

Moshe Dayan's Temple Mount Agreement

After the Six Day War, Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Dayan struck a deal with the Jordanian religious Authority (Waqf) over the control of Jerusalem's religious sites, including the Temple Mount. Dayan's intent was to maintain security and stability in the region after the war. This agreement is the origin of the "status quo" on the Temple Mount.

Moshe Dayan decided to leave the management of the Temple Mount to the Waqf, although he also insisted that Jews and other non-Jewish groups would be able to visit the area without restriction.¹

- While the IDF would secure the gates of the Temple Mount, the Waqf would decide who prayed at the site. It was decided that non-Muslim prayer was banned from the Temple Mount.²
- The Kotel remained the place of Jewish prayer, and the Muslims had religious sovereignty over the Temple Mount.³
- Muslims would be able to enter the Temple Mount through 10 out of the 11 gates that lead up to the Mount, while Jews would only be able to enter through Mugrabi Gate.⁴
- Furthermore, Jews and non-Muslims visitors can only visit the Temple Mount from Sun-Thursday, for 4 hours each day in between the time for Muslim prayer.⁵
- This situation continued informally until Jordan and Israel signed a peace treaty in 1994, formalizing the arrangement.
- Even though in 1988, Jordan renounced any territorial claim to Judea and Samaria ("The West Bank"), it kept control of East Jerusalem.⁶
- On June 27th, 1976, just days after the end of the Six-Day War, the Knesset passed the Protection of Holy Places Law. This granted special legal status to the Holy Sites and makes it a criminal offense to desecrate them, or to impede freedom of access to them.⁷
 - Even this offer was objected to by Muslims because they completely rejected the Israeli conquest of East Jerusalem and the Temple Mount.⁸

¹ Ibid.

² Halevi, Yossi Klein. "The Astonishing Israeli Concession of 1967." The Atlantic. June 07, 2017. Accessed August 03, 2017.

³ "Temple Mount." Temple Mount. Accessed August 03, 2017.

⁴ "Tourism Min. plan to widen Jewish access to Temple Mount angers Palestinians." Haaretz.com. October 07, 2014. Accessed August 03, 2017.

⁵ "Temple Mount." Temple Mount. Accessed August 03, 2017.

⁶ Lieber, Dov. "Amid Temple Mount tumult, the who, what and why of its Waqf rulers." The Times of Israel. July 20, 2017. Accessed August 03, 2017.

⁷ Halevi, Yossi Klein. "The Astonishing Israeli Concession of 1967." The Atlantic. June 07, 2017. Accessed August 03, 2017.

⁸ "Temple Mount." Temple Mount. Accessed August 03, 2017.

By allowing the Waqf to maintain religious authority over the The Temple Mount, Dayan hoped to ease religious tensions following the violent war.

- Once the IDF unit captured East Jerusalem, they raised an Israeli flag on the Temple Mount to convey that the region was officially theirs; however, Moshe Dayan immediately ordered the lowering of the flag in order to not provoke Muslim Arab countries.⁹
 - Dayan's intent was to minimize any sort of violence on the Temple Mount and prevent the conflict from becoming a holy war.¹⁰
 - In a statement at the Kotel, Dayan said; "I hereby promise faithfully that [Christians and Muslims]'s full freedom and all their religious rights will be preserved. We did not come to Jerusalem to conquer the Holy Places of others.¹¹
 - He believed that "one should not hinder the Arabs from behaving [at the Temple Mount] as they do now," for it is necessary to remove any potentiality for a conflict between Jews and Muslims.¹²

⁹ Shragai, Nadav. "The Israeli Relinquishment of the Temple Mount." Jerusalem Center For Public Affairs. Accessed August 03, 2017.

¹⁰ Halevi, Yossi Klein. "The Astonishing Israeli Concession of 1967." The Atlantic. June 07, 2017. Accessed August 03, 2017.

¹¹ 1967: Reunification of Jerusalem." CAMERA: The Six-Day War. Accessed August 03, 2017

¹² Shragai, Nadav. "The Israeli Relinquishment of the Temple Mount." Jerusalem Center For Public Affairs. Accessed August 03, 2017.