



BRIEFING No. 2

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ISRAEL'S CONTRAVENTIONS OF THE UN CHARTER

By Dr. David Morrison

Article 2.4 of the UN Charter states:

“ All [UN] Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations. ”

Throughout its existence as a state, Israel has contravened this Article of the UN Charter on many occasions, by threatening or using force against its neighbours – and relentlessly expanded the area under its control.

In November 1947, the UN General Assembly proposed that Palestine be partitioned. If Jewish leaders had accepted this UN partition plan, Israel would today consist of about 56% of the land area of Palestine, and Jerusalem would be under international control. That 's what the UN General Assembly recommended in Resolution 181, passed on 29 November 1947. But Jewish leaders didn't accept this partition plan.

Instead, the area allocated by the UN General Assembly for a Jewish state was expanded by force to include 78% of Palestine, even though at the time Jews made up only about a third of the population of Palestine as a whole and owned a mere 6% of the land. To ensure that Jews were numerically dominant in the new Jewish state, nearly all the Arabs — around 750,000 — were expelled from it into the rest of Palestine and the surrounding Arab states, where they and their descendants live today. Over 500 Arab villages were destroyed so that those expelled had no homes to return to.

In October 1956, Israel entered into a secret arrangement with the UK and France, who wished to seize the Suez Canal from Egypt. Under this arrangement, Israel invaded Egypt and by so doing provided the pretext for the UK and France to “intervene” and occupy the Canal Zone, ostensibly to protect the Canal. The conspirators were forced to withdraw by the US. This action was contrary to Article 2.4 of the UN Charter.

In June 1967, Israel attacked Egypt, Jordan and Syria, forcibly occupying the remaining 22% of Palestine (the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Gaza), plus portions of Egyptian territory (the Sinai Peninsula) and Syrian territory (the Golan Heights). These actions were contrary to Article 2.4 of the UN Charter.

The Sinai remained under Israeli military occupation until the Camp David Accords over a decade later. The West Bank and Gaza remain under Israeli military occupation today. The Golan Heights and East Jerusalem were subsequently annexed.

Israel proceeded to build Jewish settlements in the areas it occupied, contrary to Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. It has continued to do so despite Security Council demands (in resolutions 446, 452 and 465) that it cease building settlements and remove those it has built.

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Likewise, Israel has refused to comply with Security Council demands that it reverse its annexation of East Jerusalem (in resolutions 252, 267, 271, 298, 476 and 478) and of the Golan Heights (in resolution 497).

Israel has also refused to comply with the ruling of the International Court of Justice in July 2004 that it “cease forthwith the works of construction of the wall being built in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, to dismantle forthwith the structure therein situated and to repeal or render ineffective forthwith all legislative and regulatory acts relating thereto ”.

More than 40 years later, the West Bank and Gaza remain under Israeli military control, the building of Jewish settlements on occupied Arab land continues apace, East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights remain annexed – and the Wall lengthens daily.

In 1978, and again in 1982, it attacked Lebanon and occupied parts of it militarily until 2000. These actions were contrary to Article 2.4 of the UN Charter. For over 20 years, it ignored the Security Council demand (in resolution 425, passed on 19 March 1978) that called upon it “immediately to cease its military action against Lebanese territorial integrity and withdraw forthwith its forces from all Lebanese territory ”. It finally withdrew its ground forces from Lebanon (apart from Shebaa Farms), because of military pressure from Hezbollah.



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Israel 's use of force, and threat to use force, contrary to Article 2.4 of the UN Charter, continues unabated. On 6 September 2007, an Israeli aircraft entered Syrian airspace and bombed a building allegedly housing a nuclear facility; Israeli aircraft regularly enter Lebanese airspace and violate Lebanese sovereignty; and hardly a day passes without a member of the Israeli government threatening to attack Iran – all actions that are contrary to Article 2.4 of the UN Charter.

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