



ON: UN Security Council, Resolution 242

After the 1967 Six-Day War

In the aftermath of the Six-Day War, Israel offered to exchange the newly acquired territories (with its 750,000 Palestinian inhabitants) for peace with the Arab states. Moshe Dayan famously said, Jerusalem was waiting only for a telephone call from Arab leaders to start negotiations.

The Arab states, however, were not remotely interested in peace. In the fall of 1967, eight Arab heads of state attended a meeting in Khartoum. At this summit, Arab leaders reached a consensus on their relationship with Israel: *No peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel and no negotiations with Israel.*

A few months after the 1967 meeting in Khartoum, the UN Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 242. (See other side for full text.) This resolution established the principles that have continued to guide Arab-Israeli negotiations. The ultimate goal of 242 was the achievement of a “peaceful and accepted settlement.” This means a negotiated agreement based on the resolution’s principles rather than one imposed upon the parties.

The Heart of Resolution 242

At its core, Resolution 242 calls for a “just and lasting peace in which every State in the area can live in security.” The phrase “every State in the area” includes Israel.

Resolution 242 affirms that fulfilling Charter principles requires the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East that includes the following principles:

- “(i) Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict;
- (ii) Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force.”

Significantly, the language used in the first principle lacks the direct article “the” before the word “territories.” Resolution 242 does not require Israel to withdraw from “the territories” only from “territories” occupied in the 1967 war. This indicates the desire of the resolution’s drafters to see negotiations leading to a “just and lasting” peace based on the second principle, which calls upon the Arab states to terminate their state of war against Israel.

Thus the “land for peace” formula governing all Israeli-Arab peace efforts was born. Israel accepts Resolution 242 as the basis for a negotiated settlement with the Palestinians and Arab states.



United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 (November 22, 1967)

The Security Council,

Expressing its continuing concern with the grave situation in the Middle East,

Emphasizing the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war and the need to work for a just and lasting peace in which every State in the area can live in security,

Emphasizing further that all Member States in their acceptance of the Charter of the United Nations have undertaken a commitment to act in accordance with Article 2 of the Charter.

1. Affirms that the fulfillment of Charter principles requires the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East which should include the application of both the following principles:

(i) Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict;

(ii) Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force;

2. Affirms further the necessity:

(a) For guaranteeing freedom of navigation through international waterways in the area;

(b) For achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem;

(c) For guaranteeing the territorial inviolability and political independence of every State in the area, through measures including the establishment of demilitarized zones;

3. Requests the Secretary-General to designate a Special Representative to proceed to the Middle East to establish and maintain contacts with the States concerned in order to promote agreement and assist efforts to achieve a peaceful and accepted settlement in accordance with the provisions and principles in this resolution;

4. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the Security Council on the progress of the efforts of the Special Representative as soon as possible.