It is often suggested that a little goodwill and give and take could resolve the conflict between Israel and Palestine. This collection of some of the best legal analysis of the matter is a timely reminder that there are fundamental legal rights and duties at stake, and basic questions of the Rule of Law, which must be understood and addressed if a just and durable settlement of this desperately sad, and ultimately dehumanizing, situation is to be found.

Professor Vaughan Lowe QC, Chichele Professor of Public International Law, All Souls College, Oxford

The question of Palestine has been a pivotal one for international law ever since the foundation of the United Nations Organisation in 1945. It remains so today. On 9 July 2004, the International Court of Justice gave its advisory opinion on the Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in Occupied Palestinian Territory, where it ruled on some major international law questions concerning the applicability of the Geneva Civilians Convention of 1949 to prolonged occupations, as well as human rights law more generally. It confirmed the illegality of the Israeli civilian settlements established on occupied Palestinian territory and affirmed the continuing relevancy of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, which it considered an obligation erga omnes. The ICJ did not, however, rule on many of the international law questions pertaining to Final Status Issues which still need to be negotiated between the Israeli and Palestinian leadership if peace is to ever be accomplished in the Holy Land. In this series of essays, with contributions from James Crawford, Sir Adam Roberts, Antonio Cassese, John Quigley, Iain Scobbie and Omar Dajani, among others, some of the most important questions relating to the Israel–Palestine conflict are addressed and reproduced in one complete volume to coincide with the 60th anniversary of the creation of Israel and the demise of the British mandate of Palestine.

Victor Kattan is a Research Fellow at the British Institute of International and Comparative Law on the Human Rights in International Law and Iran project. He is assistant editor of the Yearbook of Islamic and Middle Eastern Law and the author of several articles on the Arab–Israeli conflict which have been published in international law journals. Before joining the British Institute, he was a Director of Arab Media Watch and also worked in the Occupied Palestinian Territories as a UN Development Programme TOKTEN Consultant on secondment to the Badil Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights. Victor is currently undertaking a three-year PhD on ‘The Partition of Territory: An International Law Analysis’ at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, for which he has been awarded a full scholarship from the Arts & Humanities Research Council.

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