

ISRAEL



ISRAEL -- In Context

- **Area:** 7849 sq. miles (about the size of MA)
- **Founded:** 1949
- **Population:** 8.146 million (2014)
- 75% or 6.1 million are Jewish

Prime Minister Rabin – signed the Oslo Accords; assassinated in 1995

Prime Minister Sharon – withdrew from Sinai

Former President Shimon Peres

Current President Reuven Rivlin (elected 2014)


Political Parties/Leaders/Knesset Seats (2013 Elections) (*coalition member)

Likud	Binyamin Netanyahu (PM)	19 *
Yesh Atid	Yair Lapid (Finance)	19 *
Labor	Isaac Herzog	15
The Jewish Home	Neftali Bennett	12 *
Yisrael Beiteinu	Avigdor Lieberman (Foreign Affairs)	12 *
Shas	Aryeh Deri	11
Un. Torah Judaism	Yaakov Litzman	7
Hatnuah	Tzipi Livni (Peace Process)	6 *
Meretz	Zahava Gal-on	6
United Arab List	Ibrahim Sarsur	4
Hadash	Muhammad Barakeh	4
Balad	Jamal Zahalka	3
Kadima	Shaul Mofaz	2

THE PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

WEST BANK -- In Context

- ▣ **Area:** 2180 sq. miles (DE)
- ▣ **Founded:** 1967
- ▣ **Population:** 2.345 million (2014)
- ▣ More than 82% or 1.9 million are Palestinians
- ▣ Over 425,000 are Jewish settlers (all are deemed illegal)



PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY

PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION (PLO)

President Mahmud Abbas (“Abu Mazen”)

FATAH (“harakat al-tahrir al-filistiniyah”)

Marwan al-Barghouti

GAZA -- In Context

- ▣ **Area:** 139 sq. miles (2xDC), bordering Egypt on the SW for 7 miles and Israel on the east and north for 32 miles
- ▣ **Founded:** 1949
- ▣ **Population:** 1.816 million (2014)



HAMAS – (“harakat al-muqawama al-islamiyah)

Khalid Mish'al – head of the political office (now based in Turkey)

Ismail Haniya – (prime minister after 2006 elections)

Mahmud Zahar – leading Hamas ideologue

ISLAMIC JIHAD

EGYPT



Muhammad Husni Mubarak (former president, 6 Oct 1981 until 11 Feb 2011)

THE SCAF (Supreme Council of the Armed Forces)

Field Marshal Tantawi

President Abd al-Fatah al-Sisi (elected May 2014)

Muslim Brotherhood (Freedom and Justice Party)

Muhammad Mursi (former president; elected June 2012; deposed July 2013)

“al-Nour” Party (Salifist Islamist party)

Shaykh Hazim Salih Ismail (disqualified, but popular “al-Nour” 2012 candidate)

SYRIA

OVERVIEW

AREA:

It is slightly smaller than the combined area of Pennsylvania and New York states or less than one-half the size of Iraq.

POPULATION:

About 21 million in 2011;
74% [Sunni Muslim](#), 13% [Shia](#) and [Alawite](#) Muslim population, 10% [Christian](#) and 3% [Druze](#); ;
[Muslims](#) include [Arabs](#), [Kurds](#), [Circassians](#), and others, while some 10% are [Christians](#), which includes Arabs, [Assyrians/Syriacs](#), and [Armenians](#)..



THE GOVERNMENT

Baath Party (“Renaissance”)

President Bashar al-Asad – president since 2000. Re-elected in June 2014

Maher al-Asad – his brother

THE OPPOSITION

SNC – The Syrian National Council

FSA -- Free Syrian Army

Nusra Front (Islamist; Muslim Brotherhood)

ISIS (“Da’ish” – or The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria)

PYD – the strongest Kurdish resistance group – off-shoot of Turkey’s PKK

Dozens of other, smaller, largely Islamist groups

Rifaat al-Asad – former Vice President; in exile, secular Nat’l Democratic Front

IRAQ

IRAQ OVERVIEW

AREA:

168,571 sq. miles
Size of NE, plus NY, PA,
--CT

POPULATION:

About 28 million
Baghdad -- 5.7 million
Mosul -- 3 million
Basrah -- 2.3 million
Arbil -- 1.3 million



Shi'a Personalities

Prime Minister Haidar al-Abadi; Prime Minister; Dawa Party
Nuri al-Malaki – former PM, co-vice president, Dawa Party
Sayyid Amaar al-Hakim (Supreme Council) or ISCI
Muqtadar al-Sadr

Iyad Allawi – secular Shi'a leader; co-vice president

Sunni Personalities

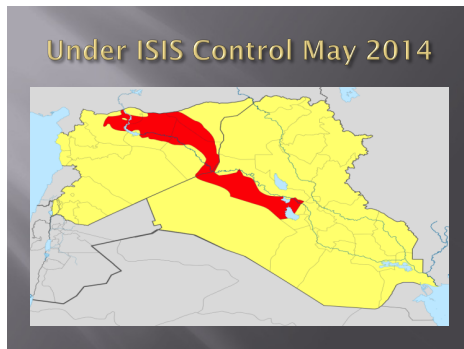
Salim al-Jaburi – Speaker of Parliament
Osama Nujayfi – former speaker from Mosul; co-vice president
Athil Nujayfi – governor of Mosul
Shaykh Abu Jabbar Abu Risha – *Sahwa* or 'awakening' movements

Kurdish Personalities

President Fuad Masum
Former President Jalal Talabani

Masud Barzani – President, Kurdish Regional Government (KRG)
Nechirvan Barzani, Prime Minister, KRG

THE (so-called) 'ISLAMIC STATE'



ISIS Personalities

Abu Musab al-Zarqawi (aka Ahmad Fadal al-Khalayah) – headed al-Qa'ida in Iraq and later The Islamic State in Iraq

Abu Ayad al-Masri

Abu Omar al-Baghdadi

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi (aka Ibrahim Awad al-Samarrai), ISIS, now self-proclaimed Caliph of the Islamic State

Izz al-Din al-Duri – former Saddam Deputy; drawn from the Islamist wing of the Baath Party; organizing former regime supporters in support of the IS

Cities –

Al-Raqqa – IS capital in Syria (former Abbasid capital)

Mosul – Iraq

Aleppo – formerly Syria's largest city and commercial center