

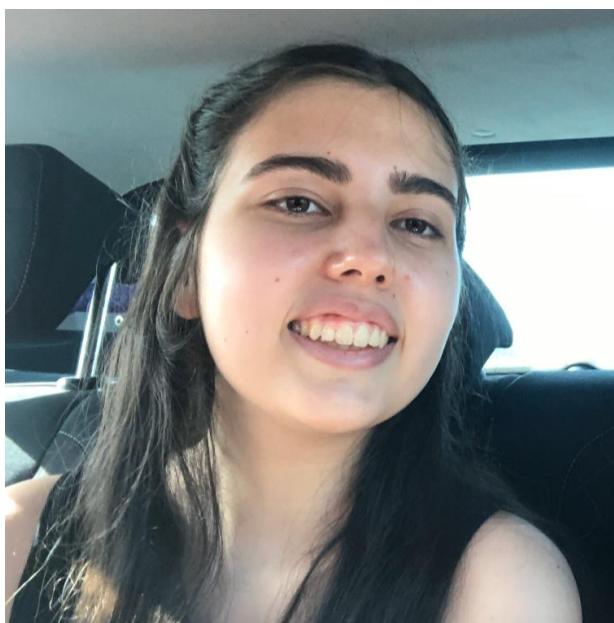
Israeli-Palestine Interview

By Helena Drzazga

This month we are taking a closer look at the Israeli-Palestine conflict, that is happening for centuries now. We asked young adults from Israel and Palestine, for their perspectives and views on this situation. We want to know what youth thinks and to hear fresh opinions.

QUESTION: Could you tell me a little about yourself?

ISRAEL : I am Agam. I am 16 years old. I was born here in Israel, and my whole family is Israeli. I haven't lived here my whole life. In fact, I lived in Poland for the majority of my life. However, I love Israel, it is really important to me and my whole family lives here.



PALESTINE: I am 30 years old, I was born and raised in Halifax and my ethnic origins is Pakistan Kashmir.



QUESTION: What are the roots of the conflict?

I: In general, Israel's many, many conflicts start with a religious background. It is a giant problem. “We think this is our land”, “No, we think this is *our* land”. I think because it is religious it causes so much more of a problem. Religion is not something we agree about. It is just something that we live with. When I believe in this and you believe in that, it is okay. However, when it is a reason why two countries are in constant war it is a big, big problem. This specific conflict that just happened is more of Israel's fault. Israel has a lot of faults, and the government has a lot of faults. I believe a lot of this comes from Israel, which is not taking care of all of its citizens, especially those who live in the Gaza strip. The Gaza Strip is in horrible condition, and no one is taking care of it, no one is making sure that all citizens are okay. I think the root of it is that the government is not paying enough attention.

P: The root of the conflict, I believe, is Zionism. Zionism is the ideology of creating and developing a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Everyone has the right to a homeland but the issue is when it is at the expense of others.

QUESTION: What do you think of your opponents?

I: They are really scary, of course, it is scary. Especially when you live in Israel, and you are here. My opponents are basically every country that surrounds Israel. It is like a constant fear that one of those big countries can attack us at any time.

P: Firstly to clarify, who the opponent is, anyone who is carrying out injustice or oppression, they are the opponent, anyone who does not value human life they are the opponent, whether that is the Israeli regime, oppressing Palestinians, the Indian Modi establishment in Kashmir or the Saudi Arabians oppression and aggression in Yemen.

QUESTION: Is homeland or peace between the nations more important to you?

I: Peace. For sure peace. I don't think I need to explain it. I just want peace, not only between Israel and people living outside of it. I want peace for people who live in between. You know the Arabic people that live in Israel, they live in horrible conditions as well. Not only in the Gaza Strip, just in general. I just want a perfect world!

P: Peace is the most important objective, no money, no land, no holy place is above the life of a human.

QUESTION: Do you think that the government or the media are creating even more problems? In other words, are they aggravating the conflict?

I: Definitely. When you read and watch the news all you can see is different perspectives. Everyone claims to have a new perspective, and people on the news start to argue who is right. And what keeps happening when there is a big conflict, for example a war, is that the media starts to show people hurting Arabic citizens, devastating their shops, saying “No more Arabic citizens”. And I cannot believe you would show this on TV. I agree to spread awareness, but say „this is bad, this shouldn’t be happening”. Leaving it without any comment might be perceived as a positive thing. I just don’t get it, it is so horrible!

P: In all honesty, the biased coverage by the media and elected representatives of the issues happening in Palestine, fuelled and contributed before, but in today's age where everyone has access to social media, and the people on the ground can record and share first-hand experiences, this has helped change the narrative.

QUESTION: Do you think that HAMAS is a terrorist organization?

I: I do. I don't know, maybe it is just because I was taught that, but this is just how I see them.

P: Hamas to many nations in the west is a terrorist organization, but to the people of Gaza, who are currently undergoing a land sea and air blockade, they have democratically voted for them, they are their elected representatives. I DO NOT agree with their strategies and tactics, the same way I do not agree with the strategies or foreign policy of other countries.

QUESTION: Do you think that involving a third party such as the UN is a good idea to resolve the conflict?

I: I think it is great when there is a third perspective. We obviously can't solve it alone. Right now, it is just people screaming at each other. The only way to solve this is when someone else intervenes and starts making peace.

P: All the UN is doing is offering words of condemnation, no further action has been carried, Israel is clearly committing International war crimes and human rights violations, the illegal settlements the bombing of the most densely populated area in the world, where are the sanctions, where are the UN peacekeepers, the issue is the nations that fall part of the Security Council such as the US, are always vetoing any motion to bring change.

QUESTION: This conflict is very complex. What are the most common misconceptions that you have had contact with?

I: I've heard a lot of stuff. When I receive new information, I try to ask myself: is that true? I often think it is a misconception, but what if I was just taught to think that? There are so many perspectives coming at you, so you can't ever be sure. I hear one person saying that this is not a war; it is just Israel dominating and controlling other areas.

P: The most common misconception that I've had experience with, is that people believe it's a conflict, this is not a conflict. A conflict would suggest equal powers having a fight or war, where one side is the clear aggressor, land grabbing, murdering of children, ethnic cleansing, apartheid walls, blockades, police brutality, genocide is all ongoing in Palestine today.

I really don't see it like that. I don't even think that this conflict was started by us. Everyone that I see is like, "Finally, the world will see who started!" But nobody cares who started. It started such a long time ago that I don't believe there is a bad and a good guy anymore.

QUESTION: Do you think there is a solution that can satisfy both parties?

I: I wish there was. If there is any, it would be shared territory. No Palestinian, no Israeli, just shared by everyone. But I don't see that happening any time soon. Everyone just wants it. Without thinking about the other side.

P: In all honesty, I don't know, too much land has been stolen, too many illegal settlements have been developed, too much blood has been spilt, before a solution can be found the aggression and oppression would need to be seized.

QUESTION: What scenario are you hoping for?

I: I just want peace. I want everyone to be and feel safe, especially the Arabic citizens in Israel. That's what worries me the most right now, because it is a terrifying way to live, to live in a country that is racist towards you. Israel is chaotic. I don't know if you know this but, today, 25% of the government is from the Arabic party.

P: I am hoping for Palestine to be free, this means, for the indigenous people to have a right to return, a right to their land back. For all nations and all people to have the right to worship and live without fear as they did before 1948. Jerusalem to be a place where all people can worship at their respective holy places, as they did before the aggression and oppression began.

I really hope that the new government will change something. So, hopefully, there will be a change.



Helena Drzazga

Hi! My name is Helena, and I am 17 years old high school student. I am editor in chief of GAM Times. My goal is to spread awareness among youth, mainly on human rights and politics. In my free time you can find me in an art gallery, cinema or fighting for equality.
