

To what extent has September 11th affected the peace process in the Middle East?

Peace; Calm, freedom from strife and war, tranquillity. A million miles away from the devastation and conflict of a country that has been at war within itself for generations. But peace is what so many people are trying to accomplish.

The United Nations is an organisation that began after the Second World War. It was set up to prevent such an event from ever happening again. The UN contains representatives from nearly every country in the world who work together in order to obtain world peace. One of the peacekeeping missions that the UN works on is the conflict in the Middle East between Israel and Palestine. The peacekeeping efforts in the Middle East are called the peace process.

In 2001 on September eleventh a horrific event happened that prevented the peace process from progressing in the Middle East. A terrorist group called Al Qaeda hijacked four passenger planes in America. One crashed into the pentagon, one was brought down in a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania and the other two were flown into the world Trade Centre. Thousands of lives were lost and the entire of America grieved. The hijacking and the pain it caused had nothing to do with the Palestinians or the Israelis but today both groups are suffering from the repercussions.

After September eleventh the American government headed by George W Bush put a giant foot down on terrorism. Although this 'foot' was only meant to flatten Osama Bin Laden and the Al Qaeda network, it affected many more people. As in many situations the root of this problem is politics. America has a substantially large Jewish population. In order to ensure the support and votes of those people George Bush is backing Israel in their war with Palestine. I have drawn this conclusion from numerous sources all of which say that 'America backs Israel'. These sources are also not all from a like point of view. This makes the conclusion less likely to be biased. America has traditionally supported Israel in their plight but now more than ever.

The Palestinians are not fortunate enough to have the backing of a world super power. They are becoming increasingly more desperate in the war for 'their' homeland. As weapons of mass destruction, guns and tanks are not provided for the Palestinians some take matters into their own hands. By this I mean suicide bombers see source 2. Suicide bombers are evidence that prove that the Palestinians are becoming desperate. Civilians strap explosives to themselves under their clothes and

then blow themselves up in Israeli territory. Examples of two such cases were in March 2002 and again in June 2002, when suicide bombers attacked buses full of both civilian and military people. See sources one and two for articles and pictures from both events. Acts of terror like this are seen by most as terrorism. As mentioned above terrorism is now one of the main things America is trying to 'stamp' out. For this reason they can now justify, even more than before, providing Israel with weapons and so continue to do so. This gives Israel an unfair advantage over Palestine and as long as one side thinks that they have a good chance to succeed the peace process is very unlikely to work.

Israel is by no means an innocent party in this war. Although they may not resort to terrorist actions Israel has still caused grief and terror by their actions. They have bombed many towns and villages killing many civilians as well as military people. Since the terrorist actions in America Israel has had extra outside support in their war.

If it were not for September eleventh the peace process may be a lot further than it is. The Israelis may not have the upper hand and the Palestinians may not be as desperate. The UN might have found a solution to the problems and many more lives could have been saved. As it stands none of this has happened and although times are better now than in past years there does not appear to be a peaceful solution on the horizon. All that we can do is pray for the innocent victims and hope that a cease-fire and peace are on the horizon.