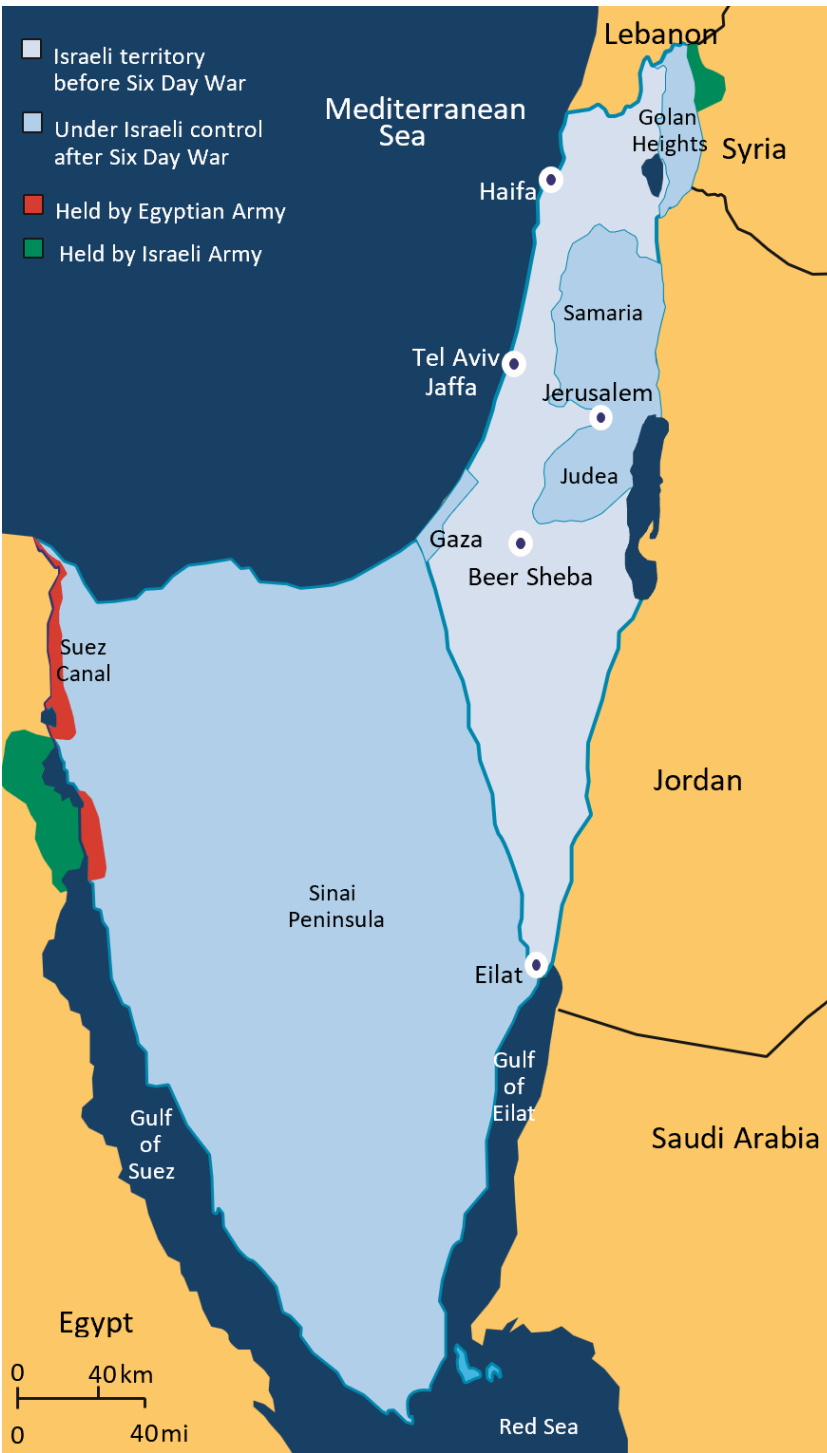


The Yom Kippur War (October 6 – 24, 1973)

The Yom Kippur War began suddenly with a surprise attack on October 6, 1973, the most solemn holy day of the Jewish calendar. The armies of Egypt and Syria attacked Israel across the Suez Canal and in the Golan Heights. After days of torrid fighting with heavy loss of life, with IDF deaths in the thousands, Egypt established itself on the eastern side of the Suez Canal. Syria captured most of the Golan. Israel's situation was dire, with the valleys of the Galilee lying exposed to the Syrian invasion.



An Israeli counterattack repelled Egyptian forces, with the IDF crossing the Canal and approaching Cairo. On the Golan, Syrian forces were pushed back. The IDF recaptured Mt. Hermon, advancing rapidly toward a defenseless Damascus. A cease-fire agreement was signed by Israel and Egypt on Oct. 24, 1973.

A separation-of-forces agreement was signed on January 18, 1974. Both sides agreed to observe the cease-fire, reduce forces and establish a UN force in the demilitarized zone. Israeli forces withdrew to 20 kilometers east of the Suez Canal, and Egypt's army withdrew most forces west of the Suez Canal.

A disengagement agreement with Syria was signed on May 31, 1974, including deployment of UN observers in the demilitarized zone, prisoner exchange, and IDF evacuation of territory seized in the Yom Kippur War and the town of Kuneitra, captured in the Six-Day War.