

Place, land, and territory in UN General Assembly resolutions on Palestine (1947-2025)

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Since its 1947 resolution (181(II)) recommending the partition of Palestine, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) has gone on to pass over 700 further resolutions on Palestine constituting the ‘formal expressions of the opinion or will’ of this international body. This article considers what happens to ‘Palestine’ as place, land and territory over this nearly 80 period. Historic Palestine remains as a reference point in the initial years after 1947, up until 1950. Thereafter, while the term ‘Palestine’ persists through the nearly 80 years of resolutions, the data has no positive concept of a post-partition Palestine until Israel’s 1967 invasion of the remaining territory of historic Palestine. The terms to emerge after this further loss of Palestinian land construe it as fragmentary and deterritorialized. The UNGA resolutions tolerate both ambiguity and contradiction in their construal of Palestine as place, land and territory, with a territorialized Palestine ongoingly contingent and dependent on bureaucratized formulations, such as ‘land for peace’, even in the midst of the post-October 7th Israeli genocide. The analysis illuminates the discursive conditions created within the UNGA for the ongoing partition of Palestine, a ‘living reality’ for Palestinians and a ‘syndrome still in the making’ {Kattan and Rangan: 15, 21}.

Kattan, Victor, & Rangan, Amit. (2023). Introduction: Connecting the partitions of India and Palestine: Institutions, policies, laws and people. In Victor Kattan, & Amit Ranjan (eds.), *The breakup of India and Palestine: The causes and legacies of partition*, 1-31. Manchester University Press.