

## U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 in the News Media Answers

Read the following excerpts from American news sources (which include opinions and blogs) that mention U.N. Security Council Resolution 242. In the spaces provided, answer the following two questions for each excerpt.

1. Does this excerpt accurately describe Israel's withdrawal obligations according to the intent of the framers of the resolution? [Circle: Accurate (A) or Inaccurate (I)]
2. Does this excerpt mention Arab obligations under the resolution? [Circle: Mention (M) or Not Mention (N)]

**Correct responses have been bolded.**

- A) Mr. Bush affirmed his intention that “all final status issues” in Palestinian peace talks be negotiated “in accordance” with U.N. Security Council resolutions that call for Israel to withdraw from all land captured in the 1967 Mideast war. (*Wall Street Journal*, May 7, 2004)

Accurate (A)                      **Inaccurate (I)**  
Mention (M)                      **Not Mention (N)**

*The passage is inaccurate because it states that Israel is obliged to withdraw from “all land” it captured in the Six-Day War, which is not what Resolution 242 calls for. The passage makes no mention of Arab obligations.*

- B) Resolution 242 of 1967, passed after the Six-Day War ... does not say what a lot of the people who quote it think it says. It does not instruct Israel to withdraw unilaterally from the territories occupied in 1967... It calls for a negotiated settlement, based on the principle of exchanging land for peace. (*The Economist*, October 12, 2002)

**Accurate (A)**                      Inaccurate (I)  
Mention (M)                      **Not Mention (N)**

*The passage is accurate because it makes no statement about how much territory Israel needs to give up according to the resolution but rather that some land will be exchanged for peace through negotiations. It doesn't, however, mention any Arab obligations clearly.*

- C) U.N. [Security Council] Resolution 242 came as a direct result from the Six-Day War, a land-for-peace deal that still forms the foundation for most discussion. At issue, Israel giving back some territory. In return, guarantees of peace, recognition of sovereignty as a Jewish state. (*CNN: Lou Dobbs Moneyline*, June 5, 2002)

**Accurate (A)**                      Inaccurate (I)  
**Mention (M)**                      Not Mention (N)

*The passage is accurate because it makes clear that Israel's obligation is to give back “some territory” but that it is in conjunction with Arab obligations. (Resolution 242 requires Arab parties to recognize Israel as a sovereign state, but does not say “as a Jewish state”.)*

- D) Having already given up all claims to 78 percent of Palestine, the Palestinians signed the Oslo agreement in the expectation that it would bring an end to Israel’s occupation of the West Bank and Gaza and lead to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. U.N. Resolution 242, which the Oslo agreement promised to implement in full, demands Israel’s withdrawal from these territories. (*Washington Spectator*, February 1, 2002)

Accurate (A)                      **Inaccurate (I)**  
Mention (M)                      **Not Mention (N)**

*The passage is inaccurate because Resolution 242 did not demand Israeli withdrawal from particular pieces of land. It is also inaccurate in that the “78 percent of Palestine” referred to is the State of Israel; neither Resolution 242 nor the 1993 Oslo agreements refer to Arab claims to the Jewish state. Historically, most of the Zionist movement, in the 1920’s, gave up claim to 77 percent of British Mandatory Palestine when the British created Transjordan, now Jordan. Finally, Arab obligations to recognize Israel are not mentioned.*

- E) U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 of Nov. 22, 1967, concluded the war of that year and has been widely acknowledged by all parties to be the basis for a peace agreement. Its key phrases are, “Emphasizing the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war,” and “Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict.” These included the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem, plus lands belonging to Lebanon, Egypt and Syria. (Opinion piece by Jimmy Carter, *The New York Times*, May 25, 2011)

Accurate (A)                      **Inaccurate (I)**  
Mention (M)                      **Not Mention (N)**

*The passage is inaccurate. While the two phrases mentioned are key phrases of Resolution 242, other important parts are omitted, such as: “the need to work for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East” and “acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area” and the right of those countries “to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force.”*

*In choosing only certain phrases of Resolution 242 and misinterpreting them, Jimmy Carter distorts the resolution’s meaning, neglecting to mention Arab obligations to accept Israel as well as Israel’s right to live in peace with secure borders without threats or violence.*

- F) The only United Nations resolution over the years that has proved beneficial to peace was Resolution 242 after the 1967 war. It passed because there was finally recognition that only by demanding that the Arabs accept Israel and agree to secure and recognized borders for the Jewish state can an Israeli withdrawal lead to stability rather than future wars. (Letter to the Editor by Abraham H. Foxman, National Director, Anti-Defamation League, *The New York Times*, September 12, 2011)

Accurate (A)                      Inaccurate (I)  
Mention (M)                      Not Mention (N)

*The passage is accurate because it makes clear that Israel’s obligation to withdraw from territory can only be in conjunction with Arab obligations.*

G) Obama’s formulation is also a restatement of the principles of U.N. Resolution 242, drafted and agreed to by a unanimous vote of the Security Council in 1967 and also agreed to by Israel and almost every nation outside the Arab world. That resolution, which called for the return of territories gained by Israel to Arab if not Palestinian hands, has remained the foundation of negotiated peace cited by every American administration, Republican or Democrat, since then. (Blog by Jay Bookman, *The Atlanta Journal Constitution*, May 20, 2011)

Accurate (A)                      Inaccurate (I)  
Mention (M)                      Not Mention (N)

*The passage is accurate because it is true that Resolution 242 calls for the return of captured territories. It is incomplete, however, making no mention of Arab obligations.*

H) After the Six-Day War of 1967, during which Israel secured control of the West Bank and Gaza, the U.N. Security Council passed Resolution 242. It spoke of Israeli withdrawal from “territories,” but not all territories. Implicit was recognition that the Green Line as border would not provide security for Israel. In no event was Israel required to withdraw prior to negotiations. No reference was made to a Palestinian people or Palestinian state. (Opinion piece by Arlene Kushner, *The Washington Times*, March 12, 2010)

Accurate (A)                      Inaccurate (I)  
Mention (M)                      Not Mention (N)

*The passage is accurate because it discusses Israel’s obligation to withdraw from “territories” (not all territories), and is based on Israel’s security needs. Arab obligations are not specifically mentioned, though it is implied that only when they are willing to negotiate is Israel required to withdraw from “territories.”*

I) Following the 1967 Six-Day War, the United States and Britain co-authored U.N. Security Council Resolution 242. It was adopted after Israel, acting in self-defense, gained the Jordanian-occupied West Bank, among other territories. As explained by U.S. Undersecretary of State Eugene Rostow, “Israel was not to be forced back to the ‘fragile’ and ‘vulnerable’ Armistice Demarcation lines.” British Ambassador Lord Caradon added that 242’s call for Israeli withdrawal “from territories occupied in the recent conflict” did not mean all territories. (Letter to the Editor from Eric Rozenman, Washington Director, CAMERA, *The Washington Times*, July 9, 2010)

Accurate (A)                      Inaccurate (I)  
Mention (M)                      Not Mention (N)

*The passage is accurate because it clarifies Israel’s obligation to withdraw from “territories” but does not mean all territories. However, it does not mention Arab obligations although it does stress that Israel not be forced back to indefensible borders.*

- J) Getting U.N. recognition of Palestinian statehood on 1967 borders would have largely symbolic value, building on previous U.N. decisions. Already Security Council Resolution 242, which followed the Six-Day War, demanded the "withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict". Although Israel disputes the precise meaning of this, there is wide international acceptance that the pre-1967 frontiers should form the basis of a peace settlement. (*BBC News—Q&A: Palestinian Bid for Full Membership at the U.N.*, September 24, 2011)

<u>Accurate (A)</u>	<u>Inaccurate (I)</u>
<u>Mention (M)</u>	<u>Not Mention (N)</u>

*The passage is inaccurate because regardless of “wide international acceptance” it was never a foregone conclusion that a Palestinian state should be based on pre-1967 borders. There were no such borders between Israel and the West Bank or Israel and the Gaza Strip, only the 1949 and 1950 armistice lines with Jordan and Egypt, respectively. In any case, Resolution 242 requires Arab-Israeli negotiations to establish “secure and recognized” boundaries, neither of which the armistice lines satisfied. There is no mention in this passage about Arab obligations.*

- K) U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 of 1967 seemed to leave the door open — calling for "withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict." It avoided use of "the territories" and left everyone to debate whether this meant Israel could keep some areas. (*Associated Press*, May 22, 2011)

<u>Accurate (A)</u>	<u>Inaccurate (I)</u>
<u>Mention (M)</u>	<u>Not Mention (N)</u>

*The passage is partially accurate because it acknowledges that the wording of Resolution 242 leaves room for the option that Israel can keep some territories, but partially inaccurate in saying the resolution allows discussion of this possibility. What can be discussed is how much territory Israel may chose to retain or return, not if it has the option of doing so. Arab obligations are not mentioned in this passage.*