

**UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES**

**TRUMP'S FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS ISRAEL AND THE
PALESTINIAN QUESTION**



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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation, with the exception of quotations and references to other published works that have been identified and acknowledged is mainly my original work conducted under the supervision of Dr. Kodzo K. Alabo, and not the same as any other work already submitted in part or whole for another degree.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to everyone in my family especially Elorm and Kafui who would achieve greater heights than I have accomplished in life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My first and foremost gratitude goes to the Almighty God for his grace that made it possible for me to come to this successful end. I say thank you Lord.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIPAC	-	American Israeli Public Affairs Committee
BC	-	Before Christ
BCE	-	Before Common Era
DPL	-	Declaration of Principle on Interim Self-Government Arrangements
GDP	-	Gross Domestic Product
IDF	-	Israeli Defense Force
IMF	-	International Monetary Fund
JCPOA	-	Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action
LAF	-	Lebanese Armed Forces
MENA	-	Middle East and North Africa
OD	-	Operation Pillar of Defense
PLC	-	Palestinian Legislative Council
PLO	-	Palestinian Liberation Organization
PNC	-	Palestinian National Council
UNCLDS	-	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNEF	-	United Nations Emergency Forces
UNESCO	-	United Nations Educational Social and Cultural Organization
UNGA	-	United Nations General Assembly
UNRWA	-	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East
UNSCOP	-	United Nations Special Committee on Palestine
UNSCR	-	United Nations Security Council Resolution
WRM	-	Wye River Memorandum
WW1	-	World War I

ABSTRACT

This study aims at exploring Trump's foreign policy towards Israel and the Palestinian question. It is obvious that the United States has played very significant roles in trying to secure peace between Israel and Palestine. However, Trump's government has recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and provided more financial support to Israel as part of its foreign policy. Additionally, Trump has cut down bilateral aid to Palestine. This change of position of the Trump government makes it difficult to understand if that advance the cause of peace in the region, hence, the decision to undertake this study. The main objective of the study is to explore the political and economic implications of Trump's foreign policy for Israel and Palestine. The study employed qualitative research method. Data was obtained through semi-structured interviews with purposively selected officials from the US, Israeli and Palestinian embassies in Ghana. The study found out that President Trump's foreign policy has economic and political implications for the conflict between Israel and Palestine. It also found out that Trump's foreign policy was biased against the Palestinians and poses a threat to the peace process in the region. The study concludes that the UN must be dynamic in its quest to achieve peace in the region. While the United States is encouraged to remain a neutral arbiter in the peace process, participation must be adequately broadened to complement her efforts. The study also recommends that Fattah and Hamas must unite in achieving a solution to the Palestinian question.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The Palestinian conflict can be traced to the late 19th century that came with the rise of national movements comprising Zionism and Arab nationalism. The Jews in the diaspora were victims of widespread anti-Semitism and began to see the need for a Jewish homeland. The first Zionist Congress, held in Basel in 1887 agreed to establish a Jewish State in Palestine as a means to find a lasting solution to the problems of persecutions of the Jews. This brought to the fore the likes of Theodore Herzl whose instrumentality ensured the Zion dream came into fruition. In his journal, "The Jewish State" (1896), he wrote, "I have founded the Jewish State... [It will exist] possibly five years from now on" (Kiewe, 2003). The journal and the usage of phrases such as "the redemption of the soil", coined by the likes of Moses Hess, inspired the Jews in the diaspora to aspire for a Jewish homeland in Palestine (Gans, 2008).

The Arab opposition against the Israelis started with the introduction of the November 1917, Balfour Declaration in which Britain promised to create a Jewish State in Palestine (Kramer, 2017). Britain took over the control of the region after the Ottoman Empire collapsed with the defeat of Germany in WWI and it had the mandate from the League of Nations to control the area.

The Balfour Declaration was a welcome news for Zionism because, to some extent, it gained legitimate acceptance and became the basis for mass emigration of the Jews to Palestine. During the period from 1922-1947, Britain controlled Palestine, other Arab States joined the Palestinian Arabs to resist its administration. The British control of

the area created enmity that led to the revolts of 1936-39 against its government and that prompted it to establish a Commission of Enquiry headed by

Lord Peel, to investigate the causes of the civil unrest. The Peel Commission report of June 22, 1937 recommended the partition of Palestine, but the Arabs rejected it because of their claim that no one consulted them (Peel, 1937). However, the UN in 1947 adopted the commission's report. It became clear that all the efforts by Britain to reconcile the Arabs with the Jews peacefully proved futile, and because of this, it gave up on the administration of Palestine.

On November 29, 1947, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolutions 181 for the partition of Palestine into two independent states, one Arab and one Jewish (Hertz, 2009). Again, the Arabs rejected the offer and on May 14, 1948 the date for the British to hand over the mandate of Palestine formerly to the UN, David Ben-Gurion, the leader of the Jewish agency declared the establishment of the State of Israel and became the first Prime Minister of the newly independent state. The Soviet Union and the United States were among the first countries to congratulate the newly independent State of Israel. The recognition of Israel by President Harry Truman laid the foundation of US foreign policy on Israel for subsequent US Presidents (Snetsinger, 1974).

The following day after Israel declared independence, Egypt, Syria, Transjordan, Iraq and Lebanon joined Palestine to attack Israel in a war. Israel emerged victorious in the first Arab-Israeli war referred to as the war of independence by the Jews. Following the defeat of the Arabs, Israel acquired more territories. It had the Golan Heights, West Bank, Sinai Peninsula and West Jerusalem in addition to what it already had

while Jordan conquered East Jerusalem, Egypt had the Gaza Strip (Herzog, 1984). Because of the war, many Palestinian Arabs were thrown into exile and have remained refugees in other countries to date (Smith, 2010).

Tension in the region continued to increase over the years as the fate of Israel, Palestine and the occupied territories could not be determined. There were three other major Arab-Israeli wars. There was the 1956 Suez crisis caused by the attempt of Egypt to nationalize the Suez Canal. The outcome was that France, Britain and Israel combined forces to attack Egypt. However, some diplomatic efforts by the US and the Soviet Union ended the war (Shemesh & Troen, 2005). Again, there was the six-day war of June 1967 engineered by the Arabs with the view to forcing Israel out of the occupied territories. Surprisingly, Israel won the war and gained more territories

(Herzog, 1984). The aftermath of the June 1967 Israeli-War was the adoption of Resolution 242 by the UN Security Council supporting the withdrawal of Israel from all occupied territories. Resolution 242 also called for the recognition by all the Arabs, of Israel's right to live in peace within secured and recognized boundaries

(Goldberg, 1973). The final major war was the Yom Kippur war of 1973 in which the Arab forces attacked Israel. In this war, Israel managed to defeat the Arab states. It is obvious from the above that the crux of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the dispute between the two parties over ownership of land. However, frantic efforts by the international community have calmed down nerves to some extent and the focus is now on the political future of the State of Palestine. The Camp David Accord of 1979, presided over by President Jimmy Carter, led directly to the peace treaty signed by Egypt and Israel. It laid the foundation for further future negotiations meant to end

peacefully the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Though the nature of the attack is no more international in character, it continues between Israel and Palestine from time to time.

Likewise, the processes of Oslo Peace Accords have been very fruitful to some extent as it led to the signing of some peace agreements between Israel, spearheaded by Yitzhak Rabin and Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) chaired by Yasser Arafat and witnessed by President Bill Clinton of the United States. The Oslo Accords signed between the PLO and Israel in 1993 and 1995 established the Palestinian Authority as a self-governing interim administration in parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strips. The leader of PLO, Yasser Arafat, expressed his commitment to recognize Israel's right to exist in reference to the UN resolution 242 and 338 while Israel, on the other hand, was ready to work with the PLO as a legitimate peace partner. The Oslo Accords is believed to be very significant in giving more meaning to the geopolitical landscape of the Middle East. In 2005, Israel withdrew from Gaza in line with UN Resolution 242 (1967) and 338(1973), bringing Gaza under the control of Hamas.

President Obama, like his predecessors, continued with the peace process and insisted the two-state solution be upheld as the means to ending the endless conflict between Israel and Palestine. The two-state solution is highly embraced by the international community particularly because of its reference to the 1948 UN partition plan and as a result, it is viewed as a vehicle to resolve the conflict. In his last press conference at the White House, he said:

“The goal of the resolution was to simply say that the... growth of settlement is creating a reality on the ground that increasingly make a two – state solution impossible” (Brady, 2017).

On December 6, 2017, Trump formally recognized the Jerusalem as Israel's capital and relocated US Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem contrary to the diplomatic way his predecessors handled the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Immediately after this development, the UN General Assembly stepped in and voted resoundingly against Trump's unilateral decision of recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

Obviously, the neutrality of the US to resolve the Israeli-Palestine conflict or mediate peace in the Middle East came into disrepute (Hummel, 2017).

Trump believes that his peace plan, the "Prosperity to Peace" is best to advance the peace process.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

It is an undeniable fact that the role of the US in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has greatly facilitated the peace process. Successive governments have demonstrated their commitment through various diplomatic efforts aimed at advancing the cause of the peace process. However, President Trump, unlike his predecessors who were more diplomatic in their approach to the issues because of the volatile nature of the problem in the region, appears to be a bit different in his attitude toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Trump has recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and has taken steps to relocate the American embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. However, the international community voted unanimously at the UN General Assembly to reject President Trump's December 6, 2017 outright recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. Again, Trump's decision to cut down US bilateral aid to Palestine and Gaza, but give more financial support to Israel, also makes one to wonder whether Trump's policy will be able to restore or add anything to the long years of efforts made to restore

peace and security in the region. The possibility of the Trump policy to undermine the ongoing peace process to resolve so many years of conflict is a matter of concern.

It is also very significant to note that the Trump administration believes that the economic emancipation of the Palestinians can address the conflict between the two parties. Nevertheless, this position is being taken at the expense of a key issue, that is, the future state of Palestine.

The feasibility to make the two-state solution workable to restore peace and security and solve the Palestinian question is becoming more difficult. The desire to see the possibility of the Trump government to find a lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, therefore, accounts for the reason to undertake this study.

1.3 Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. To what extent does Trump's foreign policy towards Israel and Palestine affect the political stability of the two states?
2. To what extent does Trump's foreign policy towards Israel and Palestine affect the economy of the two states?
3. What are the implications of Trump's foreign policy for the Israeli-Palestinian peace process?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study seeks to;

1. Explore the political implications of Trump's foreign policy toward Israel and Palestine.
2. Explore the economic implications of Trump's foreign policy toward Israel and Palestine
3. Explore the implications of the Trump foreign policy toward Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

1.5 Scope of the Study

The study was limited to US foreign policy on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict with particular attention to the implications of the Trump's foreign policy towards Israel and Palestine. Respondents for the study comprised persons from only the US embassy, Israeli embassy and Palestinian embassy in Ghana.

1.6 Significance of the Study

It is hoped that the findings of this study would bring to the fore issues regarding the implications of Trump's foreign policy on Israel and the Palestinian question. In addition, the findings could serve as a means to improve the ongoing peace process between Israel and Palestine to end years of conflict between the two parties. It is also hoped that the study would contribute to knowledge in the literature for academic purpose and motivate other researchers into the Middle East crisis to promote peace and stability.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

Central to this study is the theory of realism. To offer a proper understanding of the conceptual framework, realism as a theory will be discussed separately followed by a critique by constructivist school of thought and subsequently a conclusion made on the concept.

Realism is a school of thought that claims to explain how international politics is replete with conflict as states pursue power to defend their interest. The assumption is that because we are selfish, we see others as untrustworthy, we get hungry for power, and these could possibly account for the reason why conflict is common throughout human history.

Classical realism is one major domains of the theory of realism that places emphasis on how human nature explains international politics. Realists' view of human beings is that of egoistic and selfish interest that supersedes moral principles and this in their view impacts on a state behavior. Machiavelli, a classical realist, becomes more interested in how basic human characteristics affect the security of the state. His main concern is about how leaders can guarantee their national security. He maintains that leaders in fulfilling this responsibility, must pursue policies that take into consideration both internal and external threat of their states and ensure that the supreme interest of the state is guaranteed. His thinking is that leaders should treat morality as a secondary matter when dealing with other states but must deem it fit only when it is in the interest of their own states. To him, "anything is justified by reason of the state" (Bull, 1995: 185).

Morgenthau (1948) is another classical realist who expanded realism into a comprehensive international theory. In his view, politics like society in general is governed by laws that have their roots in human nature and therefore it is necessary to understand these laws to improve society. His major concern is based on the concept of power that is defined in terms of interest. The assumption is that political leaders should think and act in terms of power or national interest but not in line with abstract moral principle. Morgenthau notes that the insatiable human desire for power or desire to dominate others is the major cause of conflict.

In *Theory of International Politics*, Waltz (1979) comes up with a different dimension of realism termed as Neo-realism (structural realism), for the explanation of international politics. He stresses the role of "structure" as a means to determine the behaviour of international politics. According to Cepik & Brancher (2017), structure refers to the manner in which units are ordered in a relationship. Waltz puts forward three assumptions to show how the international system works. Firstly, he opines that the international system is always anarchic, that is, an international system that operates without any central authority or political government. Internally, states have various structures or institutions to ensure law and order or control their territories thus reducing the propensity of civil war or conflict. Externally however, states have no guarantee for their sovereignty. Second, in a system, that has no central authority, states do not assume that there is any one to assure them of survival and that is why they have to rely on their own self-help. Third, states have no choice than to pursue power for self-help and protect their interest. Here, Waltz is able to demonstrate amply for theorists to look at the international system for (their) answers other than human nature. States have to pursue more power in the international system mainly because they have to survive.

It can be inferred from the above that as more states pursue more power relative to others, the obvious outcome is conflict that is due to the concept of security dilemma. As more states, in their self-help attempt, acquire more power to guarantee their security needs, they become threats to other states that will also increase their power to defend themselves in case there is war (Hurz, 1951). A classic example of this given by Hersh (1991) is the case of Israel, which out of fear or threat coming from Muslim forces in the region has for defensive purposes emerged as a country with a strong military superiority. To match Israel, other Muslim countries have embarked on the build-up of powerful weaponry leading to countries such as Iran becoming a nuclear power.

Realists believe that security dilemma or anarchy is not an indication of constant war even though they acknowledge the possibility of conflict as international politics is about the struggle for power. In this regard, they recommend various strategies by which states could manage insecurity or delay the outbreak of war. Principal among these strategies are balance of power and deterrence. Balance of power is a theory that suggests states can secure their survival in an international system that is anarchical by forming alliance with other states to reduce the military strength of a hegemon to prevent it from dominating others. Morgenthau (1985) notes that when balance of power between the contending states is in equilibrium it ensures a more stable environment. In another form of alliance where a weaker state is threatened, it may choose to align or bandwagon with a more powerful nation for safety (Mearsheimer, 2001). Realists assert that states could also employ the use of deterrence as a tool for survival. That is, a strategy by which a state could use a threat to discourage an adversary from launching an attack (Weede, 1989).

The theory of realism is not without criticism and therefore it has come under attack by many theorists. According to constructivists, the claim realists make that anarchy is mainly responsible for the struggle for power because of self-help and survival states are concerned with is completely unfounded and makes no logic. Wendt (1992) asserts that "anarchy is what states makes of it". As he puts it, "people act towards objects, including other actors on the basis of meanings objects have for them". Here, he postulates that the concept of anarchy is just a matter of opinion reached by people and that it is possible that different people could have different opinions or meaning of it. Fierke (2007) sums it up simply by his argument that international relations can be understood from different perspective by different states because of the differences in their values and norms.

Again, Fierke (2007) further argues that the understanding of the realists that the international system is an immutable structure and war-prone is inappropriate since interest and identities can change over the course of time given that states which were once enemies become the best allies. For instance, the creation of institutions like ECOWAS, AU and EU inter alia could give a fertile ground to promote cooperation among states.

Similarly, Copeland (2000), another prominent constructivist, has disputed the realists' position that states could put their interest first at the expense of morality when dealing with other states. According to him, this kind of attitude will rather promote fear and mistrust the realists appear to make states to avoid. In his view, these problems the realists seek to propose solution to do not emanate from anarchy but rather from the relations among the actors within the system and that the best way

to overcome them is rather to encourage interaction and cooperation among states in the international system.

Despite the various criticisms of realism as stated above, it is very relevant to my study because it provides the framework within which we can better understand Trump's foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The foreign policy of Trump reflects the overall US foreign policy agenda of making Israel its permanent ally in the region. His policy clearly exemplifies the classical realist position that leaders should be solely concerned with their national interest irrespective of whether it adversely affects other nations negatively or not. This has brushed aside the two-state solution the international community has agreed will end the conflict and established the Palestinian sovereignty. Thus, realism gives a graphic picture of the Trump perspective towards the two countries and the particular approach he has adopted in handling the conflict.

1.8 Literature Review

Literature reviewed to support the study is based on various themes derived from the objectives.

Peace Process

The United States is widely accepted as the world's hegemonic power and, therefore, expected to play the role of a mediator in settling the dispute between Israel and Palestine. To this effect, there was an engagement between White House Officials and leaders from the Middle East to discuss the way forward (Feierstein, 2018). To speed up the process, Karakoulaki (2013) makes us understand that the UN has taken the step of preparing a peace treaty that will bring about harmony between the two

Middle East countries. Regardless of this initiative, Karakoulaki (2013) and Feierstein (2018) believe that the status of the US as an effective mediator when it comes to resolving the conflict remains questionable as its preference remains skewed towards Israel. Trump, upon his inauguration as president, made promises of working hard in the promotion of peace in the Middle East and further asked for the support of his son in law, Jared Kushner. However, current trends have shown how utopian his promises as a presidential candidate has been. This has become clear during an interaction with the Prime Minister of Israel, Netanyahu, when Trump failed to explicitly declare U.S. pledge 'to a two state solution'(Feierstein, 2018:7).

Currently, Palestinians see US as a threat and that its actions are likely to undermine the efforts they are making to establish an independent Palestinian State. Its actions will also cause them to forfeit Jerusalem and make it difficult for Palestinian refugees to return to the Middle East. Feierstein (2018) notices that Trump's recognition of Jerusalem, as part of Israel has been a deviation from previous US governments that adopted a non-aligned role in relation to Jerusalem. As it stands now, the Palestinian rejection of Trump's decision over Jerusalem has led to a cut down of aid to the Palestinians and as a result, Abbas has questioned the US neutrality in negotiating the peace process. Zanotti (2018) confirms this position and says other state actors of the UN have equally criticised the US for its decision.

Though some states still see the peace process from a positive viewpoint, Blackwill & Gordon (2016) survey shows how some Israelites view the peace process to be unrealistic. In 2008, about 79% of Israelites were optimistic about the peace process. However, the number declined to 51% in 2015. As it stands now, 88% of Jews have expressed their concern of not seeing any effort being made by the Palestinian leaders

towards harmony. As explained by Karakoulaki (2013), Abbas has articulated that he would give his consent to the peace treaty if two conditions were met. Firstly, that the status of Jerusalem should be critically examined and secondly, that measures must be put in place to pave way for Palestine refugees to return home. On the words of Blackwill & Gordon (2016), the Jews have doubted if negotiations would eventually lead to a peace treaty (Blackwill & Gordon, 2016).

As stated by Maoz (2011), US in the 1980s proposed the use of the Coexistence model as a suitable way of resolving the Israel-Palestine conflict. Its basic assumptions were that both parties were to see themselves as human beings who are entitled to exercise their fundamental human rights thus, the need for cooperation and tolerance. This model turned out to be good yet received several criticism, as Maoz (2011:118) believes that it did not take into consideration national identity, and claims concerning discrimination towards the Palestinian citizens of Israel. He challenges the manner in which the model seems to support existing structures instead of seeking for changes. Other measures, including the Joint Projects, Confrontational and Narrative models have equally been proposed by scholars yet a survey conducted between 1999 and 2000 indicated how 34% of Jewish-Arabs preferred the confrontational and narrative model whereas 60% preferred the Joint Projects and Coexistence model. The preference for the Joint Projects and Coexistence model among the Israelis remained high as at 2008 because it preserves and perpetuates Jewish dominance and control while encouraging Arab submissiveness and passivity (Maoz, 2011:122). These four models have not been able to bring about the necessary social changes needed for peace development in the Middle East. Maoz (2011) advocates ‘cognitive

transformation’ as it could rapidly bring about power balance between Israel and Palestine whilst fostering social and political unity.

Political Implication

Jack (2018), looking at Trump's Middle East Policy, observes that his policy is designed strategically to fulfill some specific objective and is the reason it shows some slight difference from that of his predecessor, Obama. Justifications provided for his observation is the US improved relation with Riyadh and Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel, which was very bad with the Obama administration. In reference to Jack (2018), Trump's withdrawal from the 2015 deal, designed to check Iran’s nuclear weapons known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and his subsequent imposition of sanction on Iran, is not just to undermine its (Iran’s) threat to the region but to protect Israel. Similarly, it is not also about Iran’s hegemonic ambition but ultimately to protect the security interest of Israel and the reason Israel has been the first to applaud Trump’s action. Oren (2018), on his part is very articulate in his view when he states that, Trump, just as his predecessors, has always looked for an opportunity to use the Israeli-Palestinian issue to promote democracy in the region (Oren, 2008). He maintains that Trump’s close ties with Riyadh and Abu Dhabi in the Middle East may turn out to polarize the region to the detriment of its peace and security.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is associated with dispute over land and territorial boundaries. As explained by Zanotti (2018), the war is not only about the conflict over Jerusalem, but it involves other parameters such as the Israeli-West Bank borders and security. It has been a difficult task for Israel to let go of Jerusalem as its possession,

which it refers to as legal, historical, strategic, nationalistic, or religious justification (Zanotti, 2018: 29).

According to Rinehart (2018), UN Resolution 181 (11), which settled on a partition plan in 1947, sets Jerusalem aside as an “International city”, but the May 15, 1948 war, which took place after the independence declaration of Israel, left Jerusalem a divided city. The independence of Israel in 1948, followed by the 1948 war, marked the beginning of the Palestinian question (Said & Hitchens, 2001). After the fight in 1948, western Jerusalem came under the control of Israel while Jordan on the other hand controlled the eastern part of Jerusalem. She points out that during the 1967 war Jordan lost the eastern part of Jerusalem, giving Israel the opportunity to take total control of it. Despite Israel’s possession of Jerusalem, the United Nation General Assembly Resolution 303 reaffirms that Jerusalem remains an international city (Rinehart, 2018).

Presently, Israel controls about 60% of West Bank and it has created a barrier to separate itself from terrorist attacks coming from Palestine. Unfortunately, the barrier has likewise affected Palestinians as it also separates them from East Jerusalem and divides the portion of some of its communities. Palestine continues to fight Israel back as it is anticipating East Jerusalem to be its capital in the future (Blackwill & Gordon, 2016). Unfortunately, the assumption of Netanyahu that since 2009 he brought about an additional increase of 3,000 Israelis to East Jerusalem has shut any hope of a Palestinian state because of their inability to acquire the land for its capital (Blackwill & Gordon, 2016). The Security Council of the United Nations, in its attempt to resolve the conflict formulated a draft resolution in 2011, which was to nullify Israel’s possession of the West Bank and East Jerusalem (Karakoulaki, 2013). The United

States of America, as a hegemon in the world is being expected by most countries to take up the lead in facilitating the peace process by backing the resolutions likely to promote peace but refuses to give fully its support as expected. It is no wonder that President Obama also refrained from a similar resolution in 2016 (Zanotti, 2018). Moreover, Karakoulaki (2013:10) reveals how Obama during his speech about US relations with the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) refused to comment on Israel's illegal occupation of certain parts of Jerusalem based on UN Security Council Resolution 446 (1976)". According to Karakoulaki (2013), US past presidents, in the exception of Donald Trump, have been silent on the state of Jerusalem. To her, Trump's foreign policy towards the Middle East is likely to take a different trend because in 2017 he recognized Jerusalem as the Capital of Israel and planned relocating the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem in 2018. The decision received cold reaction from Palestine and several countries across the globe. The reason is that it infringes upon international treaties governing the state of Jerusalem (Karakoulaki, 2013).

Several negotiations are being initiated to foster unity between these two states, however Zanotti (2018) states that the presence of the Prime Minister of Israel, Netanyahu and President Abbas of Palestine would make the issues difficult because both leaders are not showing any sign of commitment towards having good relations. Israel and the Arab states have been engaged in wars in 1956, 1973 and 1982 (Zanotti, 2018: 3). Ahmad, Balogun, Mohammed, & Salleh (2017) argue that the Palestinian Question or otherwise the Palestinian problem, emerged at the First Zionist Congress which took place in Basel in 1897 when the idea to create a Jewish State in Palestine was made with the support of Great Britain. The Zionist project, which sought to

encourage the Jews to re-establish their homeland in Palestine, came into fruition in May 1948 when the State of Israel was created. This together with the expulsion of two thirds of Palestinian population, called the Nakba, at the same time, was a „major humiliation“ for Arabs. He expresses a worry that the collective efforts by the Palestinian Arab brothers to resist the Zionist project yielded no positive result until the prophetic statement made by Theodore Herzl in 1897 at the Zionist Congress as mentioned above that the Jewish State, he has founded is to exist possibly five or fifty years to come has been fulfilled. Today, it appears the Arab States are struggling with their own internal problems and thus, Palestine is no more the rallying point.

Between 1941 and 1945, about six million Jewish people were killed by the Nazis regime and to compensate the Jews for the actions of Adolf Hitler, the Balfour Declaration was enacted to pave way for Jewish settlement among the Arabs (Zanotti, 2018). Israel and the USA have had a long-term relationship since the inauguration of State of the Israel in 1948. This was demonstrated through the signing of a bilateral agreement on trade and security. The formation of the Joint Political Military Group in 1983 has served as a platform for both countries to exchange ideas on military technology (Blackwill & Gordon, 2016). Zanotti (2018) and Blackwill & Gordon, (2016) believe that the bond between US and Israel has been possible due to their religious background and democratic principles.

Similarly, according to some scholars, Israel over the years has been able to influence US foreign policies towards the Middle East and massively supported the US in times of difficulty. During the Cold War for instance, the US has been known to support Israel against any possible threat from other countries. This has been demonstrated in its attitude toward the nuclear treaty with Iran in 2015 (Zanotti, 2018). Black and

Gordon (2016) affirm that Israel and US do share information in relation to cyber security, military tactics and production of weapons across the globe. Further, they revealed how 1.2 billion dollars was used by the US and Israel in the production of Iron Dome during the Gaza war in 2014. Moreover, Israel's lobby group, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), has performed credibly well in US making Florida one of the strong Israeli electorate areas thus, political parties in US try to win their favor so as to win elections (Karakoulaki, 2013).

The US approach to Palestine, though not hostile, has not been very good as compared to Israel. To counter this perception, some effort was made by President Barack to erase this negative opinion of the US in the minds of people (Islamic State). To this effect,

Karakoulaki (2013) makes us understand that, Obama gave a speech in the Cairo University where he acknowledged East Jerusalem as an important city to the Palestinians and encouraged both Israel and Palestine to desist from violence and accept each other's right to existence. Through the remarks on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), he reemphasized his support towards conflict resolution by stating that:

"The borders of Israel and Palestine should be based on the 1967 lines with mutually agreed swaps, so that secure and recognized borders are established for both states. The Palestinian people must have the right to govern themselves, and reach their full potential, in a sovereign and contiguous state." (Karakoulaki, 2013, p. 9)

It was obvious that Barrack Obama, Bill Clinton and George Bush Jr. were in massive support of peaceful coexistence between Israel and Palestine in the Middle East. Despite this attitude, Karakoulaki (2013) criticises President Obama for neglecting the

affairs of the Palestinians, as the terms of the MENA tend to favour Israel. Moreover, the US threatened to withdraw its funding to the United Nations Educational Social and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) when it was criticised for recognizing Palestine as a State (Zanotti, 2018). In addition, the US and Israel happened to have been among the countries which voted against Palestinian request to be a member state of the UN. Nonetheless, this request was granted as 138 states voted in support of Palestine (Karakoulaki, 2013). Israel has become powerful in the Middle East as its economy is strongly backed by its industrial and agriculture system whilst receiving aid from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Despite this success, there is inequality and poverty among the marginalized groups including the Arab and Haredim Israelis (Zanotti, 2018). As Israel is the least populated among the Middle East countries, it has developed its cyber, maritime and military systems to enhance its military power.

As it stands now, 16.4 billion dollars, which comprise 4.6% of its Gross Domestic Product, is spent on defense (Zanotti, 2018). Besides, it has the ability to produce weapons, as it is not a part of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (Zanotti, 2018). On US chance for a peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian crisis, Karakoulaki (2013) observes that the Obama administration has made some progress regarding the Israeli Palestinian crisis, especially during his first term in office but subsequently faced difficulty in making progress as series of events in the region led to a deadlock between the two parties. The occasional military strikes on both sides, coupled with Israel's settlement project in both Gaza and West Bank, make peace talks on the two states solution very discouraging (Rinehart, 2018). Ahmad, Balogun, Mohammed, &

Salleh (2017) believe that the emergence of Donald Trump as the 45th President of the US will improve the US-Israeli relations dented by the Obama regime. According to them, the invitation of both Benjamin's Netanyahu, the Prime Minister of Israel and President Mahmoud Abbas of Palestine by Trump shows a mark of an excellent diplomatic move for obvious reasons. In their view, the invitation of the two personalities by Trump signifies some sense of neutrality on his part towards the Israeli-Palestinian relation. Further, in his press conference with Netanyahu, Trump stated that he would settle for either one state or two states solution depending on which Israel and Palestine settled for. In addition, he suggested that the agreement between the two is possible through direct negotiation. This corroborates the argument by Kelman (1982) that with the necessary conditions needed for negotiations in place, it should be possible for Israel and Palestine to dialogue and end the conflict. His invitation was seen to ameliorate the anger of the Muslims concerning his ban on them into the US (Ahmad, Balogun, Mohammed, & Salleh, 2017). This is also an indication that Trump, like his predecessors, is not interested in the security of Israel alone but also in the total freedom and of other nations that believe in democracy (Daalder, Gnestto, & Gordon, 2006).

Despite this initiative, it is significant to stress the worry expressed by Rinehart (2018) as United State- Palestinian relation will deteriorate if Trump should go ahead to fulfil the campaign promise he made in a speech to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). That is, to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, considering the fact that both Palestine and Israel contest for it as their capital. In her view also, Palestinians may have lost trust in America as a neutral arbiter and may not be willing to come to the negotiating table to discuss the issues. Meanwhile, she is of

the perspective that the Palestinians must put their house in order to better position themselves more diplomatically in their next level of negotiation towards the peace process. Now it appears the Palestinians have a divided front with several organizations like the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, the Popular Front for Liberation of Palestine and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, which are all, fighting for power. Currently, the Hamas party and Fatah party do not agree to work together (Rinehart, 2018).

Economic Implication

Other scholars have strongly advocated the need to adopt a two-state solution that will ensure Palestine be granted a statehood with East Jerusalem as its capital. They believe this is the best option to achieve peace and security in the region. Under the two-state solution as well, a case is made for regional cooperation involving Israel and key Arab countries. They are encouraged to work together to end the conflict through coordinated efforts that border on security, economic and political fronts. Allowing the Palestinians to run and operate businesses on lands belonging to them and the US making efforts to promote partnership in the Palestinian ICT sector with Israel and the international market will certainly increase the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of both Palestine and Israel (Ahmad, Balogun, Mohammed, & Salleh, 2017; Rudman, 2017).

Though it appears difficult for both Israel and Palestine to reach a peaceful agreement because so far no solution has been crafted to meet their expectations, Blackwill & Gordon (2016) encourage both parties to put aside their differences so as to work together to promote political stability in the Middle East. They propose that there

should be a “transfer of more territory from Area C to Area B so that the West Bank territory come under full Palestinian security and administrative control” (Blackwill & Gordon, 2016:31). With this, each state will have substantial control over its localities that is necessary for administrative duties. Davis (2013) observes that the poor performance of the Palestinian economy with high unemployment rate is due to the Israeli continuous occupation in the West Bank, particularly in Area C of the land that is well endowed with resources.

Jack (2017) notes that the Trump decision to cut down \$200 million in bilateral aid to the West Bank and Gaza will further make things worse for the Palestinian economy. Meanwhile, the US is committed to support Israel with \$38 billion for defense over the next ten years, under the Trump government (Wilner, 2017). President Trump has supplemented this aid with \$705 million in further support to Israel that will surely create more economic power imbalance between the two parties (Stuart & Juadah, 2018). Pillar (2019) argues the financial support Israel has received will worsen the Israeli-Palestinian economic relationship because Israel being the stronger economy is more likely to exploit the Palestinian market. The Trump government has also cut down its contribution to the UNRWA to the detriment of the humanitarian services of the agency to people globally, a decision that the international community sees as a punishment against the Palestinians and strongly condemned (Dumper, 2018). The adverse effect of this development is the untold hardship it has brought to most Palestinians particularly, in the area of job losses and other relief services (Fidd, 2019). Indeed, in September 2018, the United Nations Relief Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) announced that it was no longer going to provide Palestinian children with textbooks free of charge (Blome, Endreson, & Hasselknippe, 2003). Wong (2018) argues that US reduction of its contribution to the

UNRWA is a strategic move to trap the Palestinians into accepting the Trump peace plan, the "Peace to Prosperity" (Wong, 2018). However, Anziska (2019) notes that Trump's decision to withdraw funding to UNRWA may be right, taking into consideration the historical account of all US failed attempts for a Middle East Peace. The peace plan is a \$50 billion economic plan of the Trump administration, of which \$27.5 billion will be used to boost the economic development in the West Bank and Gaza to create wealth for the Palestinians while part goes for Palestinians in Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon. If supported, it will improve the quality of lives of the Palestinian people (Linge, 2019).

1.9 Research Methodology

1.9.1 Introduction

This part of the research focuses on the research design, sources of data, and population. It also discusses the research instrument, sample and sampling procedure and data analysis of the study.

1.9.2 Research Design

The researcher employed the use of qualitative research method. This method has afforded the opportunity to have a direct contact or relationship with the respondents. The researcher used interviews in the study with the goal to obtain well-informed responses on the topic at hand. It also made use of unstructured and semi-structured guide to achieve this objective.

1.9.3 Sources of Data

The study made use of primary sources of data obtained from interviews involving some officials selected from the US embassy, Israeli embassy, and Palestinian embassy. Secondary data however, was obtained from books, journals articles,

documents and reports from the internet while the Balm library, American Corner and the library of the Legon Center for International Affairs were used for other additional sources of information.

1.9.4 Population

The target population for this study is people working at the US Embassy, Israeli and Palestinian Embassies in Accra of the Greater Accra Region. The study was conducted in these embassies because the researcher believed relevant data on the study was easy to obtain from these sources.

1.9.5 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The sample size of the study was six respondents. Two respondents were selected from the US embassy, two from the Palestinian Embassy and two others selected from Palestinian Embassy. The study made use of purposive sampling procedure to select respondents. This sampling technique was used to select persons with requisite knowledge on the study from the various embassies mentioned above.

1.9.6 Data Collection

In order to collect data for the study, the researcher visited the Palestinian and Israeli embassies on August 14, 2019 and September 18, 2019 respectively. He also visited the US embassy on November 22, 2019. The study employed a semi-structured interview to obtain information from officials of the various embassies. To avoid confusion in data collected, the researcher used a digitized tape recorder to record information from respondents. The researcher coded the interviewees as Palestinian official one and two, Israeli official one and two as well as US official one and two.

1.9.7 Data Analysis

As the study is qualitative based, the researcher organized the responses into narration and put them under thematic strands. The data were analyzed in a descriptive manner to bring out patterns and relationships in the study.

1.9.8 Ethical Consideration

Permission sought from the interviewees at the various embassies was granted. Dates were scheduled and interview conducted accordingly. To respect the position of the interviewees, the researcher assured them a guarantee of their confidentiality.

1.10 Arrangement of Chapters

The study is organized into four chapters. Chapter One constitutes the Introduction. Chapter Two discusses the overview of the Israeli-Palestine conflict and the peace process regarding the conflict. Chapter Three focuses attention on presentation of research findings. This includes the political and economic implications of Trump's foreign policy toward Israel and Palestine, and the implication of Trump foreign policy on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Chapter Four provides a summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations.

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CHAPTER TWO

OVERVIEW OF THE ISRAELI-PALESTINE CONFLICT

2.0 Introduction

The Israel-Palestinian conflict dates back to the mid-20th century and remains the world's most controversial conflicts. It borders on the question of who is the owner of the Palestinian land, an issue that has led to series of wars fought between Israel and Palestine. This chapter gives insight into US foreign policy position on her long years of efforts to negotiate resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

2.1 The Palestine Arabs

Palestine has remained an object of conflict between two groups of people, Israel and the Palestinian Arabs who lay claim of ownership over the same land, the Mandatory Palestine. Soon after the rule of the Ottoman Empire ended during WW1, Britain had the mandate from the League of Nations to exercise control over the land.

Subsequently, the UN gave Britain the go ahead to divide the place into two states, the Arab State and the Jewish State. The partition of the area led to a bitter disagreement between the two groups of people because the Arab States rejected the offer it had with the argument that what they had was woefully inadequate considering the fact that they were more than 60% of the population in Palestine (Robinson, 1947).

Currently, the Palestinian Arab State comprises the West Bank and Gaza Strip referred to exclusively as Palestine, areas where the Palestinian Arabs also known as Palestinians are located. The Israeli Arabs, on the other hand, refer to a different group of people who are Arab citizens of Israel with rights equal to that of any other citizen in Israel. While part of the West Bank (notably zone A and B) is under the

administration of the Palestinian Authority, Hamas on the other hand controls the Gaza Strip.

Until the late 19th century, Palestinian Arabs who lived in the area between the Jordan River and Mediterranean identified themselves primarily based on religion and strong family ties but had no desire for a common political goal (Ganim & Ghanem, 2001). However, the Zionist immigration into the region supported by the British was what led to the rise of Palestinian nationalism, and therefore their zeal to fight for what they believed was their land to form an Arab Palestinian State (Muslih, 1986/87).

Some Palestinians trace their origins to the Arab conquerors who had lived there in the 7th century and therefore claim they have the legitimate right of ownership of the land. However, other scholars such as Peters (2015) believed that the Palestinian Arabs migrated from the surrounding countries like Eastern Turkey, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Egypt, amongst others, to Israel in search of greener pastures because of the economic prosperity, which took place there with the arrival of the Jews from the diaspora. Nevertheless, a close look at the UN definition of Palestinians says, any person that spent two years in “Palestine” before 1948, with or without proof is a “Palestinian” as well as the descendants of that person, supports the Palestinian position that the Palestinian land belong to them.

The aspirations of the Palestinians for a future Palestinian State continue to face serious challenges. The Israeli continuous expansion of illegal settlements in the West Bank has made it difficult for them to achieve the objective of a Sovereign State of Palestine with Jerusalem as its capital. What has made the matter even more complicated is Israel’s unwillingness to let go the West Bank because of its historical

and religious attachment to places such as Samaria and Judea located there that are very significant to the Jews. Coupled with this, is the fact that the Palestinian leadership made up of Hamas and Fatah, is divided politically, ideologically and geographically regarding the approach to adopt in their fight for a common cause. Resultantly, so many years of efforts by the Palestinians to resolve the Palestinian question have remained the same (Massad, 2005).

Indeed, the Palestinian economic development will also be badly affected and cost of living of the Palestinian people remaining high so long as Israel refuses to withdraw from the West Bank that is richly endowed with natural resources. In other words, this situation could reduce the efforts of the Palestinian Authorities to deliver quality services to the Palestinian people (Orhan, Nur, & Massimiliano, 2014).

2.2 The Jewish People

After so many years of persecution of the Jewish people, they can now boast of a country, Israel, which they can refer to as their homeland they built because of their resolve and determination. The ethnic identity of the Jews is defined in part by their religion even though some of them are not active practitioners. They are involved to some extent, in observing other religious traditions and practices unique to their society.

The Jewish people are believed to be the descendants of Abraham and became a great nation called Israel after their exodus from Egypt. A notable king of Israel after the era of judges was King David who was believed to make Jerusalem the capital of Israel.

Years later after his reign Israel was divided into two kingdoms, the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom called Judah. In 721 B.C., the Assyrian army captured the Northern Kingdom of Israel, destroyed it and took the Jews into captivity. In effect, the Southern Kingdom (Judah) was left with a smaller population to defend itself in times of war (Bleibtreu, 1991). About a century later, in 587 B.C.E., the Babylonian army attacked Judah (Israel) and sent the Jews into exile for so many years before they came back. Soon after their arrival, different empires began to control the region and this led to the continuous persecution of the Jewish people by the successive empires. Similarly, in 64 B.C. the Roman Empire took over the control of Judea and part of its province. The Romans restricted the rights and freedom of the Jews in so many ways and this incited them to rebel against the regime. There were series of rebellions between the periods of 132-135 B.C.E one of which was the Bar Kokhba revolt. The Jews saw the Bar Kokhba revolt as the last resort to free themselves from Roman control. Unfortunately, they lost in the uprising against Roman authority and the outcome was that many of them were killed while others dispersed into the diaspora (Bazzana, 2010).

For so many centuries, the Jews were migrants in many countries and were persecuted or murdered in most of these countries particularly in Russia, Germany and other parts of Eastern Europe. The massacre of six million Jews during World War II by the Nazi regime in Germany known as the Holocaust is a clear demonstration of what the Jews went through in the diaspora (Maurice, 1987).

Long years of antisemitism or hostility the Jewish people suffered culminated in their desire for a national home. In line with this, Zionism was born to lead the fight for a Jewish homeland in the land of Palestine. During the Zionist Congress held at Basel,

Switzerland, on September 3, 1897, Theodore Herzl predicted that in fifty years' time, the Jewish Homeland would be established and as he put it in his own words:

“At Basel, I founded the Jewish State. If I said this out aloud today, I would be greeted by universal laughter. In five years, perhaps, and certainly in fifty year, everyone will perceive it” (Kiewe, 2003).

Indeed, he used the platform to add a political weight to the Zionist concept and took advantage of this opportunity to win the Jewish support for a national homeland (Haumann, 1997). The activities of Zionism, among others, inspired the Jews to migrate to the Ottoman controlled Palestine and subsequently, because the Ottoman Empire lost control of the region during WWI. As stated earlier, Britain had the mandate from the League of Nation to administer the region. The Balfour Declaration attracted many more Jews to Palestine and on 14 May 1948, the State of Israel was established (Morris & Morris, 1994).

There are many Jews scattered across the world with sizeable number of them living as citizens in Israel, which is their homeland. The world Jewish population report of 2018 had it that, there are about 14,606,000 Jews across the world, of which 5,700,000 constituting 44.9% are in the US, while Europe hosts about 1,348,600 making 9.0%. In Africa on the other hand, there are about 73,600, which is 0.5%. According to this report, 6,558,100 that constitutes 44.9% are the Israeli Jews (Dashefsky & Ira, 2018). The identity of Jews is based on their cohesion or common religious practice and this undermines Sand's (2010) argument that the current crop of Jews in Israel are not the true descendants of the indigenous Jews mentioned in the bible and that they adopted this identity only to get access to Palestinian land.

One of the major problems that confronts the Israeli Jews borders on their security. Despite the fact that Israel has managed to defend itself in the wars it has fought with the Arab States since its independence, its security concerns are still in question. Israel is surrounded by hostile neighboring countries and as a result, rocket attacks have been launched from these countries on it from time to time and this continues to threaten the lives of its citizens. Because of the ramifications of this situation on the Israeli citizens, the government budget on security is always high. Even (2010) noted that Israel's defense cost alone is about 5 to 6.5%, which has an excess burden of 3 to 4.5% of its GDP, compared with other countries.

2.3 The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

The Middle East region has come under conflict for decades and many attempts made to find a lasting solution to it has proved futile. Since 1948, many wars have been fought between Israel and its Arab neighbors.

During the time (1517-1917), the Ottoman Empire controlled the region especially during the mid-20th century when many Jews immigrated from Europe and other places to the region. By 1914, the population of the Jews in Palestine was about 60,000 of which 33,000 were persons of recent settlement. The Arab population on the other hand was 683,000 by the same period. By the same time, the WW1 broke out and as the war was underway, the British Commissioner in Egypt Sir Henry McMahon convinced Husayn ibn Ali to support Britain and France against the Ottoman Empire that aligned itself with Germany against them. Husayn together with T.E. Lawrence, (Lawrence of Arabia) believing in the promise that the British government would give support in the establishment of an independent Arab State

under Hashemite in the Arab province in the Ottoman Empire, led an Arab Revolt bringing an end to the Ottoman Empire (Beinin & Hajar, 2014).

Following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, Britain and France obtained a mandate from the League of Nations over the Ottoman territories. The two countries being the dominant powers at the time, divided the region between themselves with Britain controlling areas including the Palestinian Mandate. The Arabs opposed the British mandate because it failed to fulfil its promise to support their aspiration to self-rule and right to self-determination. In November 2, 1917, the British Cabinet issued a public declaration in the form of a letter from British Foreign Secretary Arthur

Balfour to Lord Lionel Walter Rothschild, a prominent Zionist, indicating that:

“His Majesty’s Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country” (Parsons, 2013).

The declaration gave international recognition to the Zionist project and led to mass immigration of Jews from other parts of the world to Palestine particularly during the inter-war period and the outcome of this was that it provided the foundation of enmity between the Arabs and the Jews (Veret, 1970).

The Holocaust involving the killing of six million Jews in Germany by the Nazi regime led by Adolf Hitler between 1933 and 1945 caused a dramatic increase of Jewish migration to Palestine and encouraged new land purchase and settlement that was more Jewish. The high Jewish presence in Palestine created tensions between the two groups of people, the Arabs and the Jews. The Arab refusal to accept the legitimacy of British control of Palestine and Zionist settlement occasioned the 1936-

1939 Arab Revolt where there was an uprising against the British administration, which caused the death of many people. To bring the situation under control, the Great Britain in 1936 set up a commission of enquiry headed by Lord Robert Peel to investigate the causes of the unrest. The Peel Commission in its report recommended that Britain should partitioned Palestine into two, one a Jewish State and the other an Arab State. The Arabs rejected the partition plan outright and demanded for an independent Palestine State while the Jews on the other hand accepted it even though with some reservation (Peel,1937).

The hostilities intensified and then in the process, WW II began. The League of Nations collapsed and the mandate of Britain over the region came into question. After the United Nation Organization was established in 1945, Britain out of growing pressure and attacks from both Arabs and the Jews and with its inability to keep order in the Holy Land finally decided to turn to the UN for a solution. On September 3, 1947, (fifty years from September 3, 1897, Theodore Herzl made a prophetic statement for the establishment of Jewish Homeland in Palestine), the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) submitted its report to the General Assembly. It demanded in its report that the British mandate should end and recommended a Plan of Partition of Palestine into a Jewish and Arab state. In line with this, on November 29, 1947, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 181, by a vote of 33 to 13 with 10 abstention, to partition Palestine into two states, one for the Jews and one for the Arabs. The Arab State received 43 percent of the land while 56 percent of it was to go for the Jews on the assumption that increasing numbers of the Jews would immigrate to their homeland. Under the partition plan, Jerusalem and Bethlehem were to come under the administrative authority of the UN Trusteeship.

On May 14, 1948 when Britain would officially end its mandate over Palestine, the Jews led by Ben-Gurion declared independence, “The State of Israel is established”. Meanwhile, the Palestinian Arabs had rejected the UN offer on the basis, that it did not consult them despite the fact that they were in majority, that they deserved more percentage of the land taking into account their numbers, and that because of this they refused to accept the creation of Israel (Herzog, 1984).

Following this, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq joined forces with Palestine to attack Israel, the following day. This war, which became the first Arab-Israeli war, is what the Jews called the Independence war of Israel. The battle was bloody and hostile and claimed many lives while many more Palestinians caught up in the trouble fled because the Arab States did not prevail in the war. Israel emerged victorious and captured the Golan Heights, Sinai Peninsula and West Jerusalem. Transjordan gained the West Bank and East Jerusalem while Egypt had the Gaza Strip. The UN mediation in 1949, with armistice agreements between Israel and the other Arab States officially ended the hostilities among the parties and ceasefire areas demarcated stationed with UN peacekeeping forces (Sutherlin, 2012).

After the 1948 war, the situation on the ground was quite clear that the conflict was far from over because tension in the region escalated, and in consequence, the 1956

Suez crisis began. In the 1950s, Britain, one of the shareholders of the Suez Canal Company, and America were engaged in the cold war battle with the Soviet Union dividing Europe into Capitalist West and Socialist East. Meanwhile, there were confrontations ongoing between Egypt and Israel over the Gaza Strip. For fear that, Egypt would attack Israel with its arm demand, US refused to grant her that request

and this compelled Gamel Abdul-Nasser to turn to the Soviet Union to sign a major deal to purchase modern tanks of aircrafts ostensibly to use that to flex her muscle against Israel. Besides this, Gamel established a diplomatic deal with communist China. This move infuriated the US and Britain to the extent that they withdrew their support of \$70 million (in aid) promised to Egypt for the construction of the Aswan dam meant to generate power to boost the economy. The Gaza raid between Israel and Egypt led to the killing of thirty-eight (38) Egyptian soldiers.

On July 26, 1956, Egypt nationalized the Suez Canal to the utter surprise of the world and to the disadvantage of the shareholders of the Suez Company. In October 1956, the British, French and Israeli forces angered by this action, quickly launched an attack on Egypt with the excuse that they were protecting the Suez Canal. The US President Dwight Eisenhower's suspicion that using this method against Egypt would lose the entire Arab region into the hands of the Soviet Union stood strongly against the invading forces and subsequently with the Soviet Union supported a UN Resolution to cause their withdrawal from Egypt in 1957. Even though Israel did not receive the freedom it wanted over the canal, it was able to regain access to the Straits of Tiran to carry out its international trade with other countries by sea. The US and Soviet Union intervention, which compelled the two colonial powers, Britain and France, to withdraw from Egypt, obviously was an indication that the European imperialism was over and that a new international order has taken over (Kingseed, 1995).

Ever since Israel emerged victorious with more territories, it captured in the abovementioned wars especially in the 1948 conflict, Arab nationalism exceedingly increased with the desire to change the situation in the region by defeating Israel.

Indeed, both sides were quite sure of this problem and were left in a state of security dilemma. On May 13, 1967, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) wrongfully reported to Egypt that Israel was massing up its defense forces along Syria borders to launch attack on it. To forestall this, Egypt began to mobilize soldiers to fight Israel and on May 14, 1967 insisted that the UN Emergency Forces (UNEF) in charge of supervising the borders in the area between her and Egypt should leave. In fact, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Iraq had granted a request from Egypt and expressed their willingness to participate in the war against Israel. At the same time, Israel had also refused to allow the UN forces to station at their side of the border. The stage was set for war and both sides, Israel and the Arab coalition, began to mobilize their forces.

On May 23, 1967, Egypt provoked Israel by blocking its entry to the Straits of Tiran. The Strait of Tiran was of a strategic interest to Israel in the sense that it used it to conduct sea trade with other countries in Africa and the Far East. This action on the part of Egypt against Israel was unlawful and an act of aggression in defiance of the Geneva Conference of 1958 navigation. The United Nations Convention on the law of the sea (UNCLOS) also referred to as the Law of the Sea Treaty is an international agreement that ensures the rights and responsibilities of nations to use the world's oceans are respected (Nordquist, 2011). By this implication, it is not out of place to conclude that Egypt violated the sea right of Israel and that any action Israel would take to defend itself was justified. On June 1, 1967, Israel formed a national unity of government and on June 4, 1967 decided to go to war.

Meanwhile, the Egyptian air defense was off duty by July 3, 1967. After the Israeli forces were adequately prepared, it launched attack on the Egyptian air bases on July 5, 1967, beginning the six-day war. About two hundred (200) Israeli aircraft heavily inflicted a decisive blow on 14 Egyptian airbase and took Egypt completely by surprise. Within the three hours, the Israeli forces had destroyed about two hundred and thirty-eight (238) Egyptian aircrafts and killed its hundred pilots to guarantee its air supremacy. Jordan and Syria responded and attacked Israel at 11.00am. Israel fought back fiercely and in the process destroyed twenty-eight Jordanian and fifty-three Syrian airbases. At the same time, Israel was busily engaging the armies of the Arab coalition from the other side. It fought the ground war at three fronts, the Sinai, Jordanian and Syrian fronts and engaged the enemies in fierce battle for the rest of the six days until the war was over by the tenth day after the UN intervened and brokered a ceasefire.

At the end of the final analysis, it was estimated that two thousand and five hundred (2500) Syrians, seven hundred (700) Jordanian and fifteen thousand (15000) Egyptian soldiers had died while part of Israel's nine hundred and eighty-three (983) soldiers were lost. Israel emerged victorious in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war and captured the Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula from Egypt. It also conquered at least two thirds (2/3) of the Golan Heights from Syria and took East Jordan as well as West Bank from Jordan, and in effect about one million (1000,000) Arabs resident on these territories were brought directly under the control of Israel.

The advantage of Gaza Strip to Israel was that it would use it to avoid threats of terrorist activities coming from Gaza while the Sinai Peninsula was to afford her the opportunity to get access to the Straits of Tiran. The possession of the Golan Heights

on the other hand was to help Israel to deny Syria of military access and terrorist operation along the border. The outcome of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war has some consequences for Palestine, Israel, the Middle East and the international community.

The war dramatically led to the increase of Palestinian nationalism and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (established in 1964) suddenly became its freedom fighter. Massad (1995) argued that because of the humiliating defeat of the Arab states in the war it made it no longer attractive as a source of hope for the Palestinians and therefore resolved to take their destiny into their own hands. Thus, without these two territorial areas or at best the entire West Bank going for the Palestinians, the Palestinian question remains the same with virtually no solution (Said, 1992).

The war ushered in an era of a profound strengthened relation between America and Israel. Unlike the Eisenhower's administration, which failed to fulfil its promise to provide Israel access to the Straits of Tiran after the 1956 Suez Canal crisis and thereafter America's support for Israel became low, the Israeli victory in this war restored the diplomatic relation between the two countries. John F. Kennedy ended the arms embargo that both Eisenhower and Truman imposed on Israel and initiated a strong security ties with Israel. Consequently, Israel became America's strategic partner in the Middle East and has since continues to enjoy its support especially in military engagements (Halliday, 2005).

The 1967 Arab-Israeli war also had some implication on the international community. Gera (1992) argued that within the context of the cold war the outcome of the war extremely enhanced the American influence in the region at the expense of its Soviet counterpart and that the general impression it left in the minds of people was that the Western-armed Israelis indisputably defeated the Soviet-armed Arabs.

On November 22, 1969, following the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) passed Resolution 242 aimed to resolve the conflict between Israel and the Arab states. The acceptance of this resolution was credited to Lord Carradon, the UN ambassador and his team because of their instrumentality that led to its conclusion. The resolution was based on two principles: first, the withdrawal of Israel from the occupied territories and second that all states in the region including Israel were to secure territorial boundaries recognized by the international community. The initial reaction was that Resolution 242 was ambiguous and that it was not clear which of the two actions, either the Israeli withdrawal from the territories or recognition of states was to take place first. Despite this, it provided the framework for signing the Peace Treaties between Israel and Egypt (1979), Israel and Jordan (1994) and the Oslo I and II Accords, of 1993 and 1995.

The 1973 Yom Kippur war was one of the most ferocious and bloody fought battles in the history of Middle East. The main objective of the October 26 Yom Kippur war of 1973 led by a coalition of Arab forces (Egypt and Syria) was to recover all the territories captured by Israel in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war especially the Golan Heights and Sinai Peninsula belonging to Syria and Egypt respectively. The viewpoint of Egypt was to mount pressure on Israel until it gave up and withdrew from the occupied territories. This situation continued until in August 1970 when a ceasefire agreement was signed between the parties, Israel and its other counterparts, the Arab states (Khalid, 1973).

As part of efforts of the United Nations to stem the tide of prevailing tension in the region, it undertook a peace initiative led by a UN Special Representative, Gunnar Jarring, to ensure a peaceful settlement between Israel and its neighboring countries.

Sadat who expressed a willingness to accept the peace proposal was ready to open the Suez Canal and recognized the rights of Israel as an independent state given that Israel would withdraw from the Sinai Peninsula in line with Resolution 242 of the UN Security Council. Israel rejected the proposal to the chagrin of Egypt because it was not convinced the move would guarantee peace with its neighbors (Podeh, 2015).

The other Arab countries showed little interest in another war with Israel because they were mindful of the humiliating defeat they suffered in the previous wars where they lost much of their territories. Jordanian King Hussein's reluctance for instance could imply that he was of the fear of losing more land in addition to West Bank and East

Jerusalem that Israel captured during the 1967 war. Even though Hussein still saw the West Bank as part of Jordan, the claim to it by the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) supported by Sadat was another contributing factor why he had no interest in another war with Israel. President Assad of Syria on the other hand was ready for the war as he felt that the only way to commit Israel to the negotiation table was to crush its military power in a war that he could use as a means to take back the Golan Heights.

Similarly, views on the possibility of another war between Israel and the other Arab states at the international front varied. At the UN Security Council, France and Britain supported the Arab states against Israel. Britain argued that the only way to prevent another war in the region was by carrying out the UNSC Resolution 242. Henry Kissinger, the National Security Advisor under the Nixon administration, had no choice than to give his unflinching support to Israel to ensure its military dominance was firmly rooted in the region to avoid the Soviet influence (Hughes, 2008).

Sadat had declared his intention to go to war with Israel and all attempts by the US and Soviet Union to discourage him had failed as he had decided to use the war to redeem the sunken image of his government's inability to deliver his country from its economic shambles, and take back the Sinai Peninsula controlled by Israel. Assad of Syria on the other hand was ready to strike at any time there is a green light from Egypt. However, Israel had discounted all the reports of preparation of its enemies on grounds that Egypt was not adequately equipped to go to war and that Syria could act only if the former had made a move. Earlier on, Kissinger had warned Israel not to pre-empt a strike or do so and take responsibility for the consequences (Sachar, 2007). Inbar (2007) noted that Kissinger's directive for Israel not to be the first to launch an attack was to ensure that a neutral approach was adopted to end the hostilities and bring peace to the region through the American led diplomatic channels. It was imperative that Israel was obliged, under the circumstances, to cede to the American advice in order to attract more support.

Israel had made a wrong calculation. It ignored a tip-off from King Hussein on imminent attack on Israel, as it did not see Hussein as a credible source of information to rely upon. It believed that in the worst-case scenario, its intelligence service would give a prior notice few hours to an attack. Meanwhile, the Defense Minister Moshe Dayan did nothing to mobilize the reserve or increase the number of troops along the canal border. It was not until the dawn of Saturday, October 6, 1973, that the Israeli intelligence became convinced that Egypt and Syria would attack within hours. The Egyptian troops had already crossed the canal with a spectacular success and had advanced about eight miles into the Sinai Peninsula. In the north, Syria had also invaded the Golan Heights with about six hundred tanks already in action. The Yom

Kippur war had started at about 2.00pm on Israel's Holy day, and Israel was taken by surprise (Bolia, 2004).

In the first few days, Egypt and Syria were in full control and had consolidated their footholds in both the Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights and their forces attacked Israel simultaneously from both ends, on the ground and in the air. The Israeli forces desperately struggled to complement the efforts of ground forces until finally out of determination and skill, managed to repulse the Arab forces beyond the original seized fire lines. After a long battle, Israel had narrowly escaped defeat and emerged victorious in the war (Liebman, 1993). On October 22, 1973, the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 338 largely influenced by the United States and Soviet Union to declare a ceasefire compelling the belligerents to end all their military activity while talks were to begin on the implementation of Resolution 242 adopted in 1967 to resolve the Arab-Israeli dispute (Adan, 1980).

Estimates were that about 2,569 Israeli soldiers were killed in action, additional 7,500 wounded and 293 captured. Approximately, 600 Israeli tanks were destroyed and 102 airplanes lost in the war. Reports from the Israeli Assistant Minister of Finance had it that a cost of \$5 to \$6 billion that constitutes 40% of Israel's gross national product was expended on defense. The high cost of the war created an economic crisis for Israel for a long period of time, a period known in history as the "lost decade" of Israel's economy (Barkai & Liviantan, 2007).

The Arab casualties on the other hand were quite higher. About 15,000 Egyptian soldiers died, and 30,000 wounded. From Syria, it was estimated that 3,500 soldiers were killed and 21,000 wounded. The Arabs lost about 2,250 tanks and between 341 and 514 aircrafts destroyed by the Israeli forces (Liebman, 1993).

The Yom Kippur war was the most difficult one for Israel of all the wars it has fought since its independence. After the war, the general impression of the Israeli nationals was that their leaders were complacent and refused to be proactive in doing what was necessary to avert the devastating consequences of the war. For instance, in a private lunch with the UN Secretary General in September 1973, the Prime Minister Golda Meir boasted saying:

“You are always saying that the situation in the Middle East is dangerous and explosive, but we don’t believe you. The Arabs will get used to our existence and in a few years, they will recognize us and we shall have peace. So don’t worry. It is a disagreeable situation, but we do not believe there is any real danger for us” (Ben-Zvi, 1990).

It should be clear from the above statement made by the Prime Minister that the Israelis were justified to blame the intelligence failure on their leaders and called for their resignation. Eventually, Golda Meir and Mohsen Dayan had no choice than to yield to public pressure to step down and replaced by Shimon Peres and Yitzhak Rabin (Shlaim, 1976).

Again, it is not out of question to conclude that the American policy regarding the outbreak of the war woefully failed Israel. The insistence of the American government that Israel should not launch a pre-emptive attack was a wrong judgment and misled their ally. Washington had undermined the Arab military might and strongly believed that there was no way it was going to prevail against the Israeli military superiority. Even though the Israeli cabinet had met in the morning, six hours before the war began, to deliberate on what actions to take in the face of a potential strike from their enemies, it had no option than to maintain the position of no pre-emptive attack (Bar-Simon-Tov, 1998).

The Yom Kippur War, however, became the watershed for the 1978 Camp David Accords that resulted in the Peace Treaty signed between Egypt and Israel, the first ever in the history of the Arab states. After the war, Sadat in his bid to restore the Sinai Peninsula and improved the quality of life of his own people made several attempts to strike peace relations with Israel. In November of 1917, he travelled to Israel for peace negotiation and by this action deemed to recognize Israel as a state and therefore viewed as a traitor by the Arab states. It was against this backdrop the President of the United States Jimmy Carter invited the two of them, Sadat and the Prime Minister of Israel, Menachem Begin to a summit for a peace talk.

The result of these talks was the "Framework for Peace in the Middle East". It had three parts; First, a process to establish a Palestinian self-governing authority in the West Bank and Gaza strip intended to address the Palestinian question. Second, a framework to deal with the Egyptian and Israeli relation. Finally, a framework for peace involving Israel and its neighboring states (Bercovitch, 1986).

On September 17, 1978, Jimmy Carter was able to broker the Camp David Accords between the two personalities who signed the Egypt Israel Peace Treaty in 1979, and this fulfilled the second part of the framework. Subsequently, Israel withdrew its troops and returned the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt leading to a normal diplomatic relations established between the two countries and the two countries exchanged ambassadors and cooperated in the area of security. Because of Egypt's peace agreement with Israel, it was withdrawn from the Arab League with its headquarters moved from Cairo to Tunis. However, Camp David failed to deal with the Palestinian question as issues about the West Bank and Gaza strip remained unchanged. Again, the talks did not provide the framework for achieving a comprehensive peace in the

region perhaps because other Arab states were not invited to participate in the negotiation process (Quandt, 1986).

Camp David was significant in many other areas. It gave some economic benefits to both Egypt and Israel. Bani (2012) pointed out that the foreign aids Egypt and Israel received from the United States boosted the tourism industry and trade between the two countries. In the whole world, Egypt became the second largest country to benefit from the US foreign aids next to Israel.

The objective of the aid was to use it to develop Egypt economically for other states in the region to see the benefit of peace and follow the good examples of Egypt. Indeed, the Peace Treaty signed between Israel and Egypt at Camp David was a clear indication to the other states in the region that negotiations with Israel were possible.

The U.S. ability to unite one of the most powerful Arab states, Egypt, with Israel arguably demonstrated that when it came to its policy towards the Arab-Israeli conflict, it was a force to reckon with and that its success in this perspective should be highly commendable. The overall significance of Camp David Accords was that it provided the framework for the Arab-Israel peace negotiation in the future.

Despite the remarkable achievement of Camp David Accords, another Israeli-Arab conflict erupted arguably because the negotiation process of Camp David involved Israel and Egypt only and excluded the other Arab states. The 1982 Lebanese war led by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) aimed to attack the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) based in Lebanon. Prior to the war, in 1970, there was a failed attempt by the PLO to overthrow King Hussein who managed to expulse them from Jordan. The PLO left for Syria and latter to Southern Lebanon where it had used as a

base for attacks on Israel and its citizens across the world. Meanwhile, other Palestinian militants in Jordan carried out operations involving the hijack of airplanes targeting the Israeli Jews. However, an assassination attempt made on an Israeli ambassador to the UK, by a group from Fatah prompted Israel to attack the PLO in June 1982 (Yanive & Yaniv, 1987).

According to a study by Amin (1993), the objectives to meet for the Israeli attack were the following. First, to destroy the military infrastructure of the PLO, and its presence in southern Lebanon and to destroy its capacity to shell northern Israel, which the PLO actively demonstrated in 1981. Secondly, to pre-empt the possibility that Syria would launch a war a year or two later. Thirdly, to help in the reconstruction of the state of Lebanon and establish a strong central government, by supporting its ally, Bachir Gamayel, to become the head of this government. Finally, to improve its posture in the next phase of the Arab-Israeli settlement process destroying the PLO base in Lebanon and establishing a diplomatic relations with another Arab state.

Consequently, the Israeli invasion supported by Lebanon Christian militias compelled the PLO to relocate its base to Tunisia and this made it possible for Israel to establish a security zone in southern Lebanon. Bachir Gamyel became the democratically elected president on August 23, 1982 with massive support from the Christian majority and Muslim MPs. Unfortunately, Bachir was assassinated on September 14, 1982 and his brother, Amin, elected to replace him. Chalala (1985) observed that upon the assumption into power by President Amin, he entered into a dialogue with Syria that regained its influence over Lebanon, which it had lost to Israel. Israel's expectation that Lebanon with a dominated Christian regime that would make her free

from the influence of Syria and presence of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) would foster peace and improve relations between the two countries failed. On the contrary, its invasion gave an impetus for the growth of various militia groups including Hezbollah mainly composed of Shia Muslims that emanated from previous unorganized guerilla movements because of the suffering or displacement of some Lebanese people especially the Shias in the south. For Iran, Hezbollah was to be seen as a vehicle to propagate the message of Islamic revolution in the Middle East, while for Syria, it was viewed as a Shia party to protect its interest in Lebanon. Thus, Hezbollah with backings (financially, political and by military training) from Syria and Iran emerged as a strong rebel force and since then began to fight the enemies; Israel and the United States who were present in Lebanon.

The result was that Hezbollah remains a torn in the flesh of Israel. It has also committed various atrocious acts against the United States. For instance, the US believed that Hezbollah was responsible for the killing of 241 American military force who were stationed in Lebanon for peacekeeping missions, in October 1983. Apart from this, there have been several considerable clashes between Hezbollah and Israel over the years especially from the years of 1985 to 2000 in southern Lebanon. The Israeli security zone in southern Lebanon, where its defense force was present created lot of security implications for both countries. Ehud Barrack saw this as a major concern and made a campaign promise to withdraw the Israeli troops from Lebanon. Barack noted that the presence of Israel in Lebanon was what created Hezbollah. He said:

“When we entered Lebanon...there was no Hezbollah. We were accepted with perfumed rice and flowers by the Shia in the south. It was our presence there that created Hezbollah” (Luft, 2000).

After Barack was elected, as the Prime Minister on the ticket of Labor Party, he fulfilled his campaign promise and unilaterally ensured that the withdrawal of the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) came into fruition on May 24, 2000 after Israel's failed efforts to influence the Lebanese government to deploy the Lebanese armed forces (LAF) to limit the activities of Hezbollah. After 22-year-long of Israeli occupation in south Lebanon ended, Hezbollah was credited for being responsible for the Israeli withdrawal largely due to its military operation and because of this; it gained more respect both locally and regionally, that is, in the Islamic world.

The 2006 Lebanon war also referred to as Israeli-Hezbollah war began on July 12, 2006 and ended on August 14, 2006 at northern border of Israel. The war involved the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) and the Hezbollah paramilitary forces and took place for thirty-four days. Hezbollah military operation against Israel continued after its departure from Lebanon in May 2000. In October 2000, Hezbollah forces kidnapped three Israeli soldiers and the intervention of Germany led to an exchange of 435 Lebanese prisoners for the bodies of the three dead soldiers. In line with this, the UN Security Council in September 2006 adopted a UN Resolution 1559 for militia groups in Lebanon (including Hezbollah) to be disarmed. However, the UN did not address the issue of Shab'a Farms considered by the international community as the former

Syria territory but not a territory of Lebanon, which Israel had occupied.

Nevertheless, because both Lebanon and Syria avers that the Shab'a Farms belong to Lebanon, Hezbollah argued that it was a resistance movement and not a militia group and was under the obligation to liberate the land from Israel. In this regard, the Lebanese government could not disarm it as demanded by the UN.

On July 12, 2006, Hezbollah launched a surprise attack across the border of Israel killing some soldiers while two others were abducted. Israel responded swiftly with a massive air and ground attack against Hezbollah. The expectation of Sheik Hassan Nasrallah (of Hezbollah) that it was a business as usual and that the attack could be used to elicit a response for swapping Lebanese prisoners with the captured Israeli troops as was the case in the past had failed. Ehud Olmert refused to release the Lebanon prisoners and responded with attacks on Hezbollah military targets ultimately to crush its military strength. Hezbollah forces then fought back fiercely and engaged the Israeli troops in guerrilla warfare until August 11, 2006 when the United Nations Security Council passed UN Security Resolution 1701 to end the hostilities. It is estimated that about one million (1,000,000) Lebanese and at least three hundred (300) Israelis were displaced in the war.

Earlier on at and the backyard of Israel in Jerusalem, West Bank and Gaza Strip and from 1987 to 1993, series of Palestinian uprising were going on against the Israeli government. The Palestinian uprising referred to as "*Intifada*", an Arab word that means to shake off, was used against the Israeli occupation. The uprising led by local activists was a civil disobedience that took the form of general strike actions on specific days, sit down strikes or acts such as refusal to pay taxes (Michal & Reuben, 1994). Cohen-Almagor (1991) observed that the cause of the uprising could be traceable to the long years of injustice the Palestinian people have suffered; the Israeli continues occupation of Palestinian territories that frustrates their aspiration and the prevailing economic hardship confronting the Palestinian people. However, he maintains that the specific cause of the uprising was that in December 1987, an Israeli army truck at around Jaballa refugee camp in Gaza knocked down four Palestinian

people and this interpreted as intentional act started a mass protest. The Israeli government decision to crack down on the demonstrations with heavy hands was responded with extreme violence and suicide bombing in Israel from the Palestinian militants. By 1993, when the uprising ended, 593 Palestinians were killed, 58 deported and 381 houses destroyed. Again, the Gaza war also caused the death of 50 Israeli civilians.

The concerns of the Palestinians remained the same with rising tensions in the region and on September 28, 2000, a second *Intifada*, also known as *Al-Aqsa Intifada*, began. An Israeli opposition leader, Ariel Sharon with about 1000 police officers entered the Al-Aqsa Mosque or Temple Mount leading to the outbreak of a fight between his security guards and Palestinian persons worshipping there. Some scholars hold that the build-up to the second *intifada* could be attributable to some other factors. Khaled (2000) argued that a hunger strike by some Palestinian prisoners in

Israel, elicited mass protest in support of this, in May 2000, escalated tensions. Again, the growing Palestinian militarization prior to the outbreak was because of inspiration the Palestinian people had from the Hezbollah military operation or force that led to the successful expulsion of Israel from Lebanon. That explains the tendency for the Palestinian militants to resort to the use of force (Graham, 2000). By the time the protest ended, eight Palestinians were killed and several others wounded (Schiff & Yaari, 1991).

It appears the neighbors of Israel will never forgive her for occupying territories believed to be illegal. Ever since Hamas was formed in 1987, it has continued to clash with Israel's Defense Forces (IDF) to date. Hamas is an Islamic Resistance Movement (otherwise a radical fundamental organization) which opposes the existence of Israel

in any form. It believes that the only way to deal with the Palestinian Question is through jihad (holy war) against Israel and establish an Islamic state in Palestine (Alexander, 2002). It is estimated that between November 11 and 13, 2012 Hamas fired at least 200 rockets and some mortar rounds from Gaza into Israel. On November 14, 2012, Israel responded in what it referred to as Operation Pillar of Defense (OPD), by launching attacks on various Hamas targets (Cohen, et al., 2017). In 2014, another terrible fight broke out between Israel and Hamas. The conflict, which lasted for fifty days, began in July and ended in August 2014. With the aim to end threats from militants tunneling under the border, the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) in what Israel, called Operation Protective Edge, launched an offensive on Gaza in retaliation to rocket attacks by Hamas. At the end of the Gaza war, 2,251 Palestinian of which 1,462 were civilians died while 67 Israeli soldiers and 6 civilians were killed (BBC News, June 22, 2015). Currently, the situation on the ground gets worse day by day and tensions between Israel and Hamas are still extremely high.

2.4 Peace Process

The Israeli-Palestinian peace process refers to efforts the international community is making to end the conflict between Israel and Palestine. After the American led, efforts resulted in the peace treaty signed between Israel and Egypt (1979), Israel and Jordan (1994), the Oslo Accords of 1993 and 1995 were kicked started because of the Madrid Conference of 1991. Since the peace treaty between Israel and Egypt was signed in 1979, the international community took various initiatives to continue the peace process in the Middle East and following the Gulf War of 1991, during which Iraq was expelled from Kuwait, the Madrid Conference of October 1991 was held starting from October 30 to November 1, 1991 (Sorry & Cerf, 1991). The conference which was hosted by Spain and co-sponsored by President George H.W. Bush of the

United States and Premier Mikhail Gorbachev of Soviet Union, involved representatives from Israel, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine. The Madrid Peace Conference aimed to create a platform to discuss how to end the Arab-Israeli conflict.

On November 3, 1991, immediately after the formal proceedings ended, both bilateral and multilateral negotiations followed. The bilateral negotiations composed of Israel and its neighboring Arabs states. The Israeli-Palestinian negotiation initially was a bit difficult. The Israeli government under Prime Minister Shamir refused to cooperate with the peace process because he felt it was his responsibility to protect the Israeli territories especially Judea and Samaria perceived to be integral part of Israel and that the Israeli withdrawal for the sake of peace would disconnect the Jews from their historical land. However, after the defeat of the Likud party in 1992, the Shamir settlement policy ended and the Labor government headed by Yitzhak Rabin continued with the negotiation process. The multilateral negotiations on the other hand, were discussions about issues of regional concern (Flamhaft, 2018).

Kaufman (1996) observed that one of the significant impacts of the Madrid Peace Conference was that it led to the Oslo Accords. Following months of intensive negotiations, Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Movement Organization (PLO) in Oslo, signed an agreement officially called Declaration of Principles on Interim Self Government Arrangements (DPO) for the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and West Bank to exercise authority within a transitional period of five years based on UN Security Council Resolution 242 and 338. The agreement, which was a framework for peace in the Middle East and signed in September 13, 1993, was to ensure, among other things, that the Palestinian people were allowed to govern themselves in line with democratic principles where elections would be held to elect their leaders to take

charge of governmental functions. This implies that both Israel and the PLO have agreed to end years of confrontation and conflict and live together in peace (Buchanan, 2000).

Prior to signing this agreement in Washington DC, with historic handshakes between the Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Chairman Arafat, presided over by US President Bill Clinton, there were letters of mutual recognition between Israel and PLO in September 9 and 10, 1993 respectively. The PLO renounced the use of terrorism and accepted to recognize the State of Israel. Israel, on the other hand, recognized the PLO as a legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. This implied that both parties have agreed to work together as partners in achieving a lasting and comprehensive peace (Benvenisti, 1993).

In accordance with the Israeli-PLO Declaration of Principles (Oslo I Accord), the Palestinian Authority was created following the Gaza-Jericho Agreement, which was signed in May 4, 1994 by Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin. The agreement made room for limited Palestinian rule in parts of West Bank and Gaza Strip for five years as a first step in fulfilling the goals of the interim arrangements. As part of the agreements, Israel was to withdraw from parts of West Bank and Gaza Strip with some authority granted to the Palestinian Authority to rule. In July 5, 1994, Yasser

Arafat became the first President of Palestinian Authority (Shehadeh, 1994). In furtherance of Oslo I Accord, the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement also called Oslo II was signed as part of the peace process (Usher, 1996). It was signed in Taba, Egypt, by Israel and the PLO in September 24, 1995 and later in September 28, 1995 by the Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and the PLO Chairman, Yasser Arafat under the auspices of US President Bill Clinton, and delegates from Jordan, Egypt,

and European Union (EU) inter alia (Donohue & Hoobler, 2002). The Oslo II Accord aimed to grant the Palestinian people greater autonomy for internal self-government, to end the hostilities between the two parties, and to create the opportunity for them to co-exist in peace and dignity based on mutual respect for each other (Israel Ministry of Affairs, September 28, 1995).

The Interim Agreement divided the West Bank into three areas or zones. As mentioned earlier, the West Bank was one of the occupied territories, captured by

Israel from Jordan in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. According to the last census taken in 2007, the population of Palestinian Arabs living in the West Bank was 2,345,000 while that of the Israelis was 389,250. Pursuant to the Oslo ii Accord, the territory was split into three, Areas A, B, and C.

Area A comprises about 18 percent of the West Bank exclusively under the control of the Palestinians where the Palestinian Authority is solely responsible for internal security and government of its people. This means that Palestinians for the first time have been granted internal self-government to manage their own affairs. Area B is approximately 22 percent of the West Bank and here, governmental functions come under the responsibility of the Palestinian Authority while Israel retains full control over security matters and this means the Israeli Defense Force is stationed in this area.

Area C accounts for about 60 percent of the West Bank and comprises settlements for the various Jewish communities. Area C is richly endowed with much of the West Bank's agricultural land, water and mineral resources and remains completely under the Israeli government and military control. Oslo ii Accord provides that the jurisdiction over Area A and B would come under the control of the Palestinian

Council. Article XI.2a reads:

“Land populated areas (Area A and B), including government AI Waqf land; will come under the jurisdiction of the Council during the first phase of redeployment” (Singer, 1994).

Pursuant to this agreement, Israel was obliged to transfer some level of authority to the Palestinians to administer their jurisdiction. Elections were to be held to elect the council to run the affairs of the people. ARTICLE II, Annex 1I of the Interim

Agreement makes this provision on election:

1. In order that the Palestinian people of the West Bank and Gaza Strip may govern themselves according to democratic principles, direct, free and general political election will be held for the Council and the Ra'ees of the Executive Authority of the Council in accordance with the provisions set out in the Protocol concerning Elections attached as Annex to this Agreement (herein "Annex II").

2. These elections will constitute a significant interim preparatory step towards the realization of legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and their just requirements and will provide a democratic basis of the establishment of Palestinian institutions (Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 28 Sept. 1995).

In line with the provisions of the Interim Agreement stated above, election of members to the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) took place in January 20, 1996 with Fatah backed by Arafat, winning 62 out of 88 seats. Thus, the Palestinian people living in West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza Strip had the opportunity to exercise their franchise to elect their own representatives to lead them. According to the Oslo Accords, the PLC was to replace the Palestinian Authority created in 1994 temporally to run the affairs of the Palestinian people. Arguably, this election marked an historic step in the Middle East peace process (Mahler, 1996).

Under the Oslo Accords, the transitional period was to end in May 4, 1999 after the Elected Council was established and a permanent status achieved for the Palestinian

people based on Security Council Resolution 242(1967) and 338(1973) (Article I of the Interim Agreement). This implied that all the pending issues on the status of Jerusalem and return of refugees would be dealt with leading to the final withdrawal of Israel from occupied territories and the Palestinian question subsequently addressed (Weiner, 1999).

However, there were certain disturbing developments that affected the peace process. Some criticized the spectacular commitment demonstrated by Yitzhak Rabin while sections of the Israeli community saw him as a traitor who was about to give away their land to the enemy. Rallies organized by supporters of the opposition party Likud, compared the Rabin regime to Nazi government, and called him names such as Adolf Hitler or murderer (Seliktar, 2009). It was no wonder that a Jewish zealot murdered him in November 4, 1995 (Tucker, 2019). Sela (2009) argued that the death of Rabin was a major setback to the Oslo peace process because of the likelihood that subsequent Israeli leaders may entertain fear to give further concessions to the Palestinians. Another problem was that the demise of Rabin led to the victory of Likud party in the 1996 election. Enderlin (1995-2002) observed that the election of the right-wing government headed by Netanyahu posed a serious threat to the Oslo Peace process since he was a devout opponent to the Oslo Accords even as in his days as an opposition leader of the Likud party. The newly elected government led by Benjamin Netanyahu declared a tit-for-tat policy to end series of suicide bombings embarked upon in April 1993 by Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad to derail the peace process. The government intended that it could engage in peace talks with Arafat only if he would stop the terrorist attack. Brym & Araj (2006) held the view that between 1993 and 1996 there were about 20 suicide bombings against Israel with 175 fatalities and 928 injuries (Brym & Araj, 2006).

Kirsten (2007) noted that the Hebron Agreement also called Hebron Protocol signed on 17 January 1997 was a major development since it moved the peace process out of the stalemate created by the death of Rabin. Prior to signing this agreement, Knesset by a vote of 87 in favor and 17 against, approved the Protocol. The Likud party approval, of the Protocol was encouraging and showed that even despite the criticism of the Oslo Accords by Netanyahu while running for office, he demonstrated that his government was committed to the peace process. At the same time, the Palestinian Authority and the Executive Council gave their approval to the Protocol. The agreement signed in accordance with the Interim Agreement of 1995, demanded that the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) withdrew from 80 percent area of the Hebron city known as area H-I, so it came under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority while the remaining area (H-2) was to remain under the Israeli control (Clarke, 2000).

In addition to the above, the Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu and the Chairman of the Palestinian Liberation Authority (PLO), Yasser Arafat, in the White House through a negotiation led by the United States President Bill Clinton, signed the Wye River Memorandum (WRM) on October 23, 1998. The Memorandum was negotiated for nine days at a summit at Wye River, Maryland, US. It aimed to address the differences regarding the implementation of the 1995 Interim Agreement on West Bank and Gaza Strip. It would also make it easy for the parties to engage in talks on key contentious issues that centered on status of Jerusalem, settlement, borders of

Israel and Palestine, refugees, water as well as the political status of Palestine (Finkelstein, 1998). The Interim Agreement on West Bank and Gaza Strip of 1995 divided the West Bank into three zones from which further redeployments were to take place under the Wye River Memorandum. The Areas were (A), controlled exclusively by Palestine, Area (B) with civil authority controlled by the Palestinians and security matters solely in the hands of Israel, while in Area (C), Israel controlled both civil and security authority. Wye provided that Israel was to transfer 13 percent of Area C to Palestine with 1 percent to become part of Area A, and 12 percent part of Area B. Of the remaining 12 percent, 3 percent was to be reserved for natural resources. In effect, Area B was to increase by 13 percent. Israel was also to transfer 14 percent of Area B it controlled to Area A under the Palestinians. If the new redeployments were completed, the Palestinians would have had about 40 percent control of the West Bank (Aruri, 1990).

On security matters, Wye provided that, the Palestinian side was to take the necessary steps to prevent terrorism, crime and hostilities, apprehend persons suspected of committing acts of violence and terror and punish them accordingly in line with its earlier agreements under Oslo ii Accord. On April 24, 1996, the Palestinian National Council (PNC) voted to cancel some articles of the PLO Charter calling for the total annihilation of Israel that did not agree with the letters the two parties exchanged in September 1993. The Memorandum expected the PLO Authorities to reaffirm their commitment by practically demonstrating that these articles of the Charter were genuinely nullified. The Palestinian Executives therefore were to declare a policy of zero tolerance for terror and violence against both sides and design a plan for its implementation to be shared with the US. Wye also required both Israel and Palestine to cooperate on security matters (Manhler, 2009).

On economic issues, Wye challenged the two sides to work together to promote development in Gaza Strip and West Bank. Both Israel and Palestine agreed to work out arrangements for Gaza Industrial Estate and the Port of Gaza leading to the transformation of the Palestinian economy and growth of Palestinian trade. Regarding permanent status negotiations, none of the parties was to take any step to change the status of West Bank and Gaza Strip stipulated in the Interim Agreement. Again, both sides were to resume negotiations with some determination to fulfil their objectives until the agreement would come into force in November 2, 1998.

Levitt (1998) noted that according to polls conducted in early November 1998; about 74 percent Israelis supported the Wye River Memorandum with the hope that it was going to bring a lasting peace to both Israel and Palestine. Netanyahu suspecting opposition from members of his own government suspended a cabinet approval to buy time to convince the opponents towards the implementation of the Wye agreement. However, a right wing coalition partners, dissatisfied with Netanyahu's leadership, provoked a vote of no confidence against his government in the Knesset (Israeli Parliament) culminating in early election in which Netanyahu was defeated decisively with Ehud Barak emerging as the new Prime Minister of Israel (Lochery, 1994).

Both parties, Israel and Palestine accused each other of shirking its responsibilities concerning the Wye agreement. Ahron (2003) observed that Arafat's attempt to declare Palestinian State unilaterally in November 15, 1988 was a serious setback to the Memorandum because his action did not only breach the principle of the Wye agreement, but it also compelled Israel to halt the implementation of the Wye Memorandum. Wye has failed and its good intentions could not be realised (Bar-Zion, 2004).

Camp David II was another attempt to advance the peace process in order to resolve the conflict between Israel and Palestine. It was a summit held at Camp David involving the United President Bill Clinton, the Prime Minister of Israel Ehud Barak and Chairman of Palestinian Authority Yasser Arafat between July 11 and 25 2000 to end the Israel-Palestine conflict. Despite the frantic efforts made at the meeting that lasted for almost two weeks, the parties could not take decision or agree on key issues such as borders, settlement, Jerusalem and return of refugees that continue to put the parties apart (Swisher, 2009).

Lustick (2001) noted that Barak's proposals were quite encouraging including his willingness to cede some Israeli areas in the West Bank and withdraw completely from Gaza. Israel has offered to withdraw from at least 90 percent of the West Bank, recognise the Palestinian right to self-determination, respect any resolution concerning the return of Palestinian refugee and subsequently withdraw from the Jordan Valley. However, Yasser Arafat rejected the offer but did not make any counter proposal. Ross (2005) maintained that the Israeli offer was quite enough to meet the aspirations of the Palestinians and regretted that they lost an excellent opportunity. President Clinton complained bitterly about the turn of events and blamed the failure of the 2000 Camp David Accord on Arafat (Clinton, 2010). Others such as Baumgarten (2004) argued that Camp David II was a myth and that the Israeli proposal was not with good intentions but a pretence of generosity mainly for media gimmick to give Barack some political expediency. In short, the 2000 Camp David Accord yielded no positive results so long as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is concerned.

Following the Oslo Accords and Camp David II, the international community proposed other alternatives to end the hostilities between Israel and Palestine. First, it was one-state solution, which was supposed to be one sovereign state for both Jews and the Palestinian people. However, arguments of its possible violence and conflict it is more likely to generate has led to the decline in support for it (Tilley, 2010). Another proposal to resolve the conflict is the two-state solution. The two-state formula will ensure that an independent State of Palestine is established side by side with Israel based on the 1967 pre-border lines according to the 1967 UN Resolution 242. Under this arrangement, the Palestinians expect East Jerusalem as the capital of future Palestinian state (Hila, 2007). The two-state solution was first proffered in the Peel Commission Report of 1937. The Commission was to investigate the causes of unrest between the Jews and the Palestinian Arabs in the Mandatory Palestine and in its report recommended the partition of Palestine into two states, with one Jewish and the other Arab. The Jews accepted the partition plan but the Arabs rejected it (Sinanoglou, 2016). Again, in 1947, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 181 to partition Palestine for the creation of independent Palestinian Arab and Jewish states. The Arabs opposed it with the argument that the territorial division violated their right to self-determination (Hertz, 2009).

Since 1993, this solution has gained currency by Israel, the Palestinians themselves, the Arab League and the international community. Over the years, some diplomatic efforts have been made to fulfil the goal of the two-state solution. The Oslo Accords and Camp David II spearheaded by the Clinton regime were all geared towards the realisation of a two-state solution. Again, the Arab League publicly declared its support for this solution in 2002 (Giora, 2008). Unfortunately, the Israeli settlement policy in the West Bank appears to make it difficult for it to work. The continuous

expansion of settlements in the West Bank supported by the Israeli authorities creates doubts in the minds of people whether the prospects for two-state model is still viable. The international community has deeply expressed its concern about the settlement activities being carried out by Israel because of its implications to the peace process.

To this effect, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 2334 (2016) to render Israel's activities in the occupied territories illegal and a gross violation of international law (Spoerl, 2016).

Glenn (2003) observed that though the Bush administration also pledged its support for the two-state framework and allowed Condoleezza Rice to go to Annapolis, Maryland in November of 2007 for peace talks on the Israeli-Palestinian issue, the administration did not do much compared to the intensive negotiations undertaken by the Clinton regime. On the contrary, the Bush administration proposed the creation of a new democratic Palestinian state with newly elected leaders. It took part in the International Quartet that comprised the UN, EU, US and Russia, adopted the UN Resolution 1515, which paved the way for peace talks in Annapolis mentioned-above and as a result, parties were to engaged in talks until end of 2008 when Hamas clashed with the Israeli IDF. Obviously, the confrontation between Hamas and IDF derailed the peace process (Mohammad, 2015).

Obama on his part, tried to achieve a breakthrough in the Israeli-Palestinian hostility. During his presidency, he endorsed the two-state formula and called for some flexibility concerning the status of East Jerusalem. However, his attempt to bring pressure on the Netanyahu government to end settlement in the West Bank, led to a stalemate between the US and Israel. Again, Obama's administration veto of UN

Resolution 2334 implied his administration support the Palestinians to come up with their own solution that is not in line with the Oslo Accords (Thrall, 2017).

President Trump's foreign policy represents a significant change to that of Barrack Obama. He sought to improve the Israeli-US relation that suffered during the Obama regime. The Trump administration has recognised Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and consequently moved the US Embassy to Jerusalem (Bilkova, 2018). His government has supported Israel with \$38 billion for defense over 10 years. Again, the Trump administration has given supplementary aid of \$705 million to Israel for defense (Blackwill, 2019).

Meanwhile, Trump has cut down \$200 million in bilateral aid to West Bank, Gaza, and drastically reduced the US contribution to UNRWA, which has been very helpful to vulnerable Palestinians (Jack, 2018). That is why critics have become skeptical about the Trump peace plan, the "Prosperity to Peace" that is a \$50 billion economic plan of which \$27.5 billion will be used to boost the economic development of West Bank and Gaza (Zanotti, 2018). Lander (2017) noted that Trump does not appear to be certain on whether the one-state or two-state solution should be used to end the conflict, because of his comments that he is comfortable with either of the two solutions the parties will identify with.

2.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, it is possible to realise that the ongoing struggle between Israel and Palestine is because of a disagreement between the two parties over the land of Palestine, which began in the mid-20th century. As a result of this, several wars have been fought notably the 1948 independence war, 1956 Suez war, the 1967 Six day war

and Yom Kippur war of 1973. These wars have become a major source of worry to the international community because of their devastating effects on innocent lives, peace and security. That is why various efforts by the international community are being made to achieve peace. Under the peace process, the 1979 Camp David Accord, 1998 Wye River Memorandum, the Oslo Accords i & ii, 2000 Camp David Accord actively spearheaded by the United States have been tried. Currently on the table is the two-state solution that also appears to face some challenges.

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CHAPTER THREE

PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

3.0 Introduction

This section seeks to present the research findings on Trump's foreign policy on the Israeli-Palestinian question. It examines the impact of the policy on Israel and Palestine and its implication for the peace process. Other issues that are considered are the extent to which the policy has political and economic implications for Israel and Palestine.

3.1 US foreign policy toward Israel and Palestine

In this study, the Trump foreign policy on Israel and Palestine constitutes a key component for discussion. The US-Israeli relation officially began after President Truman recognized the independence of Israel in 1948 and since then the US remains committed to the provision of strong bilateral ties with Israel (Snetsinger, 1974). As a result, Israel has regularly sought assistance from the US to strengthen its regional security and defense capabilities while the US Congress, on the other hand, has always taken steps to strengthen its diplomatic relation with Israel. Thus, the unconditional relationship between US and Israel described as:

“The cultural identification of the United States with Israel simply by its nature excludes the Palestinians. Palestine will never be part of being of the United States and will never be perceived as contributing to U.S. strategy and defense” (Rubenberg, 2003)

However, in the early 1990s, after the US established ties with the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), it became a major player in facilitating a peace process to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Zanolli (2018) noted that the US has committed at least \$5 billion in bilateral support to the Palestinians soon after it

officially recognized Palestine. After the Clinton regime signed the Oslo Accords ultimately to find a solution to the conflict, successive American Presidents have also done their best in search for a breakthrough in the conflict (but failed).

The conflict between Israel and Palestine is largely influenced by key issues such as security, Jewish settlements, Palestinian refugees, Israeli West Bank borders and status of Jerusalem (Herman & Yara, 2018). Meanwhile, lack of a common understanding from both sides on how to end the impasse makes it difficult for them to reach a diplomatic concession and this has made the peace process more difficult. For instance, from time to time, each party will carry out military strikes against the other, a situation that is very problematic to peace agreements (Ahmad & Balogun, 2017).

President Trump, upon his assumption to office, has also pledged his commitment to ensure the peace process will end the conflict. He justified this by telling the New York Times that he would be in a better position than anybody would do for the Israelis and Palestinians by ensuring that there is some light at the end of the tunnel (Hagerman & Danger, 2016). In December 2017, the Trump Administration recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital and moved the US embassy there (Bilkova, 2018). Again, the Trump government has significantly cut down bilateral aid to the Palestinians and stopped the US contribution to the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) (Dumper, 2018). The government has also closed down the PLO's representative office in Washington, DC.

However, the Trump Administration believes strongly that its peace plan, "Prosperity to Peace", will surely end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Ayalon, 2019). The Trump peace plan comes in its trail with \$50 billion meant to promote the economic

development of West Bank and Gaza Strip while a part will be used to address issues regarding Palestinian refugees (MEP-narrative-document, 2019).

3.2 Political Implication of Trump Foreign Policy

This section of the study takes into consideration the political issues regarding Trump's foreign policy for Israel and Palestine. The perspective focuses attention on the political implication of the policy towards Israel and Palestine. The research revealed that the following reasons account for United States' role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

3.2.1 Leadership Role of US

Palestinian one and two consider US unreliable. Palestinian official one observed that the paramount interest of the US is to maintain its leadership position in the international community in order to continue to exercise its influence around the world. According to Palestinian official two, the US' ability to achieve a breakthrough in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will surely redeem its sunken image in the Middle East region because of some wrong calculations it made in the past and give her more respect as a global leader. The finding, therefore, supports the proposition that America's presence in the Middle East will create an avenue for her to become more diplomatic and credible in the region (Kurtzer, 2015). In this way, the US will be able to use its new diplomatic status easily to rally support from the international community to deal with problems likely to occur in the future. US official two believed that the US' position as a hegemon in the international system will further be boosted if it is able to end the conflict.

3.2.2 Protection of Ally

Palestinian official one and two have no doubt that Trump's foreign policy is mainly to promote US agenda. Official one believed that Trump's foreign policy towards Israel and Palestine would afford the US the opportunity to protect its ally Israel, promote free trade and market as well as spread its liberal values. Official two noted that the special relations between America and Israel began with the recognition of the Israeli independence in 1948 by President Truman's government after which almost all American presidents have taken Israel as a strong ally in the Middle East region. Since 1948, America has had a special interest in the conduct and welfare of Israel and has made so much investment toward that. This finding has confirmed Jack's (2018) assertion that Trump's foreign policy is designed to protect the interest of Israel.

Again, it emerged that the US and Israel are both democratic nations that uphold liberty in the highest esteem. Moreover, Israel is the only democratic state in the Middle East. Both countries therefore would want to work together in promoting democratic values such as peace and justice in their respective regions. It makes sense therefore that the US as a democratic state has an interest in working hard in ensuring a stable political environment for both Israel and Palestine to promote its liberal ideas such as freedom and tolerance for all people, freedom of conscience or freedom of worship, among others, in the region regardless of religion, race or gender. The finding is perfectly in agreement with Oren (2018) when he mentioned earlier in the literature that one of Trump's main aims is to seize the moment to promote democracy in the region.

The study also showed that all the officials from both US and Israeli embassies unanimously believed that security and peace of both Israel and Palestine was of paramount interest to America. The Middle East is characterized with chaos and unstable environment, civil wars involving countries like Syria, Yemen, and Iraq inter alia. The respondents agree that terrorist groups thrive in the region with various forms of attack on civilians. Besides this, there is also the issue of nuclear proliferation that could pose a threat not only to the region but also to the entire global village. An Israeli-Palestinian peace will decrease the probability of tension and wars in the region and that is why America has a key role to play in ending the conflict. Its ability to promote peace in the region is a guarantee to its own national security, prevent a potential regional conflict, and improve its diplomatic relations with the Middle East and above all make the entire global village a more stable place. Thus, the finding is an approval of the assertion that the US is not just interested in the security and freedom of Israel but also in the freedom of other nations that champion the cause of democracy (Daalder, Gnesotto, & Gordon, 2006).

However, Palestinian one and two held a different view on the issue stated above and did not believe that the US is committed in resolving the conflict. They argue that America is powerful enough to stamp its authority and stop Israel from its occupation of territories that do not belong to it and that Trump's actions could become a threat to peace. To this effect, Palestinian two said:

"Both parties, America and Israel are not committed to ending the conflict. America is the most powerful nation and has all that it takes to end the conflict but it is only protecting the interest of Israel. Israel wants to continue to steal our land. They do not want peace and are not committed to any peace agreement. They killed Yitzhak Rabin. Benjamin Netanyahu has stood against the Oslo Accords. We shall definitely take our land back" (Personal Interview, 2019)

The sentiments expressed by this respondent finds expression in a statement once made by, a former US Secretary of State, George Schultz that:

"The United States supports Israel not because of favoritism based on political pressure or influence but because the American people and their leaders say that supporting, Israel is politically sound and morally just" (Schultz, 2007).

It also came out in the study that America's motivation also stemmed from the role played by the Israeli community in the US, that is, American Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). A sizeable number of respondents agree that the foreign policy of America toward Israel and for that matter Palestine is mostly shaped by AIPAC. The Jewish electorates are very important to the American politicians and therefore much attention is given to them especially for political expediency because most of the Jews live in States such as Florida, Nevada, and Pennsylvania among others, which are areas that determine electoral victory and are of great significance to all the political parties. The Israeli Lobby is one of the most powerful groups in America that has always directed the US foreign policy toward the Middle East and, in particular, influenced it in favor of Israel. The research revealed that Trump's support for Israel is possibly influenced by the American Jews. The finding is a confirmation of the viewpoint expressed by Karakoulaki (2013) when he stated that the American politicians have always tried to win favor from AIPAC and the Jewish electorates and resultantly have allowed them to continue to influence the US foreign policy in the interest of Israel.

3.2.2 Policy implication for territories

The outcome of the study on the above subject matter showed that Palestinian official one and two have become very disappointed in the Trump administration because of

the position it has taken on the status of Jerusalem. Under the Oslo II Accord, 60 percent of West Bank was allocated to Israel and 40 percent to the Palestinians on condition that after negotiations were over Israel was to withdraw from part of the occupied area in favor of the Palestinians. For instance, Palestinian official one held that Trump's recognition of Jerusalem, as the capital of Israel, is an endorsement for Israel to continue with more settlements in the West Bank. Official one believed his actions smack of hypocrisy as he does the exact opposite of what he says. This finding corroborates the argument that Trump's actions are in a sharp contrast to his advice for Israel to hold back settlements in the West Bank for a while to avoid further crisis (Westwood, 2017). These respondents averred that the occupation of Israel in Jerusalem and West Bank violates international law and defies the UN Security Council Resolution 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and that this decision is more likely to affect any future negotiation on settlement. Additionally, the finding supports Article 49 (1) and (6) of the Geneva Convention, which views the Israeli settlements as criminal and tantamount to breach of international law. Under Article 49 (1) and (6) of the Geneva

Convention:

Article 49 (1) states

"Individuals or mass forcible transfers, as well as deportations of protected persons from occupied territory of the Occupying Power or to that of any other country, occupied or not, are prohibited, regardless of their motive" (Focarelli, 2010, p. 125-171).

Article 49 (6) reads

"The Occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies" (Ben-Naftali, 2005 p.211-229)

Israeli official one and two as well as US official one were of the strong conviction that the decision by the international community that the Israeli settlements in the occupied territories is illegal and breaches, among others, UN Resolution 465 (1980) is a step in the right direction. To them, this provides a responsibility on Israel to respect itself and cease from further construction of settlements or withdraw altogether because there is a clear case of transfer of Israeli settlers into the occupied territories which violates the law.

The finding also authenticates the Israeli defense it puts up on the grounds that the areas of occupation referred to as “occupied territories” is rather “disputed territories” which have never come under a Palestinian sovereignty. Again, it argued that the issue of transfer of Jews into the West Bank never existed or done by any government act and that the Jews voluntarily, but not by an act of compulsion, moved into the area. Therefore, Article 1 and 6 of the Geneva Convention used to accuse her (Israel) of illegal settlement does not have a legal basis (Gunnflo, 2016). On this note, Palestinian official one has this to say:

"No force or power can take Jerusalem from us. It is for the Palestinians. The US cannot use its power or influence to impose its decision on us because its decision must be based on respect. The US action on this matter is political and makes no sense. Palestinians have the hope, faith and are convinced that Palestine will be free one day and all those who stand against us will be put to shame" (Personal Interview, 2019).

On the contrary, Israeli official one and two as well as US official one believed that the Trump government's recognition of Jerusalem, as belonging to Israel was just to add a voice to what is already the status quo. The claim is that Jerusalem has always belonged to Israel and that the international community is quite aware of this fact and

that for 52 years since 1967 Israel has controlled and owned the entire Jerusalem. It emerged from these group of respondents that because communities such as Samaria and Judea in West Bank are part of the Jewish history and Jerusalem the heart of Israel, there is no way the Jews will let go of these territories and that the only thing left for the Palestinians is to cooperate with Israel to achieve peace.

Israeli official one and two did not see anything wrong with the Trump position on Jerusalem and believed that in principle, it has been a long-standing policy of the American government for Jerusalem to become the capital of Israel and that what Trump did was just to muster enough courage and fulfilled promises made by his predecessors. To drum home this point, the justification provided was that the Congress of the US had passed the Jerusalem Embassy Act (Public Law 104-45) demanding on the country to move its embassy there by 1999. The finding supports the notion that President Trump's action does not denote that his government is against the peace process but that the President would rather help to facilitate the process to end the conflict (Jacobson, 2017).

3.2.3 The two-state solution

The research also revealed that the respondents viewed the issue relating to the two-state solution from different perspective. Palestinian official one and two together with US official one held that the international community has come to the understanding that the two-state solution is the only ultimate means to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and over the years, all key players including past presidents of the United States have made frantic efforts to make it work. For instance, Palestinian official two opined that when the objective regarding the two-state formula

is fulfilled, Palestine would become a sovereign state alongside Israel, Jordan and others.

However, President Trump's position on the two-state solution has not been very explicit. In a statement he made on the matter during a press conference with Netanyahu, he said:

"I am looking at two-state solution and one-state, and I like the one that both like. I am very happy with the one that both parties like. I can live with either one" (Lander, 2017).

According to US official one and Israeli official one and two, President Trump did not err on this matter because they agreed perfectly with his explanation. They support the president on his call for the two parties, Israel and Palestine, to engage in a direct negotiation to end the conflict because evidence on the ground indicates that no country or organization has been able to impose their solution on both parties. Neither could the United Nations impose its solution nor the US impose its solution on Israel or Palestine.

Neither Israel nor Palestine could impose an agreement on one another. The finding substantiates the notion that Trump's position is to ensure that Israel and Palestine should chart their own path to peace (Lyndon, 2017).

However, Palestinian official one and two took the matter differently. They believed that Trump's comment is an ample demonstration of his overly bias against the Palestinians' right to self-determination and that his main aim is to protect the interest of Israel and relegate the Palestinian aspiration to the background. They believed that this kind of position being adopted by President Trump does not support the peace

process and will rather complicate matters and make the feasibility of the two-state solution difficult.

3.2.4 The Palestinian question

Officials from both Israeli and US embassies were of the conviction that because the Trump administration has given the assurance it is committed to facilitate the peace process to end the conflict it is an indication that it believes in the Palestinian aspiration and will work hard to make the dream of independent state of the Palestinian people come true. Trump like all other previous American presidents has one thing in common, that is, to see that there is peace in the region because its attendant advantage goes to not only America but also the international community as a whole.

The only difference is in style and approach and this requires therefore that the Trump administration receive international support and cooperation to achieve its objective.

Some of the respondents however were of the view that the issue regarding the Palestinian question needs to be dealt with holistically and that they do not have the confidence in the Trump government as being committed enough to tackle it looking at its attitude. Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as a capital of Israel in itself has made it extremely difficult to meet the goal of the Palestinian question. The attempt of Europe to solve the Jewish question in 1948 was what began the Palestinian question that led to the expulsion of about 780,000 Palestinians from their homeland turning them into refugees in other countries to date. The Palestinian question therefore is not just about the problem of enlightenment or human right or liberation but the problem Europe created in 1948 that is about West Bank, borders of Palestine, Palestinian refugees, sovereignty of Palestine as well the status of Jerusalem. The finding

supports the argument by Said & Hitchens (2001) that the genesis of the Palestinian question began with the British support for the Zionist project in 1948 that led many Palestinians into exile.

Both Palestinian official one and two with US official one held that the Palestinian question must be a global concern that aims to support the independence of Palestinian state by ending the Israeli illegal occupation in the Palestinian territories. This group of respondents believe that Israel must not be allowed to continue to violate international law with impunity but must be held accountable for its action to prevent others from repeating similar thing in the future.

They held that the UN Security Council must sit up and be more committed and responsible toward the implementation of its own resolutions and to be seen to be committed to performing its core mandate of maintaining peace and security. The role of the Security Council is very significant in this direction solving the Palestinian question. The finding provides justification for the concern shared by Malone & Malone (2004) that the UN Security Council must do more to guarantee international security. Based on the above responses, a conclusion can be reached that not all is well and that much more work must be done to end the conflict between the two parties. It appears from the concerns raised that the Palestinians have lost hope that their political aspiration will not be met looking at the nature of Trump's policies.

3.3 Policy Implication for Economy

The study showed that the respondents have different views regarding the United State policy on United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). The UN General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution 302 (IV) established UNRWA in 1949 mainly to fulfil the obligation of the international

community by providing humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian refugees who were displaced during the 1948 Arab-Israeli war as negotiation between the parties was to continue. Since its relief operation began in 1950, it has fulfilled so many functions in many areas especially in the area of providing humanitarian support for the Palestinian refugees and preventing escalation of violence.

Israeli official one and two were of the view that the Trump government's withdrawal of the US contribution to the relief agency is for a good cause. This group of respondents believed that the agency is corrupt and full of mismanagement because funds meant for the Palestinian refugees end up in private pockets. Additionally, the funds are used as a cover for terrorist groups like Hamas in Gaza, and this development defeats or abuses the mandate of UNRWA. The US is the biggest contributor to UNRWA and therefore it makes sense that it shows an interest or raises issues on how the taxpayers' money paid to the agency is put to use. The finding corroborates the proposition that the historical antecedent of UNRWA could provide some justification for Trump's harsh decision (Anziska, 2019).

Some other respondents, Palestinian official one and two together with US official one, held a contrary view. They believed that this development would mitigate the economic impact of the conflict and that UNRWA is recognised for its humanitarian support to the Palestinian people or refugees. Over the years, it has provided 'works' and 'services' to the Palestinian refugees in the field of health, education, social services and financial support through various micro finance schemes.

Data received from one of the respondents below depicts the significant contributions UNRWA has made to the Palestinian refugees and other vulnerable persons in 2016 alone.

Table 1: UNRWA Humanitarian Support

Refugee countries	Educational inst. built	Staff employed
Jordan	171	5,090
Lebanon	67	2,082
Syria	101	2,193
West bank	96	2,671
Gaza strip	267	9,910
Total	702	21,946

Source: UNRWA 2017 Report

Table 2: UNRWA Financial Assistance

Countries	Loans Given	Us Dollar Value
Jordan	12,811	14,177,044
Lebanon	NIL	NIL
Syria	9,520	1,932,360
West bank	11,841	16,297,383
Gaza strip	4,989	7,373,630
Total	39,161	39,780,417

Source: UNRWA 2017 Report

The tables above are based on data received from some of the respondents who intend to make a case that the policy of Trump government toward Israel and Palestine has some economic implications to the people and its decision to cut down the US financial support to UNRWA is a very disturbing development.

Table 1 depicts the humanitarian support from UNRWA in the area of education to the Palestinian refugees. It shows that services of the agency from this perspective are provided in five areas Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank and Gaza Strip. UNRWA runs one of the biggest school system in the Middle East, and has remains one the

main sources of basic education for Palestinian refugee children. In 2016, 702 schools were built in the 5 countries mentioned above and 21,946 teachers employed to teach in the schools of which 5,090 were in Jordan, 2,082 in Lebanon, 2,191 in Syria, 2,671 in West Bank and 9,910 in Gaza Strip.

This shows the extent to which UNRWA has helped in the provision of education and thereby assisted in building the human resource base of the various refugee communities. Again, it is clear from the table that the existence of UNRWA is the many Palestinian people are employed for their living. Some respondents disagreed with the decision of the Trump government to stop the US financial support to this humanitarian agency strongly believing that this action could create the situation where many Palestinian refugee children will drop out from school.

Table 2 is about the UNRWA microfinance department that is used as a means by the agency to alleviate poverty and promote economic growth in the refugee community by assisting the Palestinian people with loans as their working capital. During 2016, loans were offered to persons from the following countries. Palestinian refugees in; Jordan had \$14,177,044, Syria received \$1,932,360, West Bank took \$16, 297,383 and Gaza Strip had \$7,373,630 and in all the amount of money in total given to the refugees as their working capital in 2016 alone was \$39,780,417. By indication therefore, it is quite clear that the US government withdrawal of its financial support to UNRWA will have serious economic implication for the businesspersons in the refugee communities and therefore cause an increase in unemployment situation. Again, the inability of UNRWA to continue its humanitarian services because of lack of adequate funds will worsen the plight of the Palestinian refugees. The finding makes a strong case in favour of Fidd, (2019) who is of the conviction that the US'

decision to stop its financial support to UNRWA is more likely to increase the unemployment situation of the Palestinian refugees.

The study also revealed the understanding of some persons interviewed that the Trump policy comes with a dire consequence for the Palestinian economy. They reiterated that, the recognition of Jerusalem as a capital of Israel is a green light for Israel to continue with its settlements in the West Bank. In line with this, Palestinian official one has this to say:

“Trump’s ultimate aim is to serve the Israeli interest and that right from the word go, that is what he has decided to do, to divide us and knock our heads together, and help the Israelis to continue to steal our land. The government of Israel has felled our olive trees, which generates a lot of income to our people. They have destroyed our farms and industries. The Israeli occupation in our land has adversely affected our international trade as well as import and export prosperity. Yet, Trump has supported them to steal more of our land”
(Personal Interview, 2019).

The argument is that Area C of the West Bank occupied by Israel is rich in natural resources that can support or promote the economic development of Palestine if ownership of it was in the hands of Palestinians. This has confirmed the position earlier held by Orhan, Nur & Massimiliano (2014) that the Palestinian economy will continue to decline with the Israeli refusal to withdraw from West Bank.

Again, some group of respondents, two officials of Palestinian embassy and US official two contended that the attitude of the Trump administration would make the Palestinian economy more subservient to the Israeli economy. The Israeli market determines the quantities and types of crops Palestinians should export to Israel. Meanwhile, the commercial policies of Israel is designed such that Palestine has no option than to continue to import Israeli products and this has negatively impacted the

balance of trade in the territories. Resultantly, a growing number of Palestinian labour force become compelled to seek employment in Israel. The understanding here is that the Trump policy will further compound the economic woes of Palestine to the advantage of Israel. The finding is supportive of the observation made by Pillar (2019) when he opined that the Trump policy is a deliberate attempt to create an impediment to the Palestinian economic development and to bring the Palestinian autonomy under the perpetual dominance of Israel.

3.4 Peace Process

The research revealed how the respondents were so divided over the peace plan of the Trump administration. Palestinian one and two believed that the peace plan (Prosperity to Peace) is a shift from earlier arrangements where emphasis was more on political issues other than the economic well-being of the parties in play. Prosperity to peace is a peace plan of the current US government that pledges \$50 billion to be used for the socio-economic development of the Palestinian people. Both Israeli officials and US official one who upheld the peace plan are of the opinion that it is the best alternative approach since the peace process in the past came with methods that were never successful. Therefore, the respondents maintained that the wisdom behind this peace plan is rather to promote economic development of the Palestinian community and allow both Israel and Palestine to engage in negotiation in order to settle their differences. Per the facts on the ground, no country or international organisation has been able to impose its decision on any of the parties so far. The finding gave credence to the suggestion that the international community must take steps to create the necessary condition for both Israel and Palestine to engage in negotiations to end the conflict (Kelman, 1982).

The respondents believed so strongly that the recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel by the US government is a step in the right direction because Jerusalem has always remained the city of the Jews. In this regard, Israeli official two pointed out that:

"There can be no peace based on the division of Jerusalem and therefore Trump has done what exactly is required of him. If he had delayed to relocate the US Embassy, it was going to send the wrong signals that could adversely affect the prospect of a lasting peace. Accepting the fact that Jerusalem is the undivided city of Israel will provide the basis for a sustainable peace with others that we all yearn for" (Personal Interview, 2019).

However, Palestinian official one and two as well as US official two had a different response to the Trump peace plan. They believed that the posturing of the Trump government from the look of its policies was going to be problematic to the peace process. The moment the government has sided with Israel to lay claim to Jerusalem as its capital it has amply displayed its bias and ceased to be a neutral arbiter to broker peace between Israel and Palestine. The government of America under President Trump has rather put the US in the position of dispute rather than a mediator that can be trusted. If the role of US as the main key player in trying to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is undoubtedly undermined, then indeed the way forward for the peace process has become extremely unclear.

The situation has rather complicated matters on the future of the two-state solution that has been viewed by the international community as the only way to end the conflict. It is envisaged that Palestine can also become a sovereign state with East Jerusalem, as its capital and Palestine together with other countries shall live in peace forever. As it stands now, it is clear from the responses that the US is no more

committed to the peace process and that is going to make things difficult. The respondents believed that if the patience of the losing party gets to its limit the region is more likely to witness the eruption of more violence.

It became clear from the study that both Israel and Palestine are passionately attached to Jerusalem. Both parties expressed a sense of ownership over the same city. This is a response of Palestinian official one, similar to one made above over the same issue:

"Jerusalem is the heart of the Palestinian people and we cannot afford to lose it. The peace process will never succeed without independent Palestinian with East Jerusalem as its capital. The Palestinian side has played its role by giving recognition to the right of Israel to exist. Both U.S. and Israel must do what is right and respect the UN Resolution 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) " (Personal Interview, 2019).

The finding confirms the viewpoint inferred from the above that if the international community had insisted on the application of UN Resolution 181(1947) under which the city of Jerusalem was to be set aside and placed under the mandate of special international body, part of the problem confronting Israel and Palestine today would have been avoided.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has amply demonstrated that Trump's foreign policy has some implications for both Israel and Palestine. The US policy under the Trump government has favored the Israelis more than the Palestinians whose concern especially about their sovereignty has been relegated to the background. The actions of the government do not seem to support the withdrawal of Israel from the occupied territories. The policy of the Trump administration also appears to undermine the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

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CHAPTER FOUR

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of findings of the study and conclusions. It then provides some recommendations based on the findings and conclusions of this study.

4.1 Summary of Findings

The study revealed that Trump's foreign policy towards Israel and Palestinian has some political, social implications and at the same time pose a threat to the peace process. Trump's foreign policy does not take into consideration key issues such as the status of Jerusalem, settlements, Palestinian refugee or right to return, borders and sovereignty of Palestine that center on the Palestine question would not be given any consideration in the Trump policies. The global community assumes it is only when these issues are addressed that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will end and then all the parties in the region, with Israel inclusive, shall have a lasting peace and security. As it stands now, the silence of the Trump administration on the two-state solution largely seen as a panacea to the conflict is also marginalized.

Again, the research also brought to the fore some economic implications involving the two countries, Israel and Palestine. It has become quite clear that the Trump foreign policy toward both countries will give more economic advantage to Israel than Palestine because the policy does not address settlement issues that will ensure the withdrawal of Israel from areas it occupied believed to violate international law. Sixty percent area of West Bank occupied by Israel is well endowed with natural resources and this could have been useful in supporting the economic development of Palestine.

The effect is that the Palestinian economic continues to depend on the Israeli market for the import of their products. Meanwhile, what the Palestinians export to Israel is determined by the Israeli market. Poor economic growth of Palestine accounts for the reason many Palestinians are compelled to seek for employment in Israel. Unfortunately, the Palestinians perceive the Trump peace plan that pledges economic development for the Palestine people as a political gimmick and refuse to cooperate with the Trump administration for its implementation.

Finally, it has also become obvious that under the Trump government the future of the peace process is in question. Already, the peace plan of Trump meant to address the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has not received the needed support from the international community. The Palestinian people have rejected the peace plan on the account that it does not address the core issue of their problem that is about their right to self-determination. The international community together with Palestine has questioned the neutrality of the Trump administration to spearhead a peace process that is fair because of obvious bias of the administration against the Palestinians.

4.2 Conclusions

The US has remained one of the most committed international actors in the matters relating to the Israeli-Palestinian issue for many decades even though some observers have viewed its roles in the conflict with much reservation. Some observers believed that the US' participation in the Israeli-Palestinian saga is more of a curse rather than blessing because its involvement is the reason for mounting tensions in the region. The United States strongly supported the UN Security Resolution 181 passed in 1947 that called for the partition of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states. Resolution 181 was passed to address the problems of two rival movements, Palestinian nationalism

and Jewish nationalism (Zionism). In 1917, Britain had introduced a policy to encourage the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine but failed because of its inability to contain the civil unrest between the Arabs and Jews and as a result decided to give up its mandate over the place to the United Nations. On the 14th May 1948, when the British mandate over Palestine ended, Israel declared independence. The Arab states' disagreement with the Jewish independence led to the Arab-Israeli war that ended up with Israel acquiring more territories to the disadvantage of the Palestinian Arabs. This marked the beginning of the Palestinian question because the Arabs failed to prevail against the Zionist project. Subsequent wars followed and the conflict still ongoing. In the 1967 six-day war for instance, Israel captured the West Bank, Golan Heights, Gaza Strip, and Sinai Peninsula and took control the entire Jerusalem city. Of the captured areas, the Sinai Peninsula was given back to Egypt and Gaza turned back to the Palestinians.

The foreign policy of US in relation to Israel began eleven minutes after President Harry Truman endorsed the independence of Israel in 1948. The strong diplomatic relations between the US and Israel therefore emanates from the official acceptance of Israel by Truman which is the foundation for all successive American governments. Since then all the American presidents have remained committed to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In an attempt by the Clinton regime to resolve the conflict, the Oslo Accords of 1993 and 1995 was signed between Israel and the PLO. The Oslo I Accord of 1993 demanded of Israel to accept the PLO as the official representative of the Palestinians and the PLO recognize Israel as a country and the Palestinian Authority established latter in 1994 to govern the Palestinians. The Oslo ii Accord of

1995 divided the West Bank of which 40 percent went to the Palestinians and 60 percent allocated to Israel.

The Oslo Accords provided the parameters for end of Israeli occupation and end with two-state solution but the agreement was never fully implemented. Factors such as the assassination of the Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin, in 1995 and lack of cooperation from both sides affected its success. In 2000, the Clinton administration tried the Camp David 2000 but the attempt essentially failed.

Subsequent US Presidents after President Clinton have tried with various diplomatic strategies or approaches to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. They all did their best in trying to find a solution to the conflict. It is a common knowledge that Obama's refusal to veto UN Security Resolution 2334 calling on Israel to completely cease all settlements activities in West Bank is because of his unwavering support for the two-state solution and this action accounted for the strained diplomatic relations between the two government until Obama left office.

President Trump, like all his predecessors since 1948, means so well for Israel and sought first to improve the relations between the two governments better than what he met upon his assumption to office. The first thing the Trump administration did was to recognise Jerusalem as Israel's capital and later moved the US embassy there. Secondly, the Trump government has removed virtually all the economic and humanitarian support for the Palestinians while his government has supported Israel with some bilateral aid. Unfortunately, the peace plan of the Trump administration that involves \$50 Billion for socio-economic development of the Palestinian people does not appear to receive support from key stakeholders because of the perception

that his government appears not to be concerned about the plight of the Palestinians already demonstrated by the actions of the administration.

The Palestinian concern is more to do with their right to self-determination and withdrawal of Israel from the occupied territories so their aspiration will come into fruition. It is not far from right to conclude that in line with the policy of Trump's administration the goal of the two-state solution will be extremely difficult to fulfil and the Palestinian economic capacity further worsened because the area of the West Bank rich in natural resources is under Israeli occupation. This explains the reason the Palestinian Authority is not able to deliver quality services to its people. The consequence is that the peace process as a whole under Trump government is under siege. Under the current circumstances, the position of Israel gets stronger and Palestine weaker.

4.3 Recommendations

- The Israeli-Palestinian war must be viewed from the context that it is an international issue and must be approached as such. More countries must come on board to complement the efforts of the US in addressing the problem because it appears the US is carrying the burden alone and that is unacceptable. The US has not been able to deal with the issue alone for decades now because obviously it has its own limitations especially in the area of bias and lack of effective coercive powers to ensure compliance to its decision on the Israeli-Palestinian issue.
- Participation must be broadened to allow others to play a part. The United Nations should be used as a vehicle to achieve this goal of broader participation.

- The international community should revisit the use of Security Council veto power again because its usage appears to be problematic in resolving many conflicts including the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. To make it possible for all the permanent members of the Security Council to be very effective in their roles particularly regarding this issue, the viewpoint of Putin (2013) that decisions of the Security Council on issues affecting war and peace should be based on consensus, must be taken seriously.
- Again, it should be acknowledged that the role of the United States in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is still relevant and indispensable. However, the general perception about the US is that its role as a neutral arbiter in the peace process currently is undoubtedly undermined. Therefore, it becomes incumbent on it to put her house in order to ensure that its image is redeemed by adapting a new attitude of fairness in the peace process to win the confidence of the international community as a serious and neutral broker. It must treat both parties, Israel and Palestine, equally in a manner that is reasonably acceptable.
- Lastly, it is very important that the leadership of Palestine be united in their effort to liberate the Palestinian people. Now, the leadership of Palestine is divided both ideologically and politically. Hamas controls the Gaza Strip and resolves to use violence against Israel as a means to find solution to the Palestinian question. Fatah, on the other hand, has its stronghold in the West Bank and believes in the use of dialogue or negotiations with Israel. Clearly, these differences adopted by the parties cannot help them to achieve the desired results to resolve their problems. The only option for them now is to unite to present a more united front with which to find an answer to the

Palestinian question. Fattah and Hamas must set aside their differences and show a total commitment towards the achievement of the goal of unity.

4.4 Suggestions for Future Research

The present study focuses essentially on looking at the implications of Trump's foreign policy toward Israel and the Palestinian question. The research needed to understand whether the Trump policy would have a negative or positive impact on the parties or derail the peace process. For further research, key questions may include the following: If Jerusalem is set aside for international control, per UN Security Resolution 181 would that address the Israeli-Palestinian issue. Why have the Arab States taken a back seat leaving America alone to resolve the conflict?

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APPENDIX

RESEARCH INTERVIEW GUIDE

TRUMP’S FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINIAN

QUESTION

1. Why do you think US remains a key player in the search for peace in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
2. What is your view about the US involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
3. As part of the Trump’s peace plan “Prosperity to Peace”, \$50billion will be used to support the economic development in the West Bank and Gaza, while a part will go for the Palestinian refugee cause. What is your Assessment about this peace plan?
4. What will you say about the Trump administration’s decision to cut down the US contribution to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinians Refugee in the Near East (UNRWA), which has been largely used to promote education, health and many other social programs of the Palestinians?
5. The Trump administration has recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and has relocated the US embassy there. What is our view about its political implications?
6. The Trump administration has not has not been specific on whether it supports the two-state solution to the Israeli Palestinian conflict or not. What will you say about this attitude?
7. Do you think the Trump government is committed to ensure the Palestinian question is addressed?
8. Would you please want to add any further comment?