

# The UNITED NATIONS

The UNITED NATIONS (or UN) formed on June 26, 1945, when fifty countries signed its charter in San Francisco. The UN's goal is to preserve world peace through diplomacy.

One of the UN's first tasks was to create Arab and Jewish states from a British-controlled area in the Middle East called Palestine. After the Holocaust, many Jews sought a homeland to call their own. In 1948, by UN mandate, the state of ISRAEL was officially formed. The region that was formerly called Palestine had a mainly Muslim Arab population that was not happy with a new Jewish state taking control.

Neighboring Arab countries attacked the newly formed Israel in 1948, but Israel fought back hard. Thousands of Palestinian Arabs fled the area and sought refuge in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, two Arab-controlled lands. Arab forces attacked again in 1967, and this time Israel gained control of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and parts of Syria and Egypt.

The conflict between Palestine and Israel continues to this day.