CURRENT SITUATION

For more than 70 years, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has affected the Middle East landscape. A comprehensive diplomatic solution has defied international efforts, leaving publics disillusioned about the prospect of peace. Large-scale violence ebbs and flows, leaving communities insecure and enabling the conflict to persist as a rallying tool for extremist actors, thereby demanding continued U.S. and international attention.

Yet amid this challenging context lie pockets of potential for advancing a sustainable resolution to the conflict. An established Israeli and Palestinian civil society ecosystem works to advance prospects for a just and lasting peace, and regional geopolitical shifts could offer new openings to forge progress toward Israeli-Palestinian and broader regional conflict resolution.

USIP’S WORK

For three decades, USIP has worked on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Arab-Israeli relations. Through dialogue, analysis and joint action at the grassroots and policy levels, USIP works to strengthen diplomatic peacemaking efforts; empower Palestinian and Israeli civil society actors working to build trust within and between their societies; enhance community security for Israelis and Palestinians; and build institutional capabilities that prepare the ground for a just, peaceful and sustainable solution to the conflict.
USIP has also supported over 200 grantees and more than two dozen fellows to conduct innovative work on the conflict. Recent work includes:

**Convening Experts and Informing Policy.** USIP convenes American, Israeli, Palestinian and international experts to jointly develop analysis and actionable recommendations to inform the policy community. As a trusted convener across a spectrum of views, the Institute informs the policymaking process through working groups, analysis and briefings. This work includes:

- **The Study Group on Arab-Israeli Peacemaking.** Since 2008, the study group has developed a set of best practices for American diplomacy; produced two publications: “Negotiating Arab-Israeli Peace” and “The Peace Puzzle: America’s Quest for Arab-Israeli Peace 1989–2011;” and is developing a third volume of lessons learned from American efforts to bring about Israeli-Palestinian peace.

- **The initiative on Changing Regional Dynamics and Prospects for Israeli-Palestinian Peace** which, in partnership with the Baker Institute for Public Policy at Rice University, convenes American and international experts to evaluate evolving Israeli-regional relations and generate recommendations for leveraging the current context to prevent deterioration and promote progress toward resolving the Israeli-Palestinian and broader Arab-Israeli conflict.

**Enhancing Community Security and Institutional Capacity.** Through ongoing partnerships with local leaders, U.S. government representatives and the international community, the Institute contributes expertise to building effective Palestinian institutions and enhancing Israeli-Palestinian cooperation that can improve conditions on the ground, build confidence and trust, and ripen conditions for a sustainable diplomatic solution.

In partnership with the Office of the Quartet, USIP mapped police movement and access realities in the West Bank, enabling the most extensive expansion of Palestinian communities’ access to their own policing services in 15 years.

Leveraging its expertise, the Institute works closely with senior Palestinian and Israeli security authorities, and the Office of the U.S. Security Coordinator, to ensure coordination that bolsters safety and security for Palestinians and Israelis and enhances rule of law. USIP also works with both sides and international partners to enable a more robust Palestinian economy.

**Fostering Religious and Interreligious Peacebuilding Engagement.** Faith leaders can be crucial to diplomatic processes, but too often these religious voices have been excluded from Israeli-Palestinian diplomatic and grassroots efforts.

USIP is working to make the peacebuilding process more inclusive and effective by supporting local partners who facilitate dialogue, problem solving and joint action among Israeli and Palestinian religious leaders. The Institute funds and guides work that encourages faith leader cooperation to bridge divides, mitigate violence and provide a model for collaboration that protects holy sites and their visitors.

**Bridging Divides, Empowering Peacebuilders.** USIP leverages its broad and deep set of relationships to strengthen the capacity of Israeli and Palestinian peacebuilding organizations, serving as a hub for learning, skill-building and strategic connections to build a more resilient and impactful field.

Through grants and trainings, the Institute provides Israeli and Palestinian youth with the resources and skills to engage in constructive dialogue, develop leadership skills, identify shared challenges and design and implement joint action projects that prepare the ground for peace.