

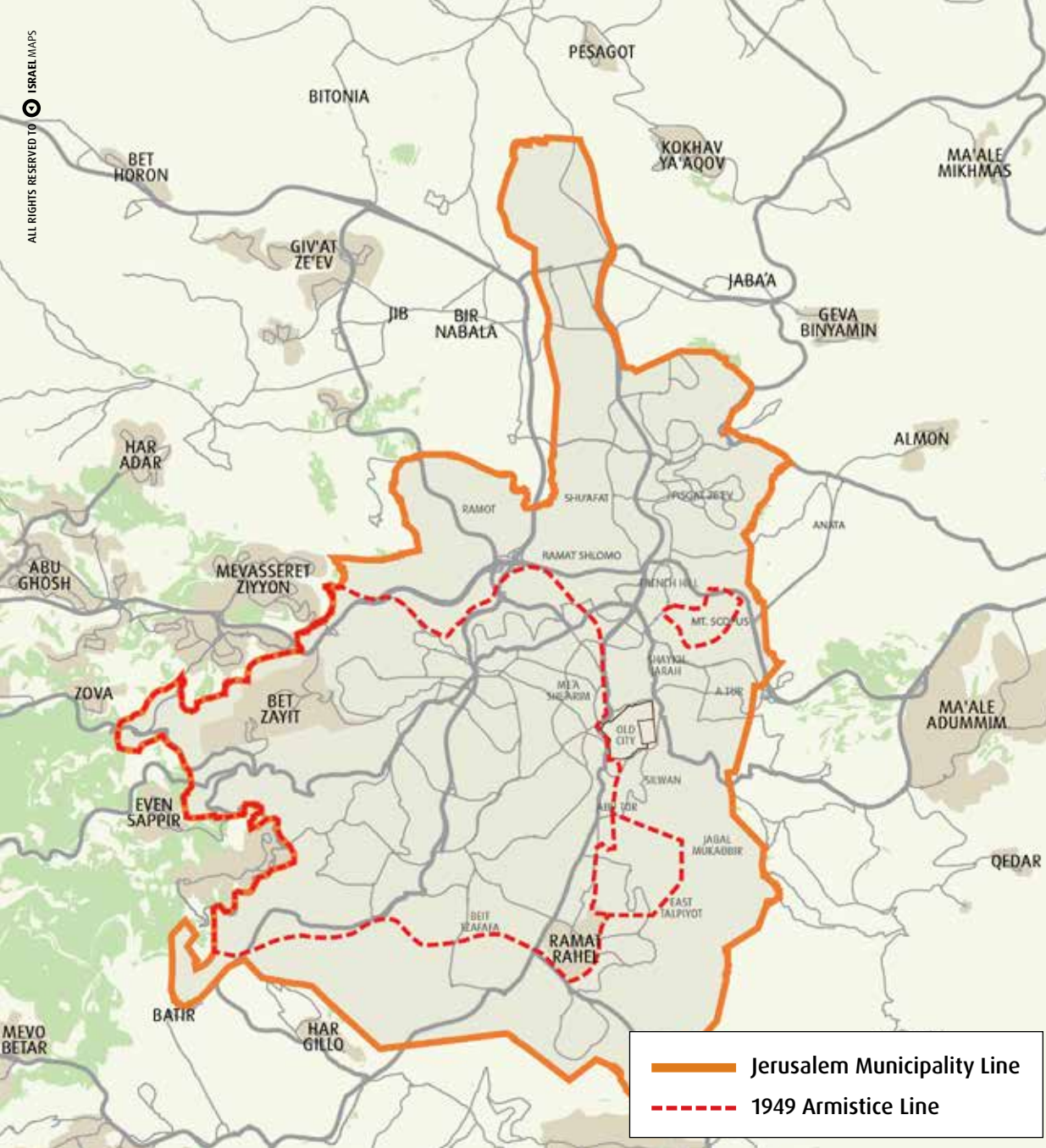
StandWithUs

ISRAEL



Israel Strategic Tours
Maps

Jerusalem



Since King David made the city his capital in the 10th century BCE, Jerusalem has been the geographic center of the Jewish people. For over 3,000 years it was the capital city of Jewish kingdoms and the location of Judaism's holiest site. All of Jewish ritual life revolves around Jerusalem as the nation's spiritual and historical center, as evidenced by the direction of world Jewry's prayers, the recurring blessing of "Next year in Jerusalem" and the mentioning of Jerusalem in the Hebrew Scriptures (aka Old Testament) over 660 times. Jerusalem still remains the nation's spiritual and political center, as it is the capital of the modern State of Israel.

Jerusalem is also of great importance to Christianity and Islam, containing holy sites held in deep reverence by billions of people around the world. For Christians, these include the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the Garden Tomb, and the Garden of Gethsemane. "Jerusalem" appears some 200 times in the New Testament. Muslim holy sites include the Dome of the Rock and the Al Aqsa Mosque situated on what is referred to by Muslims as Haram al Sharif, and by Jews as Temple Mount. Al Aqsa is the third holiest mosque in Islam, after the mosques of al-Haram in Mecca and al-Nabawi in Medina. In the Qu'ran neither the word "Jerusalem" nor the Arabic equivalent "Al-Quds" is mentioned, though it is found in later Islamic writings.

Between 1949-1967, Jerusalem was divided between Israeli and Jordanian sectors, to the West (where Israel established its capital) and East of the city, respectively. During those years Jordan banned Jews from living or even visiting eastern Jerusalem, including the Western Wall. Both sides of Jerusalem were reunited as a single city after Israel's defensive war and victory in 1967, and eastern Jerusalem was subsequently annexed by Israel. All of Jerusalem's Arab residents were offered full Israeli citizenship - but most of them refused and received permanent residency instead.

One of Israel's first acts in united Jerusalem was to grant free and open access to the holy sites of all faiths, an unprecedented act of religious tolerance. Israel granted Muslim and Christian religious authorities responsibility for managing their respective holy sites - including Muslim administration of the Haram Al-Sharif/Temple Mount, which Jews consider to be their holiest site.

Today, there are some 200,000 Jews and 270,000 Palestinian Arabs living in intertwined neighborhoods in the eastern part of Jerusalem (i.e., north, south and east of the city's 1967 borders). The Jerusalem Municipality (which moved to its current location in 1993 so as to sit centrally between the eastern and western sides) is responsible for the infrastructure and education throughout all of Jerusalem.

Population | 827,000 approx

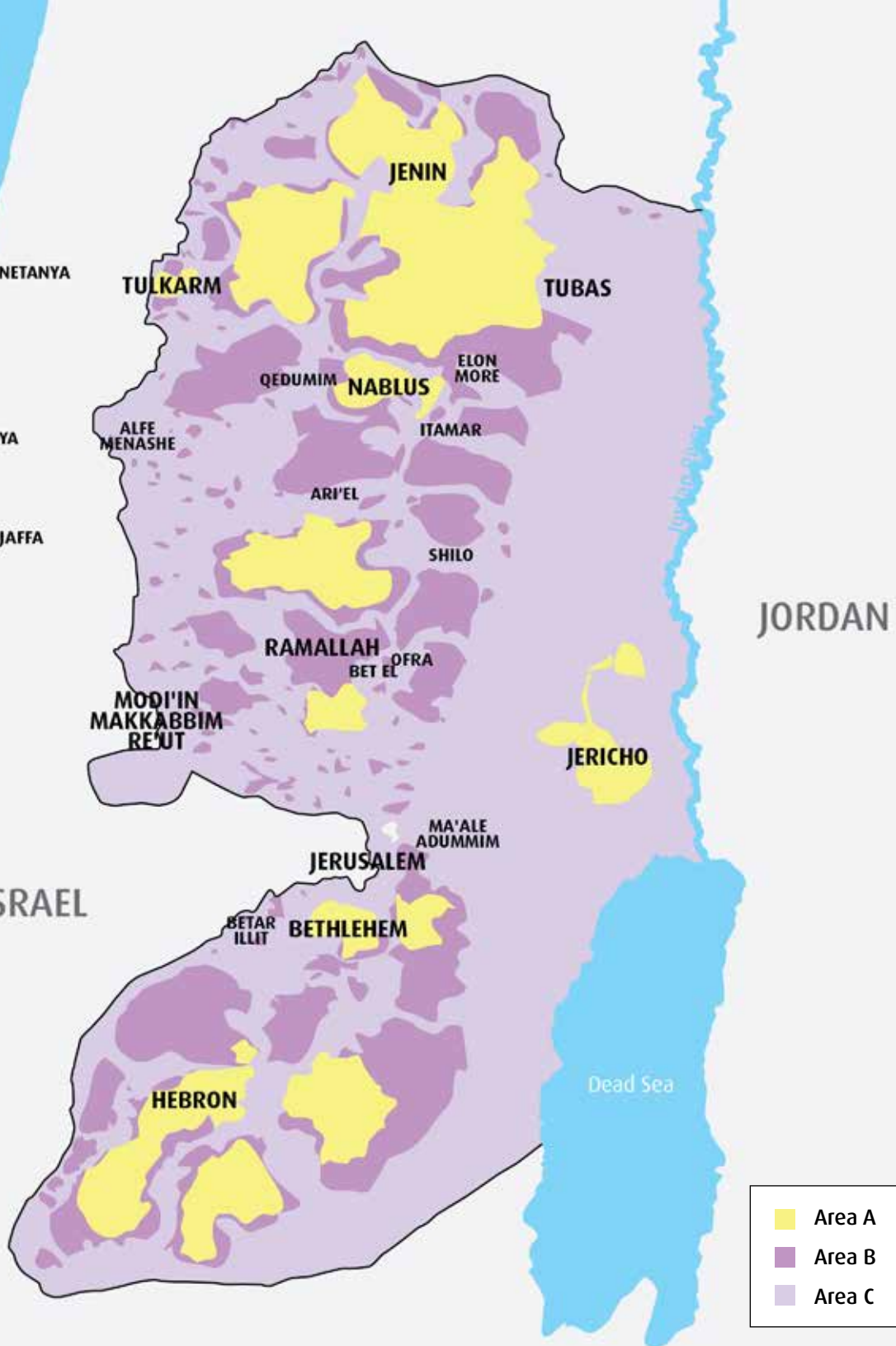
Jewish population | 515,000

Muslim population | 300,000

Christian Population | 12,000

(Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies)

Judea & Samaria / West Bank



The term “West Bank” is a modern twentieth century designation stemming from its location on the west bank of the Jordan River. For some 3,000 years, however, the territory has been known as Judea and Samaria.

In the aftermath of the 1948 War of Independence, resulting from five Arab states invading the newly established State of Israel, the Kingdom of Transjordan came into occupation of this territory. In 1949, Transjordan annexed the territory, and now being possession of both the east bank and west bank of the River Jordan, renamed itself simply as ‘Jordan.’ An armistice line drawn between Israel and Jordan was marked on the map with a green wax pencil, and it has since been known as “The Green Line.” Between 1949-1967, this territory was under Jordanian control, and its Palestinian-Arab population given Jordanian citizenship. During this period, no Jews (Israeli or otherwise) were allowed to reside on the West Bank – the first time in over a thousand years that such a prohibition existed.

In 1967, Israel successfully defended itself from attacking Jordanian forces during the Six Day War, conquering (but not annexing) the West Bank and east Jerusalem. As no Palestinian Arab state existed in the region, Israel maintains that the West Bank territories are legally considered “disputed territories.”

The 1993 Oslo Accords, signed by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, created the Palestinian Authority (PA) in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The agreement entailed the division of the West Bank into three different areas of control. 95% percent of West Bank Palestinians live either in Area A (full PA civil and security administration) or Area B (PA civil administration, joint PA-IDF security) – which makes up 40% of the West Bank. 60% of the West Bank, known as Area C, is under full Israeli administration and the Israeli communities there make up 1.7% of the entire West Bank landscape. Although the agreement was meant to be a transitional phase to a final peace settlement, the breakdown of the Oslo Accords and subsequent Second Intifada - the wave of terror attacks - led to a freezing of the peace process.

Future borders are to be determined through negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

1917-1922

1922-1947

1947 UN Partition Plan - Rejected

1947-1967



1967-1982

1982-2016



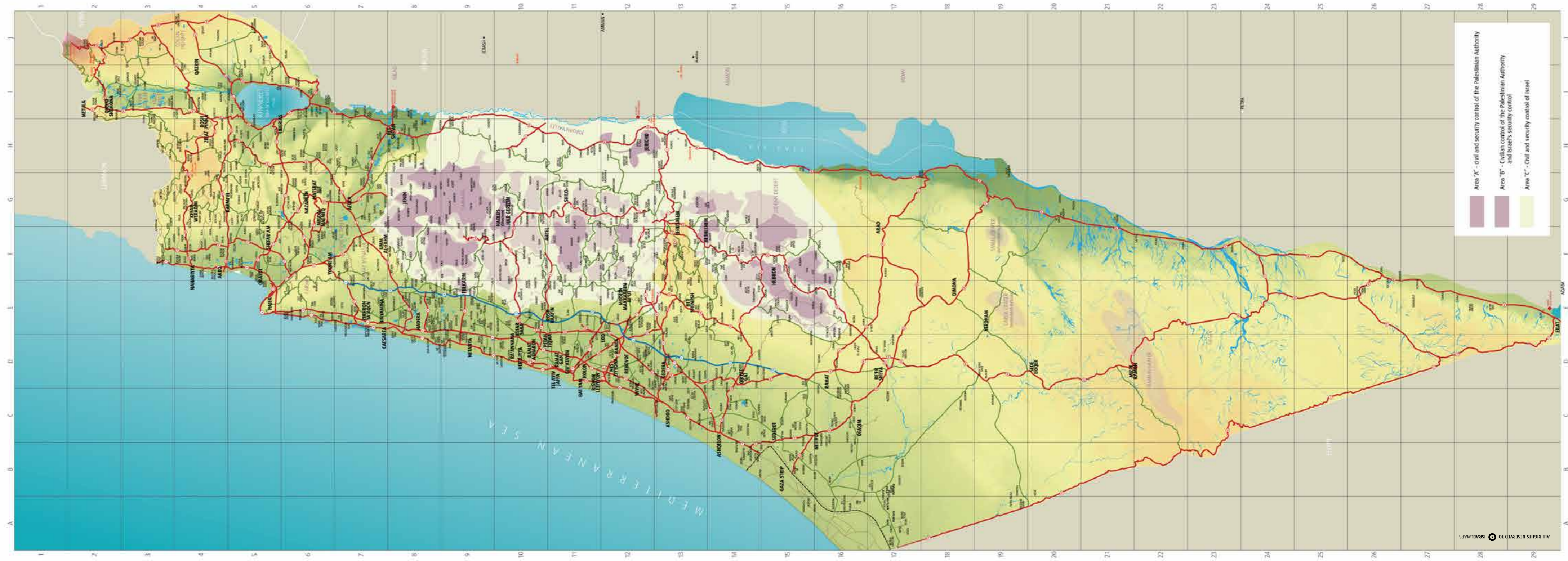
Evolution of the Middle East

The League of Nations recognized the deep ties of the Jewish People to their historic homeland, and established the British Mandate of Palestine.

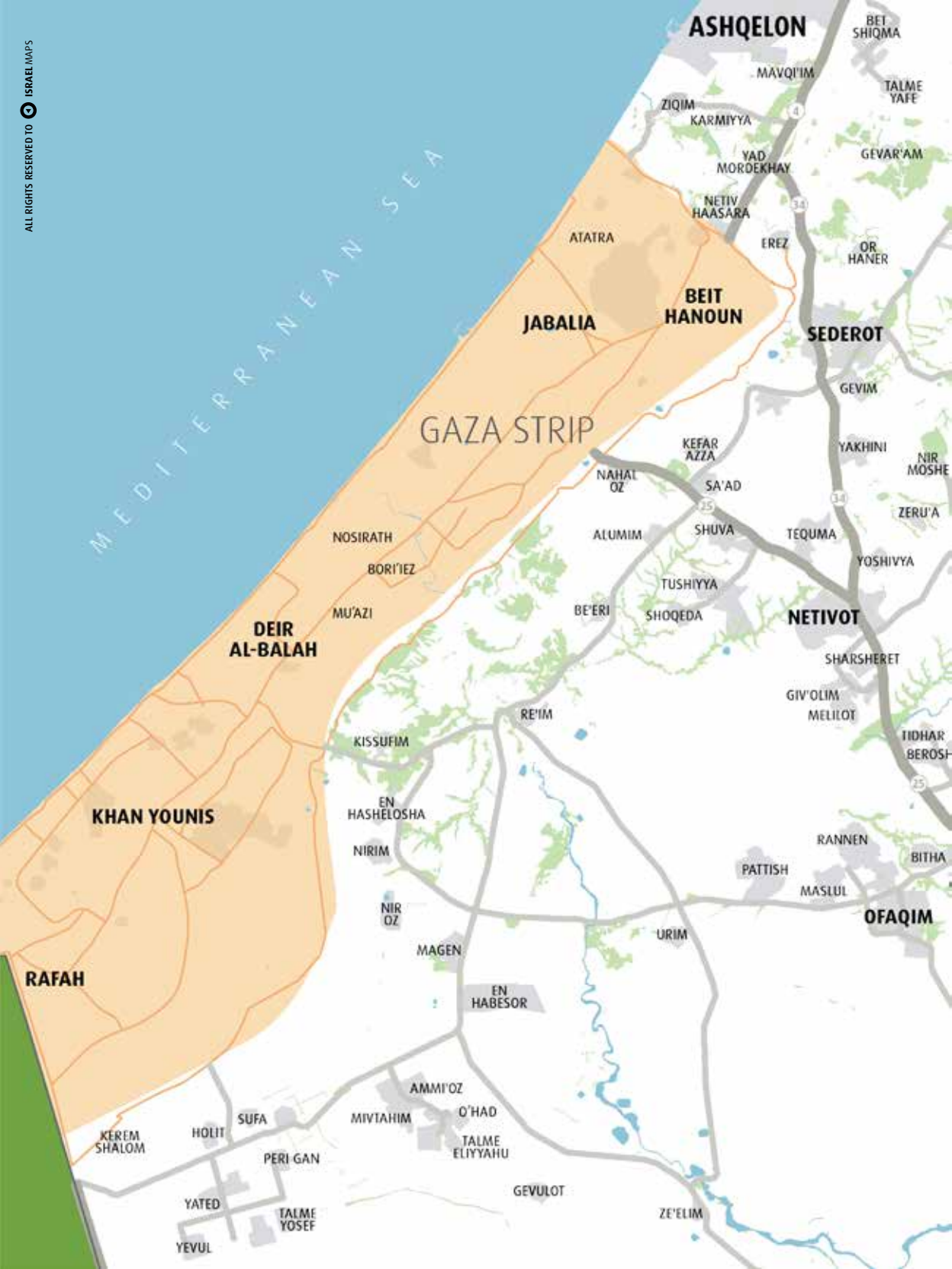
This is modern Israel's story in maps.

Israel Map

StandWithUs
ISRAEL



Gaza Border



Gaza is a 4000-year-old port city that has been a place of contention for multiple nations throughout history. During the time of the Bible (between 12th-7th centuries BCE), Gaza was home to the enemy of the ancient Israelites, the Philistines, who originated in the Aegean Sea.

After destroying Jerusalem and the Temple in 70 CE, the Romans renamed Judea "Palestina" after the Philistines. Many scholars believe this was an intentional slight to the defeated Judeans (Jews) for their ill-fated rebellion against Rome.

At 1948 war's end, Egyptian forces occupied a strip of land that included Gaza City, known as the "Gaza Strip." Gaza remained under Egyptian occupation, and became a launching pad for numerous terror attacks into Israel until the entire Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip were conquered by Israel during the Six Day War.

Now under Israeli rule, Jewish communities were built within the Gaza Strip to strengthen the borders and create a continuous Israeli-controlled territory between the Sinai Peninsula and the rest of the country. In 1982, Israel returned the entire Sinai Peninsula to Egypt as part of the Camp David Peace Accords. In 2005 Israel unilaterally evacuated all the Jewish communities in the Gaza Strip - some 8,000 people - and withdrew its military, handing it over to the Palestinian Authority.

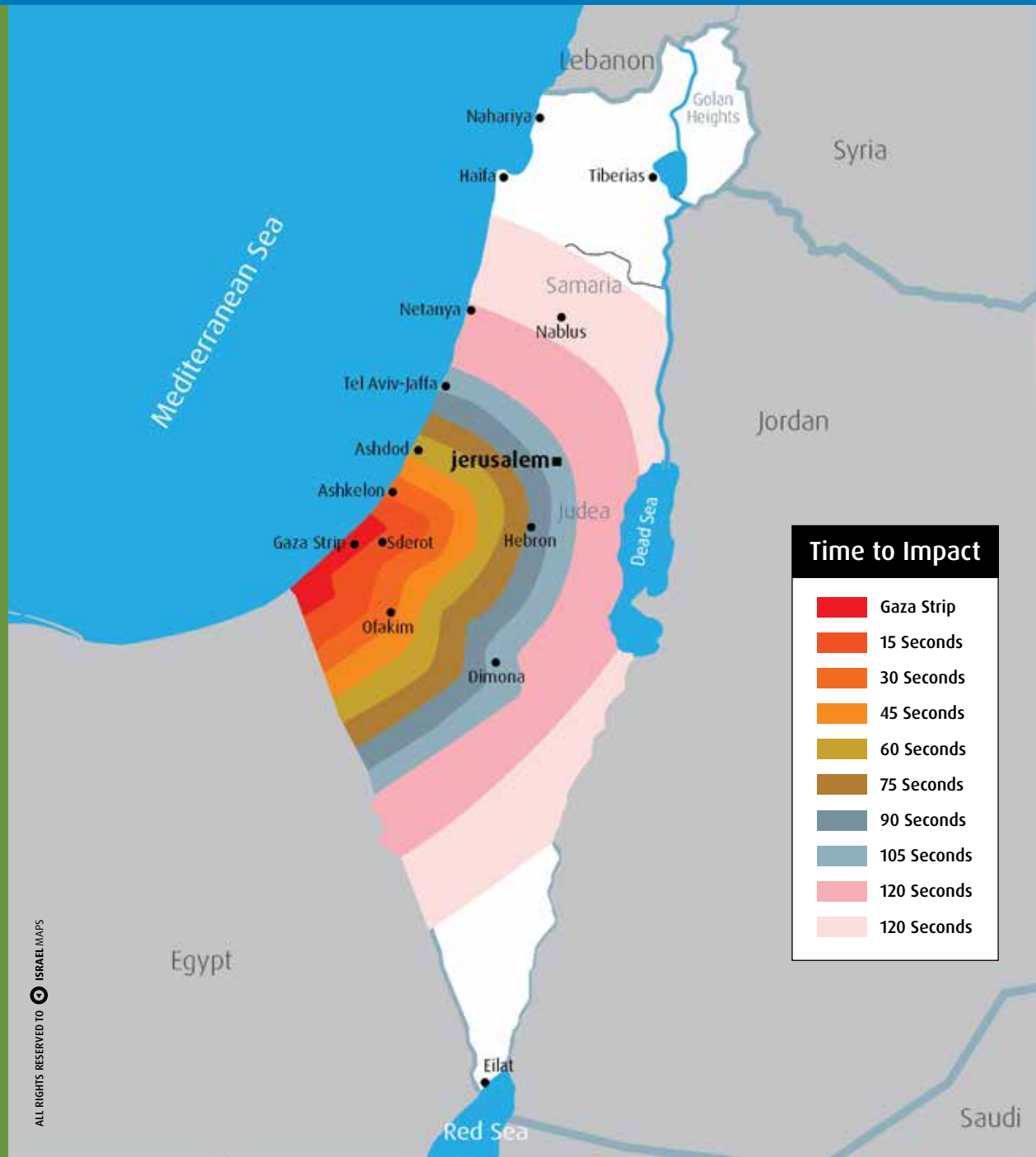
In 2006, Hamas - an internationally recognized jihadist terror organization with the stated mission of destroying Israel - won elections to the Palestinian Authority. In 2007, Hamas wrested control of the Gaza Strip from the Palestinian Fatah faction in a brief civil war. Since then, Hamas and other terror groups (such as Palestinian Islamic Jihad) have used the Gaza Strip as a base of military operations and fired nearly 16,000 rockets into Israeli cities, towns and villages. These rockets are mostly fired from civilian neighborhoods, turning Gazans into human shields.

Israeli residents living near Gaza live under the constant threat of these rocket attacks. They have 7-15 seconds to run for cover - requiring Israel to construct multiple shelters, which allow for a quick escape to relative safety. Increased rocket attacks, combined with cross-border raids (including the kidnapping of Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit to Gaza in 2006) led Israel to conduct Operation Cast Lead in 2008 - the first of three such Israeli incursions into Gaza. (Shalit was held incommunicado for five years and released in exchange for 1,027 Palestinian prisoners, most of them convicted terrorists). Following only two years of relative quiet, a surge in Hamas-fired rockets in 2012 compelled Israel to undertake eight days of surgically targeted airstrikes known as Operation Pillar of Defense. Protective Edge - the most recent mission into Gaza - took place in 2014, following the kidnapping and murder of three Israeli teenagers by Hamas terrorists, and parallel rocket and cross-border tunnels attacks by their comrades in Gaza.

In view of all of this, Israel finds itself faced with the difficult moral and legal obligation to defend its civilians from rocket and other terror attacks that disrupt daily lives, while trying to allow for Gaza citizens to have some form of quality of life. Israel provides water and electricity to Gaza, and permits and facilitates nearly 1,000 truckloads of humanitarian supplies daily into the Gaza Strip, banning only dual-use items that can be utilized for military purposes.

Israel's Narrow Waist-line

Terrorist Rocket Range from Gaza



StandWithUs is an international, non-profit organization. We believe that education is the road to peace.

StandWithUs is dedicated to informing the public about Israel and to combating the extremism and Antisemitism that often distorts the issues.

We believe that knowledge of the facts will correct common prejudices about the Arab-Israeli conflict, and will promote discussions and policies that can help promote peace in the region. Through print materials, speakers, programs, conferences, missions to Israel and from Israel, campaigns, social media and internet resources, we ensure that the story of Israel's achievements and ongoing challenges is told on campuses and in communities around the world.

In addition to our Education Center in Jerusalem and our Head Office in Los Angeles, StandWithUs today has eighteen offices and thousands of activists across the US, in Canada, Asia, Europe, South America, Australia, South Africa and the UK.



King David's Crown, 26 King David Street, Jerusalem, Israel
+972-(0)2-6360-200 | israel@standwithus.com

www.StandWithUs.co.il