

Oslo – a roadmap for peace?

After the First Intifada (1987–93), leaders of Palestine and Israel met in secret in Norway and agreed a peace treaty that promised a way for both Palestinians and Israelis to each have their own country: a “two-state solution”.

This would be based on the pre-1967 borders, meaning Palestine would be made up mainly of the West Bank and Gaza.

The Oslo Accords were the result of quiet mediation by Norwegian diplomats, with a small number of Palestinian and Israeli representatives getting to know each other at a personal level.

A plan was made that would gradually end the occupation without Israel losing its security. Yasser Arafat, leader of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, and prime minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel signed the agreement in 1993. Rabin and Arafat were both old warriors, so people were surprised to see them shake hands. It was a big moment, and the source of much hope for peace.

The Palestinian Authority was created in 1994 as a new government, but it did not get control of the West Bank and Gaza straight away; the Israeli occupation continued.

In 1995 Yitzhak Rabin was killed by an Israeli Jew called Yigal Amir, who opposed the peace deal, but Israel’s policy did not change.

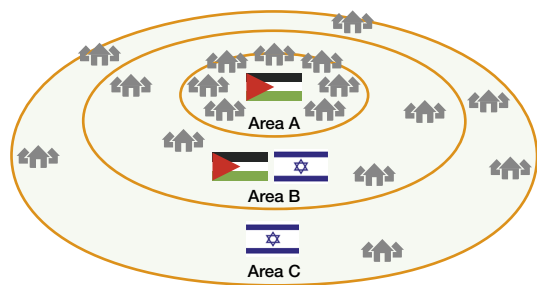
Areas A, B and C of Palestine

Under the Oslo Peace Accords in 1993 and 1995, occupied Palestine was divided into three areas: A, B and C. The Palestinian government has full control of Area A, the town centres, although the Israeli army is sometimes active there. In Area C, the largest area covering the Palestinian countryside, Israel has overall control of law enforcement, planning and construction. In the in-between areas (Area B), on the town outskirts, Palestine’s government runs ordinary life but Israel’s army is in control of security.

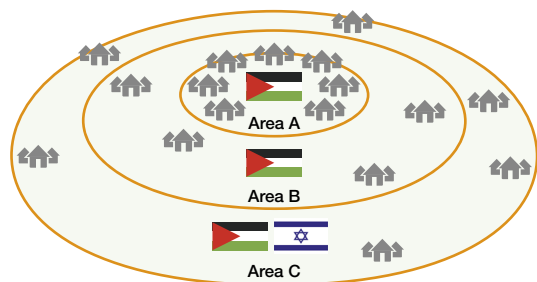
The idea was that Israel would gradually pull out from Area A, then B and finally C, allowing Palestinians to run their own country. This withdrawal never **fully** happened.

Israel has continued to build settlements for Jewish Israelis to move into on Palestinian land while restricting building by Palestinians in the areas it controls.

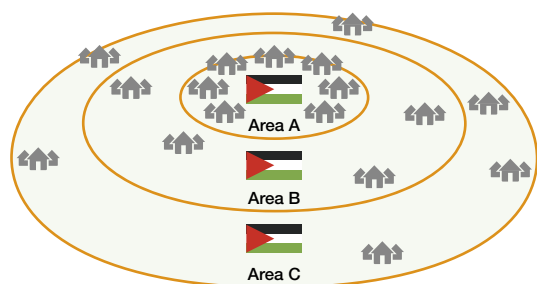
Oslo: how it was supposed to work:



Area A: Palestinian Authority has full control (17%)
Area B: Palestinian civil control with Israeli military control (22%)
Area C: Overall control by Israel (60%)



Areas A and B: Palestinian Authority has full control
Area C: Palestinian civilian control, Israeli military control



Areas A, B and C: Palestinian Authority has full control

What happened?

This transition, which was supposed to happen within five years of the Oslo Accords being signed, never fully happened.

RESOURCE 15-A

Did the Oslo Accords work?

What has happened since the Oslo Accords were first signed in 1993? Copy this table and come back to it to reflect on how successful the peace agreement was.



Aim	What happened?
End violence	
Stop Israeli settlement expansion	
Gradually negotiate about borders, the return of Palestinian refugees, Jerusalem and final borders	
Allow for a “two-state solution” with Palestine and Israel as neighbours	
Realise Palestinians’ right to self-determination	