# BBC documentary series explores history of Israeli-Palestinian conflict



Air strikes in Gaza and missiles illuminating the sky over southern Israel are images that have become all too familiar in the past two decades of conflict, particularly heightened by the October 2023 Hamas attacks on Israel. A new documentary series, "Israel and the Palestinians: The Road to 7th October," has been produced by the BBC, directed by documentarian Norma Percy. This three-part series aims to explore the complex history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict leading up to the recent escalation.

The first episode of the series delves into the rise of Hamas as both a military threat and a political entity in its rivalry with the Palestinian Authority. It also examines the shift towards a more right-leaning, expansionist policy in Israel, particularly under the leadership of Benjamin Netanyahu. Several pivotal events are highlighted as significant turning points that contributed to the situation observed today, including the release of Yahya Sinwar, a key architect of the October 7 attacks, as part of a prisoner exchange in 2011, as well as the Israeli invasion of Gaza in 2014. Another critical moment discussed is the police raid on the al-Aqsa Mosque in East Jerusalem in 2023, showcasing the escalations that have characterised the conflict.

The series does not only recount events; it also explores the opportunities for peace that were missed. It suggests that both sides, Israeli and Palestinian, have failed to compromise or establish trust necessary for progress toward a resolution. Although the documentary refrains from making overt editorial comments, it features interviews with a diverse set of key figures from both sides, as well as significant international diplomats such as Hillary Clinton, Condoleezza Rice, and Tony Blair, who provide insights into the negotiations and provocations that have marked these two decades.

The testimonies presented reveal competing narratives, with responsibility often discussed but rarely shouldered. The film compellingly illustrates how the perspectives of various contributors might remain unchallenged, creating a complex dialogue about the responsibility for past actions. Instances, such as senior Hamas leaders justifying the October events as “resistance,” bring chilling elements to the viewer's experience.

Among the more reflective moments, former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert expresses regret over a missed opportunity in 2008 to establish peace with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, lamenting their failure to agree on a secret peace plan that would have seen significant Israeli territorial concessions. Abbas's advisers recount that Olmert’s push for a swift agreement did not allow adequate time for consideration.

The penultimate episode of the series brings into focus the efforts of former US President Donald Trump's administration during its initial term to broker a peace deal, nicknamed “the deal of the century.” This segment highlights how the White House largely excluded Abbas from the negotiations, emphasising a historical pattern of sidelining Palestinian leadership in crucial discussions that involve their future.

The series will air its first episode on February 24 at 9pm on BBC2, with the second episode following on March 3 at the same time. All episodes will also be available for streaming on BBC iPlayer, allowing a broader audience to engage with this comprehensive account of a longstanding and multifaceted conflict.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer> - This URL supports the availability of the documentary series 'Israel and the Palestinians: The Road to 7th October' on BBC iPlayer for streaming. It allows a broader audience to access the series.
2. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/10/7/israel-hamas-attacks> - This URL provides context on the October 2023 Hamas attacks on Israel, which are referenced in the documentary series as a recent escalation of the conflict.
3. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-64444441> - This URL could potentially offer insights into the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including recent events and historical context that might be explored in the documentary series.
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/08/israel-gaza-conflict> - This URL discusses the Israeli invasion of Gaza in 2014, a pivotal event highlighted in the documentary series as contributing to the current situation.
5. <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/hamas-israel-exchange-prisoners-2011-10-18/> - This URL provides information on the prisoner exchange in 2011 that included Yahya Sinwar, a key figure mentioned in the documentary series.
6. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/trump-middle-east-peace-plan> - This URL offers details on the Trump administration's peace plan, known as 'the deal of the century,' which is discussed in the documentary series as part of efforts to broker peace.
7. <https://www.ft.com/content/2691dde4-c84b-4237-a90e-84d099a39e6e> - Please view link - unable to able to access data