The issue of Palestinian genocide and its impact on regional stability

The Gaza war

The Gaza war, between [Israel](https://www.britannica.com/place/Israel) and Palestinian militants, especially [Hamas](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Hamas) and the [Palestinian Islamic Jihad](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Palestinian-Islamic-Jihad) (PIJ), that began on October 7, 2023.

The first major conflict between Israel and Hamas, which included Israeli air strikes and a ground invasion, took place at the end of 2008. Hostilities continued to break out, most notably in 2012, 2014, and 2021. Among the factors complicating those hostilities were the high [population density](https://www.britannica.com/science/population-density) of the Gaza Strip.These conflicts were devastating for the Gaza Strip and came at a high human cost for Gaza’s civilians. Many civilians were massacred in Gaza, 50,000 recorded deaths, from October 7th 2023 to January 2025, when a ceasefire deal was achieved and implemented.

Many officials in Israel’s defense establishment maintained that Hamas had been effectively deterred by years of conflict and that an occasional flare-up of violence would be manageable. On October 7 the error of that assumption became clear. Ongoing violence in the West Bank, political turmoil at home, and simmering tensions with [Hezbollah](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Hezbollah) in Lebanon were among the distractions that left Israel unprepared.

Iran

Iran is a key stakeholder in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Tehran does not have a deciding vote on the outcome of the current war in Gaza, but it does have plenty of capacity to shape the future course of the conflict. Iran is, after all, among the top backers of Hamas, both in terms of diplomatic support and as a supplier of military materiel and knowhow.

Iran’s current regional agenda, carried out via a network of pro-Iran Arab militant proxies, requires a common foe, and armed opposition to Israel serves that purpose.

Iran has had a far greater impact by acting as a supplier of weaponry during periods of Israeli-Palestinian armed conflict, when there is no prospect for a political process. Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and other Arab movements like Hezbollah and the Houthis all owe their military prowess and capabilities to Iran.

Iran has tried to use the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza to consolidate its influence in the Middle East through its sway over proxy militias in the region, say analysts.

Jordan

Jordanians of all walks of life have watched the relentless war in Gaza with deepening alarm. By latest count, at least [38,000 Palestinians](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/longform/2023/10/9/israel-hamas-war-in-maps-and-charts-live-tracker) have been killed, most of whom were civilians. As Israel’s assault continues, Jordanian government officials fear a further [deterioration](https://arabcenterdc.org/resource/from-gaza-to-the-syrian-border-jordan-is-increasingly-in-the-line-of-fire/) in Jordan’s own security, especially as a broader regional struggle between Israel and Iran seems to put Jordan too in its crosshairs.

The Israel-Hamas war in Gaza threatens to undermine Jordan’s domestic and regional goals, including intensifying the kingdom’s concerns over its control of its own borders.

But the Gaza war has [deepened](https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/jordan-fears-crossfire-if-gaza-war-pulls-iran-into-wider-conflict-2023-10-31/) long standing regime concerns about Iranian machinations in the region including the influence of Iranian-backed militias in Iraq and of [Hezbollah forces](https://www.newarab.com/news/hezbollah-deploys-700-fighters-near-syrias-golan-heights) operating in Syria.

The January [drone attack](https://www.reuters.com/world/biden-says-three-us-service-members-killed-drone-attack-us-forces-jordan-2024-01-28/) by Iranian-backed militias in Iraq on Tower 22, a US military base strategically close to both the Syrian and Iraqi borders, killed three US soldiers and alarmed Jordan. In April, concerns increased when Jordanian forces shot down [a barrage of missiles and drones](https://apnews.com/article/strait-of-hormuz-vessel-33fcffde2d867380e98c89403776a8ac) that Iran fired toward Israel.

Egypt

The Gaza war has Egypt on edge, as Cairo contemplates the humanitarian catastrophe on its eastern border and worries about spillover at home. Since fighting began, Egyptian leaders have feared that Israeli operations will forcibly displace hundreds of thousands of Palestinians into the Sinai Peninsula.

Syria

In a matter of days, Syrian rebels captured the major city of Aleppo, seized additional territory in the surrounding countryside, and refocused international attention on what was the mostly dormant Syrian civil war.

Yet events in Syria are linked to a series of upheavals in the Middle East over the past year, beginning with the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza. Collectively, they have destabilized the region and helped create the opening for HTS fighters to launch their offensive last week.

Lebanon

Israel escalated its campaign against Iran-backed Lebanese armed group Hezbollah. Its main focus had been southern Lebanon, aiming to weaken the group’s capacity to launch rockets across the border. But operations have targeted cities and towns throughout Lebanon.

In a separate incident to the south, three medical workers were killed when an Israeli strike hit an Islamic Health Authority building in Adloun.

According to the UN aid coordination office, [OCHA](https://www.unocha.org/), the updated death toll - which includes fatalities recorded since 8 October 2023 – is 58 per cent higher than the 1,900 people killed during the 34-day conflict in 2006 between Israel and Hezbollah.

“Across the country, at least 71 people were killed in airstrikes on 1 November alone,” OCHA said, warning that the conflict has reached a “critical point”. Because of the conflict an estimated 1.3 million people have been displaced across Lebanon and into neighbouring countries.

Parties involved:

* Egypt
* Gaza strip
* Hamas
* Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS)
* Hezbollah
* Iran
* Jordan
* Lebanon
* Palestinian islamic jihad (PIJ)
* Syria
* The West Bank

Groups involved

**Hamas,** militant [Palestinian](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Palestinian) nationalist and [Islamist](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Islamism) movement in the [West Bank](https://www.britannica.com/place/West-Bank) and [Gaza Strip](https://www.britannica.com/place/Gaza-Strip) that is dedicated to the establishment of an independent Islamic state in historical [Palestine](https://www.britannica.com/place/Palestine).

**Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ),** militant group founded with the goal of liberating historical [Palestine](https://www.britannica.com/place/Palestine) through armed struggle and by appealing to the region’s Islamic heritage. It was first formed in the [Gaza Strip](https://www.britannica.com/place/Gaza-Strip) but also operates in the [West Bank](https://www.britannica.com/place/West-Bank).

**Hezbollah,** [Shiʿi](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Shii) Lebanese [political party](https://www.britannica.com/topic/political-party) and militant group that first emerged during [Lebanon](https://www.britannica.com/place/Lebanon)’s civil war as a [militia](https://www.britannica.com/topic/militia) after the [Israeli](https://www.britannica.com/topic/history-of-Israel) invasion of that country in 1982.

**Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS),** militant [Islamist](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Islamism) group in [Syria](https://www.britannica.com/place/Syria) that emerged during the [Syrian Civil War](https://www.britannica.com/event/Syrian-Civil-War) (2011– ) and in 2024 led rebel forces to oust Assad, ending his family’s five-decade rule.

