

**THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT AND THE UNITED STATES
ECONOMIC INTEREST IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

BY

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**BEING A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND STRATEGIC STUDIES,
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES,
IGBINEDION UNIVERSITY OKADA, EDO STATE, NIGERIA**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
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MAY, 2015

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research work “THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT AND THE UNITED STATES ECONOMIC INTEREST IN THE MIDDLE EAST” was carried out by OKORO PERE CHARLES with Matriculation Number 11/013535/ASS in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of B.sc degree in international relations and strategic studies. Igbinedion University, Okada, Edo State.

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DECLARATION

I, OKORO PERE CHARLES, hereby declare that:

That this research project titled “THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT AND THE UNITED STATES ECONOMIC INTEREST IN THE MIDDLE EAST ” was an original research carried out by me,

That this project has not previously been submitted for the award of any degree, diploma or certificate anywhere.

Signature: _____

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to the Almighty God for His tender mercies, compassion, wisdom, abundance blessings and grace for a successful completion of this project throughout the duration of the course of study at the university.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

A successful academic research brings one internal contentment. It is an achievement, which marks the realization of one's educational potentials

In life, we come across certain favour in which we realize that words of gratitude alone are quite insufficient in expressing our appreciation. I have been privileged to be a recipient of many of such favour of which I realized are not based on my worthiness, one of such includes the contributions of all who have ensured that this project is successfully completed. It is on these premises that, with utmost sincerity and humility that I wish to express my profound heartfelt gratitude to the following people:

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ABSTRACT

The Middle East has been one of the most volatile and violent subsystem of the international political system since the end of the Second World War. The conflict between Israel and the Arabs is one of the most profound and protracted conflicts of the twentieth century and the principal precipitant of wars in the Middle East. Furthermore, the United States' involvement in the Middle East has been seen as a critical issue because of her Economic interest in the Region which has generally been due to its largest deposit of Oil reserve in the world. In other words, America's strong military and financial support to Israel lends well to having a powerful ally in the region in furtherance of her National Interest.

The methodology used in this study is a qualitative research. Also the theoretical framework used in the explanation of this research problem is the Realist or power perspective theory. Realism which rest on the importance of States operating within an environment of anarchy. The major variables of concern are National interest, the distribution of power and war. Therefore, the researcher concludes this study by saying that the Arab-Israeli conflict remains unsolvable as long as it was set in existential term requiring either Israel's destruction or the Palestinian Arab's exile and nonexistence. Only when both sides perceived that neither could be eliminated did they become ready for an outcome giving each a national framework, a two-State solutions in which Israel and Palestine partition the land and leave in peace.

Based on the researcher's findings, it is therefore recommended that the president of America as matter of importance should visit Israel and Palestine and directly address the Israeli people as well as the Palestinians, strongly suggesting that only peace will serve their greater interests. He must look into the eyes of the Israeli and Palestinian public and emphasize that the U.S. is committed to a two-state solution and will remain consistent and resilient until such a resolution is achieved.

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The Middle East has been one of the most volatile and violent subsystem of the international political system since the end of the Second World War. Postwar history in the Middle East has been punctuated by an unusually high number of full-scale, inter-state wars. The conflict between Israel and the Arabs is one of the most profound and protracted conflicts of the twentieth century and the principal precipitant of wars in the Middle East. There are two major dimensions to this conflict: the Israeli-Palestinian dimension and the Israeli-Arab dimension. The origins of the conflict go back to the end of the nineteenth century when the Zionist movement conceived the idea of building a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine. This project met with bitter opposition on the part of the Arab population of the country. The upshot was a clash between two national movements for possession of Palestine. There were two peoples and one land, hence the conflict (Shlaim, 1998).

The neighboring Arab states became involved in this conflict on the side of the Palestinian Arabs in the 1930s. After the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, the main weight of the conflict shifted from the local or inter-communal level to the

inter-state level. In 1967, the conflict was further complicated by Israel's capture of the West Bank from Jordan, the Golan Heights from Syria and the Sinai peninsula from Egypt. From this point on, these states had a direct territorial dispute with Israel quite apart from their commitment to the Palestinian cause. On the root cause of the conflict there are widely divergent views. Most Arabs maintain that the root cause of the conflict is the dispossession and dispersal of the Palestinian Arabs, an original sin which was compounded by Israel's subsequent territorial acquisitions. In their view, Israel is an inherently aggressive and expansionist state and that the real source of violence in the region (Hirst, 1977) .

Most Israelis, on the other hand, maintain that the root cause of the conflict is not territory but the Arab rejection of Israel's very right to exist as a sovereign state in the Middle East. According to this view, the basic Arab objective is the liquidation of the State of Israel while Israel acts only in self-defence and in response to the Arab challenges. But whatever one's view of the origins and nature of the Arab-Israeli conflict, there can be no doubt that this conflict has been a major cause of wars in the Middle East (Yehoshafat, 1977).

A second source of tension and instability which at least on one occasion, in June 1967, helped to tip the balance in favor of war is to be found in the relations among the Arab states. In theory all Arab states subscribe to the ideal of Arab unity but in

practice inter-Arab relations are characterized more by conflict than by cooperation. Israel is widely held to be one of the few solid pillars propping up Arab unity, the one issue on which all Arabs, whatever their other differences may be, can agree. Opposition to Israel follows naturally from the belief that the inhabitants of the various Arab states, including the Palestinians, form a single nation and that Israel has grossly violated the sacred rights of this nation (Malcolm, 1958).

The United States' involvement in the Middle East has also been seen as a critical issue because of her interests in the wider region which has generally been due to oil. Israel and Palestinian territories do not have oil themselves, but are surrounded by states that do. Strong military and financial support of Israel lends well to having a powerful ally in the region. For that reason as well, other Arab dictators and corrupt rulers have also been supported and even helped into power, Saddam Hussain was one of them. Dictators that can be bought provide a useful check against possible popular uprising in the region and therefore, for the US, help ensure their "security"—that is, their "national interests" are safeguarded and local puppets profit, while the people of the region end up suffering and losing out (Michael,1977).

Furthermore, the United States officials approach their Middle East policies from a pragmatic and realistic perspective which forcefully promotes the goal of a stable Middle East. In pursuit of this stability, U.S. foreign policy has therefore been based upon four cornerstones: the preservation of a continued flow of large quantities of cheap Gulf oil; the protection of the State of Israel; the containment of Communism as introduced by foreign powers (the Soviet Union in past years); and the curbing of movements potentially threatening stability, especially Islamic fundamentalism and (historically) radical leftist ideology. Such are the premises underlying all U.S. policies in the Middle East (Manuel, 1997).

The centrality of Oil from the Middle East has long been understood by U.S. Planners; as early as 1944, for examples, a report by the office of strategic services (the Forerunner of CIA) concluded that, in relation to Middle East, Washington's key national interests were "Oil , Airbases and future Markets" Whilst the United States department urged a sustainable and orderly expansion of production in the Eastern Hemisphere sources of oil supply, principally the Middle East.

In particular, the United States has worked to forge close relations with the Middle East nations such as Saudi Arabia. President Roosevelt committed the US in 1945 to secure the Saudi monarchical dictatorship from internal and external threat in

return for an agreement to export Oil cheaply onto the international markets (Klare, 2004).

While the UN Security Council has attempted to pass numerous resolutions critical of Israel, the United States has vetoed almost all of them. Nevertheless, there have been some resolutions demanding that Israel return land that was captured in the 1967 war etc (such as UN Resolution 242). The 1948 UN Resolution 181 allowed for both Jews and Arabs to live in Israel, which goes counter to claims of some groups that Israel should not exist. Often the international community is critical of Israeli inaction, but the US veto prevents anything coming of it. Instead, Israeli land expansion and settlements have continued. The US has also provided Israel with enormous military aid, to the extent that in the Middle East, Israel has the most advanced and superior military power with high military industries and nuclear weaponry (Ngaire, 1996).

A distinction needs to be made, however, between the rhetorical and the operational levels of Arab foreign policy. Whereas at the rhetorical level the Arab states were largely united in their commitment to oppose Israel, at the operational level they remained deeply divided. The conservative states tended to advocate containment of the Jewish state, while the radical states tended to advocate

confrontation. For this reason, the conventional wisdom on Israel's role in inter-Arab relations is not entirely convincing. As a number of scholars have pointed out, the conflict with Israel has imposed enormous strain on the inter-Arab system (Gamal, 1970).

Far from serving as a drive to unity, the question of how to deal with Israel has been a serious source of dissension and discord in inter-Arab politics. A third source of instability and war in the Middle East is the involvement of the Great Powers in the affairs of the region. Two features of the Middle East help to account for the interest and rivalry it has evoked among the Great Powers in the twentieth century: its geostrategic importance and its oil reserves. Great Power involvement is not a unique feature of the Middle East but one that affects, in varying degrees, all regions of the world. What distinguish the Middle East are the intensity, pervasiveness and profound impact of this involvement. No other part of the Third World has been so thoroughly and ceaselessly caught up in Great Power rivalries. No other sub-system of the international political system has been as penetrated as the Middle East (Carl, 1984).

The dominant Great Powers in the Middle East were the Ottoman Empire until its dissolution in 1918, Britain and France until, roughly, the Suez war of 1956, the United States and the Soviet Union from after the Suez war until the dissolution of

the Soviet Union in 1991, and the United States on its own since 1991. So much emphasis has been laid on the role of these external powers that the history of the modern Middle East, in the words of Malcolm Yapp, in his book, *The Near East since the first World War*, has often been written as though the local states were "driftwood in the sea of international affairs, their destinies shaped by the decisions of others" (Malcolm, 1991).

A perceptive survey of the period 1955-1967 by Fawaz Gerges reaches the same conclusion: the superpowers were rarely able to impose their will on the smaller states of the Middle East. Although the local states depended on their respective superpower patrons for diplomatic support, economic aid and the supply of arms, they managed to retain considerable freedom of action. Yet no account of the origins of Arab-Israeli wars would be complete if it ignored the role played by outside powers (Fawaz, 1955-1967).

The United Nations have made the quest for Palestinian rights a key component its work since 1947, but so far it has been unable to seize the initiative to create a truly international, UN-based diplomatic campaign to end the occupation and defend human rights. Governments are largely unwilling (and the few willing are largely unable to confront US domination of the UN and resulting US control of the

Middle East “peace process” as a result civil society mobilization to pressure governments and to demand UN centrality to replace US control (Phyllis, 2005).

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.

The United States' are focused on ending the Arab -Israeli conflicts because of their Strategic and Economic interest in the region. U.S. support for Israel, sometimes described as ‘America’s aircraft carrier in the region’, is seen as integral to U.S. plans for domination. The Middle East also is home to Israel, one of closest allies of US, and one with which American enjoy a special bond rooted in history; founded on common interests; sustained by shared values. To protect Israel's security is to protect American own, which is why US commitment is ironclad and everlasting. All these are seen also serving Western economic interests, such as in securing oil, which joined together with the agenda of keeping Islam under foot. Muslims generally perceive U.S. military forces in the region as a threatening presence designed to keep the region the way America wants it to be. Any lightening of America’s military footprint will further mitigate this sense of being coerced. U.S. Middle East policy has long been plagued with goals that are contradictory and frequently mutually exclusive. While it is understandable that a global power such as the U.S. would find itself confronted with overlapping interests that do not necessarily match up with regional political realities, the lack of a coherent policy direction in pursuit of vital national interests has hindered

United States' ability to achieve its policy goals and has led to a significant loss of ability to influence in the Middle East. This is not a new phenomenon, but one that has plagued policy makers since the U.S. has attempted to influence events in the Middle East (Gaddis,1982).

Despite the importance of Arab-Israeli peace to regional stability, however, U.S. officials subsumed their peacemaking to other Cold War interests. The U.S. government tempered its dedication to conflict resolution with a determination to deny the Soviets any opportunity to gain political influence in the Middle East. The United States refrained from imposing stringent peace terms on either side and eventually even tolerated the conflict in an effort to safeguard the country's relationships with Middle East states and to steer them away from Moscow. The United States prioritized anti-Soviet containment over Arab-Israeli settlement, preferring a region in conflict under U.S. hegemony to a region at peace under Soviet influence (Gaddis, 2004).

In the end, the United States failed to resolve the overall Arab-Israeli conflict or any of its specific disputes. Failure resulted in part from the deep reluctance of the Arab states and Israel to make concessions or compromises but also resulted from the United States' self-imposed restraints on peacemaking, which undermined its

moral and political credibility in the eyes of local states. U.S. peace initiatives occasionally deepened the conflict by aggravating the passions of the principals and accentuating their disagreements. Despite U.S. efforts to resolve the conflict, peace remained elusive (Don, 2014).

In the 1970s and 1980s, there were many efforts to reach a solution concerning the Palestinian issue. Since the early 1970s, the Question was perceived as a problem concerning the natural and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to a new phase. In November 1970, the General Assembly declared its view on peace in its Resolution 2628, which reads, The General Assembly: Recognizes that the people of Palestine are entitled to equal rights and self determination in accordance with the charter of the United Nations; Declares that full respects for inalienable rights of Palestine is an indispensable element in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East (Bulent, 1998).

Various levels to strengthen the likelihood of peace initiatives had failed. However, these initiatives are not being able to soften the relations between Jews and Arabs. The recognition of the PLO in the international arena has not changed very much the attitude of Israel towards to the Palestine problem. Particularly including US and USSR have attempted for peace initiative in the early 1980s. The primary

purpose was to have strong place on the balance of power in Middle East. The Reagan Plan and The Soviet Peace Plan were the instances of this case. Unfortunately, these attempts for permanent peace could not be eventuated moreover a new tragedy could not be obviated (Bulent, 1998)

The post-Lebanon war atmosphere created momentum for international peace attempts. The UN General Assembly decided, based on Resolutions from 1980, to convene an international conference on the Question of Palestine under the supervision of the UN. The conference convened in Geneva from 29 August to 7 September (1983).

According to the Preparatory Committee, the two main objectives of the conference should be:

- a) To increase international awareness of the facts relating to the question of Palestine;
- b) To attain governmental and non-governmental support for effective ways and means to enable the Palestinian people to exercise its inalienable rights in Palestine on the basis of United Nations Resolutions.

In addition to that, there were some initiatives for peace in 1980s. , such as in 1985 the Arab initiative, in 1988 The Mubarek initiative, in 1988 The Shultz Initiative,

The Shamir initiative and Swedish diplomacy. In international arena, the question of Palestine has been a diplomatic/strategic game for creating solution.

Also was the Madrid Conference of Oct 30. 1991, which was co-sponsored by Bush and Gorbachev who invited Israel, the Arab states, and the Palestinians to this peace conference, for the purpose of directing negotiations. Israel, Jordan, the Palestinians, Syria, and Lebanon decided to attend in response to that invitation. The participation was not restricted to only those mentioned above; the European Community, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, and Mauritania were also engaged in this process (Bulent, 1998).

The Oslo agreement of 1993 was the most profound demonstration of the statist goals of both Israel and the Palestinians. From the outset it was clear that in exchange for the end of conflict and Palestinian recognition of Israel, the Israeli government was ready, in accordance with UN resolutions 242 and 338, to withdraw from biblical land in Judea and Samaria. It was also implicit that at the end of the process, the Palestinians would establish a state in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (Shmuel, 2004).

In light of the foregoing, this research shall be guided by the following questions:

1. What has been the major cause and motive of the Arab -Israeli Conflict?

2. What is United States interest in the Middle-East?
3. How is the United States' interest in the Middle -East facilitating the Arab-Israeli conflict?
4. Why has the various peace initiatives continued to fail?
5. What hopes are there for the peaceful resolutions to the Conflict?

1.3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY.

This study shall be guided by the following objectives:

1. To trace the major cause and motive of the Arab - Israeli conflict.
2. To analyze /examine United States' interest in the region.
3. To examine how the United States' interest in the Middle East has facilitated the Arab-Israeli conflict.
4. To examine the failure of the various peace initiatives in the past.
5. To critically examine the hopes of peaceful resolutions of the conflict, and to make policy recommendations that could be useful to stakeholders, policy makers and the various Actors in the peace process.

1.4. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.

The Arab-Israeli conflict has generated intense feelings among so many people; it goes deeper and spreads more widely than virtually any other current political issue around the globe. People who have no personal stake -no relations in any part of Israel and Palestine, express themselves on this conflict with genuine feelings of grief and anger, where other conflicts provoke only humanitarian response or concern for the unjustly treated.

The importance of the region as a whole and its strategic position to the United States' is a key element; this in a general sense reflects a glow of significance onto the Arab - Israeli conflict. There is no doubt that this conflict has become an intractable one despite the fact that it has engaged World's attention for several decades.

Therefore this study is of great importance owing to it's relation to current events/issues and also to highlight the security implications of the conflict on the globe and possibly predict the future of events globally. On the other hand, this study is a modest contribution to the larger literature on the Arab- Israeli conflict bringing in fresh perspective and insight, which may be of significance to the teeming reading public, stakeholders and policy makers.

1.5. SCOPE / LIMITATION OF THE STUDY.

The study will therefore cover a brief historical overview of the Arab - Israeli conflict from 1948- 2014. It will also analyze and concentrate on the United States' foreign policy, and her economic interest in the Middle -East and the various peace initiatives embarked upon by the major stakeholders both within the region and outside.

It is common known fact that a researcher, especially in this part of our world will encounter certain problems referred to as limitations. Some of this limitations encountered in the pursuit of this research includes, the inability of the researcher to travel to the region and other countries of interest may likely limit our full access to necessary information. Also coupled with financial constraint on the part of the researcher arising from lack of sponsors. However, an appreciable effort would be made to salvage the listed limitations.

1.6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.

This study shall make use of qualitative research methodology. Therefore, Due to the topical nature of the Arab -Israeli conflict, there can be deficiency or inadequacy of materials on the topic. Data used for this study are mainly collected

through secondary sources such as, books, journals, monographs, United Nations publications, Newspapers, magazines and from the internet sources. The study is basically qualitative in nature; the data collected would be analyzed using the historical, descriptive and analytical methods.

1.7. DEFINITION OF TERMS

CONFLICT:

According Rakhim (2010), conflict can be defined as “an interactive process manifested in incompatibility, disagreement or dissonance within or between social entities.” Rakhim also notes that a conflict may be limited to one individual, who is conflicted within himself (the intrapersonal conflict).

Michael, (1992) also defines conflict as an activity which takes place when conscious beings (individuals or groups) wish to carry out mutually inconsistent acts concerning their wants, needs or obligations. Conflict is an escalation of a disagreement, which is its common prerequisite, and is characterized by the existence of conflict behavior, in which the beings are actively trying to damage one another.

Based on this research problem, Conflict could be referred to some form of friction, disagreement, or discord arising within a group when the beliefs or actions of one or more members of the group are either resisted by or unacceptable to one or more members of another group. Conflict can arise between members of the same group, known as intragroup conflict, or it can occur between members of two or more groups, and involve violence, interpersonal discord, and psychological tension, known as intergroup conflict.

ECONOMIC INTEREST

The objective motives for people's activities, reflecting the place of these people in the system of social production. "The economic relations of a given society," wrote F. Engels, "present themselves in the first place as interests" (K. Marx and F. Engels,). The relations of production are revealed precisely through the incentives of human activity, that is, as interests, which are objective conditions of social existence. Economic interests are reflected in the consciousness of people as set goals and are further revealed through the efforts of the will toward achieving the goals. Economic interests comprise all types and forms of investment vehicles that an investee could issue or be a party to, including equity securities; financial instruments with characteristics of equity, liabilities, or both; long-term debt and

other debt-financing arrangements; leases; and contractual arrangements such as management contracts, service contracts, or intellectual property licenses (Marx 1884).

1.8 ORGANIZATION OF STUDY

This study is divided into five fairly equal chapters.

Chapter one introduces the research topic taking into consideration the background of study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, the significance of study, scope/limitations of study, research methodology adopted for this study and also definition of terms.

Chapter two involves conceptual clarification of relevant literature on the conflict and provides an appropriate theoretical framework from which the conflict can be analyzed.

Chapter three is to trace the major causes and motive of the Arab Israeli conflict and also to analyze the United States interest in the region.

Chapter four is to examine how the United States interest in the Middle East has facilitated the conflict and also to examine the failure of the various peace initiatives in the past.

Chapter five concludes the study by making a brief summary of the work, and drawing a conclusion and finally, making recommendations on how to amicably resolving the conflict.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

In any scientific study of a social phenomenon of this nature, a comprehensive review of already existing literature is inevitable, because it provides a sound footing for the study as it enables the researcher to build on existing literature on the topic and also builds a strong theoretical framework for the study .

It is an indisputable fact that Conflict forms an intrinsic and inevitable part of human existence and interactions and is not limited to race, beliefs, culture or location. Therefore Conflict refers to some form of friction, disagreement, or discord arising within a group when the beliefs or actions of one or more members of the group are either resisted by or unacceptable to one or more members of another group. Conflict can arise between members of the same group, known as intra-group conflict, or it can occur between members of two or more groups, and involve violence, interpersonal discord, and psychological tension, known as intergroup conflict. Conflict in groups often follows a specific course. Routine group interaction is first disrupted by an initial conflict, often caused by differences of opinion, disagreements between members, or scarcity of resources. At this point, the group is no longer united, and may split into coalitions (Robert,1990).

As Nwolise, (2004) stated " a careful study of human history reveals that conflict has been humanity's unending affliction" The continued occurrence or preponderances of conflicts usually in nature of wars the world over attests to this fact so that despite a universal condemnation of violent conflicts, it has become particularly persistent overtime. As Joan Bondurant rightly argues, "human conflict is, perhaps, the most fundamental problem of all time "Catlin, (1927).

Porter,(1994), Speaking in a similar vein, Rapia also asserted that "as long as people and nations pursue different and conflicting interests, there will always be disagreements, disputes and conflicts" Nwolise, (2004). Momah (1993) agrees with when he proclaims that "War cannot be wished away, nor decreed or legislated out of existence" it was in this realization that plato , the famous Greek Philosopher, asserted that "only the dead have seen the end of War"

Rourke (2007) talking about the frequency of violent conflicts, he states that there were almost 1,000 wars during the last one millennium and that the world has been totally free of significant interstate, colonial, civil war in only about one out of every years in all of recorded human history, no wonder the famous German Political sociologist Max Weber proclaimed that "the decisive means of politics is violence; anyone who fails to see this is a.. "political infant"

Therefore, Conflict is defined in many ways; there is no unanimity among the scholars about what constitute a conflict. One school, dominant in North America, defines conflict in terms of clash of interest between two parties. Buolding, (1940), for instance, states: "Conflicts over interests are situations in which some change makes at least one party better off and the other party worse off, each in their own estimation. A fight is a situation in which each party to a Perceived conflict over interests acts to reduce the welfare of the other" Johan Galtung, who represents another school, maintains that "injustice and structural violence" mark a conflict situation. According to him, absence of physical violence and direct confrontation between actors does not necessarily mean that structural violence is totally absent. Adam, (2003) presents a broader definition. For him, conflict is a situation where "potential development" of one party is "impeded" by another. However, the most widely used definition links a conflict situation with "incompatible goals" of parties.

According to Nicholson, (1992) " a conflict exists when two people wish to carry out acts which are mutually inconsistent. The definition of conflict can be extended from single people to groups and more than two parties can be involved in a conflict. The principles remain the same. A common element found in all definitions is the divergent goals and interest of two actors or parties who resort to various means in pursuit of achieving their objectives. Rakhim (2010), notes that

there is no single universally accepted definition of conflict. He notes that one issue of contention is whether the conflict is a situation or a type of behavior. Citing a review of definitions of organizational conflicts in 1990 by Robert A. Baron, Rakhim notes the following common elements in the definitions of conflict:

- There are recognized opposing interests between parties in a zero-sum situation;
- There must be a belief by each side that the other one is or will act against them;
- This belief is likely to be justified by actions taken;
- Conflict is a process, having developed from their past interactions;

Building on that, the proposed definition of conflict by Rakhim is "an interactive process manifested in incompatibility, disagreement or dissonance within or between social entities." Rakhim also notes that a conflict may be limited to one individual, who is conflicted within himself (the intrapersonal conflict).

To take another definition of conflict, Nicholson (1992) defines it as an activity which takes place when conscious beings (individuals or groups) wish to carry out mutually inconsistent acts concerning their wants, needs or obligations. Conflict is an escalation of a disagreement, which is its common prerequisite, and is characterized by the existence of conflict behavior, in which the beings are actively trying to damage one another. Rakhim lists some manifestations of conflict behavior, starting with disagreement, and followed by verbal abuse and interference. Conflicts can occur between individuals, groups and organizations;

examples include quarrels between individuals, labor strikes, competitive sports, or armed conflicts.

Various authors and scholars have offered quite useful definitions of conflicts. Coser, (1956) defines it as "a struggle over and claims to secure resources in which the aims of opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals." Dougherty and Pfaltzgraf (1981) see it as "a condition in which one identifiable group of human beings is engaged in conscious opposition to one or more other identifiable groups because these groups are pursuing what are or appear to be incompatible goals." In such struggle, each party mobilizes energy to obtain the goal as stake or desired objective, often perceiving "the other as a barrier or threat to that goal" Stagner,(1967). Usually, the means employed, and the extents to which the parties are ready to go in the struggle depend on the value attached to the goal or object, and the resources available. At times violence is introduced, but conflict need not necessarily be violent. Nwolise, (2004). It is when conflict between groups or state becomes violent that we talk of its transformation into war which Clausewitz, (1968) defines conflict as "a duel on an extensive scale..., an act of violence pushed to utmost bounds directed upon the destruction of the enemy's power"

Similarly, the term “internationalized armed conflict” describes internal hostility that are rendered international. The factual circumstances that can achieve that internationalization are numerous and often complex: the term internationalized armed conflict includes war between two internal factions both of which are backed by different States; direct hostilities between two foreign states that militarily intervene in an internal armed conflict in support of opposing sides; and war involving a foreign intervention in support of an insurgent group fighting against an established government Schindler, (1982)

What then are the sources or causes of conflicts? For Nwolise, (2004), conflict emanate generally from socio-economic and political injustices in the society either at the level of person-person, group-group or State-state interaction. These injustices may border on sharing of resources (including leadership positions), the way human rights and freedom are handled, or on the handling of demands, and jointly owned assets. These lead to clash of interests, values, and opinions. Similarly, Stedman,(1991) argues that “conflict arises from problems basic to all populations, the tugs and pulls of different identities, the differential distribution of resources and access to poor and competing definitions of what is right, fair, and just”.

Also, Rourke, (2007) identified several factors that led to conflict especially war to include disagreement on the following: distribution of power, anarchical nature of the international system, system-level economic factors, system-level biosphere stress, excessive militarism on the part of state, political structure and culture of the country, human characteristics and individual leaders' characteristics. Fulbright,(1966) on his part attributes conflicts and wars among states and groups to what he calls "the arrogance of power". For him, the causes of war may have more to do with pathology than with politics, more to do with irrational pressures of pride and pain than with rational calculations of advantage and profits. As he puts it:

If there is a root cause of human conflict, and of the power drive of nation, it lies not in economic aspirations, historical forces, or the workings of the balance of power, but in the ordinary hopes and fears of the human mind.

As stated earlier, conflict need not be violent. In fact, not a few scholars have argued that it has quite positive and innovative values in the society. Ghandi and his most faithful disciple – Martin Luther King Junior – for instance, rejected violence as a method of conflict resolution. But that does not mean they are averse of conflict for that would be a misinterpretation of their message. Ghandi, for instance, once asserted that "cowardice is impotence worse than violence" and as attested to by Varma, (1975) welcomed a 'conflict situation' as an efficient

physician would welcome a chronic patient. King on his part sees conflict as a “creative tension” which is very necessary for the health of the society to be brought on the surface. For him, it is better to create a crisis instead of quietly submitting to the situation, and force the wrongdoer to confront the issue. This, according to Martin L.King Jnr, was “a type of conductive, non-violent tension, which is necessary for growth. As Barker has pointed out, a tension was, therefore, an integral part of the non-violent technique of direct action. Elevating conflict to the level of tension makes it more susceptible to a non-violent resolution, since tension in such a situation is transformed into a ‘creative tension’ and makes a smoother resolution of the conflict easier, Varma, (1975).

Similarly, Karl Marx, while not subscribing to the non-violent means as propagated by Ghandi and King, argued that positive change could only occurs in society through violent conflict. Society, according to him, is divided into classes: Class of the ‘Haves’ and the class of the ‘Have not’s’. These classes are externally in conflict with one another and it is this conflict that leads to change and consequently growth and progress of the human society. In the communist manifesto, he and Engels famously declared: “the history of all hitherto existing societies is the history of class struggle” Marx and Engels, (1848). For them, social classes (as long as they exist in a society) are perpetually in conflict with each

other because of their mutually antagonistic economic interests. So, as long as there are classes in the society, a conflict is inevitable and progress can only occur in the context of such conflict. When Marx identified class conflict as the major cause of social change in society, he was simply stating his conviction that the economic base of society (composed of the mode or means of production and the relations of production) more than anything else shapes or influences the developments in other part of society.

However, some scholars such as Ralf Dahrendorf have dismissed as an unwarranted over simplification Marx's view that "the history of all hitherto existing societies is the history of class struggle". To them, this amounts to an economic or class reductionism in which all manner of social change are explained in term of one single factor alone which is the factor of class struggle. For some of these modern conflict theorists, social change involves not only class conflict but also social conflict in general.

Furthermore, conflict, according to some scholars, is not only desirable and creative, but also should be enjoyed. For instance Burto,(1987) asserts that, Conflict like sex is an essential creative element in human relationship. It is the means to change, the means by which our social values of welfare, security, justice

and opportunities for personal development can be achieved... indeed; conflict like sex is to be enjoyed.

For Nwolise,(2004), conflict occasionally serves as the engine or propeller of positive change, growth and development in human, state and international affairs. Recently also, at an acceptance speech on the award of Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo in December 2009, United States' President Mr. Barack Obama made allusions to the inevitability of conflict when he argued that no peaceful means or diplomacy could have tame Hitler and his outrageous Nazi ideology. So for him, as much as peace is the ultimate desire of mankind, conflict – indeed, war – is, at some moment, inevitable to securing that peace. Aristotle, the ancient Greek philosopher captures it better when he suggested in his Nicomachean Ethics that “we make war that we may live in peace, Rourke, (2007).

True, there are some absurd pathology that require strong violent responses to stop them. In 1998/1999 for instance, President Slobadan Milosevic's government in Yugoslavia embarked on an ethnic-cleansing orgy against ethnic Albanians; the burning and burying of hundreds of Albanians; the burning of their homes, raping of their women, and even chasing them out of their homes and villages which were quickly occupied by the ethnic group members of the invading forces. It took the strong violent response of NATO which bombarded Yugoslavia continuously for 11 weeks for such atrocities to be stopped. It is also argued that there was

absolutely no way Hitler and his Nazi war machine could have been stop without war. But that is about the positive side of conflict. For the most part, conflict (especially war) is an instrument for destruction of human life, property, principles and values, and wakes up beastly elements in man. For Nwolise (2004), “war diverts the developments resources of a state to defense and war-making. It retards the rate of development of a people and a state, at least in the short-run. It spreads pestilence, destitution hunger and starvation. It creates gross insecurity and traumatizes people”. For Clausewitz, war sows the seeds of other wars because as he argues: “in war, the result is never final. The defeated state often considers the outcome merely as a transitory evil for which a remedy may still be found at some later date” Momah, (1993). Still, for Momah, war remains the greatest tragedy to have ever be taken mankind because to win a war it must be fought not as we may wish but as we must. Thus a former United States’ Army General and former U.S President, Dwight D. Eisenhower confessed: “I hate war.....its brutality, its futility, its stupidity.” As Momah remarks: War in its totality is evil... it destroys, ruins, maims, changes boundaries, topples government, humiliates peoples, brutalizes the human psyche, wrecks the precious family togetherness, and most regrettably, often sows the seed of other wars. No wonder Shakespeare in one of his plays describes war as a son of hell.

Whenever two individuals opined in different ways, a conflict arises. In a layman's language conflict is nothing but a fight either between two individuals or among group members. No two individuals can think alike and there is definitely a difference in their thought process as well as their understanding. Disagreements among individuals lead to conflicts and fights. Conflict arises whenever individuals have different values, opinions, needs, interests and are unable to find a middle way (Agba E, 2015). Conflict is defined as a clash between individuals arising out of a difference in thought process, attitudes, understanding, interests, requirements and even sometimes perceptions. A conflict results in heated arguments, physical abuses and definitely loss of peace and harmony. In other words, a conflict can actually change relationships (Robert, 1990).

A Conflict not only can arise between individuals but also among countries, political parties and states as well. A small conflict not controlled at the correct time may lead to a large war and rifts among countries leading to major unrest and disharmony. Misunderstandings as well as ego clashes also lead to conflicts. Every individual has a different way to look at things and react to various situations.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There are several theories in the field of international relations that tries to explain state behavior and inter-state relations. The dominant and perhaps the most relevant to this study is the realist or power perspective. Realism provides an elaborate theory of international conflict. For now, I will just provide the bare bones, the fundamentals. Realism as a theory which rests on the importance of states operating within an environment of anarchy. The major variables of concern are national interests, the distribution of power, and war. The world we live in always seems to contain wars and conflicts. Just by looking back over 100 years, history is filled with major wars like the two World Wars, the constant scare of escalation of threat during the Cold War and more recently The Afghan and Iraq War and also the present Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). Despite the fact that people always talk about the need for peace, the world is instead filled with fear and constant security threats. Since the First World War many theorists and political scientists have tried to come up with a solution on how to create a peaceful international environment but with no real achievement. This leads to a natural conclusion that there are certain obstacles that prevent peaceful coexistence between states (Helen,1992).

Simply put, realism- also known as political realism- is a school of international relations that prioritizes national interest and security, rather than ideals social reconstructions, or ethnics.

Realists believe they can provide the best explanation on why cooperation is so complicated to achieve. Realism is the most dominant theory and has been so since the end of the Second World War. Even though in the last few years it has been criticized heavily for not being able to explain certain issues in international relations like the peaceful end to the Cold War, it still provides a thorough theory. Realism is divided into three parts: classical realism, neo-realism and neo-classical realism. The classical realists are more concerned with human nature. They believe that people in general are selfish and aggressive. The main actors of the international system, the states, are guided by this and essentially war is inevitable. There is a lot of evidence to support that, like the Nazi Germany led by Hitler or Iraq led my Saddam Hussein. Neo-realists are more concerned with the distribution of power and the international system. The international system lacks a sovereign authority that can make and enforce binding agreements. Without such authority, the states are given an opportunity to do what they like which makes it difficult for states to trust each other and cooperate (Robert,1978).

This point is further maximized with the realist assumption that the state's main goal is power maximization and security. So with no world authority to keep an eye on those power seeking states, it is a no surprise that realists see international relations as a constant battle and a struggle for survival. Even if some states are not trying to increase their power and are happy with the way things are, they cannot trust other states to think the same because if the other state suddenly decided not to cooperate, the survival of the first state is under major threat. Because all states are aware of this, they all try to protect themselves by seeking control, increasing their military capabilities and making allies with other states. This in turn leads to a different realist concept- the security dilemma. Collins in his writing "The Security Dilemma" described the concept very well:

"The Security Dilemma is the notion that in a context of uncertainty and bounded rationality perceived external threats (real or imagined) generate feelings of insecurity in those states that believe themselves to be the targets of such threats, thereby leading those states to adopt measures to increase their power and capability to counteract those threats (alliance creation, arms build-ups, and so on)" (Cerny, 2000).

So if one state sees another state suddenly increase its military power it will assume that it is about to attack even if that might not be the case. The state that

thinks it is under threat will have to increase its military power too which in turn will alarm the original state and this spiral could continue for a long time (Collins,1976).

It is a never ending situation which is in fact why realists believe cooperation is not only difficult to achieve, but mostly impossible. Security dilemma happens because of fear between states. Many of these states experience a lack of contact between each other which eventually leads to a lack of trust. A current example of the security dilemma is between India and Pakistan. In order to achieve cooperation, security dilemma between two countries must not only stop getting worse but spiral back in the direction where those states trust each other. Even if states do agree on some laws and arms agreements, there is nothing to stop one of them breaking the agreement or cheating. Glazer, (1994).The example of how Hitler broke the Nazi-Soviet pact and invaded Russia is clear evidence that not all states can be trusted. There are however some disagreements about that point amongst realists. While offensive realism claims that states must always act aggressively to survive because the international system encourages conflict and the inevitability of war, the defensive realists are less negative (Adam, 2003).

They believe that cooperation or conflict depends on the situation. For example if two states are similar minded and share the same views, they are more likely to cooperate. The reason for that could be a better understand between the countries like for example Germany and France share the same views and thus trust each other more. Therefore the international system does not necessarily generate conflict and war and security is often plentiful. So in summary what are the main obstacles to cooperation according to realists? The answer is aggressive, selfish humans living in states who are only concerned with power and security because of the self-help anarchical international system. Realists leave us with a bleak world, full of vulnerable states scared for their survival and reluctant to trust or cooperate with any other states. However before the points put forward by realists can be completely accepted, We shall attempt a critique of this theory, show the limitations of this state-centric and power-centered theory and possibly, replace it with a new 'transnational' or 'complex interdependencies' perspective that highlights the highly complex interdependencies and relationship among nations. some criticisms and disadvantages of realist theory must be pointed out. First of all realism ignores the importance of different concepts of identity and culture in different states. For example counties with the same religion and culture are more likely to cooperate with each other. Realism is criticized heavily for exaggerating the importance of states and not taking into account other actors like institutions

and NGOs. Also the international system has no doubt changed over the years, there are no major wars, the Cold War finished without any aggression which realists failed to predict and states in general have lost interest in territorial advantage. Robert Jarvis even believes that realist theory will not be able to explain conflict or cooperation in the coming years (Robert,1999).

In fact the biggest critics of realists are the liberals or the institutionalists as they are also called.

Realism or power politics have some basic assumptions as follows:

- The international system is anarchic. There is no authority above states capable of regulating their interactions; states must arrive at relations with other states on their own, rather than it being dictated to them by some higher controlling entity.
- Sovereign states are the principal actors in the international system and special attention is afforded to great powers as they have the most leverage on the international stage.
- International institutions, non-governmental organizations, multinational corporations, individuals and other sub-state or trans-state actors are viewed as having little independent influence.

- States are rational unitary actors each moving towards their own national interest. There is a general distrust of long-term cooperation or alliance.
- The overriding ‘national interest’ of each state is its national security and survival.
- In pursuit of national security, states strive to amass resource.
- Relations between states are determined by their comparative level of power derived primarily from their military and economic capabilities.
- There are no universal principles which all states can use to guide their actions. Instead, a state must be ever aware of the actions of the states around it and must use a pragmatic approach to resolve the problems that arise.
- The injection of morality into international relations causes reckless commitments, diplomatic rigidity, and the escalation of conflict (Wikipedia, 2010).

Hans Morgenthau, an American refugee from Nazi Germany, was one of the leading realist of the 1950s and 1960s and perhaps “the purest as well as the most self-conscious apostle of realism” of his generation, Parkinson, (1977). Most would even agree with John Vasquez (1983) that “Morgenthau’s work was the single and most important vehicle for establishing the dominance of the realist paradigm” in the study of international relations, especially in the United States. Morgenthau became best known to students of international relations with his book politics Among Nations (1959) in which he sets forth his realist principle thus:

International politics and indeed, all politics is a struggle for power whatever the ultimate aims of international politics, power is always the immediate aim. States and peoples think and act in terms of interest defined as power. They may ultimately seek freedom, security, and prosperity or power itself....but whenever they strive to realize their goal by means of international politics, they do so by striving for power.

Realism, to be sure, is derived from the theories of Thomas Hobbes and Niccolò Machiavelli. It emphasizes the constraints on politics imposed by human nature and the absence of international government. Together largely, they make international relations largely a realm of power and interest. Realism contends that human nature has not changed since the days of antiquity inclined towards immorality. As Machiavelli puts it, in politics, “it must need be taken for granted that all men are wicked and that they will always give vent to malignity that is in their minds when opportunity offers”(Donnelly, 2000).

The realists also stress the political necessities that flow from international anarchy. In the absence of international government, “the law of jungle justice still prevails” (Schuman, 1941). Within states, human nature usually is tamed by hierarchical political authority and rule. In international relations however, where

there is no world government, human nature prevails and morality is totally discounted. Therefore, as Morgenthau, (1959) argue, “universal moral principles cannot be applied to the actions of states.” Suffice it also to add that in the realist tradition, states are the principal and most important actors in the international system.

So, even though thousands of international organizations were established during the Post-World War II era, they were largely ignored or underestimated by students of international relations. However, the increasing proliferations of these organizations and the powered impact they make in the international system have led some observers to begin to reconsider their roles as independent and important actors in the international system. They later conclude that states are actually declining in importance and that non-state actors are gaining status and influence. New theories of international relations such as the “complex interdependence” of Robert (1989) were formed in order to explain these new developments.

Kegley and Wittkoph, (1995) accurately point out that “as the world grows smaller, the mutual dependence of nation-states and other transnational political actors on one another has grown.” Quite interesting, non-state actors now exert

considerable influence even over powerful states like the United States and are becoming increasingly indispensable in international politics.

A type of the numerous non-state actors is the many National Liberation Movements that straddle Asia, Africa and Latin America. These groups are very powerful and play quite significant roles in the international system. This is so because individuals give loyalty to and identify themselves with ethno-national groups besides nation-states. “many people pledge their primary allegiances not to the state and government that rules them, but rather to their ethno-national group which shares a common civilization, language, cultural tradition, and ties of kinship” Kegley and Wittkoph, (1997).

Some of these NLMs became the most important actors of many international problems. One of the most well known examples of NLMs that played and is still playing a significant role in international politics is the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). Since the late 1960s, PLO has been playing the key role in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Arab and now even European states, have considered PLO and its leaders as the legitimate representatives of Palestinians. Some other significant NLMs were African National Congress (ANC) of Nelson Mandela of South Africa which eventually brought down the white supremacist or apartheid government;

According to a project conducted by the US Institute of Peace Press, there were about 230 disadvantaged and dissatisfied political ethnic movements in the 1990s Gurr,(1993). Some stateless nations that are effective actors of international politics are the Palestinians and Catalonians in Spain, the Quebecois in Muslims of Kashmir and Serbia, the Hindu Tamils in Sri Lanka, and the Kurds in the Middle East Brown, (1995).

For instance, among these national groups, the Kurdish people and parties who represent them play an important role in Middle Eastern politics. The United States, Israel, Western European and Middle Eastern countries have been using Kurdish people and organizations against the central governments in which the Kurds live and constitute a certain percentage of the population. Likewise, Kurdish Diaspora in the West has been using the Western governments to put pressure on central governments. Like many other ethnic groups, the Kurds are also both a subject and an actor of international politics. Systemic powers seek contribution of Kurdish groups to their regional calculations and policies. Observers agree that without the consent of the Kurdish people, it is quite difficult, if not impossible, to bring stability to the region. Olson, (1994-1996).

As the Cold War ended up with the disappearance of the ideological contest, cultural cleavages and hatreds such as tribalism, religious fanaticism, and hyper-national ethnicity have resurfaced, Kegley and Wittkoph, (1995). Many non-state actors have involved in these conflicts and shaped national, regional, and international politics.

In short, non-state actors have become essential instruments within the international system. Today, it is difficult to analyze international politics and behaviors of nation-states without attaching great importance to them.

As mentioned by Brown, (1995), “the world polity is in the process of self-transformation-out of the traditional nation-state system and into a system more congruent with the contemporary global oligarchy”. Nation-states, including the most powerful one, the United States, have to attach great significance to non-state actors in order to maintain their interests. Therefore, any new theoretical and conceptual approaches to international relations have to take non-state actors and new conditions into account in order to be able to make sound analyses about world politics.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 THE OVERVIEW, CAUSES AND MOTIVE OF ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

There are a myriad of reasons underlying and undergirding the Arab-Israeli Conflict in recent times and it is important to evaluate all of these rationales. However, it is important to note that the actual military conflict is an international one with set international players. The spiritual conflict is much more pervasive. At the core for this difference is that Jews and Arabs see their communities as being brethren in the same way that all Americans see each other as brethren.

The Arab–Israeli conflict is refers to the political tension and military conflicts between certain Arab countries and Israel. The roots of the modern Arab–Israeli conflict are bound in the rise of Zionism and Arab nationalism towards the end of the 19th century. Territory regarded by the Jewish people as their historical homeland is also regarded by the Pan-Arab movement as historically and currently belonging to the Palestinians, and in the Pan-Islamic context, as Muslim lands. The sectarian conflict between Palestinian Jews and Arabs emerged in the early 20th century, peaking into a full-scale civil war in 1947 and transforming into the First Arab-Israeli War in May 1948 following the Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel (Pollack, 2002).

3.2 THE RELIGIOUS DIMENSION TO THE CONFLICT.

Some groups opposed to the peace process invoke religious arguments for their uncompromising positions. The contemporary history of the Arab–Israeli conflict is very much affected by the religious beliefs of the various sides and their views of the idea of the chosen people in their policies with regard to the "Promised Land" and the "Chosen City" of Jerusalem (Brown, W. 2008).

The Land of Canaan or Eretz Yisrael (Land of Israel) was, according to the Hebrew Bible, promised by God to the Children of Israel. This is also mentioned in the Qur'an. In his 1896 manifesto, *The Jewish State*, Theodor Herzl repeatedly refers to the Biblical Promised Land concept. Likud is currently the most prominent Israeli political party to include the Biblical claim to the Land of Israel in its platform (Moshe, 2007).

Muslims also claim rights to that land in accordance with the Quran. Contrary to the Jewish claim that this land was promised only to the descendants of Abraham's younger son Isaac, they argue that the Land of Canaan was promised to what they consider the elder son, Ishmael, from whom Arabs claim descent. (Buzan, 2003) Additionally, Muslims also revere many sites holy for Biblical Israelites, such as the Cave of the Patriarchs and the Temple Mount. In the past 1,400 years, Muslims

have constructed Islamic landmarks on these ancient Israelite sites, such as the Dome of the Rock and the Al-Aqsa Mosque on the Temple Mount, the holiest site in Judaism. This has brought the two groups into conflict over the rightful possession of Jerusalem. Muslim teaching is that Muhammad passed through Jerusalem on his first journey to heaven. Hamas, which governs the Gaza Strip, claims that all of the land of Palestine (the current Israeli and Palestinian territories) is an Islamic war that must be governed by Muslims (Weinberger, 2004). Christian Zionists often support the State of Israel because of the ancestral right of the Jews to the Holy Land, as suggested, for instance, by Paul in Romans. Christian Zionism teaches that the return of Jews in Israel is a prerequisite for the Second Coming of Christ (Gracethrufaith.com. 2011).

3.3 POLITICAL DIMENSION TO THE CONFLICT.

The roots of the modern Arab–Israeli conflict lie in the rise of Zionism and the reactionary Arab nationalism that arose in response to Zionism towards the end of the 19th century. Territory regarded by the Jewish people as their historical homeland is also regarded by the Pan-Arab movement as historically and presently belonging to the Palestinian Arabs. Before World War I, the Middle East, including Palestine (later Mandatory Palestine), had been under the control of the Ottoman Empire for nearly 400 years. During the closing years of their empire, the

Ottomans began to espouse their Turkish ethnic identity, asserting the primacy of Turks within the empire, leading to discrimination against the Arabs (Avi, 2008).

The promise of liberation from the Ottomans led many Jews and Arabs to support the allied powers during World War I, leading to the emergence of widespread Arab nationalism. Both Arab nationalism and Zionism had their formative beginning in Europe. The Zionist Congress was established in Basel in 1897, while the "Arab Club" was established in Paris in 1906. However, it is inevitable that political agreements may not easily resolve decades of distrust and conflict, they can reduce suffering, unfortunately, the problem's impact continued to increase in the middle of 20th century (Fraser, 1980).

3.4 THE INTERNATIONAL LEGAL DIMENSION TO THE CONFLICT.

The Question of Palestine, often on the top of the United Nations agenda, has occupied many hearts and minds. The Question's important issues- Jerusalem, scarce water, Israeli settlements, Palestinian refugees, the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and their causes and effects have resulted in countless international meetings. At the end of World War 2, Palestine was a territory being governed by the United Kingdom. Great Britain had had administrative control of Palestine under the League of Nations mandate since 1922. "However, the World

War 2 had left the combatant countries with many problems. Great Britain was one of these countries which faced adverse circumstances. The internal problems within the UK limited both the willingness and the ability of its administrators in dealing with matters outside the island kingdom. For that reason, the UK signaled her aim of submitting the Question of Palestine to the two-year-old successor of the League of Nations, now the United Nations” (Barry, 2003).

The UN, as constituted in the Charter, is as good as the will, policies, and deeds of its member states. Since its founding in 1945 out of the ashes of World War 2, the UN embodied the hope that the albatross of war could be permanently removed and that conflicts between nations, like that between Palestinian Arabs and Israeli Jews, could be settled without violence. International conflicts are diminished by UN action, however, only if they are accessible to UN mediation." On 18 February 1947 Great Britain, after thirty years of rule in Palestine, made the following announcement: ‘His Majesty’s Government has been faced with an irreconcilable conflict of principles. There are in Palestine about 1.200.000 Arabs and 600.000 Jews. For the Jews, the essential point of principle is to resist [Until] the establishment of Jews sovereignty in any part of Palestine.’“It is in these circumstances that we have decided that we are unable to accept the scheme put forward either by the Arabs or by the Jews, or to impose ourselves a solution of our

own. We have, therefore, reached the conclusion that the only course now open to us is to submit the problem to the judgment of the UN" (UN General Assembly, 1947).

Since that time, the Question of Palestine has been dealt with in the international arena within the context of the United Nations. In this framework, immediate attention to the problem was decided upon the first special session of the General Assembly in 1947. On 28 April 1947, the General Assembly convened in New York to establish a special committee on Palestine. In the aftermath of World War 2, the core element in international relations was power. The Palestinians were faced with the realities of power politics for decades after that time. All these developments opened the way to independence for the Jews. Eventually, January 1949, Mr. Bevin, British Foreign Secretary, is considering the present need to recognize the Government of Israel, and diplomatic moves to get the USA to recognize Transjordan. Besides, "The new Israeli state was immediately recognized by the US and the USSR" (Mideastweb.org. 1948).

In 1947, Israel accepted the U.N. partition plan while the Palestinians rejected it and tried to prevent its realization by force. The result was catastrophic for the Palestinians. Following the Six Day War, Israel withdrew from its liberal occupation policy and from its intention to avoid any changes in the administered

territories prior to the political negotiations. This created a new reality that made any future political agreement extremely difficult (Segev, 1999).

3.5 DIFFERENT EPOCH'S OF THE CONFLICT.

3.5.1 The Arab-Israeli Conflict: 1949–67.

As a result of Israel's victory in the 1948 Arab–Israeli War, any Arabs caught on the wrong side of the ceasefire line were unable to return to their homes in what became Israel. Likewise, any Jews on the West Bank or in Gaza were exiled from their property and homes to Israel. Today's Palestinian refugees are the descendants of those who left, the responsibility for their exodus being a matter of dispute between the Israeli and the Palestinian side (Aharoni, 2003). Morris concluded that the "decisive cause" for the abandonment by Palestinian Arabs of their settlements was predominantly related to, or caused by, actions of the Jewish forces (citing actual physical expulsions, military assaults on settlements, fear of being caught up in fighting, the fall of nearby settlements, and propaganda inciting flight), while abandonment due to orders by the Arab leadership was decisive in only six out of the 392 depopulated Arab settlements analyzed by him. Over 700,000 Jews emigrated to Israel between 1948 and 1952, with approximately 285,000 of them from Arab countries (Aliyeh, 1953).

In 1956, Egypt closed the Straits of Tiran to Israeli shipping, and blockaded the Gulf of Aqaba, in contravention of the Constantinople Convention of 1888. Many argued that this was also a violation of the 1949 Armistice Agreements (Sachar, 1976). On July 26, 1956, Egypt nationalized the Suez Canal Company, and closed the canal to Israeli shipping. Israel responded on October 29, 1956, by invading the Sinai Peninsula with British and French support. During the Suez Crisis, Israel captured the Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula. The United States and the United Nations soon pressured it into a ceasefire ("UN GA Resolution 997" 2007). Israel agreed to withdraw from Egyptian territory. Egypt agreed to freedom of navigation in the region and the demilitarization of the Sinai. The United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) was created and deployed to oversee the demilitarization. The UNEF was only deployed on the Egyptian side of the border, as Israel refused to allow them on its territory (Israel- MSN Encarta, 2009). Israel completed work on a national water carrier, a huge engineering project designed to transfer Israel's allocation of the Jordan river's waters towards the south of the country in realization of Ben-Gurion's dream of mass Jewish settlement of the Negev desert. The Arabs responded by trying to divert the headwaters of the Jordan, leading to growing conflict between Israel and Syria. The PLO (Palestinian Liberation Organization) was first established in 1964, under a charter including a

commitment to "the liberation of Palestine [which] will destroy the Zionist and imperialist presence." (PLO Charter, Article 22, 1968).

On May 19, 1967, Egypt expelled UNEF observers, and deployed 100,000 soldiers in the Sinai Peninsula. It again closed the Straits of Tiran to Israeli shipping, returning the region to the way it was in 1956 when Israel was blockaded. On May 30, 1967, Jordan signed a mutual defense pact with Egypt. Egypt mobilized Sinai units, crossing UN lines (after having expelled the UN border monitors) and mobilized and marched onto Israel's southern border. On June 5, Israel launched an attack on Egypt. The Israeli Air Force (IAF) destroyed most of the Egyptian Air Force in a surprise attack, then turned east to destroy the Jordanian, Syrian and Iraqi air forces. This strike was the crucial element in Israel's victory in the Six-Day War. At the war's end, Israel had gained control of the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank (including East Jerusalem), Shebaa farms, and the Golan Heights. The results of the war affect the geopolitics of the region to this day (Lesch, 1998).

3.5.2 Arab-Israeli Conflict: 1967–73

At the end of August 1967, Arab leaders met in Khartoum in response to the war, to discuss the Arab position toward Israel. They reached consensus that there

should be no recognition, no peace, and no negotiations with the State of Israel, the so-called "three no's"

In 1969, Egypt initiated the War of Attrition, with the goal of exhausting Israel into surrendering the Sinai Peninsula. The war ended following Gamal Abdel Nasser's death in 1970. On October 6, 1973, Syria and Egypt staged a surprise attack on Israel on Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish calendar. The Israeli military were caught off guard and unprepared, and took about three days to fully mobilize. This led other Arab states to send troops to reinforce the Egyptians and Syrians. In addition, these Arab countries agreed to enforce an oil embargo on industrial nations including the U.S, Japan and Western European Countries. These OPEC countries increased the price of oil fourfold, and used it as a political weapon to gain support against Israel. The Yom Kippur War accommodated indirect confrontation between the US and the Soviet Union. When Israel had turned the tide of war, the USSR threatened military intervention. The United States, wary of nuclear war, secured a ceasefire on October 25 (Blomfield,2010).

3.5.3 Egypt 1974–2000

Begin, Carter and Sadat at Camp David Following the Camp David Accords of the late 1970s, Israel and Egypt signed a peace treaty in March 1979. Under its terms, the Sinai Peninsula returned to Egyptian hands, and the Gaza Strip remained under

Israeli control, to be included in a future Palestinian state. The agreement also provided for the free passage of Israeli ships through the Suez Canal and recognition of the Straits of Tiran and the Gulf of Aqaba as international waterways (Mubarak 2007).

In October 1994, Israel and Jordan signed a peace agreement, which stipulated mutual cooperation, an end of hostilities, the fixing of the Israel-Jordan border, and a resolution of other issues. The conflict between them had cost roughly 18.3 billion dollars. Its signing is also closely linked with the efforts to create peace between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) representing the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). It was signed at the southern border crossing of Arabah on October 26, 1994 and made Jordan only the second Arab country (after Egypt) to sign a peace accord with Israel (Barzilai, 1996).

Israel and Iraq have been implacable foes since 1948. Iraq sent its troops to participate in the 1948 Arab–Israeli War, and later backed Egypt and Syria in the 1967 Six-Day War and in the 1973 Yom Kippur War. In June 1981, Israel attacked and destroyed newly built Iraqi nuclear facilities in Operation Opera. During the Gulf War in 1991, Iraq fired 39 Scud missiles into Israel, in the hopes of uniting the Arab world against the coalition which sought to liberate Kuwait. At the behest

of the United States, Israel did not respond to this attack in order to prevent a greater outbreak of war (Charles, M. 984).

In 1970, following an extended civil war, King Hussein expelled the Palestine Liberation Organization from Jordan. September 1970 is known as the Black September in Arab history and sometimes is referred to as the "era of regrettable events". It was a month when Hashemite King Hussein of Jordan moved to quash the autonomy of Palestinian organizations and restore his monarchy's rule over the country. The violence resulted in the deaths of tens of thousands of people, the vast majority Palestinians. Armed conflict lasted until July 1971 with the expulsion of the PLO and thousands of Palestinian fighters to Lebanon. The PLO resettled in Lebanon, from which it staged raids into Israel. In 1978, Israel launched Operation Litani, in which it together with the South Lebanon Army forced the PLO to retreat north of the Litani River. In 1981 another conflict between Israel and the PLO broke out, which ended with a ceasefire agreement that did not solve the core of the conflict. In June 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon. Within two months the PLO agreed to withdraw thence (Derfner, L. 2008).

In March 1983, Israel and Lebanon signed a ceasefire agreement. However, Syria pressured President Amine Gemayel into nullifying the truce in March 1984. By 1985, Israeli forces withdrew to a 15 km wide southern strip of Lebanon, following

which the conflict continued on a lower scale, with relatively low casualties on both sides. In 1993 and 1996, Israel launched major operations against the Shiite militia of Hezbollah, which had become an emergent threat. In May 2000, the newly elected government of Ehud Barak authorized a withdrawal from Southern Lebanon, fulfilling an election promise to do so well ahead of a declared deadline. The hasty withdrawal led to the immediate collapse of the South Lebanon Army, and many members either got arrested or fled to Israel (Dershowitz, 2004).

In 2006, as a response to a Hezbollah cross-border raid, Israel launched air strikes on Hezbollah strongholds in Southern Lebanon, starting the 2006 Lebanon War. The inconclusive war lasted for 34 days, and resulted in the creation of a buffer zone in Southern Lebanon and the deployment of Lebanese troops south of the Litani river for the first time since the 1960s. The Israeli government under Ehud Olmert was harshly criticized for its handling of the war in the Winograd Commission (Edmund, 2010).

The 1970s were marked by a large number of major, international terrorist attacks, including the Lod Airport massacre and the Munich Olympics Massacre in 1972, and the Entebbe Hostage Taking in 1976, with over 100 Jewish hostages of different nationalities kidnapped and held in Uganda (Citron, 2006).

In December 1987, the First Intifada began. The First Intifada was a mass Palestinian uprising against Israeli rule in the Palestinian territories. The rebellion began in the Jabalia refugee camp and quickly spread throughout Gaza and the West Bank. Palestinian actions ranged from civil disobedience to violence. In addition to general strikes, boycotts on Israeli products, graffiti and barricades, Palestinian demonstrations that included stone-throwing by youths against the Israel Defense Forces brought the Intifada international attention. The Israeli army's heavy handed response to the demonstrations, with live ammunition, beatings and mass arrests, brought international condemnation. The PLO, which until then had never been recognized as the leaders of the Palestinian people by Israel, was invited to peace negotiations the following year, after it recognized Israel and renounced terrorism (Gelvin, 2005).

In mid-1993, Israeli and Palestinian representatives engaged in peace talks in Oslo, Norway. As a result, in September 1993, Israel and the PLO signed the Oslo Accords, known as the Declaration of Principles or Oslo I; in side letters, Israel recognized the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people while the PLO recognized the right of the state of Israel to exist and renounced terrorism, violence and its desire for the destruction of Israel (Gopin, 2002).

The Oslo II agreement was signed in 1995 and detailed the division of the West Bank into Areas A, B, and C. Area A was land under full Palestinian civilian

control. In Area A, Palestinians were also responsible for internal security. The Oslo agreements remain important documents in Israeli-Palestinian relations (Finkelstein, 2003).

3.5.4 The Arab-Israeli conflict: 2000–09.

The Second Intifada forced Israel to rethink its relationship and policies towards the Palestinians. Following a series of suicide bombings and attacks, the Israeli army launched Operation Defensive Shield. It was the largest military operation conducted by Israel since the Six-Day War (Citron, 2006).

As violence between the Israeli army and Palestinian militants intensified, Israel expanded its security apparatus around the West Bank by re-taking many parts of land in Area A. Israel established a complicated system of roadblocks and checkpoints around major Palestinian areas to deter violence and protect Israeli settlements. However, since 2008, the IDF has slowly transferred authority to Palestinian security forces (Abu, 1971).

Israel's then prime minister Ariel Sharon began a policy of disengagement from Gaza from the Gaza Strip in 2003. This policy was fully implemented in August 2005. Sharon's announcement to disengage from Gaza came as a tremendous shock to his critics both on the left and on the right. A year previously, he had commented that the fate of the most far-flung settlements in Gaza, Netzararem and

Kfar Darom, was regarded in the same light as that of Tel Aviv. The formal announcements to evacuate seventeen Gaza settlements and another four in the West Bank in February 2004 represented the first reversal for the settler movement since 1968. It divided his party. It was strongly supported by Trade and Industry Minister Ehud Olmert and Tzipi Livni, the Minister for Immigration and Absorption, but Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom and Finance Minister Benjamin Netanyahu strongly condemned it. It was also uncertain whether this was simply the beginning of further evacuation (Henderson, 2012).

On March 16, 2003, Rachel Corrie, an American peace activist was crushed to death by an Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) bulldozer in Rafah, Gaza, during a non-violent protest of the Israeli demolition of Palestinian homes. Corrie stood in confrontation with the bulldozers for three hours wearing a bright orange jacket and carrying a megaphone. Although the Israeli government has denied responsibility in the incident and ruled her death as an accident, several eyewitness reports say that the Israeli soldier operating the bulldozer deliberately ran her over (Howell, 2007).

In June 2006, Hamas militants infiltrated an army post near the Israeli side of the Gaza Strip and abducted Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit. Two IDF soldiers were killed in the attack, while Shalit was wounded after his tank was hit with an RPG. Three

days later Israel launched Operation Summer Rains to secure the release of Shalit. He was held hostage by Hamas, who barred the International Red Cross from seeing him, until October 18, 2011, when he was exchanged for 1,027 Palestinian prisoners (John, 1981).

In July 2006, Hezbollah fighters crossed the border from Lebanon into Israel, attacked and killed eight Israeli soldiers, and abducted two others as hostages, setting off the 2006 Lebanon War which caused much destruction in Lebanon. A UN-sponsored ceasefire went into effect on August 14, 2006, officially ending the conflict. The conflict killed over a thousand Lebanese and over 150 Israelis, severely damaged Lebanese civil infrastructure, and displaced approximately one million Lebanese and 300,000–500,000 Israelis, although most were able to return to their homes. After the ceasefire, some parts of Southern Lebanon remained uninhabitable due to Israeli unexploded cluster bomblets (Khouri, 1985).

In the aftermath of the Battle of Gaza, where Hamas seized control of the Gaza Strip in a violent civil war with rival Fatah, Israel placed restrictions on its border with Gaza borders and ended economic cooperation with the Palestinian leadership based there. Israel and Egypt have imposed a blockade of the Gaza Strip since 2007. Israel maintains the blockade is necessary to limit Palestinian rocket attacks from Gaza and to prevent Hamas from smuggling advanced rockets and weapons

capable of hitting its cities. On September 6, 2007, in Operation Orchard, Israel bombed an eastern Syrian complex which was allegedly a nuclear reactor being built with assistance from North Korea. Israel had also bombed Syria in 2003.

In April 2008, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad told a Qatari newspaper that Syria and Israel had been discussing a peace treaty for a year, with Turkey as a go-between. This was confirmed in May 2008 by a spokesman for Prime Minister Ehud Olmert. As well as a peace treaty, the future of the Golan Heights is being discussed. President Assad said "there would be no direct negotiations with Israel until a new US president takes office (Lesch, 2007)."

Speaking in Jerusalem on August 26, 2008, then United States Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice criticized Israel's increased settlement construction in the West Bank as detrimental to the peace process. Rice's comments came amid reports that Israeli construction in the disputed territory had increased by a factor of 1.8 over 2007 levels. A fragile six-month truce between Hamas and Israel expired on December 19, 2008; attempts at extending the truce failed amid accusations of breaches from both sides. Following the expiration, Israel launched a raid on a tunnel suspected of being used to kidnap Israeli soldiers which killed several Hamas fighters. Following this, Hamas resumed rocket and mortar attacks on Israeli cities, most notably firing over 60 rockets on December 24. On December

27, 2008, Israel launched Operation Cast Lead against Hamas. Numerous human rights organizations accused Israel and Hamas of committing war crimes.

In 2009 Israel placed a 10-month settlement freeze on the West Bank. Hillary Clinton praised the freeze as an "unprecedented" gesture that could "help revive Middle East talks." A raid was carried out by Israeli naval forces on six ships of the Gaza Freedom Flotilla in May 2010. After the ships refused to dock at Port Ashdod. On the MV Mavi Marmara, activists clashed with the Israeli boarding party. During the fighting, nine activists were killed by Israeli Special Forces. Widespread international condemnation of and reaction to the raid followed, Israel–Turkey relations were strained, and Israel subsequently eased its blockade on the Gaza Strip. Several dozen other passengers and seven Israeli soldiers were injured, with some of the commandos suffering from gunshot wounds (Anthony, 2009).

3.5.5 The Arab-Israeli conflict, 2010–present

Following the latest round of peace talks between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, 13 Palestinian militant movements led by Hamas initiated a terror campaign designed to derail and disrupt the negotiations. Attacks on Israelis have increased since August 2010, after 4 Israeli civilians were killed by Hamas militants. Palestinian militants have increased the frequency of rocket attacks

aimed at Israelis. On August 2, Hamas militants launched seven Katyusha rockets at Eilat and Aqaba, killing one Jordanian civilian and wounding 4 others.

Intermittent fighting continued since then, including 680 rocket attacks on Israel in 2011. On November 14, 2012, Israel killed Ahmed Jabari, a leader of Hamas's military wing, launching Operation Pillar of Cloud. Hamas and Israel agreed to an Egyptian-mediated ceasefire on November 21. The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights said that 158 Palestinians were killed during the operation, of which: 100 were civilians, 55 were militants and one was a policeman; 30 were children and 13 were women. B'Tselem stated that according to its initial findings, which covered only the period between 14 and 19 November, 102 Palestinians were killed in the Gaza Strip, 40 of them civilians. According to Israeli figures, 120 combatants and 57 civilians were killed. International outcry ensued, with many criticizing Israel for what much of the international community perceived as a disproportionately violent response. Protests took place on hundreds of college campuses across the U.S., and in front of the Israeli consulate in New York. Additional protests took place throughout the Middle East, throughout Europe, and in parts of South America. However, the governments of the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, France, Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic and Netherlands expressed support for Israel's right to defend itself, and/or condemned the Hamas rocket attacks on Israel (Bard, 1999).

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0. UNITED STATES' INTEREST IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

4.1 INTRODUCTION.

The United States' support for Israel, which is sometimes described as 'America's aircraft carrier in the region', is seen as integral to U.S. plans for domination. All this is seen as also serving Western economic interests, such as in securing oil, which is linked with the agenda of keeping Islam under foot. Muslims generally perceive U.S. military forces in the region as a threatening presence designed to keep the region the way America wants it to be. Any lightening of America's military footprint will further mitigate this sense of being coerced (William, 1993).

In the 1950s, the U.S. began to realize that Great Britain and France, drastically weakened by the devastation of World War II, could no longer be the guarantors of regional stability and, thereby, ensure the unfettered flow of the oil required to fuel the post-war economic boom. Efforts to maintain a stable region called for good relations with the oil producing Arab states and minimal conflict within the region. At the same time the conflict between Arab states and the fledgling state of Israel became a major source of instability. Beginning in the Kennedy administration and expanding during the Johnson administration, the U.S. evolved a policy of unconditionally supporting the State of Israel both militarily, economically and

diplomatically. This unconditional support has prevented the U.S from being an unbiased broker between the Arab states and Israel, thereby hindering efforts to achieve any level of stability (John,1974).

American officials desired in principle to promote Arab-Israeli peace in order to stabilize the region. Yet Hahn shows how that desire for peace was not always an American priority, as U.S. leaders consistently gave more weight to their determination to contain the Soviet Union than to their desire to make peace between Israel and its neighbors. During these critical years the United States began to supplant Britain as the dominant Western power in the Middle East, and U.S. leaders found themselves in two notable predicaments. They were unable to relinquish the responsibilities they had accepted with their new power even as those responsibilities became increasingly difficult to fulfill. And they were caught in the middle of the Arab-Israeli conflict, unable to resolve a dispute that would continue to generate instability for years to come (Hahn, 2004).

U.S. Middle East policy has long been plagued with goals that are contradictory and frequently mutually exclusive. While it is understandable that a global power such as the U.S. would find itself confronted with overlapping interests that do not necessarily match up with regional political realities, the lack of a coherent policy

direction in pursuit of vital national interests has hindered United States' ability to achieve its policy goals and has led to a significant loss of ability to influence regional events. This is not a new phenomenon, but one that has plagued policy makers since the U.S. has attempted to influence events in the Middle East. Recent events in Iraq and Syria have raised this issue to a whole new level of importance, a level which deserves the attention of political leaders (Hassassian, 1997).

4.2 FAILED PEACE INITIATIVES OF THE ARAB-ISRELI CONFLICT.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has gone through a number of different phases in its long history. In the 1970s. & 1980s, there were many efforts to reach a solution concerning the Palestinian issue. Since the early 1970s, the Question was perceived as a problem concerning the natural and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to a new phase. In November 1970, the General Assembly declared its view on peace in its Resolution 2628, which reads, that The General Assembly: Recognizes that the people of Palestine are entitled to equal rights and self determination in accordance with the charter of the United Nations; Declares that full respects for inalienable rights of Palestine is an indispensable element in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East (Resolutions and Decisions, 91).

The Various levels to strengthen the likelihood of peace initiatives had been embarked upon but however, these initiatives are not being able to soften the relations between Jews and Arabs. The recognition of the PLO in the international arena has not changed very much the attitude of Israel towards to the Palestine problem. Particularly including US and USSR have attempted for peace initiative in the early 1980s. The primary purpose was to have strong place on the balance of power in Middle East. The Reagan Plan and The Soviet Peace Plan were the instances of this case. Unfortunately, these attempts for permanent peace could not be eventuated moreover a new tragedy could not be obviated (Bulent, 1998).

4.2.1 The Post-Lebanon War Peace Process:

The post-Lebanon war atmosphere created momentum for international peace attempts. The UN General Assembly decided, based on Resolutions from 1980 (Resolution 36/120 C 1980), to convene an international conference on the Question of Palestine under the supervision of the UN. The conference convened in Geneva from 29 August to 7 September 1983 (Aras, 1998).

4.2.2 The Oslo Peace Accord:

In 1993, the Oslo process began, concurrently with a remarkably propitious confluence of events that helped to propel it forward. The fall of the Soviet Union

and the end of the Cold War, the success of the first Gulf War and its unprecedented coalition, the 1988 (arguable) recognition of Israel by the PLO, the PLO's low point after the Gulf War, the return of the Israeli Labor Party to power after 15 years, the massive Russian Aliyah to Israel, the gradual slowing of the first intifada, and the fairly flush state of the world economy all combined to provide an atmosphere unusually conducive to making peace. Despite these seeming advantages, the Oslo process collapsed in the violence of the second intifada, leading to a period of some movement (the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza) but little progress toward peace was made (Shlomo,1998).

4.2.3 The Arab Peace Initiative:

The Arab Peace Initiative was offered by then Crown Prince Abdullah in March 2002, at a time when the Second Intifada was raging and Israel was retaking the West Bank. Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon was not enthusiastic about it, and neither was the Bush administration. They were giving up on Yasser Arafat as a partner for peace and demanding that Palestinians implement political reform before the United States would support a two-state resolution of the conflict. But as war with Iraq approached, Secretary of State Colin Powell wanted to establish a Quartet — the United States, Russia, the European Union and the UN — to draft a road map for how to get to a two-state solution. Also, Arafat agreed to the

establishment of a position of prime minister, filled by Mahmoud Abbas, as a response to Bush administration demands for political reform (Bulent, 1998).

Therefore, in the spring of 2003, when the war in Iraq seemed to be going well, President Bush asked Sharon to cooperate with Mahmoud Abbas. Sharon said he was ready to make painful compromises for peace. But the road map is a complicated document, full of stages and conditions. The first one, a complete ceasefire, could never be established. So Israel was unwilling to freeze settlements, and the process stalled. In 2004, Bush made some assurances to the Israelis that they wouldn't have to withdraw fully and completely to the 1967 lines or take Palestinian refugees into Israel. And the Bush administration supported a number of Sharon's unilateral measures — namely, consolidating large settlement blocs that he wanted to be incorporated into Israel later, building a security wall, and then in 2005 withdrawing from the Gaza Strip (Mohamed,1978).

In 2006, there was war between Israel and Lebanon. Hamas won the Palestinian elections, and the following year, Hamas even drove Fatah out of the Gaza Strip. The Arab Peace Initiative was endorsed again early in 2007. The Bush administration still wasn't enthusiastic, but by the end of the year, they called the parties to Annapolis and committed themselves to supporting negotiations that

would bring about two states within a year — that is, by the end of Bush's term. But Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Abbas couldn't close the deal in 2008. Israelis and Syrians tried, but they couldn't close the deal in 2008. And that year ended in war (Kirsten, 1994).

Now we have an Israeli peace initiative not an official one, but a civil society initiative authored and signed by very well-regarded retired generals, intelligence officials, government officers, academics and others, demonstrating there is still the will and support in Israel for a peaceful resolution. How this initiative compares and contrasts with the Arab Peace Initiative and agreements almost reached between Barak and Arafat in 2000, and agreements missed between Olmert and Abbas in 2008 (Shibley,2011).

After what seemed like a lost decade during the George W. Bush administration, then the Obama administration came into office and tried gallantly, I think to resolve this conflict, but it failed, even though it has said that it is a vital national security interest of the United States to succeed in the Middle East. Obama entered office vowing that dealing with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict would be a particularly high priority. One of his first acts after his inauguration was appointing a high-profile envoy—former Senator George Mitchell, who had been instrumental

in the Northern Ireland Good Friday Agreement—to get things moving. In the spring of 2009, however, his administration inexplicably bungled its first major diplomatic initiative when it demanded that the newly installed right wing government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stop the growth or expansion of settlements as a precondition to resuming negotiations with the Palestinian Authority. Netanyahu, whose government was (and is) heavily based on settlers and their supporters, of course refused. At that point it became painfully clear that there was no “plan B” and that the administration was not prepared to apply pressure to enforce its demand, which it eventually withdrew. However, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, perennially accused of being too accommodating to Israel, who had not previously set a settlement freeze as a precondition, could not let himself be in a position in which American demands on Israel were more stringent than his own, and thereafter demanded a settlement freeze as a precondition. This contretemps poisoned the will of the Obama peace process and, despite two sets of negotiations that eventually took place, it is hard to see much that is positive that the Obama administration has accomplished (Shibley. 2011).

It is not as though Obama has ignored the conflict after his first foray ended in fiasco. His speech in Cairo in June 2009 produced expectations of a more

evenhanded policy, which have been dashed as Obama became increasingly unpopular in both the Arab world and in Israel. A few days thereafter, under intense pressure from Obama, Netanyahu grudgingly endorsed the two-state solution in a speech at Bar-Ilan University in Israel, though what is meant by “two states” clearly varies widely, depending on who invokes it. Obama and then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton worked for years to restart negotiations.

But Palestinians protested when Israel produced only a partial and temporary settlement freeze, and the negotiations went nowhere. When Obama chose John Kerry as his secretary of state for his second term, Kerry amazed observers with his dogged efforts to restart negotiations. To the surprise of many, he succeeded in doing so in the summer of 2013, but to the surprise of very few, they collapsed in April 2014. A Palestinian unity government and the kidnapping and death of four teenagers—three Israeli and one Palestinian—closely followed, which led to latest Gaza war.

Since its inconclusive end, violence, especially in Jerusalem, has sparked, and commentators are busy producing analyses as to why the current situation will—or would not lead to a new intifada in weeks, months, or years. This is in the context

of a growing Sunni-Shii conflict elsewhere in the Middle East and near-hysteria about ISIS in much of the world (Ilan,2004).

President Obama himself has contributed to the current impasse in part by insisting early in 2009 that the peace negotiations should start by first freezing the settlements, which was a nonstarter for the Netanyahu government, and by failing to visit Israel when he travelled three times overseas, visiting four Arab/Muslim states. The president went to Turkey in April of 2009, in June of the same year he visited Saudi Arabia and Egypt, and in November 2010 he traveled to Indonesia.

For most Israelis, skipping Israel three times was nothing short of a slap in the face, especially in light of the fact that the president made a solution to the conflict a top priority by appointing former Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell as a Special Envoy to the region only two days after his inauguration. To demonstrate his seriousness about the urgent need for a solution, the next president must visit Israel and the Palestinian Authority and make it abundantly clear where the U.S. stands.

Nonetheless, President Obama throughout his presidency and recently reiterated in his speech at the U.N. General Assembly - has insisted that the only solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict rests on creating two independent states, a Jewish and a

Palestinian state living side-by-side in peace while growing and prospering together as neighbors. Any other message coming from the White House, regardless of party affiliation, will fundamentally be injurious to both the Israelis and the Palestinians. The notion from some American politicians who have said that the U.S. should not have a greater desire for peace than the parties to the conflict is shortsighted.

The U.S. has serious stakes in the region and responsibility toward its allies. The lack of peace will continue to undermine the U.S.' interest, erode its influence and jeopardize its role in shaping the outcome of the multiple upheavals sweeping the region in the wake of the Arab Spring (Hillel,2004).

The Arab-Israeli conflict has been overshadowed in recent months by international concerns over Iran's nuclear program, the bloody civil war which continues to rage in Syria and the unending insurgencies and terrorism that continues to plague many nations. Meanwhile, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is quietly simmering underneath the surface and is becoming ever more perilous. Israel continues to expand existing settlements and legalize others while the Palestinians remain hopelessly factionalized and aimless, unable to present a unified front to be taken

seriously, and thus, leaving the festering conflict in the hands of radicals on both sides.

4.2.4 Current Situation in the peace process

What is more, the relevant signals are as negative now as they were positive in 1993. The period that has passed since the hopeful times of Oslo has soured Israelis, Palestinians, and the rest of the world. The Middle East is in a near-unprecedented state of turmoil and is confronting a newly-hatched danger; the Islamic State (ISIS) is frightening virtually all the regimes in the region, as well as many in Europe and elsewhere. Ukraine, Russia, and China are also creating serious new crises at an alarming rate. Israel's international isolation has grown, as it is largely blamed for the succession of brief wars in Lebanon in 2006 and in Gaza in 2008-9, 2012, and 2014. Its steady expansion of settlements in East Jerusalem and the West Bank, which are designed to preclude a genuine, sovereign, and contiguous Palestinian state, has deepened international criticism of Israeli policy, and this in turn is feeding Israelis' historic fears of isolation and claims of anti-Semitism (Helga,2005)..

However, it is unlikely that Israel's increasingly unpopular status will be translated into effective external pressure on it to change its policies. Its government is the

most right wing in Israel's history, with the majority of its members deeply skeptical, at the least, or else outspokenly hostile to the two-state solution. "Two states" has been Israel's official policy since 2009, but the actions of Netanyahu and his government, especially an increased emphasis on settlements, have been largely inconsistent with this goal. Netanyahu has not officially renounced his commitment to two states, although he has asserted that Israeli forces will never leave the West Bank. He is under intense pressure to avoid any compromise from those much further to his right, in and out of his government. It is generally believed that the Israeli population has swung further to the right in the wake of the failed negotiations, the murder of three teenagers by two rogue Palestinians, and the latest Gaza war.

4.3 AMERICA'S POLICY IN MIDDLE EAST DURING THE COLD WAR ERA.

The Cold War between the Western democracies and the Soviet Union introduced a whole new set of geopolitical complications for U.S. policy makers. Western efforts to contain Soviet expansionism led to U.S. support for unsavory autocratic regimes such as that of the Shah of Iran, resulting in alienation of ordinary citizens and the rise of anti-American sentiment throughout the Middle East. A number of the autocratic regimes that the U.S. attempted to enlist in opposing the Soviet

Union, were also staunchly anti-Israel. The resulting conflicts led to oil embargos and oil supply disruptions, all of which negatively affected the U.S. economic policy in the region (Barak, 2014).

Despite the importance of Arab-Israeli peace to regional stability, however, U.S. officials subsumed their peacemaking to other Cold War interests. The U.S. government tempered its dedication to conflict resolution with a determination to deny the Soviets any opportunity to gain political influence in the Middle East. The United States refrained from imposing stringent peace terms on either side and eventually even tolerated the conflict in an effort to safeguard the country's relationships with Middle East states and to steer them away from Moscow. The United States prioritized anti-Soviet containment over Arab-Israeli settlement, preferring a region in conflict under U.S. hegemony to a region at peace under Soviet influence (Gaddis, 2004).

In the end, the United States failed to resolve the overall Arab-Israeli conflict or any of its specific disputes. Failure resulted in part from the deep reluctance of the Arab states and Israel to make concessions or compromises but also resulted from the United States' self-imposed restraints on peacemaking, which undermined its moral and political credibility in the eyes of local states. U.S. peace initiatives

occasionally deepened the conflict by aggravating the passions of the principals and accentuating their disagreements. Despite U.S. efforts to resolve the conflict, peace remained elusive. While confronting this peacemaking conundrum, the United States became inextricably involved in the Middle East. As they resisted communism worldwide, U.S. leaders assigned increasing strategic and political importance to the Middle East. They gradually assumed the duty of defending Western interests there, even at the risk of war against the Soviet Union or a local state. In short, the Cold War compelled the United States to make deep and enduring commitments to regional security. By 1961, the United States found itself caught in the Middle East, unable to escape the responsibilities that American leaders had assumed. (Chemi, 2014).

The United States also became caught in the middle of the Arab-Israeli conflict. U.S. officials felt compelled by their global containment policy to intercede in the Arab-Israeli conflict and to preserve sound relations with all sides of the dispute. Operating within the limits set by U.S. anti-Soviet policy, however, American officials proved unable to accomplish a peace settlement and in the process of trying strained relations with both sides. Snared in the middle of a nasty fight, the United States found it impossible to arbitrate a settlement or to avoid the combatants' resentment (Don, 2014).

The United States remained trapped in the middle of the Arab-Israeli conflict because American policy emanated from two distinct and conflicting perspectives. One impulse took root in the State and Defense Departments. Driven by such national security concerns as containment, access to military bases, and preservation of oil sources, adherents to this approach advocated close relations with Arab states. The second impulse centered on the White House staff and Congress. Reflecting such domestic concerns as electoral politics, public opinion, and cultural values, proponents of this position favored close relations with Israel. As U.S. policy regarding the Arab-Israeli situation evolved, these competing impulses struggled for the president's mind (Peter, 2004).

Competition between the national security and domestic impulses significantly shaped U.S. policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict. This competition frequently resulted in U.S. policies that were compromises between the pro-Israel and pro-Arab perspectives, a tendency that rendered the United States unable to side with one antagonist over the other or find a solution to the conflict that both sides would accept. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict cannot be resolved without the direct and active involvement of the United States, using both inducements and coercive diplomacy to bring about a peaceful solution. If the conflict remains unresolved over the next couple of years it will most likely precipitate a massive violent

conflagration to the detriment of the Israelis and Palestinians, and will also severely damage the U.S.' security, economic interests and its credibility in the region (Patrick,1978).

4.4. POST-COLD WAR FOREIGN POLICY OF AMERICA IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

With the breakup of the Soviet Union into separate nations, and the re-emergence of the nation of Russia, the world of pro-U.S. and pro-Soviet alliances broke down. Different challenges presented themselves, such as climate change and the threat of nuclear terrorism. Regional powerbrokers in Iraq and Saddam Hussein challenged the peace with a surprise attack on the small nation of Kuwait in 1991 (Bülent,1998).

President George H.W. Bush organized a coalition of allied and Middle Eastern powers that successfully pushed back the invading forces, but stopped short of invading Iraq and capturing Hussein. As a result, the dictator was free to cause mischief for another twelve years. After the Gulf War, many scholars like Zbigniew Brzezinski claimed that the lack of a new strategic vision for U.S. foreign policy resulted in many missed opportunities for its foreign policy. The United States mostly scaled back its foreign policy budget as well as its cold war

defense budget during the 1990s, which amounted to 6.5% of GDP while focusing on domestic economic prosperity under President Clinton, who succeeded in achieving a budget surplus for 1999 and 2000. The aftermath of the Cold War continues to influence world affairs. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the post-Cold War world was widely considered as Unipolar, with the United States the sole remaining superpower. The Cold War defined the political role of the United States in the post-World War II world: by 1989 the U.S. held military alliances with 50 countries, and had 526,000 troops posted abroad in dozens of countries, with 326,000 in Europe (two-thirds of which in West Germany) and about 130,000 in Asia (mainly Japan and South Korea). The Cold War also marked the apex of peacetime military-industrial complexes, especially in the United States, and large-scale military funding of science. These complexes, though their origins may be found as early as the 19th century, have grown considerably during the Cold War. The military-industrial complexes have great impact on their countries and help shape their society, policy and foreign relations (Bernard,1969).

4.5 ANALYSIS OF UNITED STATES INTEREST IN THE MIDDLE EAST

In an era in which U.S. interests are being examined more critically, the greater Middle East continues to present high stakes for American policymakers. The United States' key national interest in the Middle East includes:

- .The survival of Israel and completion of the Middle East peace process,
- Access to oil.
- Forestalling the emergence of a hostile regional hegemon.
- Preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction,
- Promoting political and economic reform and through it internal stability.
- Holding terrorism in check.

Some of these interests are specific to the region, but most are closely linked to broader, systemic interests instability, non-proliferation, energy security, and evolutionary versus revolutionary change (Shibley, 2011).

4.5.1 The survival of Israel and completion of the Middle East peace process:

The United States has been committed to the security and prosperity of Israel since the founding of the state, and this commitment will almost certainly remain a key interest through the period under discussion. U.S. policy over the next decade will, however, be shaped by the parallel national interest in promoting, reinforcing, and bringing to completion the Middle East peace process. Success in this arena will have a considerable influence over the region's future propensity for conflict and the demands on U.S. strategy and forces. Achievement of a comprehensive peace will very likely bring increased demands for monitoring and security guarantees. Failure will raise more conventional demands for deterrence and reassurance. At

the same time, the increasing prosperity and military capability of Israel—and economic realities in the United States—will shape the level of support this enduring interest implies (Peter, 2004).

4.5.2 Energy Security:

Access to Middle Eastern oil in adequate amounts and at reasonable prices will almost certainly remain a vital interest. A large proportion of world petroleum reserves are to be found in the greater Middle East. The Gulf states alone account for 65 percent of proven world oil reserves, and despite changing patterns of demand and consumption over the past two decades, almost 35 percent of the industrialized world's oil supply came from the Gulf in 1994. The five countries with the greatest proven reserves are all in the Middle East. If Caspian oil and gas are included—and they should be, since much of the future production from this region will be exported via the Levant or the Gulf—the region's importance in energy terms is greatly reinforced. Growing energy needs in Eastern Europe and Asia could place greater pressure on demand and further increase the strategic significance of the region's oil resources. Although world oil production continues to grow rapidly, world reserves have grown even faster, and the bulk of these new additions have been in the Middle East. Given our systemic interest in international economic stability, the United States is unlikely to abandon its current role as

ultimate guarantor of world access to Middle Eastern oil. Future aggression by Iraq or Iran against the oil-rich Arabian Peninsula would doubtless trigger an American military response on the order of the Desert Storm operation (Mohamed, 1978).

4.5.3 Forestalling and Containing the emergence of a hostile regional Hegemons and Proliferators .

There continues to be a strong consensus within the U.S. strategic community about the need to prevent the emergence of a regional hegemon or, more precisely, a “hostile” regional hegemon (i.e., a power capable of and interested in regional domination). From a strategic planning perspective, this need could be extended to include preventing the emergence of competitors capable of successfully challenging U.S. military power. Such competitors could come from within or outside the region (Kirsten, 1994).

The United States will also continue to have a closely- related interest in preventing regional powers and non-state actors from acquiring new or additional weapons of mass destruction and the means for their delivery at longer range. These weapons can be classed as a systemic concern for the United States. But the greater Middle East has emerged as a focal point for WMD challenges, with

longer-range ballistic missiles poised to change the relationship between the traditional Middle East and adjacent regions in security terms (Ilan, 2004).

4.5.4 Promoting Internal Stability:

It has become fashionable to refer to the greater Middle East as an arc of crisis. Given the strength of pressures for change within societies across the region, it might be more appropriate to describe the region as an “arc of change.” As a status quo power, the United States has a strong systemic interest in avoiding violent change and encouraging behavior in line with accepted international norms. The links between political and economic reforms and stability cannot be taken for granted. There is an emerging Western consensus that movement toward modern economic systems, more representative government, and greater attention to human rights will help forestall radical change in societies under pressure. Broadly speaking, we will continue to have a national interest in preventing violent change and the emergence of radical or revolutionary regimes (such regimes are unlikely to “wish us well) (Chemi, 2014).

4.5.5 Checking and Dealing with Terrorism.

Finally, recent events have reinforced American awareness of terrorism as a security problem. Terrorism is a well-established mode of conflict on the Middle

Eastern scene. We will continue to have a keen stake in limiting the threat of terrorism to friendly regimes and Western citizens and assets, as well as preventing the spillover of political violence emanating from the region. A variety of future regional conflict scenarios may stem from terrorist action, and counterterrorism is likely to be a motivating factor in many instances of U.S. and Western military intervention. Terrorism might also emerge as a tactic for regimes bent on more traditional forms of regional aggression. In the future, U.S. strategy will need to address the problem of terrorism both as a stand-alone threat and as a “fifth column” or “asymmetric” risk in regional conflicts (Tawfik, 2010)

CHAPTER FIVE

GENERAL CONCLUSION

5.1 SUMMARY

The Middle East has been one of the most volatile and violent subsystem of the international political system since the end of the Second World War. The conflict between Israel and the Arabs is one of the most profound and protracted conflicts of the twentieth century and the principal precipitant of wars in the Middle East. The land in the Middle East, referred to as Palestine, has been ruled by foreigners for hundreds of years. Since British occupation and eventuation of the independent state of Israel, May14, 1948, the region has been plagued by a series of wars and undercurrents between the Arabs and Jews. The Arab-Israeli conflict is a crisis that impacts the international community and is multifaceted. It involves violence, prejudice, human tragedy, destruction and sadly, loss of life.

The United States' involvement in the Middle East has also been seen as a critical issue because of her interests in the wider region which has generally been due to oil. Israel and Palestinian territories do not have oil themselves, but are surrounded by states that do. A Strong military and financial support of Israel lends well to having a powerful ally in the region.

The Various levels to strengthen the likelihood of peace initiatives had been embarked upon but however, these initiatives are not being able to soften the relations between Jews and Arabs. Particularly including US and USSR have attempted for peace initiative in the early 1980s. The primary purpose was to have strong place on the balance of power in Middle East. The Reagan Plan and The Soviet Peace Plan were the instances of this case. Unfortunately, these attempts for permanent peace could not be eventuated moreover a new tragedy could not be obviated.

5.2 CONCLUSION

The Arab-Israeli conflict is a product of history, an unmanaged historical crisis which would have been properly taken care of by the British authority when they managed the territory. The seemingly bias nature of the manipulation of the apex international body of the United Nations have helped to exacerbate the crisis leaving the aggrieved with no choice but to take their destiny in their hands. The Arab-Israeli conflict has gone through a number of different phases in its long history.

The roots of the modern Arab–Israeli conflict are bound in the rise of Zionism and Arab nationalism towards the end of the 19th century. Territory regarded by the Jewish people as their historical homeland is also regarded by the Pan-Arab

movement as historically and currently belonging to the Palestinians, and in the Pan-Islamic context, as Muslim lands. The sectarian conflict between Palestinian Jews and Arabs emerged in the early 20th century, peaking into a full-scale civil war in 1947 and transforming into the First Arab-Israeli War in May 1948 following the Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel.

The United States' key national interest in the Middle East includes: The survival of Israel and completion of the Middle East peace process, Access to oil, forestalling the emergence of a hostile regional hegemon. Preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction, Promoting political and economic reform and through it internal stability and Holding terrorism in check.

The U.S. evolved a policy of unconditionally supporting the State of Israel both militarily, economically and diplomatically. This unconditional support has prevented the U.S from being an unbiased broker between the Arab states and Israel, thereby hindering efforts to achieve any level of stability.

The Failure of the various peace initiatives resulted in part from the deep reluctance of the Arab states and Israel to make concessions or compromises but also resulted from the United States' self-imposed restraints on peacemaking, which undermined its moral and political credibility in the eyes of local states. U.S. peace initiatives occasionally deepened the conflict by aggravating the passions of

the principals and accentuating their disagreements. Despite U.S. efforts to resolve the conflict, peace remained elusive.

The conflict has been unsolvable as long as it was set in existential terms-requiring either Israel's destruction or the Palestinian Arabs' exile and political nonexistence . Only when both sides perceived that neither could be eliminated did they become ready for an outcome giving each a national framework, a two-state solution in which Israel and Palestine partition the land and live in peace. The conflict's apparent endlessness, incurring high costs with no prospect for absolute victory, finally made success at the bargaining table seem both plausible and desirable. Even at that, there is hope that the Arab-Israeli conflict will be resolved as long as both parties abide by the previous peace initiative such as the Oslo peace accord and the United Nations partition Resolution 181(11) 1947.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

To advance the prospect for peace between Israel and Palestine, the President of the United States' of America must take a number of critical steps.

First, the president of America should as a matter of urgency visit Israel and Palestine and directly address the Israeli people as well as the Palestinians, and strongly suggest that only peace will serve their greater interests. He must look into the eyes of the Israeli and Palestinian public and emphasize that the U.S. is

committed to a two-state solution and will remain consistent and resilient until such a resolution is achieved. The president should also accentuate that the U.S. will use all means available at its disposal to advance the two-state solution and stress that further delay would only harden the many facts on the ground, especially the expansion of settlements, becoming irreversible and rendering any future peace agreement virtually impossible.

Second, the president must carry with him a general framework for an Israeli-Palestinian peace based on prior agreements negotiated between the two sides, especially those achieved in 2000 (at Camp David between Yasser Arafat and Ehud Barak) and in 2007-2008 between Ehud Olmert and Mahmoud Abbas. In both sets of these comprehensive negotiations, the two sides have been able to resolve the vast majority of the conflicting issues. In the 2007-2008 talks, then-Israeli Prime Minister Olmert stated that both sides had come "very close, more than ever in the past, to complete a principle agreement that would have led to the end of the conflict." These prior agreements should be placed on the table anew and modified in order to create a clear basis for negotiating a peace agreement with the U.S.' direct participation.

Third, to increase the framework's effectiveness, a new internationally recognized special envoy of the caliber of President Clinton should be appointed with a clear

presidential mandate to work relentlessly to advance the negotiating process while keeping a top level American official in the region to press on with the negotiations during the occasional absence of the special envoy. To avoid deadlocks, the rules of engagement should be based on an incremental agreement on various conflicting issues, ideally starting with borders. The Palestinians should abandon their precondition to freeze the settlements before they enter into the negotiating process. Agreements on borders will in and of itself resolve 70 to 80 percent of the final status of the settlements and define the parameters of the Palestinian state. Such an agreement will also facilitate the negotiations of other conflicting issues, including the status of Palestinian refugees, Jerusalem, and Israel's national security. Finally, the negotiations should not be open-ended; a timeline must be established, albeit with some flexibility, to prevent either party from playing for time.

Fourth, it is imperative that the U.S. reaches out to other leading Arab and Muslim states such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey, to exert pressure on the Palestinian Authority to enable them make necessary concessions. Egypt must also be approached about beginning the process of influencing Hamas to change its open enmity towards and hard-line policy against Israel. In particular, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood-led government should persuade Hamas to renounce violence as a tool by which to reach its political objective of establishing an independent

Palestinian state and remove from its charter the clause that calls for Israel's destruction. These Arab states, especially Egypt, have serious stakes in finding a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Indeed, any new conflagration between Israel and the Palestinians will impact directly and indirectly not only on their interests, but could also draw them into the conflict which they want to avoid at all costs given their own internal political combustion and uncertainty.

Fifth, once the Israelis and Palestinians engage in negotiations, the U.S. should press both to immediately begin the process of changing their public narratives about each other by mutually ending acrimonious statements and expressions of hatred and distrust. To that end both governments should encourage universities, nonpartisan think tanks and media outlets to deliberate publicly about the psychological dimensions of the conflicting issue and begin a process of changing mindsets about some of the inevitabilities of reaching an agreement.

Even when the leaders reach an agreement behind closed doors, they cannot simply come out with pronouncements of concessions that were made by either side without first preparing the public. For example, an agreement on Palestinians refugees will of necessity entail the return of only a small fraction of refugees to Israel proper under family reunification, when in fact the vast majority of Palestinians still believe in the right of return. Additionally, there can be no two-state solution without Jerusalem becoming the capital of Israel and Palestine, albeit

the city will remain united, which will be difficult for the Israeli public to accept. For these reasons, changing public perception about each conflicting issue is central to ratifying any peace accord.

Sixth, in reaching out to the Arab and Muslim world, the president should help reignite the Arab Peace Initiative (API) which still represents the most comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. The revival of the API remains critically important as even top Israeli officials, including the former head of the Israeli Mossad, Meir Dagan, have stated that the plan is central to resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict. As the whole region undergoes revolutionary change in the wake of the Arab Spring, restarting the API will have special importance in reaching a comprehensive peace and long-term stability. The creation of a "sovereign, independent Palestinian state," which the API calls for, will greatly contribute to stabilizing the region. Indeed, various Arab and Muslim countries will begin to normalize relations with Israel and foster a lasting peace that will ultimately improve the lives of millions of ordinary citizens throughout the region. The United States has both the interest and the responsibility to put an end to the Arab-Israeli self-consuming conflict in a region where the stakes for all concerned cannot be overestimated.

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