

Israel has long sought a partner for peace to establish a two-state solution — the proposed resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that predates the 1948 establishment of the Jewish state. The Palestinian Authority (PA), forged initially from the 1993 Oslo Accords, is a transitional government that is still touted as the most obvious choice. However, after more than three decades and two presidents, the Palestinians have failed to convert the PA into a viable government. Poll after poll indicate that the PA's corruption and dysfunction make it deeply unpopular among Palestinians in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

1. The PA was created 30 years ago by the Oslo Accords

Founded in 1964 as an umbrella organization for Palestinian terrorist groups, the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) is today recognized by international bodies as the official representative of the Palestinian people. In [1993](#) and then [1995](#), Israel and the PLO signed a pair of agreements known as the Oslo Accords. By recognizing the State of Israel, the PLO emerged as the internationally recognized representative of the Palestinian people in negotiations with Israel. The Oslo Accords also led to the establishment of the PA to serve as an interim governing body in Gaza and parts of the West Bank. While technically distinct, the PLO and the PA have had the same leadership (currently Mahmoud Abbas, who succeeded Yasser Arafat).

2. The PA is not a democratic representative of Palestinians

The last presidential election in the West Bank was held in 2005, when PLO and Fatah faction representative Mahmoud Abbas swept to power. Abbas is now 88 years old, serving the 20th year of his original four-year presidential term. In the 2006 parliamentary elections, Hamas emerged victorious, prompting Washington to urge Abbas to retain power so as to prevent a designated terrorist group from taking over. There have been no presidential or legislative elections since. Washington has optimistically [described](#) Abbas as committed to making peace with Israel. However, Abbas has since ruled by decree, [incited](#) violence against Jews, [peddled](#) antisemitic tropes, proved [unwilling](#) to make diplomatic compromises, and [dissolved](#) the Palestinian parliament. He exercises autocratic power in the West Bank.

3. The PA is widely unpopular among Palestinians

If offered the opportunity to exercise self-determination and vote, Palestinians would not vote for Fatah — the political party that dominates the PA and PLO — in either Gaza or the West Bank.

GAZA: After Hamas's 2006 legislative victory was effectively nullified by Abbas with backing from the United States, Hamas [took control](#) of Gaza in a bloody civil war against the Palestinian Authority. Despite the fact that Hamas has brought multiple wars upon the people of Gaza and that the coastal enclave has suffered from economic sanctions as a result of the Hamas conquest, the group remains popular. A [poll](#) in December 2023 by the Ramallah-based Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research found that if similar parliamentary elections were held today, 52 percent of Palestinians in Gaza would [vote](#) for Hamas, compared to 21 percent for Fatah. In presidential elections, 71 percent of Palestinians in Gaza would [vote](#) for Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh over PA President Abbas.

WEST BANK: A [poll](#) conducted by the Ramallah-based Arab World for Research and Development in November 2023 found that 85 percent of Palestinians in the West Bank have a “somewhat negative” or “very negative” view of the PA. The December 2023 Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research poll [found](#) that 92 percent of Palestinians in the West Bank want Abbas to resign. If presidential elections were held today, 82 percent of Palestinians in the West Bank would [vote](#) for Hamas's Haniyeh over Abbas. In parliamentary elections, 50 percent of West Bank Palestinians would [vote](#) for Hamas, compared to 18 percent for Fatah.

4. Hamas and the Fatah faction have repeatedly failed to reconcile since the 2007 Civil War

Attempts to [reconcile](#) the Palestinian factions over the years have repeatedly [failed](#). The Saudis, Turks, Egyptians, Qataris, and others have unsuccessfully attempted to end their dispute. In April 2014, the PA [sidestepped](#) peace talks with Israel and signed a unity pact with Hamas. The unity government [dissolved](#) in June 2015 because Hamas would not allow the PA to operate in Gaza. Subsequent attempts to reconcile in [2017](#) and [2023](#) also failed. The Russian government [launched](#) a new round of Palestinian unity talks in February 2024.

5. The PA has rejected multiple peace offers

The PA has rejected or failed to respond to multiple peace offers from Israel and the United States over the last 25 years. In 2000, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak offered PLO chairman Yasser Arafat a Palestinian state encompassing all of Gaza and at least 94 percent of the West Bank with East Jerusalem as its capital. Arafat turned the offer down. Prime Minister Ehud Olmert [offered](#) more land in 2008 and “accepted in principle” allowing some Palestinians to live in Israel as part of an agreement — a concession that no previous Israeli prime minister was willing to make. Again, the PA rejected Israel’s offer. When Prime Minister Netanyahu [said](#) in 2015 that he was “prepared to go to Ramallah or anywhere else right now” to resume peace talks, the PA refused. In 2016, then Vice President Joe Biden reportedly presented a peace plan to Abbas while visiting Ramallah. Abbas [rejected](#) the proposal. The PA also [rejected](#) the Trump administration’s [peace plan](#) in 2020.

6. The PA is rife with corruption

Corruption within the PA is widespread, including [embezzlement](#), [nepotism](#), and [blackmail](#). Initially touted as a reformer compared to his predecessor, Yasser Arafat, PA President Mahmoud Abbas has diverted public funds and international aid to [enrich](#) himself and his family. In 2020, a Palestinian whistleblower [revealed](#) that Abbas’s office had been regularly transferring European aid money to the president’s personal accounts. Palestinian political activist Nizar Banat was repeatedly arrested for criticizing the PA’s corruption and human rights abuses, including a final 2021 arrest during which he was [beaten to death](#) by PA security forces.

7. The PA encourages violence by issuing stipends to Palestinians who commit acts of terrorism

The PA [provides](#) monthly stipends to Palestinians imprisoned in Israel for committing terrorist attacks. Former prisoners and the families of “martyrs” are also eligible for compensation. The payments, which American legislators refer to as “[pay-to-slay](#),” are based on a sliding scale relative to the amount of time an individual spends in prison, which typically correlates to the severity of the attack. The PA spends upwards of \$300 million per year on pay-to-slay. With the [addition](#) of 3,550 Palestinian terrorists who were arrested since the attack on Israel by Hamas on October 7, 2023, that figure is expected to grow.

8. The PA incites violence against Jews in its schools

The themes of violence and martyrdom [permeate](#) the PA’s school curriculum. For example, a PA textbook [praises](#) Dalal Mughrabi, the perpetrator of a 1978 terrorist attack that killed 38 civilians, as a heroic female role model. An elementary math exercise [asked](#) students to calculate the number of martyrs who died during the First and Second Intifadas — the violent Palestinian uprisings marked by frequent terrorist attacks against Israeli civilians. Despite the European Union [pledging](#) in 2021 to “work with the Palestinian Authority” to revise its curriculum, PA textbooks remain largely unchanged.

9. PA security forces have occasionally attacked Israeli troops

The Israeli security services and the Palestinian security forces engage in security cooperation under the auspices of the U.S. military. However, after the PA lost control of pockets of the West Bank in 2021 and 2022 and overall violence [surged](#), PA security forces have been involved in [dozens](#) of attacks against Israeli military personnel and civilians. In May 2022, Daoud Zubeidi, an officer in the PA security forces, killed Israeli police officer Noam Raz. In September 2022, Ahmed Abed, an intelligence officer in the PA security services, and another gunman opened fire on Israeli troops in the Palestinian village of al-Jalama, [killing](#) Bar Falah, the deputy commander of Israel’s elite Nahal reconnaissance unit. In March 2024, a member of the PA security forces [killed](#) two Israelis at a West Bank gas station. Fatah celebrates these officers, [lauding](#) the violence and terrorism within PA ranks.

10. The Biden administration proposes a revitalized PA to govern postwar Gaza

The Biden administration has suggested that a reformed PA should preside over postwar Gaza. On November 18, 2023, President Biden [wrote](#) in *The Washington Post* that “Gaza and the West Bank should be reunited under a single governance structure, ultimately under a revitalized Palestinian Authority.” Secretary of State Antony Blinken [reiterated](#) “the benefits of revitalizing the Palestinian Authority” in a meeting with Abbas on February 7, 2024. Israel has repeatedly said that the PA [cannot](#) be allowed to govern Gaza after the war. “I will not allow the entry into Gaza of those who educate for terrorism, support terrorism and finance terrorism,” Prime Minister Netanyahu [said](#) on December 12.