invades Poland and World War II begins.

### **The 1940s (Slides 15 and 16)**

1941—Pro-Nazi Palestinian leader Haj Amin al-Husseini (appointed Grand Mufti by the British) calls for holy war (jihad) against Britain and meets with Hitler, who promises to help annihilate all Jews in Arab lands.

Attack on Pearl Harbor. United States enters the war against Hitler and Japan.

1942—Hitler’s lieutenants put final touches on planning the “Final Solution” to the “Jewish problem.” Auschwitz, major Nazi death camp, becomes fully operational.

1944—Britain allows the formation of a Jewish Brigade of Palestinian Jews to fight alongside British troops. More than 5,000 join.

1945—World War II ends. Six million Jews are murdered in the Holocaust. Great Britain continues to bar Jews from entering Palestine.

1946—Pogroms against Jews in Arab countries. Fighting between Arabs and Jews in Palestine intensifies. Britain does little to stop the violence. The Haganah and other Jewish groups unite to fight the British and defend Jews.

1947—The United Nations proposes a partition of Palestine. The Jews accept the partition, the Arabs reject it. Continued Arab attacks on Jewish communities.

1948—The State of Israel is declared. Prime Minister Ben Gurion urges Arabs to stay and help build the country with equal rights. Five Arab countries attack Israel.

1949—Israel wins its War of Independence. The Arabs are defeated and an armistice is brought about by the United Nations. Jordan occupies the West Bank and eastern Jerusalem, while Egypt takes the Gaza Strip. Neither country seeks to establish an Arab “Palestine.”

### **The 1950s (Slides 17 and 18)**

1950-1952—Massive immigration ( more than 687,000) to Israel by the remaining Jews of Europe and Jews of Arab countries facing persecution.

1951—Fearing he may make peace with Israel, an assassin kills King Abdullah of Jordan.

1951-1956—Violating their agreements with Israel, Egypt and Jordan begin to send terrorists into Israel.

1952—Gamal Abdul Nasser, a supporter of Pan-Arabism (the belief that all Arab peoples should be united into one nation, or at least that Arab identity transcends nationality) emerges as leader of Egypt.

1956—Nasser violates international agreements by blocking Israeli shipping through the Straits of Tiran and nationalizes the Suez Canal. England and France plot to retake the Canal; they and Israel attack Egypt in the Sinai Campaign. Israel captures Sinai and the Gaza Strip.

1957—Israel returns the Sinai to Egypt for the promise it will be able to use the Suez Canal as well as the Straits of Tiran. Egypt reneges on the canal promise. The United Nations sends a “buffer force” to Sinai to keep Israeli and Egyptian forces apart.

1958—Egypt and Syria briefly combine to form the United Arab Republic.

1959—Yasir Arafat founds the anti-Israel organization Fatah (reverse Arabic acronym for Movement for Liberation of Palestine) in Kuwait.

### **The 1960s (Slides 19 and 20)**

1964—The Arab League founds the Palestinian Liberation Organization composed of a number of groups, including Arafat's Fatah. The PLO does not demand a Palestinian state in the West Bank or the Gaza Strip. Its goal is a Palestinian state in all of Israel.

1967—Egypt breaks its international agreements and closes the Straits of Tiran. Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and other Arab countries mass armies on Israel's borders.

Israel preemptively attacks in the Six-Day War, gaining control of the Sinai, Golan Heights, West Bank, Gaza Strip and eastern Jerusalem. Jews are finally able to go to their holy sites in Jerusalem and elsewhere for the first time in 19 years.

Arab leaders meet in Khartoum and proclaim—No peace with Israel, No negotiations with Israel and No recognition of Israel.

The U.N. Security Council issues Resolution 242 calling for the return of land whose exact dimensions are not specified in return for recognition by, and peace with, neighboring countries. Israel accepts the resolution; Arab countries reject it.

1968—With the hijacking of an El Al plane, Palestinian Arabs begin to widen the war of terror against "soft" Israeli and Jewish targets.

1969—Israel begins to build Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria (the West Bank) and the Gaza Strip primarily for security reasons and also because it views the area as the cradle of Jewish civilization.

### **The 1970s (Slides 21 and 22)**

1970—Palestinian forces lead by Arafat and the PLO threaten Jordan as well as Israel. King Hussein of Jordan counter-attacks, killing thousands and sending the PLO into exile in Lebanon. Over the next 10 years, many innocent Israelis, including children, are targeted and killed by terrorists.

1972—Eleven Israeli athletes are murdered by Palestine Liberation Organization terrorists at the Munich Olympic Games.

1973—Egypt and Syria, aided by Russian arms, attack Israel on Yom Kippur. After difficult fighting and with the help of US-supplied weapons, Israel defeats the Arabs. The U.N. Security Council calls for a cease-fire, adopts Resolution 338, which calls for prompt implementation of Resolution 242 and negotiations. Israel accepts the resolution; Arab countries reject it.

Arab oil producing countries (OPEC) raise oil prices to record highs and announce an embargo against the United States and other countries aiding Israel, letting the world know that support for Israel can have drastic effects.

1975—Prodded by oil-rich Arab countries and the Soviet Union, the U.N. General Assembly adopts a resolution equating Zionism with racism (repealed in 1991).

In Lebanon, open warfare breaks out between Christian, Muslim and PLO fighters. Syrian troops are called in by Lebanon's president to impose a cease-fire. PLO continues to attack Israeli towns from Lebanon.

1979—Peace treaty is signed between Anwar Sadat, President of Egypt and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin with the help of U.S. President Carter. Israel gives up the Sinai in stages but Egypt refuses to take back the Gaza Strip.

### **The 1980s (Slides 23 and 24)**

1981—Fearing that an atomic weapon would be used against it, Israeli fighter jets destroy Iraq's nuclear reactor.

President Sadat of Egypt is assassinated by members of a Muslim Brotherhood offshoot for signing a peace treaty with Israel.

1982—Israel invades Lebanon in response to PLO and Syrian shelling and the United Nation's inability to keep the peace. Israel expels Palestinian terrorists, reaching as far as the capital,



Beirut. Yasir Arafat and his forces are allowed to retreat into exile in Tunisia. Lebanese Christian Phalangists, allied with Israel, massacre Palestinian civilians at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps. Israel sets up a security zone in South Lebanon.

Iran founds, trains and finance Hezbollah, a Lebanese Shi'ite terrorist organization dedicated to destroying Israel.

1984—Operation Moses brings approximately 7,000 African Jews from the ancient Jewish community of Ethiopia to Israel.

1987—First Intifada. Palestinian Arabs in the West Bank begin rioting against Israel. At first a spontaneous uprising, it eventually comes under the control of PLO leadership in exile in Tunis.

Founding of Hamas, a radical Sunni Muslim organization associated with the Muslim Brotherhood and sworn to the destruction of Israel.

1988—Jordan's King Hussein gives up any claim to the West Bank (which his country had occupied from 1948-1967) and recognizes the PLO as the "sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians."

### **The 1990s (Slides 25 and 26)**

1991—Gulf War. Saddam Hussein's Iraq invades Kuwait and threatens Saudi Arabia. The United States leads a multi-nation coalition, which does not include Israel, against Iraq. Nevertheless, Israel is attacked by Iraqi missiles.

The United States convenes a peace conference in Madrid, bringing together representatives of Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the Palestinian Arabs for the first face-to-face talks.

1993—Oslo Accords are signed by Yasir Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. Under the plan, Israel is to gradually hand over major Palestinian cities for self-rule. The PLO pledges to give up terrorism, to stop incitement against Israel and to resolve all future problems through negotiations.

1994—Jordan becomes the second Arab country to recognize Israel, signing a peace treaty.

Yasir Arafat becomes head of the Palestinian Authority. He soon moves to eliminate all opposition in Palestinian territories and quashes freedom of the press. Suicide bombers from areas under Palestinian control begin to attack Israeli civilians. A Jewish extremist kills 29 Muslim worshippers in Hebron.

1995-1999—Suicide bombers attack buses, malls and street gatherings, killing Israeli civilians.

Arafat continues to claim he is fighting terrorism but does little or nothing to stop it.

Yitzhak Rabin is assassinated by a young Jew opposed to ceding any land controlled by Israel to Arab rule.

### **The 2000s: (2000-2012, Slides 27-30)**

#### **2000-2006 (Slides 27-28)**

2000—At Camp David Israel offers the Palestinian Arabs a state in more than 95 percent of the West Bank and all of Gaza and parts of eastern Jerusalem as its capital. Palestinian Authority chairman Arafat rejects the offer and launches the “Al-Aqsa intifada.” Two months later, Ariel Sharon is elected Israel’s prime minister.

2001—Escalation of violence as Palestinian Arabs unleash suicide bombings against Israelis and foreign visitors at discos, pizzerias and markets.

September 11—Mass terror strikes the United States as al Qaeda, led by Osama bin Laden and other Islamic fundamentalists, attacks New York and Washington.

2002—After hundreds of non-combatant deaths from Palestinian terrorism, Israeli troops return to Palestinian population centers vacated as part of the 1993 Oslo “peace process.” Construction of West Bank security barrier begins. Terrorist attacks decrease.

U.S. President George W. Bush calls publicly for the creation of a Palestinian state but only after Palestinian Arabs select new leaders untainted by terrorism.

2003—American and allied forces overthrow Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein who had violated U.N. resolutions including those regarding inspections for weapons of mass destruction. He also helped bankroll anti-Israel suicide bombings.

Israel continues work on the security barrier, despite protests by Palestinian Arabs and their supporters, and U.N. condemnation.

2004—President Bush writes letter to Prime Minister Sharon stating that new “facts on the ground” since the 1967 Six-Day War make it unrealistic to expect an Israeli withdrawal to the 1949 armistice lines.

Yasir Arafat dies.

2005—Mahmoud Abbas who had briefly served as Palestinian prime minister in 2003, is elected Arafat’s successor as head of the Palestinian Authority.

Israel unilaterally withdraws from the Gaza Strip, removing its more than 8,000 Jewish residents and all troops.

2006— Hamas, designated a terrorist organization by the United States and other countries in addition to Israel, wins elections to lead the Palestinian Authority. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, president of Iran, which is believed to be developing nuclear weapons, calls for Israel’s destruction.

Israel wages war in Lebanon against Hezbollah after its gunmen cross the border into Israel, killing eight soldiers, capturing two and bombarding northern Israel with rockets.

### **2007-2010 (Slide 29)**

2007—Iran declares its ability to enrich uranium on an industrial scale, a necessary step to building a nuclear bomb.

Fighting erupts between Hamas and PA President Abbas' Fatah. Hamas seizes the Gaza Strip.

2008—Hamas resumes heavy mortar and rocket barrage from Gaza at nearby Israeli communities. Palestinian terror attacks staged in other parts of Israel.

Hezbollah terror chief Imad Mugniyeh is assassinated in Damascus.

Abbas rejects Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's offer of a Palestinian state on virtually all the West Bank and Gaza Strip, with eastern Jerusalem as its capital, in exchange for peace with Israel. Abbas makes no counter offer.

Sen. Barack Obama (D-Ill.), wins the U.S. presidential election, defeating Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.).

Under Prime Minister Olmert, Israel Defense Forces launch Operation Cast Lead, a three-week offensive to halt mortar and rocket fire and other attempted attacks by Hamas and other terrorist groups on Israel from the Gaza Strip.

2009—Benjamin Netanyahu, chairman of the Likud Party, is sworn in as Israeli prime minister and head of new government.

In a speech in Cairo, President Obama calls for a "new beginning between the United States and Muslims."

Incumbent Mahmoud Ahmadinejad claims victory in Iranian election. Vote fraud is suspected, and many Iranians publicly protest and are violently suppressed.

Netanyahu publicly endorses—for the first time—the concept of a West Bank and Gaza Strip Palestinian Arab state alongside Israel in exchange for peace and recognition of Israel as the Jewish state.

The U.N.'s Goldstone commission report is released, accusing both Israel and Hamas of war crimes and possible crimes against humanity in connection with Operation Cast Lead. A year and a half later, Goldstone retracts central accusations against Israel, most notably that Israeli troops had intentionally targeted Arab civilians.

Netanyahu announces a 10-month freeze on Israeli construction in West Bank communities in a bid to restart stalled peace talks with the Palestinian Arabs, but Abbas refuses to negotiate without a total freeze.

2010—A “humanitarian aid” flotilla from Turkey (chartered by anti-Israel organizations) attempts to break Israel’s naval blockade of Gaza and is intercepted by Israeli naval forces. Nine Turks, who attacked Israeli commandos with knives and metal bars, are killed.

Immense natural gas discovery in the eastern Mediterranean Sea within Israel’s territorial waters.

### **2011-2012 (Slide 30)**

2011—“The Arab Spring” leads to the overthrow of dictators in Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen and Libya, and large-scale bloody repression in Syria.

Terrorist attacks include the murder of five Jewish family members in Itamar in Samaria (northern West Bank).

Israel thwarts Iran’s attempt to smuggle over 50 tons of weapons into Gaza via the sea aboard the “Victoria.”

Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden is killed in Pakistan by United States Navy SEALs.

U.S. President Obama declares “the borders of Israel and Palestine should be based on the 1967 lines with mutually agreed swaps.” Netanyahu asserts that the pre-’67 armistice lines were “undefensible.”

Eight Israelis are killed during a terror attack along the border with Egypt.

Antisemitism and anti-Israel activity increase on U.S. college campuses. The movement calling for boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) against Israel gains attention, with anti-Israel groups calling for boycott of Israeli goods such as Ahava cosmetics and divestment from companies such as Caterpillar, Hewlett Packard and Motorola for doing business with Israel.

Palestinian Authority President Abbas requests formal U.N. recognition of a Palestinian state, ignoring President Obama’s plea to instead negotiate directly with Israel.

Hamas frees Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit in return for Israel's releasing 1,027 imprisoned Palestinian terrorists.

The Stuxnet virus reportedly slows down Iran's nuclear weapons program.

2012—The Sinai Peninsula becomes a new hotspot with an expanding terrorist infrastructure. IDF Intelligence head reports that Israel's enemies have 200,000 rockets and missiles, which could reach all parts of Israel.

Saboteurs blow up Egyptian natural gas pipelines to Israel 12 times in 2012. Finally, Egypt terminates its agreement with Israel.

Terrorist bombers attack Israel embassy staffers in India. Plots to attack Israeli interests in Singapore and Thailand go awry.

The Iron Dome system intercepts more than 50 rockets fired at Israel from the Gaza Strip.

Israel receives German-built Dolphin submarines, equipped to carry cruise missiles and nuclear warheads, giving Israel "second-strike" capabilities in case of a nuclear attack.

A senior member of the Muslim Brotherhood, Mohammed Morsi, wins Egypt's first democratic election since President Hosni Mubarak's overthrow.

Israel's High Court of Justice rules for the dismantling of five apartment buildings in Ulpana, a neighborhood within the Beit El settlement, saying they were built on private Arab land.

UNESCO's World Heritage committee approves a Palestinian bid to place the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem on its list of World Heritage in Danger sites

An Israeli government-appointed judicial commission states that Israel's presence in the West Bank should not be considered "occupation" and that existing settlements authorized by the government are legal under international law.

## **2013 (Slide 31)**

2013—Parliamentary elections gave the ruling Likud and Israel Beitenu parties a reduced plurality. Yesh Atid (There is a Future), led by former newscaster Yair Lapid, came in second, and Habayit Hayehudi (Jewish Home), led by Naftali Bennett, placed third.

Yityish Aynaw, 21, became the first Ethiopian-Israeli to win the Miss Israel pageant.

President Obama arrived in Israel, the first visit of his presidency. His agenda included discussing Iran’s nuclear program, the situation in Syria and Israeli-Palestinian diplomacy.

Upheavals in Arab and Muslim countries throughout the Middle East resulted in attacks on many Christians. Dozens of churches in the Middle East have been destroyed.

An Israeli government review discredited a report saying 12-year-old Muhammad al-Dura was killed by Israel Defense Forces fire during the al-Aqsa *intifada*. Al-Dura became one of the second *intifada*’s most widely disseminated anti-Israel symbols. The IDF had initially accepted responsibility for the incident.

The death toll in Syria exceeded 100,000. In August, more than 1,400 Syrian men, women and children were killed in a nerve gas attack by Syrian President Bashar-al-Assad forces on rebel-held areas near Damascus.

Hassan Rouhani won Iran’s presidential elections, succeeding Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

Egypt’s military deposed Mohammed Morsi, the country’s first democratically elected president.

Singer Alicia Keys performed to a sold-out Tel Aviv concert despite pressure to cancel her trip from author Alice Walker and other proponents of the anti-Israel Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement.

The European Union published a directive forbidding any funding or cooperation to Israelis residing beyond the 1949 armistice line, including in Judea and Samaria, eastern Jerusalem and the Golan Heights.

The European Union added the “military” wing of Hezbollah to its list of terrorist organizations.

Demonstrating their interest in resuming peace talks with the Palestinian Authority, the Israeli government agreed to gradually release four groups of 104 Palestinian terrorists, all of whom were convicted of murder, attempted murder or kidnapping. Ultimately, Israel released three of

the groups, but decided against releasing the final group when PA President Mahmoud Abbas violated the terms of the agreement.

Israel and the Palestinian Authority held several rounds of peace talks, their first negotiations in nearly five years.

Two Israeli scientists and one American Jewish scientist shared the Nobel Prize in chemistry. The winners were: Arieh Warshel, an Israeli-American professor at the University of Southern California; Martin Karplus, a Jewish citizen of the United States and Austria who researches at the University of Strasbourg and Harvard University; and Michael Levitt, an American, British and Israeli citizen who works at the Stanford University School of Medicine.

The P5+1 powers (United States, Russia, United Kingdom, France, China, Germany and the European Union) reached a six-month interim deal with Iran on its nuclear program, despite the opposition of Israel, Jewish groups, the U.S. Congress and Saudi Arabia. In exchange for sanctions relief, Iran agreed to halt any uranium enrichment above five percent and promised to neutralize its stockpiles that are near 20%.

## **2014 (Slide 32)**

PA President Mahmoud Abba's Fatah party agreed to form a unity government with Hamas, a terrorist organization sworn to the destruction of Israel. This unity agreement prompted the Israeli government to officially pull out of peace talks.

Israeli teenagers Eyal Yifrach, Gilad Shaar and Naftali Frenkel were kidnapped and murdered. The discovery of their bodies 18 days later led to an apparent revenge killing of Palestinian teenager Mohammed Abu Khdeir.

Israel launched Operation Protective Edge in response to increased rocket fire from Gaza. The war began with airstrikes, then led to a ground invasion that destroyed more than 30 Hamas terror tunnels into Israel. During the 50-day war, there were many more fatalities among Palestinian Arabs than among Israelis, in large part due to the fact that Hamas used its citizens as human shields. After Hamas violated 11 cease-fire agreements, a final cease-fire was reached on August 26<sup>th</sup>.



Israel and Egypt shared an interest in cracking down on Islamic terror groups in the Sinai Peninsula and in targeting Hamas. Israel also found common ground with Saudi Arabia, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates.

Israel faced new threats at its border with Syria from al-Qaeda-affiliated terror groups, Hezbollah and Iran. After violence on the Syrian side, the United Nations moved its peacekeeping forces to the Israeli side of the Golan. Israel built an improved security fence against infiltration. Although barely reported, Israel has been quietly helping Syrian refugees throughout the war, both medically and with supplies (“Operation Human Warmth”).

The relationship between Turkey and Israel deteriorated, with President Erdogan accusing Israel of “genocide” and “terrorism” against the Palestinian Arabs. He also said Israel’s “barbarism has surpassed even Hitler’s” and refused to consider normalizing relations with Israel.

The threat from radical Islam rose to new proportions. The Islamic State terrorist group (also known as ISIS or ISIL) has been the most prominent, gaining attention for its beheadings of American journalists James Foley and Steven Sotloff (also an Israeli citizen) and two British citizens, David Haines and Alan Henning. ISIS posted videos of their brutal murders on YouTube.

Energy-independent Israel is now supplying natural gas to its neighbors. In September, Israeli energy companies signed a multi-billion dollar deal with Jordan to provide them with off shore natural gas.

Antisemitism increased worldwide, especially in Europe, to levels not seen since the Holocaust. French Jews are making aliya in record numbers.

Anti-Israel and antisemitic sentiment continued to grow on American college campuses, including regularly held “Israel Apartheid Week” and BDS events.

### **2015 (Slide 33)**

Elections for Israel’s 20<sup>th</sup> Knesset were held on March 17, 2015 after the dissolution of the prior government in Dec. 2014 over budget disputes and legislation to codify into law that Israel is a “Jewish state.” The Center-Right Likud Party of sitting Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu won a plurality of votes. He formed a governing coalition that included right-of-center political

parties and religious parties that just barely provided a majority in the Knesset. Netanyahu's main focus is on preventing Iran from developing the capacity to build nuclear weapons. He also took a firm stand opposing a Palestinian state as long as Palestinian Authority leaders refuse to endorse a two-state solution with Israel as a Jewish state and an end to the conflict.

Throughout the spring and summer of 2015, announcements of a political agreement between the Obama administration and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, with the backing of the P5+1 group (China, France, Germany, Russia and the United Kingdom), generated friction between Israel and the United States. Prime Minister Netanyahu spoke for the detractors of the pact both in Israel and the United States when he stated that a bad deal was worse than no deal at all.

Israelis across the political spectrum felt the agreement conceded too much to the Iranians. The deal provides an end to crippling economic sanctions and gives Iran access to a reported \$100 to \$150 billion that had been withheld from the Islamic Republic because of its failure to cooperate with international inspectors of its nuclear program and its support for terrorism. Critics from many quarters also expressed their concern that the American negotiators had conceded too much to the Iranians and abandoned previous demands that Iran allow unfettered inspections of its nuclear facilities, especially those associated with military installations.

Israel was not alone in expressing deep consternation over the proposed deal. Many of its Arab neighbors voiced similar dismay. While publicly voicing conditional support, Saudi Arabia also threatened to initiate its own competing nuclear program. Numerous reports also suggest that Turkey and Egypt, as well as other Middle Eastern states, might seek nuclear weapons in response.

Many in Israel and the region as a whole saw the deal between the United States and Iran as a harbinger of an increasingly dangerous region in the wake of a receding American presence and influence. The Saudis and other Gulf Arab states have interceded in a civil conflict in Yemen in which the Iranians are backing a Shiite militia, the Houthis, in their attempt to overthrow Yemen's Sunni dominated-government.

The civil war in Syria also threatens to impact Israel. Hezbollah, the Iranian-backed terrorist group in Lebanon sworn to Israel's destruction, has increased its involvement in Syria and the potential for a new infusion of funds from Iran worries Israel. In September, Russia entered the conflict directly, providing military assets it said would be used to fight Sunni extremists of the recently declared Islamic State, but the Russian intervention will also reinforce the Syrian Assad regime.

Israel has had to counter a growing boycott, divestment and sanctions movement [BDS] in some western countries. The BDS movement presents itself as a human rights cause but it is openly hostile to the existence of the state of Israel. Prominent liberal churches whose leaderships are influenced by anti-Israel activism and the antisemitic trope of replacement theology have passed boycott initiatives. The BDS movement is visible on college campuses where strong anti-Israeli activism occurs, although when put to vote, boycott initiatives usually fail.