

Chronologies

Chronology of Events in Israel and Palestine

2017 begins with the announcement in January by the recently elected US President Donald Trump to move the US embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. An announcement that, 11 months later, in December, is made final together with Washington's recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital, despite warnings from practically the entire international community. In the diplomatic sphere, the decision leads the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of a Palestinian state and causes friction in the United Nations with the US veto of Egypt's draft resolution submitted to the Security Council to withdraw the recognition, followed by the United Nations General Assembly's vote in favour of the resolution pushed forward by Turkey and Yemen to reaffirm that Jerusalem's future must be resolved through negotiations between the parties. On the street, Donald Trump's decision triggers protests and new episodes of violence in Gaza and the West Bank at the end of the year, which come after the surge in violence mid-year following Israel's decision to install security checks and limit access to the Noble Sanctuary / Temple Mount. The drastic and accelerated change in direction of US policy with respect to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict affects the region's fragile stability – also marked by a rise in tensions between Syria and Israel in the context of the Syrian conflict – and begins to affect the system of the United Nations itself, with announcements from the US and Israel, during the crisis over Jerusalem's status, of their readiness to leave UNESCO, due to its "anti-Israel bias" and for having approved Palestine's membership in 2011. In view of this

scenario, the luke-warm attempt by the US Administration to try to resume the peace process between Israel and Palestine offers no significant progress. The rise in regional and international tensions caused by the new US administration's impulsive politics also contributes to endangering the reconciliation process between Fatah and Hamas that had been making promising progress throughout the year in the context of the electricity supply crisis and unpaid civil servant salaries in the Gaza Strip. This process is sparked by the new political road map adopted by Hamas in May, in a swerve towards more moderate and realistic stances, thereby breaking with the trajectory marked by the founding charter of the Shiite movement in 1988, despite February's election of Yahya Sinwar as the new leader of the Islamic Resistance Movement. The reconciliation process between Palestinian factions continues to be considered as a critical threat to Israel's existence by the Israeli government, who, meanwhile, approves the new Amichai/Emek Shilo settlement in the middle of the West Bank – to provide homes for the evacuees from Amona – and new extensions to existing settlements in East Jerusalem, Ariel, Givat Zeev and Beit El. With regard to West Bank settlements, there is also a major development with February's approval by the Knesset (Parliament) of the Regularization Bill, which will allow the retrospective legalisation of some 4,000 homes in the C Area of the Oslo Accord, but which in August is provisionally suspended by Israel's Supreme Court. As regards Israel's home policy, 2017 is also marked by the opposition of the ultra-orthodox Jews, known as *haredim*, to the legal reform

that makes it compulsory for them to do military service – from which, until recently, they were exempt – and the court investigations linking the Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, his wife Sara and other Likud members to cases of corruption or the government crisis caused by the replacement of the Israel Broadcasting Authority (IBA) with the Israel Broadcasting Corporation (IBC), among other developments.

January 2017

Israel

- On 6 January Israel announces cuts of six million dollars in funds earmarked for the United Nations, in protest against the Security Council's approval, on 23 December 2016, thanks to the US abstention, of a resolution condemning the Israeli settlements in Palestinian territory. This is one of the last measures taken by the Barack Obama presidency, despite pressure from his successor, the Republican Donald Trump and Israel.
- On 22 January Israel approves the construction of 560 new homes in East Jerusalem.
- On 24 January the Defence Minister Avigdor Lieberman reports the approval of 2,500 more homes in the West Bank settlements of Ariel (900 units) and Givat Zeev (652 units), erected right on the Green Line, and in Beit El (100 units), a settlement to which the US President Donald Trump, his new ambassador to Israel David Friedman, and his son-in-law and advisor Jared Kushner, give significant sums of money on a yearly basis, according to the *Haaretz* newspaper.

Palestine

- On 8 January protests intensify in the Gaza Strip against the Hamas government over the frequent cuts in the power supply which in recent months have gone on throughout most of the day. The deficient electricity supply is a constant issue, especially since the only power plant in the strip was forced to shut down in July 2015 for failing to pay taxes to the Palestinian National Authority (PNA).
- On 17 January the Fatah-led PNA agrees on the formation of a national unity government with Hamas, following three days of Russian-brokered negotiations in Moscow. Both organizations are thereby to form a new National Council that will include Palestinians in exile and will organize new elections, the first in which Fatah and Hamas would participate since 2006. It is worth noting that the agreement also includes Islamic Jihad.

Peace Negotiations

- On 15 January Paris hosts an international conference under the auspices of the French government to try to re-launch the Arab-Israeli peace process, with a view to reaching a definitive solution based on the coexistence of both states. With 70 countries in attendance – although without the participation of either Israel or the PNA –, the meeting urges the US's impending Trump administration not to abandon the broad consensus from the international community concerning the conflict and criticizes the intentions of the President-elect Donald Trump to move the US embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

Conflicts between the Parties

- On 18 January a Palestinian is shot dead while attempting to drive into Israeli police during a demonstration following clashes over the demolition of illegally constructed homes in the Bedouin village of Umm al-Hiran, in Negev. In reaction to the demolition works, protests break out led by Palestinian citizens in various places in Israel.

February 2017*Israel*

- On 1 February Israeli forces begin the eviction of the Amona settlement. Ten Israeli police officers are injured in clashes with settlers attempting to prevent the evacuation ordered by the Israeli Supreme Court, which has ruled that the homes were illegally constructed in Palestine territory.
- On 3 February the new Trump administration in the US issues a statement regarding Israel's decision in January to build new settlements and expand existing ones. The statement asserts that while the existence of settlements need not be an impediment to peace, the new constructions or the expansion of already existing ones beyond their current boundaries could be.
- On 6 February the Knesset (Parliament) approves the controversial Regularization Bill with 60 votes in favour and 52 against, in connection with the settlements in occupied Palestinian territory in the West Bank. The text, drafted with the support of the ultra-Orthodox party and member of the government, HaBayit HaYehudi (The Jewish Home) of Naftali Bennett, will enable the retroactive legalisation of some 4,000 homes in settlements in Area C of the Oslo Accord, which is entirely under Israeli control. Under the new bill the properties can then be declared as state-owned in exchange for economic compensation for the Palestinian owners.
- On 9 February several rockets launched from the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula towards the city of Eilat are intercepted by the Iron Dome defence system. This attack coincides with another similar attack carried out from Syria against the Golan Heights, occupied by Israel since 1967, in response to an attack launched against a position close to the Syrian army.
- On 28 February the Israeli police begins evicting the new buildings of the Ofra settlement, illegally constructed on private Palestinian land in the West Bank.

Palestine

- On 13 February after a lengthy and complex process of internal consulta-

tions, Hamas appoints Yahya Sinwar as leader of the movement to replace Ismail Haniyeh. Sinwar founded the Majd section, the intelligence unit of Ezzedeem al-Qassam, Hamas' armed militia, spent 22 years in prison in Israel after being sentenced to life imprisonment for his involvement in various attacks and the murder of Palestinians accused of collaborating with Israel.

- On 26 February, after two days of meetings in Istanbul, the Palestinians Abroad Conference establishes a new political entity to represent the Palestinian diaspora and defend their rights.

Conflicts between the Parties

- On 21 February, in a unprecedented verdict, a military court in Tel Aviv sentences sergeant Elor Azaria to 18 months in prison. for shooting a Palestinian assailant in the head and killing him, while he was lying injured on the floor, on 24 March 2016 in Hebron.

March 2017*Israel*

- On 17 March the Syrian Armed Forces confirm they have shot down an Israeli military jet, coinciding with an attack launched by the Israeli Air Force against targets in Syrian territory, in what would be the most serious incident between both countries since the beginning of the war in Syria. The same day, the Russian Foreign Minister summons the Israeli ambassador in Moscow Gary Koren over the attacks launched by the Israeli Air Force against Syrian army targets close to the town of Palmyra.
- On 19 March the Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu threatens to call early legislative elections if the Israel Broadcasting Corporation (IBC), the new public television broadcaster to replace the old Israel Broadcasting Authority (IBA) begins broadcasting on 30 April, in a crisis with the Finance Minister Moshe Kahlon who accuses him of being reluctant to the existence of the new public body, over which the government would have less control. Netanyahu's political opponents accuse him of using the complaints aimed at the body by employees

over the numerous dismissals arising from the transition from IBA to IBC, as an excuse to deny approval for the new television station.

- On 31 March the Israeli government approves the creation of a new settlement in Amichai, also known as Emek Shilo, to accommodate 42 Jewish families evacuated in early February from the illegal enclave of Amona. This is the first settlement to be newly built in the West Bank in the last 25 years.

Palestine

- On 16 March the Hamas members of the Palestinian Legislative Council in Gaza announce the formation of a committee to manage the Strip's government institutions, led by Abdel Salam Siam, the former secretary general of the Hamas Council of Ministers in Gaza, and comprising seven members, each of whom is appointed to oversee a ministry of the Palestinian unity government.
- On 19 March a Hamas military court hands down death sentences to two drug traffickers from the Gaza Strip.
- On 27 March the spokesman for the Interior Ministry of Gaza Iyad al-Bazem announces the closure of the border between Gaza and Israel "until further notice," while investigations are carried out into the murder, on 24 March in the Tel al-Hawa neighbourhood, of Mazen Fuqaha, the commander of Hamas' armed wing, the Ezzedine al-Qassam Brigades.

Conflicts between the Parties

- On 13 March a Palestinian citizen is shot dead in East Jerusalem by Israeli soldiers after he stabbed and wounded two soldiers.
- On 23 March the Israel Defence Forces shoot down a Palestinian leaving three others wounded during clashes in Beit El, the West Bank, in which the Palestinians had used molotov cocktails against the Israeli soldiers.

April 2017

Israel

- On 17 April some 1,100 Palestinian prisoners – linked mostly with Fatah and,

to a lesser extent, with Hamas and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) – begin a hunger strike in several Israeli prisons led by the former Fatah militia leader Marwan Barghouti, following the failed negotiations with the Israeli Prison Service (IPS) over the restoration of rights withdrawn in recent years and the end of the preventive detention and isolation systems. The measure is interpreted in Israel and certain sectors of Fatah as a demonstration of Barghouti's strength compared with the leadership at the heart of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the PNA. On 27 April a general strike is staged in the Palestinian territories in solidarity with the ongoing prisoner protest.

- On 27 April the Israeli Air Force attacks an arms depot allegedly operated by Hezbollah close to the Damascus airport.

Palestine

- On 6 April, in an unexpected and unprecedented move, the Russian Foreign Minister says he sees West Jerusalem as the future capital of Israel and East Jerusalem as the capital of the Palestinian State.
- On 8 April thousands of Palestinian civil servants take to the streets of Gaza to protest against the pay cuts approved by the PNA and demanding the resignation of the Palestinian Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah and the Finance Minister Shukri Bishara. On 11 April Hamdallah, assures that the pay cut for civil servants in the Gaza Strip – which does not affect civil servants in the West Bank – is a "temporary" measure and that the cuts will be reimbursed. Hamdallah attributes the measure to the economic crisis exacerbated by the blockade Israel continues to impose on the Strip and Hamas' unwavering control over the enclave, which vetoes strategic projects of the Palestinian government, refuses to redistribute taxes among the population or surrender a proportional part to the PNA.
- On 27 April the PNA notifies the Israeli government that it will stop paying for the electricity that Israel supplies the Gaza Strip. The decision, which endangers the precarious economy and medical services in the Strip,

forms part of a series of initiatives adopted by the PNA to force Hamas to assume full responsibility for the territory it governs or surrender control to Ramallah, in light of Hamas' refusal to buy fuel from the PNA for the enclave's only power plant.

May 2017

Israel

- On 22 May roughly 200 Palestinians imprisoned in Israel join the hunger strike declared by another 1,300 prisoners after the Israel Prison Service refuses to negotiate over the prisoners' demands regarding their living conditions, the practice of torture, abuse and medical negligence and the abolition of the so-called administrative detention.
- On 23 May a missile fired from the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt lands in Israeli territory after exploding in the air.
- On 27 May thousands of people demonstrate in Tel Aviv to demand a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- On 27 May the Palestinian prisoners end their hunger strike after reaching an agreement with the government of Israel, the Palestinian Authority and the Red Cross over visiting rights, according to which, from now on, each prisoner can receive a family visit twice a month instead of once.
- On 31 May the Israeli Finance Minister Moshe Kahlon meets with the Palestinian Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah in an unusual visit aimed at presenting Hamdallah with a series of proposals, which include the 24-hour opening of the Allenby Bridge border crossing, an increase in the number of building permits for Palestinians living in Area C of the West Bank and greater development in the industrial areas close to the West Bank cities of Jenin and Hebron.

Palestine

- On 1 May Hamas announces its new political roadmap, which amends the 1988 founding charter and which contemplates "more moderate" positions and the implicit recognition of an Israeli state, while at the same time con-

sidering the establishment of an independent and sovereign Palestinian state, with its capital in Jerusalem and the 1967 borders. The organization thereby renounces its historical position which called for a Palestinian state “from Jordan to the Mediterranean.” Hamas, also breaks its historical ties with the Muslim Brotherhood and continues to restructure its leadership with the appointment of the former Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh, as director of the political office of the Shiite movement. This historic change in direction taken by Hamas comes despite February’s election of Yahya Sinwar as the movement’s new leader, a development which, at the time, was thought to preempt a change towards more radical stances.

- On 25 May Hamas executes two Palestinians by hanging and a third by firing squad, who were convicted of killing one of the heads of the party’s armed wing under Israeli orders.

Peace Negotiations

- On 21 and 22 May on his second stop – following Saudi Arabia – on his first foreign visit as President of the United States, Donald Trump visits Israel and Palestine meeting in Tel Aviv and Bethlehem with Benjamin Netanyahu and Mahmoud Abbas respectively, with the aim of “reviving” the peace process. In this regard, in an interview with the conservative newspaper Israel Hayom, Trump asserts that he is “working very hard to finally achieve peace between the people in Israel and the Palestinians.” For the moment, his electoral promise to transfer the US embassy in Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, a “red line” for the Palestinians, is put on hold.

Conflicts between the Parties

- On 18 May clashes break out near the Kalandia border checkpoint, in the West Bank, between the Israeli security forces and Palestinian demonstrators protesting over the death hours earlier of a Palestinian who was shot by an Israeli settler, whose vehicle had been stoned in Nablus.
- On 19 May a march in support of the Palestinian prisoners on hunger strike

since 17 April ends with multiple episodes of unrest between Palestinian demonstrators and Israeli security forces in the West Bank – especially in Nablus – and the border with the Gaza Strip.

- On 25 May a Palestinian dies two days after being shot down after he stabbed a Border Police officer in Netanya.

June 2017

Israel

- On 10 June Benjamin Netanyahu demands that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) be shut down following the previous day’s discovery of a secret tunnel under one of the organization’s schools in Gaza. UNRWA denies all responsibility and blames the Islamist movement Hamas.
- On 19 June the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announces the beginning of construction of the new Amichai settlement (Emek Shilo), in the West Bank, which will house the 300 settlers evacuated from the Amona settlement. This is the first Israeli settlement built in Palestinian territory in two decades.
- On 25 June Benjamin Netanyahu orders the suspension of the project to establish a common prayer area for men and women at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem.
- On 29 June the parole board of the Maasiyahu prison grants the former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert early release after serving two-thirds of his 27-month prison sentence, handed down for crimes of corruption.

Palestine

- On 5 June the PNA denies that it has not paid the salaries of 47 Hamas MPs on the same day that representatives of the Islamist prisoners accuse it of stopping the salaries of nearly 300 prisoners in Israeli jails.
- On 14 June with the backdrop of the Qatar crisis, Mousa Abu Marzook, Vice-President of Hamas’ political bureau and Hassan Nasrallah, Hezbollah’s Secre-

tary General hold a meeting in Beirut, the latest in a series of meetings in an effort to improve relations for the last two months, which, since 2012, have been especially cold.

- On 15 June at least nine Palestinian websites based outside of the West Bank are blocked inside the territory by order of the PNA’s public prosecutor. The blocked pages include the Palestinian Information Center, the Hamas-linked Shehab news agency and the Voice of Fatah – close to Mohammed Dahlan, the Palestinian MP thrown out of Fatah in 2011.
- On 19 June Nabil Abu Rudeineh, the official spokesman of the Palestinian presidency since the days of the President Yasser Arafat, is unanimously appointed as member of the Fatah Central Committee. The appointment of Abu Rudeineh, a Christian Palestinian from Bethlehem, is the latest example of the unique relationship between Fatah and the Palestinian Christians.
- On 20 June Israel’s national power company begins reducing its supply to the Gaza Strip following a decision by Benjamin Netanyahu’s government, taken at the request of the PNA President, Mahmoud Abbas. The Fatah leader’s request to reduce the payment of the Israeli power supply by 40% comes in the context of its dispute with Hamas, which has controlled Gaza for the last 10 years.
- On 22 June the only power plant in the Gaza Strip resumes operation at a reduced capacity, following a fuel delivery from Egypt.

Peace Negotiations

- On 21 June Jared Kushner, White House advisor and son-in-law of the US President Donald Trump, holds separate meetings with Benjamin Netanyahu and Mahmoud Abbas in an effort to relaunch the peace process.

Conflicts between the Parties

- On 1 June an Israeli soldier is wounded close to the Israeli settlement of Mevo Dotan after being stabbed with a screwdriver by a Palestinian teenager, who dies the following day from the bullet wounds he received in response.

- On 6 June a man identified as Mohamed Taha, is shot dead by an Israeli security guard during clashes between police and demonstrators at a protest in Kafr Qasim.
- On 16 June an Israeli police officer is stabbed to death in Jerusalem in an action that Daesh claims responsibility for and is praised by various Palestinian factions. Should such a claim be confirmed, denied by Hamas, which asserts that two of the authors were members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the third belonged to the Islamist movement controlling Gaza, this would be Daesh's first attack in Israel. Virtually simultaneously and just 100 metres away, two other Palestinians open fire and attempt to stab several police officers. The attack, which causes minor injuries ends with the death of the attackers, shot down by security officers. In response, Benjamin Netanyahu orders the cancellation of visiting permits for Palestinians planning to meet relatives from the occupied territories.
- On 19 June the Israel Defense Forces shoot and kill a Palestinian man armed with a knife who was allegedly attempting to stab several soldiers at the Kalandia checkpoint.

July 2017

Israel

- On 10 July Avi Gabbai wins in the second round of the primary elections to lead the Israeli Labor Party, gaining 52% of the votes, against Amir Peretz's 47%. With a 59% turnout of the 52,502 registered members, Gabbai is victorious despite not having the support of the party apparatus and not being an MP –which means that Isaac Herzog, who was defeated in the first round, will continue as leader of Labor's parliamentary opposition-
- On 12 July the Israeli military court in Ofer, the West Bank, sentences Khalida Jarrar, member of the Palestinian Legislative Council, to six months of administrative detention over links with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, after arresting him at the beginning of the month during a raid in Ramallah.

- On 26 July the Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu threatens to close down the Jerusalem offices of the Qatari television news network al-Jazeera for inciting the rise in violence.

Peace Negotiations

- On 9 July Mahmoud Abbas meets with the Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi in Cairo, to study a possible relaunch of the peace talks between Palestinians and Israelis based on the co-existence of the two states. Abbas informs al-Sisi of the initiative of the US President Donald Trump to push the peace process forward, as well as the Israeli actions on the ground, which include settlement construction. The meeting comes days after a Hamas delegation travels to the Egyptian capital to talk about improving bilateral relations – which have deteriorated since the overthrow in July 2013 of the Islamist Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi and to address the Palestinian reconciliation process.

Conflicts between the Parties

- On 12 July two Palestinians are killed during clashes with the Israeli army during a raid of the Jenin refugee camp, in the West Bank. 39 Palestinian citizens have now been killed in clashes with Israeli security forces since the year began.
- On 14 July two Israeli police officers are killed and a third injured at the hands of three Palestinians in an attack on the entrance to the Noble Sanctuary / Temple Mount in the Old City of Jerusalem. Following the murders, the Israeli authorities decide to install metal detectors at the entrances to the Noble Sanctuary / Temple Mount, a measure that increases protests and clashes with the Muslim community.
- On 17 July dozens of faithful Muslims clash with members of the Israeli security forces at the Lions' Gate in the Old City of Jerusalem.
- On 18 July at least 14 Palestinians are injured in fresh clashes between Muslims and the Israeli police in the proximity of the Noble Sanctuary / Temple Mount.
- On 21 July three Palestinians are killed and almost 500 injured in major

unrest in East Jerusalem and on the border between Israel and Gaza, following the Friday prayers, when the Palestinian factions had called upon their supporters to face up to the Israeli soldiers.

- On 25 July the Israeli government decides to remove the metal detectors which they had installed at the entrance to the Noble Sanctuary / Temple Mount of the Old City of Jerusalem.
- On 27 July at least 96 people are injured in new clashes in the Noble Sanctuary / Temple Mount between Palestinians and Israeli security forces, when thousands of Muslims turn up for prayers following the withdrawal of the special security measures established by Israel.
- On 28 July the Israeli police force announces that it will prohibit access to men under the age of 50 to Friday prayers in the Noble Sanctuary / Temple Mount, following the recent escalation in tension.
- On 29 July Israel lifts all access restrictions to the Noble Sanctuary / Temple Mount. The authorities also carry out a raid on the offices of various Arab media outlets and a Ramallah producer for an alleged crime of inciting hatred.

August 2017

Israel

- On 6 August the Israeli Communications Minister Ayoob Kara announces that he is revoking the credentials of journalists from the al-Jazeera television station and will proceed with the closure of their offices in Israel after the Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu accuses the Qatari media outlet of inciting violence against Israel during its coverage of the latest crisis at the Noble Sanctuary / Temple Mount.
- On 18 August the controversial law on illegal enclaves in the West Bank, passed in February in the Israeli Parliament and which gives the government authority to expropriate private land from Palestinian citizens in exchange for economic compensation, is provisionally suspended by order of the Supreme Court.
- On 31 August Israeli security forces carry out a raid on a Palestinian broad-

caster in Hebron, the al-Hurriya Media Company that manages the Manbar al-Hurriya radio station and al-Nauras television station, which are then shut down for a period of six months accused of inciting terrorism.

Palestine

- On 17 August at least two people are killed in clashes on the Gaza Strip between Hamas and Salafi militants also operating in the neighbouring Egyptian Sinai.

Peace negotiations

- On 23 August three advisors of the US President Donald Trump, including his son-in-law Jared Kushner, begin a tour of the Middle East to try to unblock the frozen peace process between Israelis and Palestinians. Travelling with Kushner are the White House's Special Envoy to the Middle East Jason Greenblatt and Trump's Deputy National Security Adviser Dina Powell.

Conflicts between the Parties

- On 19 August the Israeli police kill a young Palestinian who had attacked a checkpoint in Zotara, in the north of the West Bank, armed with a knife.

September 2017

Israel

- On 3 September the Israeli government approves 14 million euros to resume construction of the new Amichai settlement in the West Bank, work on which had been suspended for two months due to insufficient funds.
- On 3 September David Sharan, former cabinet chief of the Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is identified as a suspect in the court investigation known as Case 3000 over the suspected bribery in the purchase of German submarines for the Israeli navy.
- On 5 September Israel begins 11 days of military exercises in the north of the country, the largest scale manoeuvres since 1998, coinciding with the advance in Syria of the axis formed

by Bashar al-Assad's regime, Hezbollah and Iran, and after the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warns that Israel will not allow the creation of missile factories in Lebanon, or an Iranian presence on the Israeli-Syrian border.

- On 7 September the Syrian army accuses Israel of attacking the Syrian Scientific Studies and Research Centre, in Masyaf, Hama, from Lebanese aerospace, which, according to Israeli analysts could be a chemical weapons and missile plant. Israel neither confirms nor denies the information about an attack which, as in previous similar cases, would be aimed at destroying Iranian weapons, some of which would be destined for Hezbollah.
- On 8 September the Israeli Public Prosecutor Avichai Mandelblit charges Sara Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister's wife, with alleged fraud and abuse of public funds, in the investigation known as the "meals-ordering affair" into the excessive spending at the Prime Minister's official residence in Jerusalem. This comes after the news in August, according to which the Israeli police has publicly recognized the existence of a criminal probe into Benjamin Netanyahu under suspicion of bribery, fraud and abuse of power.

Palestine

- On 11 September the chief of Hamas' armed wing Ismail Haniyeh asserts that the group is prepared for a reconciliation process with Fatah without preconditions.
- On 17 September in response to the Egyptian mediation's call for dialogue with Fatah, Hamas announces that it will dismantle its Administrative Committee, in operation in the Gaza Strip since March. Hamas created the Administrative Committee in light of what it considered a complete absence of attention from the Palestinian unity government, set up in 2014. Fatah considers the committee as a shadow government. Hamas also announces that it will accept the holding of general elections in the PNA, which would be the first since 2006 in which Hamas won in Gaza, sparking the long showdown with Fatah, which governs in the

West Bank. The Shiite movement's decision comes after the 40% cuts in payments for the Israeli power supply decreed by the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

- On 27 September despite Israeli opposition, the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) approves Palestine's entry as a member state of the organism during its 86th General Assembly held in Beijing.

Conflicts between the Parties

- On 26 September two Israeli security guards and an Israeli police officer are killed and another police officer injured in an armed attack carried out by a Palestinian man at the entrance to the Israeli Har Adar settlement, close to Jerusalem. The Palestinian is shot dead by Israeli security officers.

October 2017

Israel

- On 12 October Israel announces that its Air Force has attacked a Syrian anti-aircraft battery which had previously fired a missile at Israeli jets on a reconnaissance mission over Lebanon.
- On 15 October the Israeli army reports the launch of two rockets from Syria into Israeli territory, with warning sirens sounding in the regional council of Eshkol, close to the Gaza Strip.
- On 17 October the Israeli army raids and shuts down eight Palestinian media outlets in the West Bank, accused of inciting violence against Israel.
- On 19 October hundreds of ultra-Orthodox Jews block various streets in Jerusalem in protest against the application of the military service law, which is compulsory for all Israeli citizens, and the recent arrest of conscientious objectors from their community.

Palestine

- On 3 October the PNA government holds its first meeting in the Gaza Strip since 2014, in an act that symbolizes the re-establishment of the PNA's con-

trol two weeks after Hamas announced the dismantlement of its Committee, which had been governing the Strip. The Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu criticizes the reconciliation initiative, believing that a rapprochement between Fatah and Hamas will come at the “cost of the existence” of Israel.

- On 10 October the Commissioner General of the UN's support agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) Pierre Krähenbühl warns the European Parliament that the situation in the Gaza Strip is “a timebomb” and calls for support to cover the 77 million dollars the agency needs to continue its aid operations for Palestinian refugees in 2017.
- On 10 October representatives of Fatah and Hamas begin new negotiations in Cairo for national reconciliation.
- On 12 October Hamas and Fatah take a further step towards national reconciliation in Cairo, with an agreement for the Rafah border crossing, which joins the Gaza Strip with Egypt, to be controlled by Fatah as of 1 November. The unity government will also deploy its own security forces – some 3,000 officers – in the Strip before the year's end. Both factions set a two-month deadline to address the pending problems, which include the control of the Islamists' weapons arsenal and Israel.

Conflicts between the Parties

- On 9 October the Israeli army fires at a Hamas target in the Gaza Strip in retaliation to the previous day's launch of a rocket from the Palestinian enclave into Israeli territory.
- On 31 October at least seven Palestinians are killed in an Israeli airstrike on a tunnel in the south of the Gaza Strip.

November 2017

Israel

- On 2 November 100 years has passed since the Balfour Declaration, the British document which, during World War I explicitly outlined London's

support of a “national home” for the Jewish people in Palestine and which, 30 years later, would take the shape of Resolution 181 in the United Nations General Assembly of 29 November 1947, under which it was proposed to divide Palestine into two states, one Arab and another Jewish.

- On 8 November the UK International Development Minister Priti Patel hands in her resignation after it comes to light that she held a series of private and unauthorised meetings with senior Israeli officials, including Benjamin Netanyahu, during her holiday to the country in August.
- On 18 November Israel issues evacuation orders for 300 Bedouins from Jabal al-Baba, as part of Tel Aviv's Corridor E1 urban development plan.
- On 26 November the Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reaches an agreement with the ultra-Orthodox parties to put an end to the crisis sparked by the resignation of the Health Minister Yaakov Litzman after the government gave permission to workers in charge of repairing a train track in the south of the country in the middle of Shabbat, the Jewish day of rest.
- On 27 November the Israeli army announces that Tamir-Adir, the naval version of its Iron Dome air defence system is already operational.
- On 29 November 18 ultra-Orthodox Jews are arrested in Jerusalem during a new protest against their recruitment into the army.

Palestine

- On 1 November Hamas hands over official control of its border posts to the PNA, in the context of the national reconciliation process.
- On 8 November the PNA announces it is resuming coordination with Israel for security in the West Bank, which has been frozen since June due to the installation of metal detectors at the entrances to the Noble Sanctuary / Temple Mount
- On 18 November the US confirms that it will not certify that the PLO meets the conditions needed for its delegation in Washington to remain open, following the Palestinian organization's request to bring Israel before the International Criminal Court (TPI).

December 2017

Israel

- On 2 December various Arab media report that Israeli fighter jets have fired missiles from Lebanese airspace at Syrian army targets close to Damascus. The main target of the attack is an Iranian military base close to al-Qiswa.
- On 4 December Israeli jets attack areas of the Jamaraya region, close to Damascus and which include a scientific research centre and weapons stores of the regime and its allies.
- On 7 December the UN Security Council meets following the request of eight of its 15 members to address the status of Jerusalem after the US President Donald Trump's announcement two days before that Washington recognizes the city as the Israeli capital and the consequent move of the embassy in Tel Aviv to the city that both Israel and Palestine claim as their capital. On 10 December the Arab League condemns Trump's decision and calls upon him to withdraw it. The Vatican also condemns the decision of the US President. The EU abstains from condemning the decision, essentially due to Hungary and the Czech Republic's reluctance, but at the same time rules out moving its delegations in Israel to Jerusalem. For his part, the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, on an official visit in the Union, says that he is confident that both the EU and its Member States will end up following the US's initiative.
- On 9 December a massive march in Tel Aviv protests against government corruption and the cases affecting the Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, under investigation for fraud and bribery. The demonstration comes during the mobilizations that different social leaders have called to oppose a draft law in progress to limit the capacity of the police regarding recommendations to try public officials. There are also protests in Jerusalem, Nahariya, Hadera, Afula, Netanya, Rishon LeZion, Modiin, and Beer Sheva. Netanyahu is a suspect in two criminal investigations, Case 1000 – into alleged gifts the Prime Minister and his family received – and 2000 – into an alleged deal between Netanyahu and the owner of the Yediot Aharonot

newspaper Arnon Mozes to reduce the circulation of his main competitor Israel Hayom, in exchange for favouring the government in its news coverage –.

- On 10 December a police investigation is opened involving the Likud member David Bitan, suspected of bribery, money laundering, fraud and abuse of trust.

- On 18 December the US vetoes a resolution in the UN Security Council submitted by Egypt and which calls for the country to withdraw its recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital and the transfer of its embassy to Jerusalem from Tel Aviv.

- On 21 December Israel dismantles a Hamas cell planning to kidnap the Likud MP Yehuda Glick and Israeli army spokesman Avichai Adrai.

- On 21 December Israel announces plans to build three new settlements in Jordan Valley with capacity for 10,000 people and to expand existing settlements, although, for the time being, no authorization has been given and there are no funds for the construction.

- On 22 December the United Nations General Assembly votes in favour of the resolution put forward by Turkey and Yemen which reaffirms that the future of Jerusalem should be resolved through negotiations, despite opposition from Israel and the United States.

- On 23 December the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu orders the Israeli ambassador to UNESCO Carmel Shama-Hacohen to formalize the request to leave the body, which will enter into force on 31 December 2018. Israel thereby joins the US, which also announces its readiness to leave UNESCO over its "anti-Israel bias."

Palestine

- On 13 December in response to America's decision to move its embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, the representatives of the 57 members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, meeting in Turkey, declare East Jerusalem as the capital of the Palestinian State.

- On 21 December Hamas says the Palestinian reconciliation agreement

signed with Fatah has failed, after the persistent divisions between both groups worsen with the US decision to recognize Jerusalem as the Israeli capital. For its part, the United Nations warns of the great risk of a new war in the region in light of the reconciliation process' definitive failure.

Conflicts between the Parties

- On 8 December a Day of Rage begins, leading to several days of unrest in Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza, amid protests to denounce the US recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

- On 10 December a security guard is stabbed and wounded by a young Palestinian, who is later arrested, close to a bus station in the centre of Jerusalem.

- On 12 December two Palestinians riding a motorcycle are killed in an Israeli airstrike close to Beit Lahia, in the north of the Gaza Strip. The Israeli attack comes after the Israeli army intercepts a new missile launched into southern Israel from Gaza.

- On 15 December more than 880 Palestinians are injured by shots fired by Israeli forces in a new day of protests in Gaza and the West Bank against the decision of the US President Donald Trump to declare Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

- On 18 December the Israel Defense Forces attack a Hamas training camp in the Gaza Strip, in response to missiles launched hours before from the Palestinian territory, as part of an escalation in tensions over the US recognition of Jerusalem as the Israeli capital.

- On 18 December, in the West Bank village of Nabi Salih, the Israeli army arrests Ahd Tamimi, a Palestinian activist who starred in a viral video in which she is hitting Israeli soldiers during one of the protests in the village, which take place each Friday against the Israeli occupation.

- On 19 December the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Raad al-Hussein, asks Israel to open an investigation into the "incomprehensible" death from Israeli gunfire on 15 December of Abu Thuraye, a

wheelchair-bound Palestinian demonstrator, during a protest against the recognition of Jerusalem as the Israeli capital by the US.

- On 22 December at least two Palestinians are shot dead by Israeli police and a further 690 left injured in clashes in the Palestinian territories during another Friday of Rage, which comes after the UN General Assembly votes against the US for recognizing Jerusalem as capital of Israel.

- On 30 December the Israeli air force reports an attack on Hamas positions in the Gaza Strip in response to rocket launches the previous day from the Palestinian enclave towards Israeli territory.

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