

Introduction

In Israel and Palestine, there is a long history of feminist peace movements, in particular tracking with points of contention during the conflict. Today, some of these grassroots peacebuilding organizations still exist and new groups continue to emerge.

Historically in Israel, there has been a masculinization of security and violence along with a feminization of peace used to simplify and discredit peace efforts. Gendering these concepts not only limits the perception of security and peace, but also limits women's voices in conflict resolution spaces. [1]

On an institutional level, Israel's lack of a National Action Plan, to be discussed in other sections, is a logistical and symbolic issue when it comes to women's involvement in negotiations. While women may be increasingly involved in peacebuilding spaces and negotiations, there remains a lack of opportunities for meaningful participation overall.

This research seeks to understand how the intersectionality of feminism and peacebuilding can serve as a connecting factor between the two sides of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as well as whether an Israeli-Palestinian peace can and should incorporate the ideas of feminist peace.



This graphic shows two sets of countries: the dark purple have NAPs and the light purple are a part of the Regional Action Plan put in place by the League of Arab States. However, some countries in dark purple, such as Lebanon, are members of the League but have their own independent NAPs. [9]

UNSCR 1325

UNSCR 1325 is the heart of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda. Adopted in 2000, it finally cemented the importance of gender into the UN's framework. It was created to encourage women's participation in peacebuilding spaces and security conversations. 1325, in the simplest terms, was formed around four main "pillars": participation, protection, prevention, and relief and recovery.

1325 encourages UN member states to create and invoke National Action Plans (NAPs), or documents lay out a country's plan to implement the WPS Agenda within their borders. Although Israel as a UN Member State adopted 1325, the nation did not create and implement a NAP like so many of the other Member States. Notably, Palestine implemented their own NAP, beginning in 2017, with a renewal date approaching in 2024. Palestine's NAP acknowledges the disproportionate impact of the Israeli occupation on women. [2]

What is intersectional feminist peace?

For the purposes of this research, peace is not just a lack of conflict but rather a solution to the conflict that encapsulates human rights, food security, women's education, and other essential humanitarian goals that are traditionally undervalued in negotiations. [3]

In this context, intersectionality serves to reference women's overlapping identities: gender, class, religion, race, sexual orientation, and more. Intersectional feminist peace strives to recognize how these overlapping identities and varied experiences impact the way that women experience oppression and discrimination.

Therefore, in the context of this project, intersectional feminist peace is used to define the scope of what peace looks like and broaden it out from the masculinized security viewpoint. Intersectional feminist peace serves to recognize and reconcile structural differences and barriers that have historically limited the meaningful participation of women so that they are able to have a tangible impact on peace negotiations and share their own experiences in order to diversify potential solutions to conflicts.

Key Organizations

Women Wage Peace is a nonpartisan, non-religious peacebuilding organization. It is the largest grassroots peace movement in Israel and its goal is not to propose or even promote a specific solution to the conflict, rather to promote female empowerment and representation in the context of the conflict under the framework of UNSCR 1325. [4]

Women of the Sun is a Palestinian group founded in 2021. Their activities span across disciplines, from programs for fine art to economic empowerment to contribute to the wellbeing of women and youth and ultimately promote community peace. [5]

One of the most notable actions across these two organizations is the Mother's Call, a protest march and petition to promote a better future for the coming generations. This effort along with other actions for peace within and across various peace organizations exemplify how women can use their shared experiences and goals to bridge across both sides of the conflict. [6]

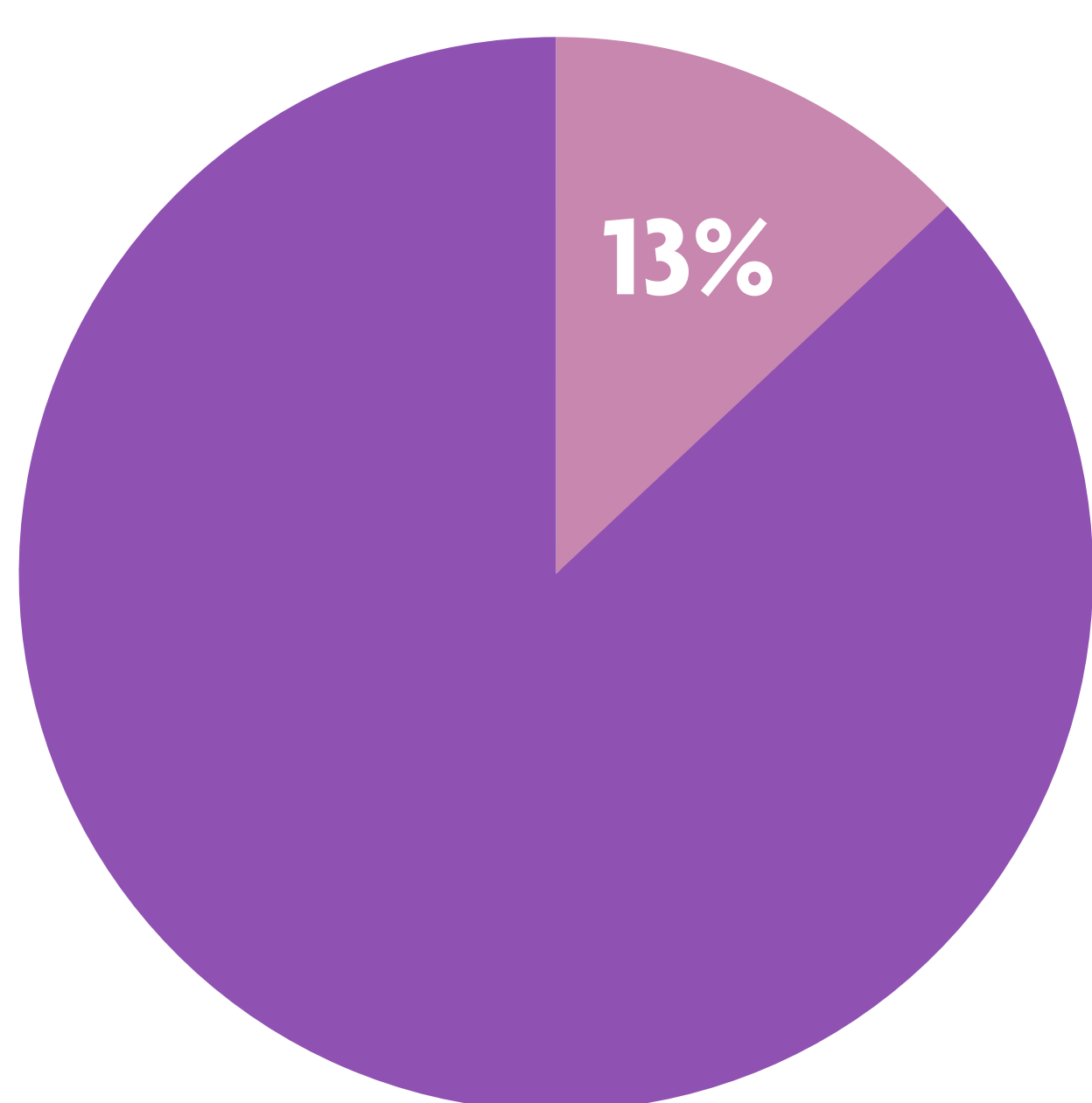
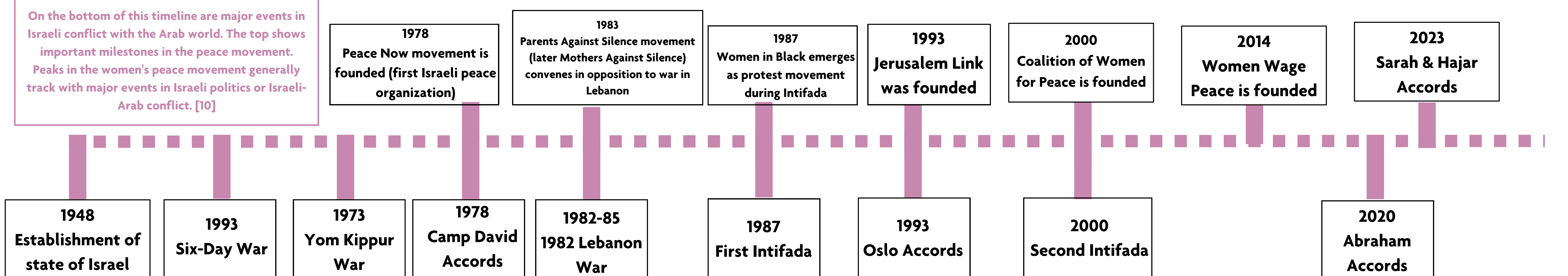
Results & Conclusions

It is clear that involving women in peace processes is of the utmost importance when it comes to conflict resolution, both regionally to the Middle East and globally. In fact, studies have shown that involving women in peace processes increases the probability of success for peace agreements by up to 64%. [7]

One concrete step Israel can take is implementing a NAP. Although NAPs won't solve the gender gap in peace negotiations entirely, implementing one would be impactful institutionally. In 2005, Israel adopted a law mandating women's inclusion in official panels, including peace negotiations, and although it may have increased the number of women involved in the Israeli-Palestinian talks, it did not necessarily increase their abilities to directly impact change or insert their voices into the negotiation process. In the Israel-Palestine conflict and beyond, the roles and power women are given in conflict resolution processes are arguably even more important than the sheer number of women in the room. [8]

Ultimately, there seems to be a major disconnect between the women's peace movements, or really Israeli women's movements in general, and the reality of the institutional and governmental structures attempting to promote equality. As Prime Minister Netanyahu continues to dominate Israeli politics, gender equality is regressing at an alarming rate in the country and tensions between Israel and Palestine still flare. Now more than ever it is crucial to bring women's voices and perspectives into peacebuilding spaces, starting at the grassroots level and moving upwards.

On the bottom of this timeline are major events in Israeli conflict with the Arab world. The top shows important milestones in the peace movement. Peaks in the women's peace movement generally track with major events in Israeli politics or Israeli-Arab conflict. [10]



Percentage of female negotiators in 2013 Israeli-Palestinian peace talks [7]

A 2018 study showed that including women in peace talks and as signatories on agreements significantly increases the durability of peace. Therefore, looking at Israeli-Palestinian peace efforts, the extremely low number of female negotiators (13%) and mediators (0 in 2013) is deeply concerning. [11]

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