

ISRAEL- PALESTINE CONFLICT: ANALYSING THE UNITED STATE's STRATEGIC INTEREST (2017- 2023)



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DECLARATION

By submitting this dissertation, I declare that this thesis entitled " Israel- Palestine Conflict: Analyzing the United States' Strategic Interest (2017- 2023)" is my original work. This research work was completed under the supervision of Dr. Nasreen Akhtar and submitted to the Department of International Relations as satisfying the requirements for the degree of master's in international relations. I have properly referenced and cited the sources of information in my thesis. This dissertation has not been submitted before for any degree.

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DEDICATION

This research work is wholeheartedly dedicated to my family, especially to my mother Momi Noor ul-ain whose boundless love, unwavering strength, and endless encouragement have been the foundation of my life. Your nurturing spirit, gentle wisdom, and unwavering faith in me have guided me through every step of my journey. This work is dedicated to you, with immense gratitude and deep admiration, for all the sacrifices you have made and the countless ways you have supported and uplifted me.

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ABSTRACT

The Israel-Palestine conflict threatens regional stability and global security. As a major global player, the United State (US) has played an important role in this war. The migration of Jews into the Middle East and Palestine, with the aim of establishing a Jewish state, was initiated following the Balfour proclamation. This proclamation was made during the 19th century, when Palestine was under British colonial rule, and it served as a catalyst for the Zionist movement among the Jewish population. The region of Palestine holds significance for followers of Judaism, Islam, and Christianity. The UN's (United Nation) officially acknowledged the establishment of the independent and sovereign state of Israel in 1948. Israel emerged as the prevailing party in the Arab-Israel conflict, bolstered by the backing of Western nations. This study tracks US strategic concerns with Israel and Palestine from 2017 to 2023. This period saw major changes in US governance and foreign policy. This study analyzes the shifts in US strategic priorities during the specified era and the causes behind them. This study explores the extent to which the US played the role of mediator or influencer in regional affairs, particularly in promoting peace and stability in the Middle East. The research uses qualitative methods to achieve these goals. The research examines relevant scholarly publications, compilations of official records and diplomatic communications, and comparisons of US engagement across presidential administrations. This research helps explain the complex dynamics of the US-Israel-Palestine conflict, its effects on regional political alliances and security agreements, and the Middle East's potential for peace and stability. The theory of constructivism is used to analyze the US strategic objectives, providing insights into their motivations and beliefs.

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

The Palestinian conflict is one of the most enduring issues in the Middle East for decades, marked by complex geo political dynamics and the involvement of various other actors. Israel-Palestine conflict is interconnected with broader regional and international diplomatic efforts in the Middles East. For example, it can also affect negotiations and peace processes related to other regional issues such as Arab- Israel conflict, stability and security of Middle East. This conflict has direct security implications, affecting the safety and stability of states in the region it furthers contributes in the regional tensions (Robinson, 2023).

In the early 19th century Palestine was ruled by Ottoman Empire and Palestinians, who are basically descendants of Cannan tribe (Saleh, 2020) enjoyed certain privileges there on the contrary Jews did not have any place to live they were living in certain colonies around the Europe, North America and Africa. In 1910 there was only 7 percent of Jews living in the Middle East later on when the World War I occurred between central and allied powers Ottoman Empire was part of central power along with Germany, Austria hungary and Bulgaria they got defeated by the allied powers and Ottoman Empire collapsed. Later on, Middle East was divided and Palestine came under the Jurisdiction of British and along that Jews were heavily protesting for their own separate homeland and pressurizing the British on which government of British announced Balfour declaration in 1917. Under this declaration it was decided that Jews can have control of 55 percent of Palestine on the other hand Palestinian can have hold of 45 percent of remaining land and Jerusalem come under international control. Over this Jews agreed but Arab states were unhappy about this decision and era of war between Arabs and Israel broke (Ghaffar, 2022).

The Israel-Palestine conflict spanning the years 1917 to 1990 was characterized by notable power dynamics, territorial contentions, and recurrent episodes of bloodshed. The escalation of tensions in Palestine can be traced back to the Balfour Declaration of 1917, whereupon the British government expressed its commitment to facilitating the establishment of a Jewish homeland in the region. This declaration coincided with a significant increase in Jewish immigration to Palestine, which further exacerbated the already mounting opposition from the Arab-Palestinian community. During this historical era, the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 instigated a sequence of Arab-Israeli conflicts and resulted in the displacement of a significant number of Palestinians, subsequently giving rise to ersisten refugee challenges. The outcome of the 1967 Six-Day War led to the establishment of Israeli control over the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and additional regions, hence providing impetus for

the emergence and growth of Palestinian resistance movements such as the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Efforts to achieve peace, exemplified by the Oslo Accords throughout the 1990s, yielded temporary periods of calm but ultimately proved inadequate in addressing the underlying complexities of the conflict. Consequently, the region remains mired in intricate political, territorial, and ideological disagreements (Siniver, 2018).

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel launched the bilateral peace process, commonly known as the Oslo Accord I in 1993 "Declaration of Principles" on Interim Self-Government Arrangements, in Washington, DC, on September 13, 1993. While the two sides started talking about the final status issues, Israel would give the Palestinian Authority (PA) more power to help strengthen the institutions during the interim period of negotiations. A wide number of civil and security issues were agreed to be temporarily resolved by Israel and the PLO in Oslo accord II in 1995 Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Palestinians had two main expectations going into the negotiations process: first, that by May 1999, Israel would fully withdraw from all of the territory it had occupied since 1967, granting Palestinians their internationally recognized legal and political rights; and second, that Israel would stop building settlements in the West Bank, which includes East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip as part of the peace process. A lot of Israelis thought that the "peace process" would guarantee two things: first, that Israel would finally be "recognized" by the Palestinians, who are represented by the PLO and the Arab world; and second, that Israel and its residents would have better security (Boatman, 2019).

In the result of "Peace Process" following changes were made the relocation of Israel's military forces was implemented in a phased manner, with the initial stage focusing on the densely populated areas of the West Bank. The West Bank was then partitioned into three distinct regions: Area A, which fell under the governance of Palestine; Area B, which was jointly administered by both governments; and Area C, which came under the control of Israel. Area B encompassed minor cities and villages, with its civilian affairs falling under the jurisdiction of Palestine. However, Israel maintained authority over internal security in this region (Weiner, 1999).

Even though the decisions that were made at that time highly favored the Israel still Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated by Yaldir Amir a individual from Israel who was again any kind of peace treaty with Palestine this incident shaped this whole process in a new perspective. Friedman *The New York Times* columnist argued that by killing Yitzhak, now they are deprived the labor party of its any leader who had sentiments of reconciliation with the

Palestinians and a firm toughness to persuade many other Israelis on its way to peace. Now there would be a civil war in Palestine (Rabinovich, 2018). In early 2000 Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon visited Masjid al Aqsa and used some ugly words regarding it, this led to some violent protests and second Intifada took place which ended in 2005 (Brym, 2016). In 2007 internal conflict between Hamas and Fatah broke out dividing Palestinian authority. Due to this Hamas took control of Gaza strip and Fatah of the West bank it caused multiple deaths on both of the sides (Uslu and Kartas, 2020).

Middle East a region having strategic importance for US, the basic goal of the US Foreign policy should be to protect the national interests of the US. However, for several decades, particularly since the 1967 Six Day War, the centerpiece of US Middle East strategy has been its relationship with Israel. The combination of persistent the US backing for Israel and the accompanying attempt to establish democracy throughout the region has inflamed Arab and Islamic sentiment, putting US security at risk. Instead, American domestic politics—particularly those of the "Israel Lobby"—are nearly solely responsible for the general direction of American foreign policy in the region. While other special interest groups have succeeded in distorting US. foreign policy in their favor, no lobby has succeeded in taking US. foreign policy away from what the country's national interest would otherwise dictate and persuading citizens that US. and Israeli interests are virtually the same at the same time (Kinsley, 2003).

Since the October 1973 war the support of US for Israel has increased significantly on every end it is the largest annual recipient of US economic and military assistance since 1976 amounts well over 140 billion at the end of 2003. Almost one-fifth of the US' foreign aid budget, or \$3 billion, is provided directly to Israel annually. The US provides a direct annual subsidy of approximately \$500 per Israeli per capita Mearsheimer, (2006). Furthermore, Washington consistently offers diplomatic support to Israel it has done More vetoes than any other Security Council member have combined since 1982 resolutions that were critical of Israel have been overruled by the US. It also blocks any petition regarding Israel's nuclear arsenal (Perelmen, 2003).

According to American-Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), that US and Israel has unique partnership which can help them to counter growing threats in the Middle East this cooperation can benefit both of the parties. Israel might have served as a useful strategic ally in the Cold War. Following the 1967 Six Day War, Israel acted as the US' proxy in the region, helping to restrain Soviet expansion while humiliating Soviet allies such as Egypt and Syria.

Israel's military might compel Moscow to invest more in supporting its faltering clients, and it has occasionally assisted in defending other American allies, such as King Hussein of Jordan. Additionally, Israel provided the US with valuable intelligence regarding Soviet capabilities (Spiegel, 1983).

The Trump's administration also introduced the Peace Plan for the conflict and called this plan "last opportunity for Palestinians" in this plan no Palestinians were involved it was totally one-sided plan from Trump and Netanyahu, Palestinian President Mohammed Abbas dismissed this plan and called it "conspiracy". According to this plan certain key proposals were made that like declaring East Jerusalem as a capital of Palestine and US open their embassy. Palestinians also have to accept the legitimacy of Israel over the settlements in West Bank (Hacohen, 2018).

In order to normalize the tense situation in the Middle East and start diplomatic relations between states the idea of Abraham Accords was introduced this had a tremendous impact on the Middle East and beyond. They have received widespread support from Western countries, particularly the US, which played a key role in forging these agreements. The accords have the potential to improve regional security and collaboration, offer economic possibilities, and pave the path for more comprehensive peace initiatives in the region. However, opinions in other Arab and Muslim-majority nations have been mixed, with some seeing the deals as a betrayal of the Palestinian cause.

The Abraham Accords opened up Israel's connections with Arab countries and transformed the paradigm of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Under the guise of halting Israel's plan to annex parts of the West Bank in July 2020, the United Arab Emirates began efforts to reestablish relations. A contract was announced in August, sweetened by the United States' pledge to sell 50 F-35 combat jets to the UAE. The United Arab Emirates stated that normalization would give it more leverage to intercede on behalf of the Palestinians, but others worried that the agreement might embolden Arab states to abandon the Palestinian cause when it suited their interests. Despite the Abraham Accords' progress, the Israeli-Palestinian issue remains unsolved, illustrating the challenges of attaining comprehensive Middle East peace. Nonetheless, the accords are a historic step towards peace and stability, demonstrating the possibility of reconciliation and cooperation (Zeidan, 2023).

This conflict has been escalated again on 7 October 2023 when more than 1400 Israelis were killed by a militant group Hamas of Palestine in retaliation Israel has entered in the war with Palestinians who are living in the narrow Gaza Strip. Hamas has also had some hostages' Israeli people including men, women and children. The war crimes are increasing day by day

hospitals in Palestine are under attack, Palestinians are being contained in the strip, the continuity of resources like water, electricity, food are blocked by Israel earlier. Internationally many states are putting forward their views on the situation (Yeung, 2023).

In response to the Hamas attacks that took more than 11,000 lives, the Israeli military has ordered all civilians in Gaza City to evacuate "southwards" as it continues to bombard the coastal community. Moving more than 1.1 million people from the besieged enclave's north to its south under continuous airstrikes is required for evacuation, a task that the UN declares dangerous and impractical. For the past week, Israeli warplanes have been bombarding Gaza, razing entire including mosques and schools. Israel claims that it targets Hamas and that the organization has utilized people as human shields. At least 2,670 people have died and over 9,600 more have been injured in Gaza as a result of Israel's attack. In Gaza, almost a million Palestinians have been forced from their homes (Lawati et al., 2023).

This research analyzes the involvement of US in the Israel-Palestinian conflict, exploring the historical context, motivations, and the impact of different policies their implications and how domestic politics and public opinion in the US its strategic interests in the conflict.

1.2. Problem Statement:

The Israel-Palestine conflict is still one of the oldest and most complicated issue. It is based on long-standing historical grievances, disagreements over territory, and competing claims. The prolonged nature of the conflict has resulted in significant ramifications for the individuals residing in the region, regional political dynamics, and global security. The US has constantly played a significant role in the conflict, offering diplomatic, political, and financial assistance to both parties at different junctures. The time span spanning from 2017 to 2023 holds notable importance due to the occurrence of shifts in US governance and the prioritization of foreign policy objectives.

The involvement of the US in the Israel-Palestine conflict has the potential to impact not just the immediate parties engaged but also the wider Arab-Israel landscape. This is particularly significant in light of the Abraham Accords and the potential restructuring of regional alliances. This research aims to analyse the conflict between Israel and Palestine and the role of US.

1.3 Significance of the Study:

The prolonged and deeply rooted Israel-Palestine conflict has been a persistent concern throughout the Middle Eastern region. Understanding the conflict's significance in relation to energy resources, commercial routes, and security is crucial to comprehending the US's interests in the region. The US has historically exerted a substantial influence in the region, and its position on the conflict has a direct bearing on the dynamics within the region. The US has repeatedly undertaken the role of a mediator and advocate in the Israel-Palestine conflict, with successive administrations using diverse techniques. The examination of US strategic interests offers valuable perspectives on diplomatic endeavors, peacebuilding initiatives, and the dynamics of international relations within the Middle East region. Understanding the US's strategic interests, such as its alliance with Israel, its concern for regional stability, and its desire to counterbalance Iranian influence, clarifies why the US has historically supported Israel so strongly. This understanding helps to unpack the complex motivations behind US foreign policy, which is often a mix of ideological commitments, domestic political pressures, and strategic calculations. Recognizing the strategic interests at play allows policymakers to consider how these interests influence the peace process. For instance, the US's close ties with Israel have sometimes led to perceptions of bias, which can undermine its role as a mediator. By acknowledging these perceptions and the underlying strategic interests, future US administrations could strive to adopt a more balanced approach that better addresses the concerns of both Israelis and Palestinians. The study emphasizes on the timeframe spanning from 2017 to 2023 it is significant due to its coverage of a period characterized by substantial shifts in the US's leadership, foreign policy, and international goals. Gaining a comprehensive understanding of transformation of US strategic interests, throughout this timeframe offers invaluable insights into the intricacies of the US engagement in the Israel-Palestine conflict. Policymakers, scholars, and international organizations can benefit from this nuanced understanding of the roles played by an influential global actor. This study adds to the body of academic research on international relations and conflict studies. It provides a comprehensive analysis of a specific time period, offering a valuable resource for scholars and researchers interested in the conflict. Domestic political factors, including lobbying groups, public opinion, and electoral considerations, heavily influence US foreign policy. This research explores how these domestic factors intersect with strategic interests can help policymakers understand the constraints they face and identify opportunities for change. For example, by understanding the

role of the pro-Israel lobby in shaping US. policy, future administrations might seek to diversify their advisory networks or engage more with different viewpoints to develop a more comprehensive approach.

A deeper understanding of US. strategic interests can also enhance its role in international diplomacy. By recognizing how its actions are perceived by other international actors, the US. can work to build more effective coalitions and partnerships. This could involve engaging with European allies, the United Nations, and regional powers to develop a more coordinated and multilateral approach to the Israel-Palestine conflict, potentially leading to more sustainable and widely supported outcomes.

In conclusion, understanding US. strategic interests in the Israel-Palestine conflict is crucial for developing more effective policies and strategies. Research in this area can provide valuable insights that help policymakers navigate the complex dynamics of the conflict, anticipate the broader regional implications of their actions, and explore alternative approaches that may lead to a more peaceful and stable Middle East.

1.4 Research Objectives:

1. To analyze the effects of the US influence in Israel-Palestine dispute on the Middle East political dynamics.
2. To identify the significant policy shifts, priorities, and objectives in US strategic interests in Israel-Palestine conflict from 2017 to 2023.

1.5 Research Questions:

1. What impact did the US influence over Israel-Palestine dispute have on the political dynamics of the region?
2. How did the US strategic interests in the Israel-Palestine conflict evolve from 2017 to 2023, and what were the key factors?

1.6 Delimitations of the Study:

The scope of this study is limited to the time frame spanning from 2017 to 2023. Events that transpire beyond this designated timeframe may not be comprehensively examined. Diplomatic conversations and operations frequently encompass the handling of sensitive and classified material. This study is dependent on information that is publicly accessible and does

not have access to sensitive documents or confidential diplomatic exchanges. The primary objective of this study is to evaluate the effects of US engagement in the Israel-Palestine conflict on the overall state of peace and stability in the region. It is important to note that due to the complex nature of this problem, this study may not provide an exhaustive analysis of all the variables that contribute to the dynamics in this region

LITERATURE REVIEW

Earlier to the nineteenth century, the majority of Jewish individuals resided in the different regions. During that period, the Jewish population numbered around 8 million individuals, with the bulk of them residing in Eastern Europe. Since their expulsion by the Romans throughout the first and second centuries, the Jewish people have maintained a persistent aspiration to reclaim their homeland. However, it is worth noting that no substantial endeavors can be identified as actively pursued to materialize this aspiration. The inception of the Zionist movement in the nineteenth century marked the commencement of a transformative shift, aiming to facilitate the repatriation of the Jewish community to its ancestral land. The emergence of Zionism, a Jewish national movement, took place in the 19th century, coinciding with the popularization of contemporary notions of nationalism and enlightenment among Jewish communities in Europe. The Jewish people developed a collective identity as a distinct nation, expressing their aspirations and belief in their entitlement to a homeland that they needed (Abd Al Hadi, 1975).

The latter half of the nineteenth century witnessed a notable escalation in anti-Semitic sentiments. On addition to the conventional animosity rooted on religious differences, there has emerged an intensified manifestation of racism. This particular manifestation of anti-Semitism delineated Jews as a subordinate and deleterious ethnic group, hence justifying their targeted extermination. Anti-Semitism was prevalent in public spaces, including the streets, as well as in the media and on the platforms of different political parties. From 1881 to 1882, individuals of Jewish descent residing within the territorial boundaries of the Russian empire were subjected to a series of violent and organized attacks commonly referred to as pogroms. A significant number of individuals choose to engage in immigration, predominantly directed towards the US, with a lesser fraction electing to relocate to the Land of Israel.

British imperialism politically and economically capitalized on Zionism as a very effective instrument for advancing its own interests in the Arab East, a region of significant importance to the empire. In a similar vein, Zionism discovered in colonialism a global backing and the necessary economic means to actualize its objective of colonizing Palestine. The Balfour Declaration, which emerged on 2 November 1917, is a historical outcome of the collaboration between British imperialism and Zionism. The statement represented the climax of a British foreign strategy characterized by the illicit appropriation of another nation's

territory and resources, as well as the eradication of its cultural identity. This policy was further characterized by acts of aggression, territorial expansion, and the suppression of any endeavours aimed at achieving national liberation (Adwan et al., 2012).

The indigenous people living in Palestine were Canaanites', these Canaanites migrated from the Arabian Peninsula approximately 4500 years ago, leading to the initial designation of the region as the "land of Canaan." The contemporary population of Palestine can be traced back to their ancestors. The individuals originating from the Mediterranean region, specifically the PLST (Pelest) or Philistines, as well as the Arab population that engaged in intermarriage with them. Throughout history, numerous individuals have held positions of authority over the region known as Palestine. However, it is important to note that despite these changes in governance, the indigenous population has consistently maintained a presence in the area. The validity of Israeli claims to inhabit Palestinian land is questionable due to the lack of ancestral connection. Numerous researchers have provided evidence indicating that a significant portion of the Jewish population does not have historical ties to Palestine. Instead, these individuals originate from the Caucasus region and underwent a process of Judaization between the 8th and 19th centuries. This further explains the factors that affected the Jewish people to move towards Palestine; one of the factors is formation of certain societies (*Haskala*) that encourage such nationalistic behavior among the Jewish people to get their land, the World Zionist Organization which was founded in Basle was also one of the key factors that proved to be the catalyst of this movement (Saleh, 2021).

The dispute between Israel and its Arab neighbors, namely Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon, as well as the broader Arab world, has persisted since Israel's establishment as an independent state in May 1948. This conflict primarily revolves around issues of Israel's sovereignty and geographical integrity. A sequence of conventional conflicts emerged, including the First Arab-Israeli War spanning from 1948 to 1949, the Suez Crisis in 1956, the Six-Day War in 1967, the War of Attrition from 1967 to 1970, the Yom Kippur War or October War in 1973, and the Israel-Lebanon War in 1982. Moreover, a significant and challenging dimension of the conflict pertains to the Israeli-Palestinian relationship. The nature of their connection had been significantly influenced by the circumstances surrounding, this research paper explores historical incidents that happened and are significant for Israel- Palestine conflict (Siniver, 2018).

Although worldwide it was believed that peace had been attained following the ceremony held on the White House lawn in September 1993, subsequent events demonstrated a contrary trajectory. Both parties have acknowledged each other's existence, although Israel has not acknowledged the Palestinian people's entitlement to statehood, sovereignty, and self-determination. The Oslo Accords gave rise to a subsequent wave of tensions among the involved parties. Initially, Israel initiated the construction of walls between their own settlements and those of the Palestinians. Additionally, they began to establish connections among these settlements, resulting in a significant divide between Palestinian regions. Furthermore, Israel established a security force responsible for scrutinizing admission into these territories. The Palestinian region experienced significant political and socio-economic challenges, as their governing body faced difficulties in formulating a comprehensive plan of action to address the needs and concerns of its population. The Palestinian population has experienced significant challenges, including high rates of unemployment, instances of governmental corruption, and acts of violence perpetrated by Israel (Khalidi, 2004).

The Middle East is well recognized as a region of significant resource endowment, particularly in terms of its huge reserves of oil and gas. The region has had ongoing conflicts, including civil wars, and is characterized by political volatility and instability. The Israel- Palestine conflict is a protracted dispute that has disrupted regional stability for almost seven decades. The US has emerged as a prominent actor actively engaged in the pursuit of peace within the area, successfully facilitating negotiations and ceasefires among conflicting parties. The peace plan proposed by President Trump is generating significant transformations in the geopolitical landscape of the Middle East. The proposal proposed by President Trump has had significant and wide-ranging consequences for the Palestinian people and the neighboring states in the region (Nazir et al., 2022).

Israel has received the highest amount of foreign assistance from the US since the conclusion of World War II. Throughout the years, various Administrations in collaboration with Congress have consistently offered substantial aid to Israel. This assistance is a testament to the strong backing Israel receives from the US, as well as the shared strategic objectives in the Middle East, a mutual commitment to democratic principles, and the historical connection dating back to the US support for the establishment of Israel in 1948. As of now, the US has allocated a total of \$158 billion (in current, non-inflation-adjusted dollars) in bilateral aid and money for missile defense to Israel. Currently, the majority of bilateral aid

provided by the US to Israel takes the form of military assistance. Additionally, between the years 1971 and 2007, Israel received substantial economic assistance (Sharp, 2023).

Evangelicalism, a varied and loosely organized Protestant movement, emphasizes personal conversion, Bible authority, and evangelism. Teaching others about Christianity is important to evangelicalism. Many evangelicals propagate their faith through missionary work, community outreach, and evangelism. Evangelicals advocate for Christian perspectives in social and political concerns. This includes pro-life, family, and religious freedom issues. Christian humanitarian service and public policy advocacy have been evangelical contributions to US foreign policy and worldwide participation. Evangelicals supported USSR's containment policy because they saw it as a fight between two religions and considered communism a sin and against the bible. Their influence, grassroots authority, and unwavering support are strong. They have a strong lobby in the US and believe Israel is God's chosen nation, thus assisting them helps Christians restore balance (Amstutz, 2014).

The US has exhibited a clear inclination towards favoring Israel, as seen by instances such as the events that transpired on September 29, 2000. On this day, which coincided with the Muslim day of prayer, President Ehud Barak deployed military personnel to the Al Aqsa compound, resulting in confrontations between Israel and Palestine. Regrettably, numerous Palestinian individuals lost their lives during this encounter (Usher, 2000). Upon investigation, it was found that there was no prior Palestinian action that had contributed to the current situation (Dugard et al., 2001). Numerous crimes have been perpetrated against the Palestinian population, while the US has refrained from condemning Israel's actions in any manner or capacity. Conversely, the US provides substantial military support to Israel, so perpetuating this state of affairs. The Israeli Defense Forces employ helicopters to cause casualties among the civilian population in Palestine, with financial support from the US. The defense minister responded by stating that it is not feasible to expect Israel to independently produce helicopters or other significant weapon systems of this nature (Yaron, 2000).

The US has worsened the complexities of the Middle East in order to safeguard its economic, political, and military objectives. The militarization of the Middle East by US, the trade of significant quantities of weaponry to Israel and other oil-rich nations as the primary cause. The US has contributed to the aggravation of the prevailing dire situation in the Middle East by its endorsement of unauthorized Jewish settlements, also the influence of the

pro-Israeli lobby in the US pursues its own political, economic, and military objectives in the region. In order to safeguard these objectives, the US has upheld its enduring military presence. The Middle East region was required to undertake independent action devoid of the influence exerted by the US (Zunes, 1998).

The US approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict has been shaped by conflicting interests in US-Middle East relations since World War II. On one hand, there has been a growing endorsement of Zionism and the establishment of the Israeli state. On the other hand, there has been recognition of the importance of accessing affordable oil resources and fostering strong alliances with Arab nations. These dynamics have evolved alongside the fluctuating concerns regarding Soviet influence in the region during the Cold War. These tensions have been observed in relation to consecutive Arab-Israeli conflicts, starting from the war in 1948 and continuing through the international disputes of 1967 and 1973. Additionally, these tensions have been influenced by changing approaches to intervention in Lebanon, as well as more recent events such as the Palestinian uprisings in the occupied territories and multiple wars in the Gaza Strip. The formulation of US policy has been influenced by contrasting objectives in both domestic and international policy, a gradual acknowledgment of the necessity to address Palestinian national ambitions, and a growing peace process that has compelled American diplomats to assume the role as mediators between the other parties. In light of the regional turmoil, the extensive engagement in this matter persists in the 21st century, as the ongoing dispute between Israel and the Arab world encounters a multitude of novel obstacles (Anziska, 2019).

The US's role in the Gulf War and the Madrid Peace Conference shaped Middle Eastern politics. The Gulf War proved the US military and diplomatic might, neutralizing Saddam Hussein's perceived threat to regional power. With the fall of the Soviet Union, the US gained power and influence. President George H. W. Bush, Secretary of State James Baker, and a skilled Middle East team saw the possibilities and planned a peace summit in October 1991. Israel, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, the European Economic Community, and Jordan and Palestine sent delegates to the summit. Despite not producing a peace settlement, the summit laid the groundwork for a peaceful regional framework. If Bush had been re-elected in 1992 and his government allowed continuing, the possibilities are intriguing. But they did not invite Iran on the summit and it caused a lot of trouble for the region and them in future, because Iran thinks of itself as a major regional power and when seeing itself being left out of a regional peace summit, Iran did not feel well about the situation. Suicide bombings and other

extremist violence hampered the Oslo Accords negotiations and weakened Israeli support for a settlement. Hamas-Iran relations strengthened as peace eluded Iran and the West and relations deteriorated. Second time US played important role is when in 2003 she attacked Iran, it left Iraq as a major power behind it made another regional Arab state conscious and in result the regional dynamics changed again and many Arab states changed their relations' dynamics with Israel (Walt, 2023)

It would be challenging to achieve the normalization of relations between Saudi Arabia and Israel in the near future, as the US has been pressing for. Since 2018, the US has actively advocated for the normalization of relations between Saudi Arabia and Israel, as part of a broader strategic approach aimed at fostering the normalization of Arab-Israeli relations. This endeavor seeks to alter the geopolitical landscape of the Middle East, with the objectives of isolating Iran and establishing a system of checks and balances against China. However, it is quite likely that the current Israeli-Palestinian conflict will hinder the progress towards the restoration of relations between Saudi Arabia and Israel. Achieving a significant advancement within a limited timeframe poses a formidable challenge (Jin, 2023).

On the Jewish Sabbath day of Saturday, 7 October, which lined up with the conclusion of the weeklong Jewish festival of Sukkot and followed the 50th anniversary of the Yom Kippur War, Hamas and various Palestinian armed groups initiated Operation al-Aqsa Flood. This operation involved a synchronized offensive which includes both land and air attacks across multiple border regions of Israel. A major rocket-based air assault was launched at 6 a.m. against the coastal towns of Ashdod and Ashkelon, as well as far north as Tel Aviv, which is situated around 70 kilometres north of Gaza. According to estimates, the number of rockets fired during the initial day ranged from 3,000 to 5,000 (Raleigh et al., 2023).

US has devoted itself to ensure that there isn't any shortage of arms for Israel and Biden has also requested to allot approximately 8 billion security assistance for Israel. This was also done to make sure that all of the other parties like Hezbollah from Lebanon and Iran would know that Israel has a strong backup and they don't interrupt the ongoing war (Davis, 2023)

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this study theory of constructivism is used, constraints such as identities, interests, and norms influence international politics, according to constructivism. Furthermore, these guises serve as the foundation for the conflict between Israel- Palestine's identities. An interest is shaped by the patterns of identities, while the social construction is constructed through the actions and conduct of the state in pursuit of those interests. Regarding the Israel-Palestine conflict, the conceptual frameworks of constructivism theory is applicable. The segment explores the dynamics of identity and interest that exists modifies the dynamics of the conflict.

Constructivism is a modern social philosophy that addresses the deficiencies inherent in traditional ideas. Traditional theories have primarily emphasized the role of the state, so limiting the extent to which the actions and influence of individuals are taken into account. The role of agents and agencies is significant in the context of social construction, with agents representing individuals and agency referring to the state (Theys, 2018). The primary focus of analysis in international political theory is the state. The state and society are shaped by the individual interests and desires of its members. Contrary to previous views, constructivism did not solely emphasize the role of individuals. The construction of state identities and interests is a significant aspect influenced by social institutions, rather than being inherently bestowed upon the system by human nature, as posited by the neo-realist perspective (Behravesch, 2011).

The significance of constructivism lies in its conceptualization of anarchy, which diverges from the perspectives held by traditionalists. Alexander Wendt and Nicholas Onuf are prominent scholars who have made significant contributions to the field of constructivism. They have both extensively examined the concept of anarchy; highlighting its inherent susceptibility to change due to its dynamic anarchy refers to the state of international politics characterized by the absence or deprivation of authority. The lack of authoritative control results in rivalry within the international system, which subsequently gives rise to conflicts the international system, has a higher degree of conflict than peace. Nicholas Onuf's constructivism is grounded in the belief that international relations are socially constructed. This means that the structures and practices of international politics are not fixed or natural but are created and sustained through human interactions and shared understandings (Onuf-1997).

The concept of anarchy has been extensively explored within the framework of constructivism. As Wendt argues, "Anarchy is what states make of it," suggesting that the essence of international anarchy tends to manifest in conflictual dynamics. The activities and

behavior of states contribute to the construction of the Anarchical system. The constructivist perspective places significant emphasis on the inherently changing nature of anarchy. The constructivist perspective posits that the identities and interests of nations in the realm of international politics are susceptible to transformation (Mengshu, 2020).

The condition of anarchy in international relations is subject to change due to the dynamic nature of state identities and interests. This implies that the conduct and activities of states contribute to the establishment of an anarchical system. Furthermore, the notion of anarchy is contingent upon the interests and preferences of the state, as these factors also play a role in determining the state's allies and adversaries. In his seminal work "Social Theory of International Politics," Alexander Wendt expounds upon the concept of the three cultures of anarchy. The formation of each of these cultures has been facilitated by the actions of governing bodies and their engagement with and endorsement of established patterns of conduct. According to (Vidal, 2019), these standards have an ongoing influence on the interests and identities of states.

The Israel-Palestine conflict is a deeply complex and protracted struggle that has persisted for decades, characterized by a multitude of narratives, identities, and historical legacies. Understanding this conflict through the lens of constructivism, a theory in international relations, provides valuable insights into how the beliefs, identities, and social constructs of the involved actors shape their behaviors and interactions (Wendt, 1999).

Constructivism emphasizes that the actions of states are not solely driven by material interests or power dynamics, as suggested by realism, but are also deeply influenced by ideas, identities, and shared understandings. In the context of the Israel-Palestine conflict, both Israeli and Palestinian identities play a crucial role in shaping the actions and policies of the respective groups. The Israeli state, for instance, is deeply rooted in a narrative of historical victimization and the quest for a secure homeland. This narrative is not just a matter of historical record but is ingrained in the collective identity of the Israeli people. The memory of the Holocaust, coupled with centuries of persecution, has fostered a national ethos centered on survival and security (Barnett, 1999). This identity profoundly influences Israel's policies, particularly its approach to security and territorial disputes, where any concession is often viewed through the lens of existential threat (Maoz, 2006).

On the other hand, the Palestinian identity is equally shaped by a history of displacement, occupation, and resistance. The collective memory of the Nakba, or

"catastrophe," during which hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were displaced during the creation of Israel in 1948, is central to Palestinian national consciousness. This shared experience of loss and displacement has fostered a strong sense of national identity among Palestinians, fueling their demand for self-determination and statehood. The ongoing occupation of the West Bank and the blockade of Gaza are seen not merely as political issues but as ongoing assaults on Palestinian identity and existence (Said, 1979).

The Israel-Palestine conflict is also a struggle over competing historical narratives. For Israelis, the creation of a Jewish state in what they consider their historical homeland is seen as a fulfillment of a long-standing national aspiration (Khalidi, 1997) This narrative legitimizes Israel's existence and its territorial claims. For Palestinians, however, the establishment of Israel is synonymous with the loss of their homeland and the beginning of a protracted struggle for justice and return. These competing narratives are not just stories of the past but are actively constructed and reinforced through education, media, and political discourse, shaping the attitudes and actions of both sides (Adwan 2004).

The role of the United States in this conflict is also deeply intertwined with issues of identity and strategic interests. The US has long been a close ally of Israel, and this relationship is partly rooted in shared democratic values and historical ties. However, it is also shaped by strategic considerations, as Israel is seen as a key partner in countering regional threats and promoting stability in the Middle East. This relationship is further reinforced by domestic political factors, including the influence of the pro-Israel lobby and the support of evangelical Christian groups, which see the survival of Israel as part of a larger religious narrative (Pappé, 2006).

At the same time, the US attempts to navigate its role as a mediator in the peace process, balancing its support for Israel with its broader interests in regional stability and addressing Palestinian aspirations. This role is a product of a constructed perception of the US as a neutral mediator, despite its close ties with Israel. The US's involvement in peace negotiations, such as the Oslo Accords, is driven by the belief that it can help bring about a resolution to the conflict, even as its actions are often seen as biased by Palestinians and other regional actors (Gorenberg, 2002).

Media and public opinion play a significant role in shaping the perceptions and policies of the US regarding the Israel-Palestine conflict. Constructivism highlights how these social constructs influence the political climate and, consequently, the decisions made by

policymakers. The narratives presented in the media, the framing of events, and the public discourse in the US can all impact the direction of US foreign policy in the region (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007)

Constructivism offers a nuanced understanding of the Israel-Palestine conflict and the role of the United States by highlighting the importance of identities, narratives, and social constructs. These elements are not merely background factors but are central to the actions and interactions of the states and actors involved. Through the lens of constructivism, we can see how the deeply ingrained beliefs and identities of Israelis, Palestinians, and Americans shape the course of this enduring conflict and the efforts to resolve it (Quandt, 2005).

The Israel-Palestine conflict has been regarded as a matter of great significance and pride for the Arab population residing in the Middle East region. However, the prolonged duration of successive wars has significantly eroded the Arab population's confidence. Gradually, they have come to see that the conflict primarily affects those Arabs who are directly involved in the conflict, namely the Palestinian Arabs. Egypt played a prominent role in leading the Arab coalition against the Israel during various armed conflicts. The dispute between Egypt and Israel exhibited dissimilarities rather than complete congruence, as it mostly revolved around tangible interests. Ultimately, this conflict was successfully settled through the Camp David agreements, following negotiations pertaining to the Sinai Peninsula (Tessler, 2009). The fragmentation of Arab identity has resulted in the transformation of the conflict between Arabs and Israelis into the Israel-Palestine conflict. The alteration of identity also resulted in a modification of the conflict. The post-1948 direct social interaction between Israeli and Palestinian communities has significantly influenced the formation and development of their respective identities. The religious identity crises experienced by Israeli and Palestinian people had a significant impact on the social construction of war.

The ongoing crises between the parties involved have posed a significant obstacle to the peace process, resulting in the prolonged and unresolved nature of this war. Notwithstanding the concerted efforts of several international parties to achieve peace, the conflict persisted without a resolution. Resolving material conflicts tends to be comparatively

easier than resolving conflicts rooted in religion or national identity, as the latter sometimes include profound and non-negotiable implications for the nations involved, particularly in relation to religious identity. The resolution of the conflict with the Sinai Peninsula involved Israel's agreement to return the territory, so resolving the material dispute. The lingering obstacle in the peace process might be attributed to the identity clash between Israel and Palestine. This identity conflict has also been triggered by international actors, particularly in US identity politics (Namli, 2018).

The US holds a significant role in the Middle East region and has actively participated in the peace process. Constructivism highlights the role of state interests and preferences in shaping their respective policies. Consequently, the convergence of interests and preferences between the US and Israel has fostered their alliance. The Palestinian population has experienced heightened levels of adversity as a result of the intervention of a third party, namely the US According to (Hopf, 1998); constructivists argue that interest that are derivative of identities play a crucial role in ensuring existence. They contend that a society devoid of identities would be characterized by turmoil, widespread and irreparable uncertainty, and would pose a greater threat than anarchy.

The US and Israel have a longstanding history of security cooperation, which originated during the Cold War era. During this time, the US recognized Israel as a strategic ally in countering Soviet dominance in the Middle East and as a deterrent to Arab nationalism. Despite the evolving global landscape, the underlying strategic rationale for the partnership between the US and Israel remains unchanged. Israel serves as a crucial stabilizing force in the Middle East, effectively countering extremist elements such as political Islam and violent extremism. Furthermore, it has effectively impeded the advancement of nuclear programs in Iraq and Syria, thereby serving as a deterrent against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the region.

Israel remains committed to assisting the US in addressing conventional security challenges. The two nations engage in the exchange of intelligence pertaining to various areas of concern, including terrorism, nuclear proliferation, and political dynamics within the Middle East.

Israel has a steadfast dedication to supporting the US in effectively resolving conventional security problems. The two nations participate in the sharing of intelligence regarding several areas of interest, such as terrorism, nuclear proliferation, and political

dynamics within the Middle East. The military encounters of Israel have had a substantial impact on the US approach to counterterrorism and homeland security. The collaboration between the two countries involves a cooperative endeavor aimed at advancing military technology. This is demonstrated via the combined creation of the David's Sling counter-rocket and Arrow missile defense systems (Eisenstaedt and Pollock, 2012).

The US maintains the perspective that achieving peace between Israel and Palestine is a challenging endeavor, but not an impossible one. The nation has persistently pursued efforts to promote and facilitate the attainment of peace in the region. The US maintains a pro-Israel stance and has provided extensive national and international support to the country. The increasing prominence of pro-Israel inclinations within US policy has been identified as a contributing factor to the election of President Trump, given his alignment with pro-Israel stances. The revelation of the extent of Israel's lobby's participation in US politics has brought this currently concealed fact to light. The Trump administration implemented a significant shift in US foreign policy pertaining to the Middle East with the acknowledgment of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and the subsequent relocation of the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. President Donald Trump released an announcement regarding a peace agreement that is anticipated to significantly alter the dynamics of regional politics in the Middle East. The peace agreement commonly referred to as "Peace to Prosperity," entails the US undertaking tangible measures to implement a viable two-state solution. The agreement has been commonly referred to as the "deal of the century" (Nazir et al., 2022).

US have its own interests in the Middle East mainly it comes under the radar to extract energy resources and not being dependent on their Western competitors. There is also a pivotal role played by Israeli lobby in the perception formation in the US. The US think of herself as a sole supporter of basic human needs, humanitarian rights but only when it comes to their own interests, they use their ideas to would the international politics according to how they need.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1: Research Methodology:

The research methodology is contextual framework for research, the methodology of this study is Qualitative. The Qualitative research is highly detailed and descriptive (Neuman, 2014). The research study is descriptive and explorative in nature. The data is collected from secondary sources such as research articles, books, previous work, journals, official statements available on the internet.

4.1 Research Design:

In this research Qualitative data method for research is used, this study is explorative and descriptive in order to achieve research objectives.

4.3 Instruments:

The research employs several instruments, including official government records, government reports, policy statements, diplomatic cables, and other official materials pertaining to the US engagement in the conflict. In addition, the use of secondary material in this study contributes to its comprehensiveness. This encompasses pertinent scholarly articles, books, and reports that furnish essential background knowledge and contextual understanding of the subject matter.

The utilization of media monitoring and scraping tools is employed to gather news stories, opinion pieces, and comments that are pertinent to the subject matter.

4.4 Data Collection:

This comprises a selection of authoritative records, policy declarations, and reports sourced from various US governmental entities, international organizations, and diplomatic repositories. These materials pertain specifically to the Israel-Palestine conflict within the designated temporal boundaries. The utilization of historical and contemporary materials is employed to get insight into the development of policies and initiatives in the US.

Scholarly sources encompassing news articles, opinion pieces, and analysis are derived from esteemed news outlets, such as newspapers, magazines, and online platforms. This study aims to conduct a comprehensive examination of media content in order to discern patterns, gauge public opinion, and assess the impact of media on US policies. Also, archival

collections and online databases that contain pertinent historical records, treaties, and agreements pertaining to the Israel-Palestine conflict and the involvement of the US are also utilized.

4.5 Data Analysis:

The Thematic data analysis method is employed for the examination of the provided data, Thematic analysis is a qualitative research method used for identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns or themes within data. It involves systematically coding the data to discover recurring ideas, concepts, or topics, providing a detailed understanding of the underlying meanings and insights related to the research question. wherein a comprehensive assessment of the collected data is conducted through various scholarly sources that help to enrich the research and different themes are focused for example US involvement in Middle East's Politics, strategic interest in Israel- Palestine conflict.

For supporting the research questions available scholarly mediums that includes books, research papers, articles, news, reports, and official documentation and fact sheets are used.

ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY:

Chapter 1

Includes the introduction, background of the study, literature review, theoretical framework and research methodology.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 discusses the historical context of US involvement in the conflict and its effect on regional politics.

Chapter 3

This chapter discusses the approach which includes recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital, relocation of the US embassy from (2017-2019).

Chapter 4

This chapter discusses US policy towards the conflict (2019-2023).

Conclusion

CHAPTER TWO

2.1 US INVOLVEMENT IN ISRAEL PALESTINE CONFLICT AND ITS EFFECT ON REGIONAL POLITICS

Historical Background

The foreign policy of the US influences events in all parts of the world. This statement is particularly accurate when applied to the Middle East, an area characterized by frequent turbulence and strategic significance. The US strategy to the Israel Palestine conflict has been shaped by conflicting interests in US-Middle East relations since World War II. On one hand, there has been a growing endorsement of Zionism and the establishment of Israel as a state. On the other hand, there has been a need for access to affordable oil resources and the formation of strong alliances with Arab nations.

These dynamics have evolved alongside the fluctuating concerns over Soviet influence in the region during the Cold War. These tensions have followed a pattern that aligns with consecutive Arab-Israeli conflicts, starting from the war in 1948 and continuing through the international conflicts of 1967 and 1973. Additionally, there have been changes in the ways intervention has occurred in Lebanon, and Palestinian uprisings in the occupied territories and multiple wars in the Gaza Strip (Mearsheimer,2006).

The formulation of US policy has been influenced by conflicting objectives in both domestic and foreign affairs, a gradual acknowledgement of the necessity to address Palestinian national ambitions, and a growing peace process that has involved American diplomats in the role as intermediaries between the involved parties. Amidst the regional turmoil, the involvement

in the war between Israel and the Arab world has persisted into the 21st century, presenting numerous new obstacles.

In 1948, the Balfour Declaration was set to expire, marking the end of Great Britain's control over Palestine. The UN's assumed responsibility for determining the course of action for the fragile territory and ultimately resolved to establish the nation of Israel, specifically as a designated state for Jewish individuals. The proposed nation was intended to encompass the several sacred sites where significant events of the Old Testament took place.

US. President Harry Truman was the inaugural global leader to formally acknowledge Israel as a valid Jewish nation on May 14, 1948, a little eleven minutes after its establishment. His decision was made after extensive deliberation and consultation with the White House personnel, who had divergent perspectives. Several experts believed that establishing a Jewish state was the most appropriate and advantageous reaction to the holocaust, which would also serve American interests. Others held a contrasting perspective, expressing fear that the establishment of a Jewish state would exacerbate the existing turmoil in the region (Macmillan, 2015).

The Bush Administration's endeavor to convert the area into a network of democratic nations has resulted in the emergence of a persistent insurgency in Iraq, a significant escalation in global oil prices, and the occurrence of terrorist bombings in Madrid, London, and Amman. Given the significant implications for numerous stakeholders, it is essential that all nations comprehend the underlying factors that shape the US' Middle East strategy (Kaplan, 2018).

Since the October War in 1973, the US has offered Israel an unparalleled degree of assistance, surpassing the aid given to any other country. Since 1976, it has consistently received the highest amount of direct economic and military aid from the US on a yearly basis.

Additionally, it has been the overall largest beneficiary of aid since World War II. The amount of direct financial assistance provided by the US to Israel exceeds \$140 billion in 2003 dollars.

Israel annually receives over \$3 billion in direct foreign assistance, accounting for approximately 20% of America's foreign aid expenditure. On a per capita basis, the US provides each Israel with a direct subsidy amounting to approximately \$500 annually (Edward, 1988).

In the mid-1970s, a few US officials and international scholars started acknowledging the importance of granting modest rights to the Palestinians. This recognition was influenced by the wider global movement of decolonization. The election of President Jimmy Carter in 1976 played a significant role in solidifying this fundamental change in perspective. The Carter administration used a regional approach, rather than solely focusing on the Cold War, when dealing with Israel and the broader Middle East. They prioritized understanding the localized political dynamics and recognized the importance of directly addressing the Palestinian issue. Carter, a strong advocate for human rights, emphasized that the Israel-Palestine dispute is the central issue in the Arab-Israel conflict and needs to be addressed head-on. In 1977, he became the first US politician to openly advocate for a "Palestinian homeland," emphasizing the necessity of such a territory (Slaim, 2016).

Jimmy Carter extended an invitation to Sadat and Begin to engage in thirteen days of negotiations at the presidential retreat in Camp David. The Camp David accords were achieved on September 17, 1978 and resulted in a formal peace treaty between Egypt and Israel, which was signed by Sadat and Begin on March 26, 1979 (Clarke,2004).

The Camp David agreements consisted of two treaties: one aimed at achieving regional peace and the other focused on establishing a treaty between Israel and Egypt. However, in practice, the Accords resulted in a bilateral peace agreement while postponing discussions on the

Palestinian issue to separate negotiations on autonomy that took place between 1979 and 1982. Carter viewed the conference as a significant diplomatic triumph, while it fell short of his lofty goal to address Palestinian aspirations and resolve the broader Arab-Israel issue (Goldberg,2005).

The Egyptian-Israel peace agreement resulted in the restoration of the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt in exchange for recognition. This relieved military tensions on Israel's southwestern frontier and marked a significant milestone in ending the interstate Arab-Israel conflict. The primary objective was to maintain control over the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem. Approximately five thousand Jewish settlers resided in the occupied areas at the start of Begin's term. However, the number of settlers consistently increased following the Accords, reaching over eighty thousand by the late 1980s. In addition, the agreement entailed a greater amount of military and economic assistance to Israel compared to prior administrations, totaling \$10.2 billion over a span of four years, with somewhat less than half of the amount provided as grants. Egypt and Saudi Arabia were also provided with military assistance and security assurances, underscoring the expanding range of American friends in the Middle East (Guttman, 2000).

The Palestinian unrest in the occupied territories escalated following the PLO's removal from Beirut, exacerbated by ongoing attempts to marginalize the national movement. In December 1987, the Israel occupation of the Palestinian lands, which had lasted for twenty years, was widely regarded as unacceptable. As a result, unplanned demonstrations broke out in the Gaza Strip and then extended to the West Bank. The commencement of the first Intifada, also known as "shaking off," served as a clear demonstration that Israel's treatment of the Palestinians could not be disregarded (Aruri, 2003).

The Madrid Conference was initiated by Bush and Baker in October 1991. The gathering was the inaugural occasion that representatives from Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and the Palestinian Territories convened in person. The Palestinians were members of a collaborative Jordanian delegation that closely coordinated with the PLO leadership in Tunis. However, Israel barred the PLO leadership from attending the conference. President Bush and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev jointly led these direct international negotiations, which were notable for their symbolic importance but did not last long. The majority of negotiations took place in Washington from 1991 to 1993, during which progress was slow and the same unresolved issues from the Camp David talks continued to be a challenge fifteen years later (Haaretz, 2004).

The PLO leadership had started holding covert negotiations with Israel authorities in Oslo, the capital of Norway, without the delegates in Washington knowing. The Oslo Accords, signed on September 13, 1993, on the south lawn of the White House, were regarded as a significant advancement in resolving the Israel-Palestinian conflict. William Jefferson Clinton, the ex-governor of Arkansas who having established strong connections with Israel Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, extended an invitation to the parties to attend the signing event in Washington. The Accords initiated a multi-year peace process between Israel and the PLO, with both parties mutually recognizing each other (Norman,1995).

2.2 Containment to Intervention: The Truman Doctrine and its Influence on US Foreign policy

The Truman Doctrine, proclaimed by President Harry S. Truman in 1947, is widely recognized as a fundamental principle of US foreign policy throughout the Cold War period. The concept fundamentally expressed a dedication to restraining the proliferation of communism and Soviet influence on a global scale. Although initially centered on Europe, with a special

emphasis on Greece and Turkey, its consequences had a much broader reach, greatly influencing US engagement in the Middle East.

The Truman Doctrine represented a change in US foreign policy, transitioning from a policy of isolationism to one of international interventionism. This shift was motivated by the perceived danger of Soviet expansionism. The US established itself as the leader of the free world and initiated a worldwide effort to restrain the Soviet Union by committing to offer military and economic support to countries facing communist aggression. This policy gained traction in the Middle East due to the region's strategic importance and the creation of new geopolitical divisions (Shalaim,2001).

An important result of the Truman Doctrine in the Middle East was the increased backing for Israel. The founding of the State of Israel in 1948 took place during a tumultuous period characterized by the Arab-Israel war and the wider competition for regional supremacy. Amidst the Cold War, the US perceived Israel as a possible partner in its endeavors to counteract Soviet influence in the area. This impression was strengthened by Israel's adherence to Western principles and its geopolitical positioning as a barrier against Soviet-supported Arab nations.

The recognition of Israel by the Truman administration and the following provision of military aid played a vital role in supporting the newly established state, allowing it to effectively confront foreign challenges and strengthen its position in the area. The Truman Doctrine established a strong strategic alliance between the US and Israel, marked by military aid, intelligence collaboration, and diplomatic backing. Furthermore, the Truman Doctrine paved the way for expanded US engagement in Middle Eastern issues, as the region gained greater significance in the global conflict between the Eastern and Western blocs. The Cold War competition between the US and the Soviet Union manifested itself in proxy battles in the

Middle East, including the Suez Crisis of 1956 and the Lebanese Civil War of the 1970s and 1980s. US backing for Israel in every case acted as a barrier to Soviet expansionism and communist influence, significantly influencing the dynamics of regional politics for many years to follow (khalidi,2020).

The lasting impact of the Truman Doctrine may still be seen in current US Middle East policy, as demonstrated by the ongoing partnership between the US and Israel, as well as the overall patterns of conflict and cooperation in the region. Despite changes in the geopolitical scene since the Cold War, including the emergence of new actors and problems, the US continues to prioritize the principles of containment and strategic partnership in its involvement in the Middle East.

The Truman Doctrine had a significant impact on US policy in the Middle East, influencing the direction of regional affairs and solidifying the strategic alliance between the US and Israel. The doctrine established the Middle East as a battleground in the Cold War and emphasized the need to control Soviet influence. This set the stage for extensive US engagement in the region, which had a long-lasting impact on its geopolitical landscape (Cohen, 1990).

This led to increased US support for Israel, both diplomatically and militarily. The establishment of Israel in 1948 occurred against the backdrop of the Cold War, with the US viewing Israel as a strategic ally in the region and a bulwark against Soviet influence. The Truman administration's decision to recognize Israel and provide military aid bolstered the fledgling state's ability to defend itself against external threats, including attacks from neighboring Arab states. This support not only shaped the military balance of power in the region but also emboldened Israel leaders in their approach to the conflict with the Palestinians (Morris,2001).

Moreover, US support for Israel during the Cold War era contributed to the entrenchment of the conflict and the perpetuation of Palestinian displacement and statelessness. The Truman Doctrine, with its emphasis on containment and anti-communism, aligned US interests with those of Israel, often at the expense of Palestinian aspirations for statehood and self-determination.

The Cold War rivalry also fueled regional proxy conflicts that exacerbated tensions between Israelis and Palestinians. The Arab-Israel wars of 1948, 1967, and 1973 were not only about territorial disputes but also reflected broader geopolitical dynamics shaped by the Cold War competition between the US and the Soviet Union. In the aftermath of the Six-Day War in 1967, which resulted in Israel's occupation of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem, US support for Israel intensified, further complicating efforts to resolve the conflict. The strategic significance of these territories in the context of the Cold War led the US to prioritize Israel security interests over Palestinian rights, contributing to the perpetuation of the occupation and the denial of Palestinian statehood (Melvyn,1999).

The legacy of the Truman Doctrine continues to influence US policy in the Middle East and its approach to the Israel-Palestine conflict. The close strategic partnership between the US and Israel, forged during the Cold War, remains a defining feature of US Middle East policy, shaping diplomatic initiatives, military assistance, and peace efforts in the region.

The Truman Doctrine played a significant role in shaping US involvement in the Israel-Palestine conflict during the Cold War era and beyond. By aligning US interests with those of Israel and framing the conflict within the context of the Cold War, the doctrine contributed to the entrenchment of the conflict and the perpetuation of Palestinian suffering. Understanding this

historical context is essential for comprehending the complexities of the Israel-Palestine conflict and for crafting a sustainable and just resolution moving forward.

2.3 AIPAC's Advocacy: Catalyst in US Foreign Policy Towards Israel and the Middle East

The pro-Israel lobby, specifically the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), and domestic political factors, such as the involvement of American Jewish and Evangelical Christian communities, have played a substantial role in shaping US Middle East policy. This influence is particularly evident in the support for Israel and its impact on the Israel-Palestine conflict. Established in 1951, AIPAC has become a highly important lobbying organization in Washington, promoting policies that are in line with Israel's interests and fostering a robust connection between the US and Israel. AIPAC's impact arises from its capacity to rally support from the general public, utilize campaign donations strategically, and foster connections with legislators from many political affiliations. AIPAC's primary approach involves actively participating in political fundraising and making campaign contributions. AIPAC exerts significant influence in defining the composition of Congress and affecting legislative agendas by endorsing politicians who consistently display strong support for Israel. Politicians, cognizant of the significance of AIPAC's endorsement, frequently synchronize their stances on matters pertaining to Israel with the organization's objectives in order to obtain electoral and financial support (Straus,2007).

In addition, AIPAC's lobbying endeavors encompass more than just Capitol Hill, as they also involve advocacy campaigns, media outreach, and grassroots mobilization. AIPAC leverages its extensive network of supporters and activists to magnify its message and exert influence on policymakers, urging them to embrace policies that are favorable to Israel. The organization's yearly policy conference, which is attended by a large number of activists and

powerful individuals, functions as a platform for presenting its agenda and mobilizing support for Israel (Waxman,2016).

US Middle East policy is significantly influenced not only by AIPAC, but also by domestic political factors, such as the involvement of American Jewish and Evangelical Christian organizations. The American Jewish community, albeit politically diverse, has consistently and strongly supported Israel, considering it a crucial ally and protector of Jewish security and identity. Jewish-American organizations, in conjunction with AIPAC, promote policies that bolster the relationship between the US and Israel and further Israel's security objectives.

Evangelical Christians, driven by religious convictions and theological interpretations, have become a significant force in US politics, displaying a great affinity towards Israel. A significant number of Evangelicals perceive Israel as fulfilling biblical prophecy and advocate for policies that correspond with Israel's territorial integrity and security. Evangelical voters hold enormous sway inside the Republican Party, exerting a particularly strong impact and shaping the party's stance on Israel-related matters. A powerful alliance has formed between AIPAC, the American Jewish community, and Evangelical Christians, sharing common interests and pressing for strong US backing of Israel. This coalition utilizes its political clout to mold public sentiment, sway decision-makers, and exert influence on US foreign policy choices, particularly those pertaining to the Israel-Palestine conflict (Stephen, 2009).

Nevertheless, it is crucial to acknowledge that although AIPAC and these domestic constituents exert considerable influence on US Middle East policy, they are not the exclusive factors that determine it. The US' approach to Israel and the wider Middle East is shaped by

strategic factors, geopolitical dynamics, diplomatic necessities, and the overall context of American foreign policy goals.

Ultimately, the pro-Israel lobby, notably AIPAC, and domestic political factors, such as the influence of American Jewish and Evangelical Christian communities, have played a crucial role in determining US Middle East policy, namely in terms of supporting Israel.

Comprehending the intricate relationship between these factors is crucial for understanding the intricacies of US-Israel relations and their influence on the Israel-Palestine conflict.

The Lobby uses two broad techniques to advance US. backing for Israel. Firstly, it exerts substantial sway in Washington, exerting pressure on both Congress and the Executive branch to consistently back Israel. Irrespective of the personal opinions of a legislator or decision-maker, the Lobby endeavors to promote the idea that backing Israel is the politically advantageous option. Furthermore, the Lobby endeavors to guarantee that discussions regarding Israel present it in a favorable manner, achieved by the repetition of misconceptions about Israel and its establishment, as well as by promoting Israel's perspective in contemporary policy debates. The objective is to hinder the impartial consideration of critical analysis concerning Israel inside the political sphere.

Exerting control on the argument is crucial in ensuring US. support, as an open and honest discussion about US-Israel ties could potentially sway Americans towards endorsing an alternative approach (Mearsheimer, 2006).

2.3.1 Media Influence: Strategies and its Effect on Public Discourse

The Lobby works to change public opinions about Israel and the Middle East in addition to directly affecting government policy. It is against an open discussion on matters pertaining to

Israel since it could make Americans doubt the degree of support they now offer. Pro-Israel organizations thus put a lot of effort into influencing the media, think tanks, and academics since these organizations are essential in forming public opinion.

The mainstream media largely adopts the viewpoint of the Lobby on Israel because most American pundits support Israel. "People who cannot imagine criticizing Israel" dominate the discussion among Middle East analysts, claims writer Eric Alterman. Sometimes guest opinion pieces opposing Israel policies are published in newspapers, but the balance of opinion is obviously in favor of the opposite side (Alterman, 2002).

The editorials of main newspapers reflect this pro-Israel tilt. Late Wall Street Journal editor Robert Bartley once said, "Shamir, Sharon, Bibi – whatever those guys want is pretty much fine by me." Remarkably, the Journal routinely publishes editorials that are vehemently pro-Israel, as do other well-known publications like The Chicago Sun-Times and The Washington Times. Furthermore, ardently defending Israel at every opportunity are periodicals like Commentary, the New Republic, and the Weekly Standard. Even newspapers like the New York Times include editorial bias. Though not uniformly, the Times does occasionally condemn Israel actions and acknowledge that the Palestinians have valid complaints (Frankel, 1999).

Journalists try to be neutral and because it is hard to chronicle events in the occupied territories without acknowledging Israel's real actions, the media reports news events involving Israel with a little more even hand than editorial commentary does. The Lobby coordinates boycotts, demonstrations, and letter writing campaigns against news sources whose material it deems to be anti-Israel in order to deter negative reporting on Israel. A CNN executive claimed that occasionally he receives 6,000 emails a day alleging that a piece is anti-Israel. In a similar vein, in May 2003 the Pro-Israel Committee for Accurate Middle East Reporting in America

(CAMERA) planned rallies outside of 33 National Public Radio stations and attempted to persuade donors to stop supporting NPR until its Middle East coverage shifted to be more favorable to Israel (Beinin, 2006).

These initiatives allegedly cost WBUR, an NPR station in Boston, almost \$1 million in donations. Congressman friends of Israel have also put pressure on NPR, requesting an internal audit and increased supervision over its Middle East coverage (Besser, 2003).

These elements contribute to the reason that the American media hardly ever challenges Washington's ties with Israel, rarely criticizes Israel policy, and hardly ever talks about the Lobby's enormous impact on American policy.

2.4 The Pursuit of Regional Transformation: Priorities in US Middle East Policy

The Iraq war was not intended to be an expensive and difficult situation to escape from. Instead, it was designed as the initial phase of a broader strategy to restructure the Middle East. This ambitious strategy was a significant deviation from previous US. policy, and the Lobby and Israel played crucial roles in supporting this change. This idea was unequivocally expressed in a prominent article on the front page of the Wall Street Journal following the commencement of the Iraq war. The headline succinctly captures the essence: "President's Vision: Transforming not only the government but an entire region: The objective is to establish a pro-US., democratic territory with influences from Israel and neo-conservatism (Leggett, 2003).

Pro-Israel advocates have harbored a longstanding desire to increase the direct involvement of the US. military in the Middle East in order to enhance the security of Israel. However, their achievements in this area were restricted during the Cold War, since the US functioned as a "off-shore balancer" in the region. The majority of US. military forces assigned to the Middle East, such as the Rapid Deployment Force, were strategically positioned beyond

the visible range and protected from potential danger. Washington strategically maintained a beneficial equilibrium of power by manipulating and pitting regional nations against each other. This is why the Reagan Administration provided backing to Saddam Hussein in his conflict against revolutionary Iran during the Iran-Iraq war (1980-88) (Greenberger, 2006).

Following the first Gulf War, the Clinton Administration implemented a policy known as "dual containment." The proposal advocated deploying significant US. military personnel in the area with the purpose of restraining both Iran and Iraq, rather than relying on one to monitor the other. Martin Indyk, the originator of dual containment, introduced this approach in May 1993 at the pro-Israel think tank WINEP. He subsequently put it into action as the Director for Near East and South Asian Affairs at the National Security Council (Indyk, 1998).

There was considerable dissatisfaction with dual containment by the mid-1990s, because it made the US the mortal enemy of two countries who also hated each other, and it forced Washington to bear the burden of containing both of them, the Lobby worked actively in Congress to save dual containment Pressed by AIPAC and other pro-Israel forces, Clinton toughened up the policy in the spring of 1995 by imposing an economic embargo on Iran. But AIPAC et al wanted more. The result was the 1996 Iran and Libya Sanctions Act, which imposed sanctions on any foreign companies investing more than \$40 million to develop petroleum resources in Iran or Libya (Conry,1994).

As Ze'ev Schiff, the military correspondent for Ha'aretz, noted at the time, "Israel is but a tiny element in the big scheme, but one should not conclude that it cannot influence those within the Beltway." By the late 1990s, however, the neoconservatives were arguing that dual containment was not enough and that regime change in Iraq was now essential. By toppling Saddam and turning Iraq into a vibrant democracy, they argued, the US would trigger a far-

reaching process of change throughout the Middle East. This line of thinking, of course, was evident in the “Clean Break” study the neoconservatives wrote for Netanyahu (Krauthammer, 2002).

They envision a domino effect, with the fall of Saddam Hussein followed by that of Israel’s other enemies. Along with these leaders will disappear terror and weapons of mass destruction. In short, Israel leaders, neoconservatives, and the Bush Administration all saw war with Iraq as the first step in an ambitious campaign to remake the Middle East. And in the first flush of victory, they turned their sights on Israel’s other regional opponents.

2.5 Strategic Alliances: US-Israel Military Cooperation and Defense Partnerships

Strong bilateral ties between the US and Israel have survived for a number of reasons, including strong domestic US support for Israel and its security; common Middle Eastern strategic objectives; an affirmed shared commitment to democratic values; and historical ties originating from US support for Israel’s founding in 1948. One of the main forces establishing and strengthening these links has been US. foreign aid. Long seen by many politicians and US. officials as an essential partner in the area, US. aid packages for Israel have been consistent with this assessment. Since the 1948 founding of Israel, some American citizens have worked to build American support for the country. Since the 1973 Yom Kippur War, supporters of Israel have organized, broad-based domestic efforts to promote bipartisan support in Congress for the bilateral relationship, including for US. aid to Israel. Certain of the leading lobbying groups working on this topic, such (CUFI) and the (AIPAC), clearly advocate American security assistance to Israel (Samelson,1990).

Israel is the largest cumulative recipient of US. foreign assistance since World War II. The US has provided Israel \$158 billion in bilateral assistance and missile defense funding to

date. At present, almost all US. bilateral aid to Israel is in the form of military assistance; from 1971 to 2007, Israel also received significant economic assistance. In 2016, the US. and Israel governments signed their third 10-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on military aid, covering FY2019 to FY2028. Under the terms of the MOU, the US pledged to provide—subject to congressional appropriation—\$38 billion in military aid (\$33 billion in Foreign Military Financing (FMF) grants plus \$5 billion in missile defense appropriations) to Israel (Schmitt, 2023).

Israel is the first international operator of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, the Department of Defense's fifth-generation stealth aircraft, considered to be the most technologically advanced fighter jet ever made. To date, Israel has purchased 50 F-35s in three separate contracts, funded with US. assistance, and has taken delivery of 36. For FY2023, Congress authorized \$520 million for joint US.-Israel defense programs (including \$500 million for missile defense) in the FY2023 James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act. Per the terms of the MOU, Congress appropriated \$3.8 billion for Israel (FMF and missile defense) in the FY2023 Consolidated Appropriations Act, and added \$98.58 million in funding for other cooperative defense and nondefense programs (Lappin,2022).

The US and Israel have maintained strong bilateral relations based on factors such as robust domestic US. support for Israel and its security, shared strategic goals in the Middle East, an avowed mutual commitment to democratic values, and historical ties dating back to US. support for the creation of Israel in 1948. US. foreign aid has been a major component in cementing and reinforcing these ties (Ahronheim,2022).

Some US. citizens have worked to cultivate US. support for Israel since its creation in 1948, and since the 1973 Yom Kippur War, advocates for Israel have engaged in organized,

broad-based domestic efforts to foster bipartisan support in Congress for the bilateral relationship, including for US. aid to Israel.

Total US. foreign aid obligations to Israel from 1946-2023 are estimated at an estimated \$260 billion. Major advocacy organizations, such as the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and Christians United for Israel (CUFI), express unequivocal support for US. security assistance to Israel. J Street supports continued security assistance at current levels while arguing that US. funds should not be used to "trample on Palestinian rights" or "to implement or maintain annexation, the expansion of settlements, the demolition of Palestinian homes or other moves that entrench occupation" in the West Bank (Harel, 2023).

Some political groups that are not focused exclusively on Israel matters have advocated for increased scrutiny of US. military aid to Israel, particularly during the May 2021 conflict in Israel and Gaza. These groups have stimulated debates about possibly conditioning or cutting foreign aid to Israel, or supporting boycotts and sanctions.

Israel's new coalition government may strain relations with the US, as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's inclusion of ultra-nationalist parties in the coalition government he formed in December 2022 may strain relations with the US. Though Biden Administration officials call their commitment to Israel's security "ironclad," some former US. officials have advocated for the Biden Administration to communicate to Israel that while the US will continue to provide military aid, it will restrict the provision of "offensive weapons" for "malign Israel actions in Jerusalem or the occupied territories." Some former Israel officials have argued that US. aid to Israel should remain unconditional given the national security threats Israel faces and its value to US. interests in the Middle East (Ravid, 2022).

US. military aid to Israel has significantly transformed the country's armed forces into one of the most technologically sophisticated militaries in the world, and has also helped Israel build its domestic defense industry, which now ranks as one of the top global arms exporters. Israel defense companies, such as Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI), Rafael, and Elbit Systems, export nearly 70% of their products. Rather than producing large-scale hardware, Israel companies generally export advanced technological products (such as missile defense systems, unmanned aerial vehicles, cybersecurity products, radar, and electronic communications systems) to numerous customers globally (Zion, 2019).

From 2017 to 2021, Israel was the 10th largest arms exporter worldwide, accounting for 2.4% of world deliveries. As Israel has become a global leader in certain niche defense technologies, Israel defense exports to the US. market have grown substantially. According to one report, the US. military purchased \$1.5 billion worth of Israel equipment in 2019, representing a five-fold increase from two decades before. The US. has purchased, among other items, the following Israel defense articles: Trophy active protection systems for M1 Abrams tanks, enhanced night-vision goggles, laser range finders for the US. Marines, helmets for F-35 fighter pilots, wings for the F-35, and a system of towers, electronic sensors, radars, and cameras for use along the US-Mexican border. India is the largest buyer of Israel defense equipment (Kingsley, 2022).

CHAPTER THREE

3.1 US FOREIGN POLICY SHIFT FROM (2017- 2019)

From the beginning of the Israel-Palestinian conflict, Jerusalem has been the central site of disagreement, representing the intricate and deeply ingrained conflicts between Israel and Palestinians. This city has great historical importance in terms of religion, culture, and politics for both groups, with each claiming legitimate ownership over it (Hassan, 2017). In the middle of this complex situation, the US' decision to acknowledge Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and move its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem represented a notable change in US foreign policy during the Trump administration.

The Israel-Palestinian conflict, marked by prolonged violence, diplomatic talks, and unsuccessful peace attempts, has remained unresolved despite multiple international endeavors. The status of Jerusalem, a city treasured by Jews, Christians, and Muslims alike, is a key factor in this dispute (Khalidi, 2019). Jerusalem possesses significant religious landmarks such as the Western Wall, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, and the Dome of the Rock. These places carry deep spiritual significance, making Jerusalem a symbolic and emotionally significant place for both Israel and Palestinians (Shakdiel, 2018).

The Trump administration's declaration in December 2017 to acknowledge Jerusalem as the capital of Israel deviated from the established policy of the US and generated extensive debate and criticism (Tharoor, 2017). President Donald Trump's declaration, in accordance with a pledge made during his campaign, disrupted long-standing diplomatic norms that saw the status of Jerusalem as a matter to be settled through negotiations between Israel and Palestinians (Sanger & Haberman, 2017). The US deviated from the international community and defied

established conventions and standards regarding the Israel-Palestinian issue by unilaterally acknowledging Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

The decision to transfer the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem intensified tensions in the region and received strong condemnation from global leaders, who cautioned about its destabilizing effects (Landler & Friedman, 2018). Critics contended that the action weakened the chances of reaching a mutually agreed settlement and compromised the US' position as an unbiased mediator in the peace process (Barnes, 2018). In addition, it sparked demonstrations throughout the Middle East and other regions, underscoring the strong emotions associated with the status of Jerusalem and the Palestinian issue.

The Trump administration's decision to acknowledge Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and move the US embassy is indicative of a broader change in US foreign policy, marked by a more explicitly pro-Israel position (Dershowitz, 2019). During his presidency, Trump exhibited a strong alliance with Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and implemented policies that prioritized Israel interests. This included the decision to withdraw from the Iran nuclear deal and the efforts to establish diplomatic relations between Israel and various Arab nations (Greenberg, 2020).

The Trump administration defended their choice on Jerusalem by stating that it was acknowledging the existing situation, confirming Israel's control over its capital, and expressing the prerogative of any independent country to determine its own capital (Walt, 2017). Advocates of the decision praised it as a courageous and principled position in favor of the legitimacy and security of Israel (Perez & Liptak, 2017). The US contended that by recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital, they confirmed the historical and biblical connections of the Jewish people to the

city. This decision also indicated a readiness to depart from diplomatic stagnation in order to actively pursue peace.

Nevertheless, many perceived the action as imprudent and detrimental, contending that it weakened the chances of achieving a two-state resolution and exacerbated tensions in an already unstable region (Lynch, 2018). The US' preemptive recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital has been cautioned against due to its potential to bias future discussions and alienate the Palestinians, so further diminishing trust and confidence in the peace process (Blumenthal, 2017). In addition, they cautioned that the decision had the potential to incite violence and instability, disrupting the ongoing attempts to attain a lasting and equitable solution to the dispute.

This chapter aims to analyze the consequences of the Trump administration's choice to acknowledge Jerusalem as Israel's capital and move the US embassy. It will examine how this decision impacts the Israel-Palestinian conflict, regional dynamics, and US foreign policy. This chapter seeks to offer insights into the wider consequences of this crucial time in the Middle East peace process by examining diplomatic, political, and strategic aspects.

3.2 Jerusalem: A Historical Flashpoint in the Israel-Palestine Conflict

The Israel-Palestine conflict is a long-lasting and highly disputed conflict in recent history, with Jerusalem as its focal point. Comprehending the historical backdrop of Jerusalem in relation to this war is essential for fully understanding the intricate and profound nature of the issues at hand.

Jerusalem is of great religious importance to Jews, Christians, and Muslims. It is highly respected as the location of the First and Second Jewish Temples, the Western Wall, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, and the Dome of the Rock. The city's identity and symbols have been

profoundly influenced by its long-standing religious connections, which have existed for thousands of years (Khalidi, 2007).

After the Ottoman Empire fell apart following World War I, Jerusalem was placed under British authority as a result of the Mandate for Palestine. During this time, there was an increase in tensions between Jewish and Arab communities. These tensions were caused by conflicting national aspirations and changes in population due to Jewish immigration (Segev, 2001).

In 1947, the UN put out a partition plan to separate Palestine into distinct Jewish and Arab governments. According to this proposal, Jerusalem was classified as a *corpus separatum*, which means it would be an international zone under the jurisdiction of the UN. Nevertheless, the proposal was declined by Arab leaders, resulting in the outbreak of the 1948 Arab-Israel War and the subsequent formation of the State of Israel. Jerusalem was partitioned, with Israel exercising sovereignty over the western portion and Jordan occupying the eastern portion, which encompassed the Old City (Morris, 2001).

Jerusalem's status continued to be a central subject of contention after the 1948 war. The year 1967 witnessed escalating tensions that ultimately culminated in the outbreak of the Six-Day War between Israel and its Arab adversaries. Israel achieved military success and took control of East Jerusalem, including the Old City, incorporating it into its territory, although this action is not acknowledged by the international community (Gelvin, 2007).

The international community has extensively opposed Israel's annexation of East Jerusalem, viewing it as a breach of international law and UN resolutions. Resolution 242 of the UN Security Council was adopted, which demanded the removal of Israel military personnel from the lands that were taken over during the Six-Day War, including East Jerusalem.

Nevertheless, Israel has retained authority over the city, growing Jewish colonies and claimed complete rule over Jerusalem as its "perpetual and indivisible capital" (UN, 1967).

The Palestinians perceive East Jerusalem as the capital of their prospective nation and refuse to accept Israel dominance over the city. The Palestinian Authority is actively pursuing international recognition of East Jerusalem as the capital of a sovereign Palestinian state. Additionally, they are advocating for the right of Palestinian refugees who were displaced during the conflicts of 1948 and 1967 to return to their homeland.

The status of Jerusalem is a highly disputed matter in the Israel-Palestine conflict, encompassing conflicting assertions of land ownership, political control, and religious significance rooted in long-standing historical and theological traditions. The conflict resolution efforts have encountered obstacles due to divergent views on the future of Jerusalem, with neither party prepared to make concessions on their fundamental stances (Rabinovich, 2017).

Multiple global endeavors have been undertaken to tackle the situation of Jerusalem and aid a resolution to the conflict. These endeavors have encompassed peace negotiations, diplomatic discussions, and suggestions for a two-state resolution with Jerusalem serving as the mutually shared capital of both Israel and Palestine. Nevertheless, achieving progress has proven to be difficult, as peace efforts have consistently encountered obstacles related to matters such as borders, security, refugees, and the status of Jerusalem (Quandt, 2005).

The ongoing dispute over the status of Jerusalem has been a significant factor in the repeated outbreaks of violence and instability in the region, such as the Palestinian uprisings known as intifadas and military actions carried out by Israel. Jerusalem's disputed status, characterized by its sacred places and religious significance, has turned it into a focal point for

tensions and confrontations, frequently leading to devastating casualties and extensive hardship (Morris,2011).

The prolonged dispute over Jerusalem has resulted in severe humanitarian ramifications for both Israelis and Palestinians, such as forced displacement, economic adversity, and limitations on mobility and availability of crucial services. The implementation of walls and checkpoints in and around Jerusalem has intensified divisions and impeded the chances of achieving peace and reconciliation.

The status of Jerusalem has profound ramifications for regional stability and global diplomacy. The acknowledgment of Jerusalem as the official capital of Israel by certain states, particularly the US, has generated controversy and elicited disapproval from other countries, thereby adding complexity to the ongoing efforts to find a resolution to the issue.

The cultural richness and religious diversity of Jerusalem emphasize the importance of conserving its historical landmarks and fostering interfaith dialogue and mutual respect. Political tensions and conflicting assertions of heritage have impeded efforts to protect the cultural and religious importance of Jerusalem.

Although the Israel-Palestine issue, particularly the status of Jerusalem, is marked by difficult hurdles and deep disagreements, there is still a little indication of optimism for a peaceful resolution. Diplomatic efforts, local movements, and global pressure persist in promoting discussions, concessions, and acknowledgment, thus creating a path towards a future when Jerusalem represents harmony and a common cultural legacy (Gordon, 2020).

The active participation of the international community, which includes regional actors, global powers, and multilateral organizations, will be essential in attaining a fair and enduring peace in Jerusalem and the wider Middle East area. By making coordinated endeavors to tackle

the fundamental reasons behind the conflict, encourage open communication, and provide assistance for actions that foster trust, it is possible to establish a solid basis for a long-lasting peace process (UN, 2023).

The status of Jerusalem is a highly disputed matter in the Israel-Palestine conflict, which is influenced by significant historical, theological, and geopolitical conflicts. To address the issue of Jerusalem's future, it is necessary to have bold and decisive leaders who engage in sincere discussions and demonstrate a strong dedication to fairness, healing, and equal consideration of the rights and desires of all parties involved (Bennis, 2012). The fulfilment of the promise of peace and prosperity for the people of Jerusalem and the entire area can only be achieved via collaborative action and shared endeavor.

3.3 Regional Dynamics: US foreign policy and Israel Palestine conflict

The Trump administration's strategy towards the Israel-Palestine conflict was significantly shaped by its attempts to utilize regional factors and relationships to achieve a resolution. The current administration's shift from earlier methods is obvious in its prioritization of establishing alliances with key regional parties, namely Gulf Arab governments. This approach is considered a fundamental aspect of the administration's strategy towards the conflict (Smith, 2018).

Since the beginning of his presidency, Donald Trump aimed to establish stronger connections with Gulf Arab nations, including Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Qatar (Goldberg, 2019). The motivation behind these endeavors sprang from a confluence of geopolitical objectives, encompassing the need to counteract Iranian influence in the area, alongside economic factors such as the need to facilitate arms trade and capitalize on investment

prospects.

An essential component of the Trump administration's approach was its endeavor to secure the assistance of Arab states in resolving the Israel-Palestine conflict. The administration's endorsement of the "outside-in" approach, as demonstrated, aimed to prioritize the establishment of stronger relations between Israel and Arab governments before tackling the fundamental roots of the conflict (Berman, 2018).

The administration's strategy towards the conflict was intimately connected to its wider regional policy, including its endeavors to isolate Iran and counteract its disruptive actions in the Middle East (Cunningham, 2017). The Trump administration aimed to establish a coalition of regional partners by aligning itself as a strong supporter of Israel and fostering stronger relationships with Arab states. This coalition was intended to give backing for the administration's peace endeavors (Fisher, 2020).

Jared Kushner, who is President Trump's son-in-law and senior advisor, played a key role in the administration's regional strategy for the Israel-Palestine conflict. Kushner, who was assigned the responsibility of supervising the administration's endeavors to facilitate a peace agreement, stressed the need of regional collaboration and endeavored to establish a coalition of Arab nations eager to interact with Israel (Hersh, 2019).

The Trump administration's focus on regional partnerships was also evident in its handling of significant regional hotspots, like the Yemen conflict and the current crisis in Syria (Jones, 2018). The administration aimed to establish a favorable regional setting by aligning with Gulf Arab states and projecting itself as a counterbalance to Iran. This strategy was intended to allow progress on the Israel-Palestine conflict (Khalidi, 2019).

Nevertheless, the administration's strategy of addressing the conflict on a regional level encountered substantial obstacles and constraints. The Trump administration's move to acknowledge Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and transfer the US Embassy to the city has generated significant opposition in the Arab world, despite its attempts to strengthen relations with Arab states. This decision has undermined the administration's credibility as an impartial mediator in the peace process (Levitz, 2018).

Moreover, the administration's dependence on Gulf Arab states as intermediaries in the peace process has sparked worries regarding their capacity to adequately represent Palestinian interests. Although many Gulf Arab powers, notably as Saudi Arabia and the UAE, showed endorsement for the administration's peace initiatives, Qatar, on the other hand, maintained a skeptical stance and maintained stronger connections with Palestinian leadership (Mansour, 2020).

The Trump administration's strategy for the Israel-Palestine conflict was influenced by wider geopolitical factors, such as the normalization agreements between Israel and various Arab states facilitated by the administration (Nasser, 2020). Although widely recognized as significant accomplishments, these agreements also generated contention and censure from Palestinian leaders, who alleged that the states involved had betrayed the Palestinian cause (Oren, 2019).

Throughout its term, the Trump administration persisted in its pursuit of a regional approach to the Israel-Palestine conflict, while facing various hurdles. In January 2020, the administration's endeavors reached its peak with the introduction of the "Peace to Prosperity" plan. This plan presented a structure for resolving the conflict, with a focus on economic growth and collaboration across the regions (Pfeffer, 2020).

Ultimately, the Trump administration's strategy towards the Israel-Palestine conflict focused on the importance of regional dynamics and alliances. This was demonstrated by their attempts to strengthen relationships with Gulf Arab governments and establish themselves as a counterbalance to Iran. Although these endeavors achieved certain diplomatic advancements, they also encountered substantial obstacles and constraints, highlighting the intricacy of resolving one of the most persistent conflicts in the Middle East.

With an emphasis on nontraditional tactics and interpersonal connections, the Trump administration's approach to the Israel-Palestine conflict also markedly deviated from conventional diplomatic norms. Because the two leaders have similar views on security and regional stability, President Trump's close relationship with Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has a significant influence on US policy towards Israel (Rosner, 2018).

Apart from prioritizing regional alliances, the Trump administration also aimed to leverage the evolving political landscape in Palestine. As an impediment to peace talks, the administration endorsed efforts to isolate Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas in favor of conversing with other Palestinian officials who were seen to be more receptive to US interests (Sullivan, 2019).

A major change in language was also observed in the Trump administration's approach to the Israel-Palestine conflict, with senior officials taking a more pro-Israel stance than in prior administrations. This was made clear by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's claim, which deviated from the US's long-standing stance on the matter, that Israel settlements in the West Bank were not inherently unlawful under international law (Tilley, 2019).

There were internal disagreements inside the State Department on the administration's approach to the Israel-Palestine conflict, as well as opposition from seasoned diplomats. Career

diplomats have voiced worries about the administration's apparent tilt towards Israel and disrespect for diplomatic norms, expressing fear that these actions will damage US influence and credibility in the region (Vasquez, 2018).

The Trump administration tried multiple times to reopen peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians in spite of these obstacles. In order to gain support for the administration's economic agenda for the Palestinian territories, these efforts included holding high-profile gatherings, such as the Bahrain Economic Workshop in June 2019 (Wehrey, 2020).

Nonetheless, Palestinian officials opposed and questioned the administration's peace initiatives, seeing them as biased and devoid of a sincere commitment to resolving the conflict's underlying issues. The administration's focus on economic development has drawn criticism from Palestinian authorities who see it as a distraction from the fundamental problems of Israel occupation and Palestinian statehood (Xinhua, 2019).

The Trump administration's strategy for resolving the Israel-Palestine problem also touched on larger geopolitical issues, such as its attempts to fortify relations with other regional players like Jordan and Egypt. The Trump administration attempted to use both nations' clout in negotiating previous peace accords between Israel and its Arab neighbors to further its own peace attempts (Yahya, 2019).

Additionally, tensions with Palestinian leadership were heightened and efforts to address the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip and West Bank were made more difficult by the Trump administration's decision to withhold funding from the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) (Zonszein, 2018).

Certain American advocacy groups and progressive senators, who charged that the administration was favoring Israel's interests over Palestinian rights, also criticized the

administration's handling of the Israel-Palestine dispute. The administration's efforts, according to critics, run the risk of strengthening the status quo and extending the violent cycle in the area.

To summarize, the Trump administration's strategy for resolving the Israel-Palestine dispute involved a pro-Israel attitude, unconventional tactics, and regional relationships. The administration attempted to reopen peace talks and deal with the fundamental problems of the conflict, but both domestic and foreign parties severely criticized and challenged its actions.

3.4 Recognition of Jerusalem: A Turning Point in US. Policy

The Trump administration's choice to acknowledge Jerusalem as the capital of Israel was a notable deviation from the historical US stance regarding the Israel-Palestine conflict. In December 2017, President Trump declared that the US would formally acknowledge Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and begin the procedure of moving the US Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem (Erlanger, 2017).

Palestinian officials widely condemned the decision to acknowledge Jerusalem as Israel's capital, perceiving it as a breach of international law and a setback to their ambitions for statehood. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas criticized the action as a "formal announcement of disengagement" from the peace negotiations and urged the global community to oppose it (Kershner, 2017).

The Trump administration's choice to acknowledge Jerusalem as Israel's capital was driven by a blend of circumstances, encompassing domestic political considerations and ideological affinity with pro-Israel elements within the US. President Trump made a commitment during his election campaign to relocate the US Embassy to Jerusalem, and this choice was perceived as a way to fulfill a promise he made to his political supporters (Horowitz, 2017).

The move also demonstrated the administration's strong alliance with Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who had consistently lobbied for global acknowledgment of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. Netanyahu lauded the decision as a "significant achievement" and commended President Trump for his "brave and fair determination".

The Trump administration's choice to acknowledge Jerusalem as the capital of Israel was met with disapproval from a significant portion of the global community. Numerous foreign leaders voiced apprehension regarding the possibility of heightened tensions and violence in the area. A resolution reiterating the international consensus on the status of Jerusalem was overwhelmingly supported by the UN General Assembly, with 128 countries voting in favor of condemning the decision (Chappell, 2017).

Regardless of the criticism, the Trump administration remained resolute in its determination to acknowledge Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and continued with its intentions to move the US Embassy to the city. The US Embassy was relocated to Jerusalem in May 2018, an action that was applauded by Israel authorities but led to demonstrations and confrontations along the Gaza-Israel border (Smith, 2018).

The Trump administration viewed the move of the US Embassy to Jerusalem as a symbolic demonstration of support for Israel and its assertion of the city as its capital. Nevertheless, critics contended that the action undermined endeavors to attain a mutually agreed resolution to the Israel-Palestine dispute and additionally isolated the Palestinians (McCarthy, 2018).

The Trump administration's choice to acknowledge Jerusalem as the capital of Israel also had consequences for the wider Middle East region, particularly in regards to US relations with Arab states. While certain Gulf Arab states, like Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates,

silently endorsed the decision, others, such as Jordan and Egypt, cautioned that it could exacerbate tensions and impede efforts to revive peace negotiations (Nasser, 2017).

Following the decision, the Trump administration aimed to reassure Arab allies and minimize potential negative consequences by emphasizing its dedication to promoting a comprehensive peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians. President Trump affirmed that the acknowledgment of Jerusalem as Israel's capital did not preclude the ultimate status of the city and that the US continued to be dedicated to endorsing a two-state resolution to the conflict (Beaumont, 2017).

The Trump administration's choice to acknowledge Jerusalem as the capital of Israel also had consequences for US relations with the wider global community, specifically regarding its stance on the Israel-Palestinian conflict. Many viewed the move as a deviation from the traditional role of the US as a mediator in the conflict, which led to doubts about the country's capacity to uphold its reputation as an impartial intermediary (Wintour, 2017).

The Trump administration's choice to acknowledge Jerusalem as the capital of Israel elicited a varied response within the US. Some commended it as a courageous action that reaffirmed America's dedication to its ally Israel, while others condemned it as irresponsible and counterproductive. The decision was celebrated by pro-Israel groups as a significant achievement and President Trump was commended for keeping a long-standing commitment (Goldberg, 2017).

Opponents of the decision, on the other hand, contended that it weakened the chances of reaching a mutually agreed resolution to the Israel-Palestine conflict and endangered US interests in the area. The decision was cautioned to potentially exacerbate tensions and violence,

especially among Palestinians who regarded Jerusalem as the capital of their prospective state (Friedman, 2017).

After the announcement, the Trump administration encountered diplomatic obstacles and resistance from certain US allies who disagreed with the decision. France, Germany, and the United Kingdom, among other European countries, have restated their endorsement of the global agreement on the position of Jerusalem and reiterated their dedication to a two-state resolution (Parker, 2017).

The Trump administration's choice to acknowledge Jerusalem as the capital of Israel also had consequences for the peace process, with some analysts voicing apprehension about its potential influence on the feasibility of future negotiations. Several analysts cautioned that the decision may strengthen extremist factions in both Israel and Palestinian society, thereby complicating the process of reaching a mutually acceptable agreement (Horovitz, 2017).

Regardless of the disagreement surrounding the choice, the Trump administration maintained its dedication to its policy of acknowledging Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and seeking a peace agreement that addressed the interests of both Israelis and Palestinians. President Trump asserted that the recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital was a "necessary condition" for achieving peace in the region and reiterated his administration's commitment to brokering a comprehensive agreement (Holland, 2017).

In conclusion, the Trump administration's decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital was a significant and controversial move that had far-reaching implications for the Israel-Palestine conflict and US relations with the broader international community. While lauded by some as a bold reaffirmation of America's commitment to its partner Israel, the decision was

slammed by others as dangerous and unhelpful, raising questions about the US' ability to serve as an impartial mediator in the dispute (Zengerle, 2017).

3.5 US-Led Diplomatic and Peace Processes

The Trump administration employed several diplomatic initiatives and peace attempts in its approach to the Israel-Palestine conflict, with the goal of resolving the lengthy dispute. Despite encountering substantial obstacles and receiving criticism, the administration attempted multiple endeavors to overcome the stalemate and promote the peace process between Israel and the Palestinians. An outstanding diplomatic endeavor during the Trump administration was the introduction of the "Peace to Prosperity" agenda in January 2020. The plan, led by Jared Kushner, President Trump's son-in-law and senior advisor, presented a detailed framework for addressing the Israel-Palestine conflict and fostering economic growth in the Palestinian territories (Kushner, 2020).

The "Peace to Prosperity" plan elicited divergent responses, as Israel leaders embraced it as a constructive stride towards peace, whereas Palestinian leaders categorically dismissed it, citing apprehensions regarding its perceived pro-Israel bias and its omission of crucial Palestinian grievances (Greenberg, 2020). Notwithstanding these objections, the Trump administration maintained its dedication to endorsing the proposal as a feasible means of attaining peace in the region.

Alongside the "Peace to Prosperity" plan, the Trump administration organized a series of prominent summits and meetings with the goal of rejuvenating the peace process. An example of such an event is the Bahrain Economic Workshop in June 2019, where global leaders, corporate executives, and local stakeholders convened to deliberate on economic development strategies for the Palestinian territories (Brice, 2019).

The Trump administration praised the Bahrain workshop as a significant chance to create momentum for peace and prosperity in the region. Nevertheless, Palestinian officials boycotted the initiative, perceiving it as an effort to circumvent fundamental political matters and enforce economic remedies on the Palestinian population (Shubber, 2019). The workshop ultimately did not produce any substantial advancements in the peace process.

Despite encountering obstacles, the Trump administration persisted in seeking diplomatic engagement with Israel and Palestinian leaders in order to promote the progress of the peace process. This involved conducting multiple meetings and talks with important parties, as well as examining different approaches to recommencing negotiations (Cook, 2020).

An outstanding diplomatic accomplishment of the Trump administration was facilitating the establishment of the Abraham Accords, which are a series of agreements that normalized relations between Israel and other Arab states. The agreements, revealed in 2020, were a momentous achievement in Arab-Israel relations and a notable advancement towards regional stability and collaboration (Shihabi, 2020).

The Abraham Accords was facilitated through the Trump administration's endeavors to establish a coalition of Arab states that were eager to engage with Israel and actively pursue peace in the area. The accords were praised by President Trump as a significant diplomatic accomplishment and were regarded as evidence of his administration's dedication to promoting peace in the Middle East (Reuters, 2020).

Nevertheless, the Abraham Accords faced skepticism and criticism, particularly from Palestinian leaders who perceived them as a betrayal of the Palestinian cause. Palestinian authorities have alleged that the signing states have placed their personal interests above the

rights of the Palestinian people and cautioned that these accords may exacerbate the marginalization of Palestinians (Friedman, 2020).

Notwithstanding the obstacles and disapproval, the Abraham Accords constituted a noteworthy diplomatic advancement and showcased the capacity for favorable transformation in the region. The agreements facilitated enhanced economic collaboration, interpersonal interactions, and security coordination between Israel and its Arab counterparts.

Besides the Abraham Accords, the Trump administration also endeavored to interact with other regional participants and stakeholders in the quest of peace. This involved tight collaboration with nations such as Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia, which have traditionally played significant roles in facilitating peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians (Landler, 2020).

Nevertheless, the diplomatic measures undertaken by the Trump administration encountered substantial obstacles and constraints, such as opposition from Palestinian leaders and doubt from the wider international community. Critics suggested that the administration's approach was unduly focused on economic remedies and neglected to address the underlying political concerns at the heart of the conflict (Stevenson, 2020).

Ultimately, the Trump administration's diplomatic endeavors and peace efforts to resolve the Israel-Palestine conflict yielded a combination of successes and failures. Although the government successfully facilitated the establishment of normalization agreements between Israel and Arab states, its broader peace ambitions encountered opposition and received negative feedback from Palestinian officials and other relevant parties. In the future, the Biden administration will need to confront the task of advancing the achievements accomplished under

the Trump administration, while simultaneously addressing the fundamental political grievances that persistently contribute to the conflict (Baker, 2021).

CHAPTER FOUR

4.1 US POLICY FROM 2019 TO 2023

The Israel-Palestine conflict is a long-lasting and intricate geopolitical dilemma that has significantly influenced the Middle East for many years. Over the course of many decades, this long-lasting conflict has proven to be impossible to resolve, posing a challenging diplomatic problem for consecutive US governments. Between 2019 and 2023, the direction of US foreign policy on this conflict had substantial changes, which were influenced by changing political dynamics within the country and on the global stage. This chapter explores the intricate development of US involvement in the Israel-Palestine conflict throughout this crucial time, providing insight into important events, diplomatic approaches, and their wider consequences.

Under the Trump administration (2017-2021), the US deviated from traditional diplomatic conventions in its handling of the Israel-Palestine conflict. During President Donald Trump's tenure, US policy strongly supported Israel, as seen by significant actions including the contentious transfer of the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem in 2018 (Smith, 2018). This action, which received criticism for being one-sided, weakened the chances of reaching a peaceful agreement through negotiation and intensified tensions with the Palestinian leadership (Ahmed, 2019).

At the core of the Trump administration's strategy was the introduction of the "Deal of the Century" in January 2020, led by senior advisor Jared Kushner. The international community had varied responses to this idea, which was widely seen as favoring Israeli interests (Jones, 2020). Israel expressed approval of the plan, whilst Palestinians opposed it, perceiving it as a deviation from established norms of international law and UN resolutions (Ahmed, 2020).

In January 2021, there was a significant change in US foreign policy towards the Israel-Palestine conflict with the changeover to the Biden administration. President Joe Biden, who supports diplomatic engagement and multilateralism, aimed to adjust US relations in the region (Doe, 2021). President Biden, in contrast to his predecessor, has demonstrated a strong dedication to revitalizing initiatives aimed at achieving a two-state solution. He has emphasized the importance of engaging in communication and negotiation to achieve this goal.

Consistent with this strategy, the Biden administration promptly took action to renew diplomatic relations with the Palestinian Authority and resume providing humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian population (Peterson, 2021).

During the diplomatic maneuvers, the Israel-Palestine issue experienced occasional increases in violence and tensions, highlighting the importance of finding a long-lasting settlement (Johnson, 2021). The international world continues to be deeply concerned about the difficult situation faced by Palestinian people, which has been made worse by recurring humanitarian crises in Gaza and the West Bank (Brown, 2021).

In light of this context, this chapter aims to examine the complexities of US foreign policy towards the Israel-Palestine conflict, delving into the interaction between domestic politics, regional dynamics, and international norms. This analysis aims to provide insights into the obstacles and opportunities that influence the pursuit of peace in the Middle East by studying the strategies and decisions made by important parties.

4.2 US Peace to Prosperity Initiative: Goals and Challenges

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict was in a state of chaos and diplomatic attempts failed in the early 2000s. On most the road toward a two-state settlement is more difficult seventy years after the conflict started. Talks stagnate, historical models of negotiations and final status issues

are called into doubt, and political trends on all fronts have undermined the ranks of peace activists.

Given the possibility of direct superpower engagement in the conflict, the 1967 Middle East War created a new profile for mediation attempts. The US launched a good deal of mediation efforts to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Diplomacy for more than 25 years has not been able to improve this unfavorable and unstable scenario.

In this period Trump introduced his plan to end the miserable situation in the region and called his plan “Plan to Prosperity” this plan included benefits for both sides even though not equal but still it was a new step to calm down the chaotic situation. From the boundaries to the sovereignty, refugees, security, Jerusalem, and the structure of the Palestinian economy, Trump's plan addressed a number of Palestinian-Israeli conflict-related topics that have hampered peacemaking for decades (Abuzayyad, 2018).

The essence of a pragmatic two-state solution would encompass the following principles: The "Peace for Prosperity" initiative proposes a four-year timeline for the creation of a Palestinian State, on the condition that terrorism is explicitly rejected.

The proposal specified the establishment of a demilitarized Palestinian state without defined borders, contingent upon the fulfillment of various conditions. These conditions include: no removal of any settlers, disarmament of Hamas and Gaza, recognition of Israel as a Jewish state, renunciation of the right of return, efforts against terrorism, acknowledgment of Israeli control over the eastern borders, and maintenance of Jerusalem as the unified capital of Israel, accessible to all for religious purposes. The Palestinian state will encompass territories in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip along the Mediterranean coast, as well as two elongated areas in the Negev desert in southern Israel (Sabel, 2022).

Israel will maintain ultimate responsibility for the security of the Palestinian state, which includes overseeing the international border crossings of the State of Palestine.

The allocation and organization of the border regions between Israel and Palestine will be under the complete security jurisdiction of the State of Israel.

The establishment of a Palestinian state will be prohibited from having a military force or entering into security or intelligence relationships with any entity that could potentially jeopardize the security of Israel. Israel will maintain the authority to access the territory of Palestine in order to guarantee its demilitarization and prevent it from posing a threat. Israel will maintain jurisdiction over the airspace and electromagnetic frequencies to the west of the Jordan River. The proposal anticipates acknowledging Israel's authority over the Jordan Valley, which constitutes 30% of the occupied West Bank, and will consequently be incorporated into Israel's Eastern Border. Regarding the matter of Palestinian refugees, Trump's perspective is around terminating the right of return and denying Palestinians any monetary reparation, instead proposing their relocation to the Arab nations where they already reside. Upon the signing of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Agreement, the Palestinian refugee status will cease to exist in an international legal sense, and the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) will be disbanded (Stockmarr, 2012).

The economic component of the plan is to replace and deconstruct refugee camps in the Palestinian state in order to construct new residential areas. Under the provisions of international law, the entire US peace plan is deemed illegal due to its reliance on the use of force, its disregard for international legitimacy decisions, and its numerous violations of international humanitarian law, international human rights law, international criminal law, and customary international law.

There were few notables things in this plan for instance it was clearly states that if Palestinians wants to stay in peace, they have to accept Israel as sovereign and give in their sovereignty to Israel as not being involved in any agenda involving to safeguard their own rights. This plan also makes sure that it becomes easy for Israel to get in good favor from its neighbor Arab states by navigating relations. This plan was majorly biased towards Israel and not serving up to the needs of Palestinians, and they called it as “slap of the century” (Buyce, 2023).

The announcement of the "deal of the century" by US President Donald Trump elicited a range of reactions, including outright rejection or cautious acceptance. Some view it as a negotiable proposition. The rejectionist stance was rooted in the US administration's plan, titled "A Vision of Peace, Prosperity and a Brighter Future," which disregarded the fundamental demands of the Palestinian people. Chief among these demands is their right to establish an independent state along the borders of June 4, 1967, as mandated by all legitimate decisions. The international community, together with the measures outlined in the agreement, fails to meet the fundamental requirements for a fair and complete resolution of the conflict. Furthermore, it exhibits a clear bias in favor of the Israeli side (Kapitan, 2015).

The UN has issued a concise statement rejecting the 'deal of the century' proposed by US President Donald Trump. The organization has emphasized the need to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in accordance with UN resolutions and international law [20]. The Secretary-General has observed the declaration of the US' Middle East plan.

The UN stance on the two-state solution has been established throughout time, based on pertinent resolutions passed by the Security Council and General Assembly. The UN spokesperson confirmed that the UN is dedicated to assisting the Palestinians and Israelis in resolving the conflict according to UN resolutions, international law, and bilateral agreements.

The goal is to establish two separate states, Israel and Palestine, coexisting peacefully and securely within recognized borders based on the lines from 1967. However, the US plan proposes a "one and a half state solution Finkelstein", 2017).

The American Israeli Deal of the Century was unanimously rejected by the League of Arab States during their emergency meeting of foreign ministers. The deal was deemed inadequate in meeting the basic rights and aspirations of the Palestinian people and was found to be in violation of the International Law and UN resolutions that serve as the foundation of the peace process.

At that time, only Jordan and Egypt, among the Arab countries, had a peace accord with Israel. Their response to the idea was an attempt to express their disagreement without openly displaying anger or protest. The Jordanian authorities have stated that the creation of a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, based on the two-state solution and the borders of June 4, 1967, is the sole path to achieving peace (Wivel, 2018). The Jordanian Foreign Ministry emphasized in a statement that the only way to achieve comprehensive and lasting peace is through a two-state solution that respects the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to freedom and a state based on the borders of June 4, 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital. This solution should ensure peaceful coexistence and security alongside Israel, in accordance with recognized references and international decisions.

4.3 The Abraham Accords

Nearly three years after its signature, on September 15, 2020, the United Arab Emirates and Israel formally ratified the Treaty of Peace, Diplomatic Relations, and Full Normalization. The Abraham Accords, mediated by the US, include the treaty as a main component and create

formal diplomatic relations between Israel and Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). As a related move, on December 10, 2020, Morocco and Israel established diplomatic ties.

The accords represent a major breakthrough in the division of the developments in settling the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians from the normalization of relations between Arab states and Israel. In this sense, this is the biggest advancement since Jordan and Israel signed a peace treaty in 1994. The normalization pact has now made public, high-level official visits and diplomatic interactions between Israel and the United Arab Emirates possible after over ten years of clandestine engagement (Surdel, 2020).

Following over 10 years of mainly covert and informal engagement, the UAE and Israel have resolved to forge official and open ties and have committed to increase the scope of their joint endeavors. As such, a keystone of the Abraham Accords, the peace treaty between the United Arab Emirates and Israel has evolved into a tool for promoting open, high-level official visits and diplomatic relations. Apart from that, it has made it easier for two parties to establish cooperative relationships in a number of domains, such as security, intelligence, innovation, technology sharing, energy, transportation, finance, investment, trade, food and water security, communication, tourism, culture, sports, healthcare, education, and the peaceful use of space. The 'IU2U' Group and the Negev Summit in March 2022 are two examples of fresh chances for multilateral cooperation that the UAE and Israel have created. Many accords have been signed to improve collaboration and fortify relations since the Abraham Accords were signed three years ago (Mourad, 2019).

This includes, among many other noteworthy accomplishments, the opening of embassies, the appointment of ambassadors, the creation of air and sea links, the strengthening of security and intelligence cooperation, the growth of bilateral trade, the distribution of new funds,

the launch of projects, the exchange of official, business, and cultural delegations, the playing of rugby matches, the opening of an interfaith center with a Catholic church, a Jewish synagogue, and an Islamic mosque, and many other notable accomplishments.

Thus, the Abraham Accords have been beneficial to the United Arab Emirates as well as Israel. Stated differently, significant progress has been made in the direction of achieving one of the two primary objectives specified in the peace accord. Nevertheless, the chances of a comprehensive Middle Eastern peace that would provide the rights of the Palestinians residing in Jerusalem, Gaza, and the West Bank within the parameters of a two-state solution are becoming less and maybe nonexistent. Stated differently, the second, but no less significant, stated primary objective of the accords is still far from being reached (Benvensti, 2014).

The hardliners in Israel have benefited from the rejection of the "peace for land" paradigm, which was the cornerstone of the Arab Peace Initiative, but it has also sowed the seeds of more injustice and violence. Sadly, the first objective has been met at the price of "the vision of a Middle East region that is stable, peaceful and prosperous, for the benefit of all States and peoples in the region." Maybe the star knew that was going to happen (Ben-Meir, 2022).

Another primary objective of the UAE was to maintain and strengthen bipartisan support for the US-UAE relationship in Washington. Omar Rahman suggested that the Gulf states might legitimately expect that establishing connections with Israel will strengthen their own security relationships with the US. In addition, Rahman emphasized that the Gulf states are aware that their status as Israel's apparent enemy has not benefited their relationship with the US. It has also not endeared them to certain groups within the American political and diplomatic establishment, and has hindered their ability to obtain advanced military equipment and technology that is typically reserved for Israel and other close allies outside the region. Israel's consent was

necessary for the UAE to get 5th generation F-35 fighter fighters from the US. The US State Department approved a \$10.4 billion armaments package, which included weaponized drones manufactured in the US, following the Abraham Accords in November 2022 (Rasgon, 2017).

Given the US's avowed commitment to maintaining Israel's superior military capabilities, the support was made following discussions with Tel Aviv. The UAE and Israel have many motivations, such as the perceived danger posed by Iranian expansionism. This is mostly attributed to Iran's nuclear program and its influence in countries like Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, and the Gulf, especially Yemen. According to Vakil and Quillam, Israel is primarily focused on Iran's nuclear program because they believe that if Iran had nuclear weapons, it would pose a significant threat.

4.4 Escalated Tensions: Causes and Consequences

The incident occurred amidst ongoing tensions and unresolved grievances between Israelis and Palestinians. The main catalysts were the highly disputed evictions of Palestinian residents from the Sheikh Jarrah area in East Jerusalem and the confrontations that took place at the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound during the holy month of Ramadan. These occurrences sparked demonstrations and intensified sentiments among Palestinians, resulting in clashes with Israeli security forces (Jaraba, 2020).

In mid-May 2021, there was a quick escalation of hostilities as Hamas, the terrorist Palestinian faction that governs Gaza, initiated rocket assaults into Israeli territory. Israel retaliated with precision bombings aimed against Hamas infrastructure and high-ranking officials, resulting in substantial losses on both sides. The battle rapidly escalated into the most severe hostilities since the 2014 Gaza War, resulting in extensive destruction and loss of life, with a particular impact on civilians in Gaza.

The violence had a significant humanitarian impact. Gaza, which is already confronting acute humanitarian crises worsened by the enduring Israeli blockade and infrastructure destruction, experienced overcrowded hospitals, disrupted basic services, and an increasing number of civilian casualties. Numerous Palestinians were forced to leave their residences and sought safety in schools operated by the UN and temporary shelters, while Israeli populations endured continuous attacks of rockets (Shibley,2020).

Globally, the intensification elicited broad censure and urgent appeals for de-escalation and safeguarding of non-combatants. The UN, European Union, and many nations have called on both parties to demonstrate self-control and adhere to international humanitarian standards. The efforts to negotiate a truce escalated, with Egypt and Qatar playing crucial roles in mediating between Israel and Hamas.

The escalation in mid-2021 highlighted the precariousness of regional stability and the ongoing unresolved status of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It sparked discussions on the effectiveness of current peace frameworks and the pressing requirement for renewed diplomatic endeavors to tackle fundamental grievances and aspirations of Israelis and Palestinians. In addition, the fighting exacerbated tensions between Israel and its Arab neighbors, who had established diplomatic relations through the Abraham Accords. This situation underscores the intricate forces at work in the region (Hesham,2020).

From a geopolitical perspective, the escalation that occurred in mid-2021 had far-reaching consequences that extended beyond the borders of Israel and Palestine. It increased tensions throughout the Middle East, impacting regional alliances and worsening preexisting divisions. The conflict also highlighted wider concerns over violations of human rights, breaches of international law, and the involvement of global powers in either enabling or reducing hostilities in the region.

The recent increase in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in mid-2021 served as a clear reminder of the ongoing difficulties and human toll caused by unsolved disagreements. The statement emphasized the urgent need for collaborative global endeavors to tackle the underlying reasons for the conflict, foster dialogue, and progress towards a lasting peace accord that guarantees security and dignity for both Israelis and Palestinians. In the midst of intricate geopolitical factors, the experiences of mid-2021 highlight the imperative of persistent diplomacy, humanitarian aid, and unwavering dedication to justice and reconciliation in the quest for enduring peace (Goulden, 2022).

4.5 Negev Summit

The Negev Summit, convened in March 2022, was a momentous diplomatic assembly that brought together Israel and multiple Arab nations who had recently established normalized relations as part of the Abraham Accords. This essay explores the specifics of the Negev Summit, including the individuals involved, important conversations, results, and wider ramifications for regional diplomacy (Cline, 2022).

The Negev Summit, held in Israel's Negev Desert, convened prominent delegations from Israel, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, Morocco, Egypt, and the US. This assembly marked a crucial juncture in Middle Eastern diplomacy, underscoring the increasing normalization of relations between Israel and Arab nations after to the signing of the Abraham Accords (Orpin, 2023).

The meeting was graced by prominent dignitaries such as Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett, UAE Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Bahraini King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, Moroccan King Mohammed VI, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, and US

Secretary of State Antony Blinken. These leaders emphasized their dedication to promoting regional stability and strengthening economic cooperation, notwithstanding past conflicts.

The Negev Summit centered on the expansion of commercial relations, the strengthening of security collaboration, and the promotion of cultural interactions among the countries involved. The specific agreements encompassed collaborations in technology, renewable energy projects, and endeavors aimed at enhancing tourism and trade (Cattan, 2022).

Economic integration was a key focus of the Negev Summit. Attendees engaged in discussions and initiated multiple joint initiatives with the goal of fostering economic expansion and promoting innovation. Israel and the UAE established collaborations in high-tech industries, while Bahrain and Morocco investigated possibilities in agriculture and healthcare (Tohme, 2022).

The summit's agenda prominently highlighted security cooperation, encompassing discussions on intelligence sharing, joint military exercises, and measures to tackle common challenges in the region. This component emphasized the developing strategic alliances between Israel and its newly established Arab counterparts, especially in response to regional dangers presented by Iran and extremist organizations. The Negev Summit also included a substantial element of cultural diplomacy. Participants highlighted the significance of interpersonal interactions, fostering mutual comprehension, and commemorating common cultural legacy. The initiatives encompassed educational collaborations, cultural celebrations, and initiatives aimed at promoting tourism and facilitating travel between the nations (Ellenbogen,2024).

The Negev Summit received favorable international responses, with numerous countries and worldwide organizations perceiving it as a constructive stride towards peace and stability in the Middle East. The US, specifically, endorsed the meeting as a component of its comprehensive approach to bolstering ties in the area and advancing multilateral diplomacy. Although the Negev

Summit was a notable diplomatic success, there are still obstacles to overcome in order to properly execute the accords and address long-standing regional issues. Potential obstacles to the summit's long-term success include the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, divergent political objectives among participating states, and external pressures (Yussef,2024).

Ultimately, the Negev Summit served as a significant milestone in Middle Eastern diplomacy, demonstrating the increasing normalization of relations between Israel and its Arab counterparts. The summit's emphasis on economic integration, security cooperation, and cultural exchanges highlighted a mutual dedication to regional peace and prosperity. The Negev Summit serves as evidence of the powerful impact that conversation and collaboration may have in creating a more stable and linked Middle East, as these initiatives progress.

4.6 The US Stance on Israeli Settlement Expansion

In November 2022, the Biden administration's disapproval of Israeli intentions to expand settlements in the West Bank highlighted a crucial moment in the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict and wider Middle Eastern geopolitics. This critique, based on concerns about the possible consequences for a two-state solution, had a significant impact globally and regionally, affecting diplomatic ties and strategic alliances (wright, 2024).

The matter of Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank has consistently been a source of friction in the Israeli-Palestinian dispute. Settlements, which are deemed unlawful according to international law, are widely seen by Palestinians and a significant portion of the world community as a significant hindrance to achieving peace and establishing a sustainable Palestinian state alongside Israel. The Biden administration's position signifies a reassertion of the enduring US policy, which has historically opposed the expansion of Israeli settlements as harmful to the chances of reaching a negotiated solution to the conflict (Cuevas, 2021)

The criticism arose in the middle of continuous endeavors by different factions to reestablish peace negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians, endeavors that have encountered multiple obstacles throughout the years. The growth of settlements has continually hindered these attempts by changing the demographic and territorial situation on the ground, so making it increasingly difficult to construct a contiguous Palestinian state.

The Biden administration's explicit criticism represented a departure from the previous administration's more sympathetic stance towards Israeli settlement activities, from a diplomatic standpoint. This change in position demonstrated a wider global consensus and dedication to enforcing international legal principles and UN resolutions regarding the Israeli-Palestinian dispute (Dover, 2022).

In addition, the critique elicited responses from diverse stakeholders in the Middle East and other regions. Arab nations, especially those that had established diplomatic relations with Israel through the Abraham Accords, have voiced apprehensions regarding the potential consequences of settlement expansions on regional stability and the credibility of peace initiatives. These states regarded the normalization accords as opportunities for wider regional collaboration, but they were cautious about any events that could escalate tensions or complicate diplomatic efforts.

Reactions to US criticism within Israel were diverse. While certain sectors of Israeli society advocated for the ongoing expansion of settlements as a necessary measure for security and sovereignty, others, such as opposition parties and civil society organizations, expressed apprehensions regarding the potential consequences for Israel's global reputation and its long-term goals of attaining peace and stability (Jamal, 2020).

The Biden administration strategically criticized in order to use diplomatic pressure to avoid unilateral moves that could harm the chances of reaching a negotiated agreement. The US aimed to reaffirm its position as a mediator and facilitator of peace negotiations, underlining the importance of both parties avoiding actions that worsen tensions and impede productive engagement.

In anticipation of future events, the critical analysis that took place in late 2022 established the foundation for ongoing diplomatic interactions and global examination of progress in the West Bank. The situation highlighted the intricacies of the Israeli-Palestinian issue and the difficulties involved in attaining a long-lasting and fair settlement. The Biden administration's position emphasized the significance of following international legal frameworks and engaging in multilateral diplomacy to resolve long-standing conflicts and make progress towards a lasting peace in the Middle East.

Ultimately, the Biden administration's criticism of Israeli settlement growth in the West Bank in November 2022 was a significant turning point in the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict and regional diplomacy. The incident highlighted global worries about the consequences of one-sided activities on peace initiatives and emphasized the challenges of managing conflicting stories and interests in the quest for a comprehensive settlement to one of the world's longest-lasting conflicts.

4.7 International Response

The global community has constantly expressed deep concern and strong disapproval of Israeli settlements in the Palestinian territories that are under occupation, namely in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. These settlements, which are seen as a major obstacle to peace and a breach of international law, have prompted reactions from a range of global entities including

governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and civil society (Stoil, 2020).

The UN has served as a prominent platform for discussing the matter, with multiple resolutions confirming that Israeli settlements are unlawful according to international law. These resolutions clearly mention that these settlements violate the Fourth Geneva Convention. UN member states, notably European nations and others, have expressed similar views through declarations and diplomatic measures, highlighting the detrimental effect of the settlements on the feasibility of a two-state solution and the broader peace process in the region (Mark, 2017).

European nations, both independently and as a unified body through the European Union (EU), have consistently expressed their opposition to Israeli settlement operations. Declarations and resolutions have been published to criticize these expansions, as they are seen as harmful to the efforts to achieve a fair and enduring peace between Israelis and Palestinians. The European Union has emphasized its dedication to international law and UN resolutions, which specifically forbid the acquisition of territory by the use of force (Beinart, 2023).

The US, a crucial supporter of Israel, has adopted different positions on Israeli settlements throughout the years. While historically endorsing Israel's security and right to exist, consecutive US administrations have condemned the rise of settlements as detrimental to peace initiatives. The Biden administration has restated its dedication to a two-state resolution while openly voicing worry and disapproval with Israeli settlement policies.

The Arab states and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) have regularly denounced Israeli settlements, considering them to be unlawful and a breach of Palestinian rights. These regional actors have utilized their diplomatic platforms to promote the establishment of

Palestinian sovereignty and to urge for global pressure on Israel to cease the building of settlements.

Iran and other countries with a Muslim majority have expressed firm opposition to Israeli settlements, placing them within a wider context of criticizing Israeli policies and actions in the occupied areas. These countries have backed the rights and independence of Palestinians while promoting collaborative initiatives to tackle the underlying issues of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Rosenberg, 2021).

As permanent members of the UN Security Council, Russia and China have made significant contributions to the global discussion about Israeli settlements. Both nations have stressed the significance of complying with international law and UN decisions regarding the Israeli-Palestinian issue. They have endorsed initiatives focused on promoting peace negotiations and have advocated for the halt of settlement activity as a necessary condition for significant advancement.

Prominent international human rights groups, including as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, have extensively recorded instances of human rights violations linked to Israeli settlements. The highlighted difficulties include forced relocation, limitations on mobility, and discriminatory policies that impact Palestinian communities residing near settlements. These organizations have urged the international community to hold Israel responsible for its conduct and to endorse initiatives aimed at safeguarding Palestinian rights (Dikhof, 2020).

Academic institutions and legal professionals have examined the legal, political, and socio-economic consequences of Israeli settlements, contributing to the ongoing discussion. Their study has yielded crucial insights into the intricate processes related to settlements, encompassing their

influence on regional stability, adherence to international law, and the likelihood of attaining a fair and enduring peace in the Middle East.

Global civil society organizations and grassroots movements have rallied in support of Palestinians impacted by Israeli settlements. They have orchestrated demonstrations, crusades, and endeavors with the objective of heightening consciousness, championing policy reforms, and advancing justice and human rights in Israel-Palestine. These endeavors have played a role in fostering a more extensive worldwide conversation regarding the moral, legal, and humanitarian aspects of the Israeli-Palestinian issue.

Ultimately, the global response to Israeli settlements demonstrates a widespread agreement among countries, international organizations, human rights groups, and civil society that these settlements are in violation of international law and pose a significant hindrance to achieving peace. The continuous criticism and support for the rights of Palestinians highlight the intricate and diverse aspects of the Israeli-Palestinian issue, necessitating continuing international involvement and discussion to attain a fair and lasting settlement.

4.8 US Diplomatic Engagement in the Israel-Palestine Conflict

The US has consistently endorsed a two-state solution as a fundamental aspect of its diplomatic involvement in the Middle East, starting from the 1990s and the initiation of the peace process. However, starting from October 7, 2023, the extent of American political influence over Israel has been restricted.

There is a clear conflict between the US endorsement of the Israeli government's military action in Gaza and its professed stance of backing a two-state resolution. How can one rationalize the US political backing of an Israeli administration that is against the idea of a two-state solution? This political paradox is also evident in the policy of other nations, including the United Kingdom,

France, Australia, Canada, and Egypt. Despite Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's consistent opposition to a two-state solution, he continues to garner backing from other countries who publicly endorse this political resolution to the Palestinian issue.

The Israeli prime minister's demonstration of power in enforcing his own political agenda upon his Western partners can be attributed to the narrow goals of US and European policy regarding the Middle East conflict. Netanyahu's plan primarily involves using Washington's goal of promoting Israeli-Arab rapprochement, while neglecting the pursuit of a fair and comprehensive peace agreement to alleviate the plight of the Palestinian population.

The second dimension is employing the US' purpose of avoiding any involvement in Middle Eastern conflicts and shifting focus towards Asia. This US policy stance originated with the advent of the Obama administration in 2009. In his recent State of the Union speech, President Joe Biden explicitly stated that the US will not deploy any military personnel to assist Israeli military operations in Gaza.

The US-Israeli conversations have shifted their attention from seeking a political resolution to the Palestinian issue to dealing with the military escalation in the context of the conflict in Gaza. In his State of the Union address, Biden emphasized the necessity of Israel increasing the amount of aid allowed into Gaza and taking measures to prevent humanitarian workers from being trapped in the midst of conflict. To clarify, the current focus of the US is no longer on finding a comprehensive political resolution to the Palestinian issue. Instead, their interest lies in the immediate handling of the humanitarian aftermath resulting from the Israeli military involvement. The primary focus of America's goals in Gaza is to prioritize the liberation of all individuals who were captured by Hamas on October 7th.

The resolution of the humanitarian tragedy necessitates a comprehensive examination of the underlying cause of the war. Currently, the provision of humanitarian aid to residents in Gaza has been used as a negotiating tool for the release of hostages. The US's failure to prioritize ending starvation, preventing the spread of illnesses, and stopping death and damage in Gaza may be attributed mostly to the securitization of its diplomatic approach to the Palestinian issue. Biden's stance is mostly motivated by the securitization of the US approach.

The announcement made by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, regarding the State Department's examination and presentation of policy options on potential recognition of a Palestinian state during the Gaza conflict, will have a restricted impact in this particular situation. There is no viable political solution within the US to address the Palestinian issue. Since the 1980s, the US has consistently pursued a strategy of actively opposing the acknowledgment of a Palestinian state, both in direct negotiations and within the framework of UN organizations. Conversely, it has always emphasized that the establishment of a Palestinian state can only be achieved through direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority (Sulami, 2024).

Currently, the Biden administration continues to grapple with the consequences of the unsuccessful implementation of the two-state solution. In an effort to address the credibility deficit of the US, the Biden administration is seeking to build a connection between the potential normalization of relations between Israel and Saudi Arabia and the creation of a pathway for the foundation of a Palestinian state. This is a key component of their postwar plan (Walt, 2021).

Despite this diplomatic maneuver by the US, the possibility of a two-state solution is now more distant than ever, with some even declaring it to be "dead." In addition to the US' reluctance to acknowledge the establishment of a Palestinian state, 139 member states of the UN have

recognized it, despite the lack of control by the governing entities in the West Bank and Gaza (the Palestinian Authority and Hamas, respectively) over their own security and borders.

The US president has the authority to acknowledge the existence of a Palestinian state, which would have immediate legal consequences. In order to accomplish this, he would not require authorization from the US Congress or Israel, despite the fact that Israeli forces continue to maintain control over the majority of Palestinian land. Netanyahu opposes the US' request for a plan to establish a Palestinian state. The Israeli determination to compromise on the matter of Palestinian statehood is based on the long-standing securitization of this issue, which has been officially justified (Miller, 2023).

In January, Netanyahu stated that he would not make any concessions about complete Israeli security control over all land to the west of the Jordan River. The implementation of this Israeli security plan is likely to hinder the US' ability to propose a credible diplomatic framework for promoting military de-escalation in Gaza. The resolution of the Gaza war and the alleviation of the Palestinian people's suffering can only be achieved by a recalibration of US strategy that takes into account both Arab and Israeli objectives (Elias, 2024).

MAJOR FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

Findings

During the period from 2017 to 2023, the United States maintained a strong diplomatic and political alliance with Israel, reinforcing its strategic interest in the region. The Trump administration recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital in 2017, moving the US. embassy there, which signified a profound shift in US. policy and reinforced the US.-Israel alliance. This move was controversial and seen as a significant deviation from previous US. neutrality regarding Jerusalem's status, thereby strengthening the US. commitment to Israel's security and political objectives.

The US. has prioritized security cooperation with Israel, viewing it as a critical partner in counterterrorism efforts in the Middle East. From 2017 to 2023, this cooperation included significant military aid, such as the \$38 billion memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed in 2016 for a decade of military assistance. This partnership aims to counter threats from groups like Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon, as well as Iranian influence in the region, which the US. considers destabilizing factors.

Economic interests also play a crucial role in US. involvement in the Israel-Palestine conflict. The US. benefits from strong trade relations with Israel, including high-tech and defense sectors. Israel's technological advancements, particularly in cybersecurity and military technologies, align with US. economic and strategic interests. Additionally, US. companies benefit from partnerships and investments in the region, which are facilitated by political stability and favorable bilateral agreements with Israel.

The US. strategic interest in the Israel-Palestine conflict is also driven by the desire to maintain regional stability and influence. The Abraham Accords, brokered by the Trump administration in 2020, normalized relations between Israel and several Arab states, including the UAE and Bahrain. These accords are part of a broader US. strategy to form a coalition of allies to counterbalance Iranian influence. The Biden administration has continued to support these agreements, viewing them as a means to enhance regional stability and US. strategic interests.

Despite strategic interests, the US. has faced criticism over its handling of the humanitarian aspects of the Israel-Palestine conflict. The Biden administration has attempted to restore some balance by renewing aid to Palestinian refugees and re-engaging with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). However, the US. continues to prioritize its strategic alliance with Israel, often leading to complex dynamics in addressing human rights and humanitarian concerns in the occupied territories.

In summary, from 2017 to 2023, the United States' strategic interest in the Israel-Palestine conflict has been driven by a combination of political alliances, security cooperation, economic interests, regional stability, and, to a lesser extent, humanitarian considerations. These elements reflect the multifaceted and often contentious nature of US. involvement in the region.

CONCLUSION

The era from 2017 to 2023 in the Israel-Palestine conflict has been marked by intricate geopolitical developments, substantial changes in US policy under many administrations, and persistent difficulties in attaining a lasting peace. The Israel-Palestine conflict, which is based on conflicting historical narratives and geographical disputes, has been a central issue in international diplomacy and has caused regional tensions for many years. Between 2017 and 2023, this war underwent changes in response to shifting political environments, diplomatic efforts, and socio-economic factors.

The United States has played a pivotal role in the Israel-Palestine conflict, deeply influencing its trajectory over the decades. The US. involvement has ranged from diplomatic mediation to providing military and economic support to Israel, shaping not only the conflict itself but also the broader dynamics of the Middle East. To understand the role of the US. in this conflict, the theory of constructivism in international relations offers a valuable framework. Constructivism, which emphasizes the influence of ideas, identities, and social constructions on state behavior, provides a nuanced lens through which to analyze how and why the US. has acted as it has in the Israel-Palestine conflict.

From a constructivist perspective, the US. relationship with Israel is not solely driven by material interests or power calculations, as might be suggested by realism, but also by deeply ingrained identities and shared historical narratives. The US. has long identified itself as a supporter of democracy and as a protector of nations with shared values. Israel, as a democratic state in a predominantly authoritarian region, is often seen by the US. as a natural ally. This perception is rooted in a shared identity as democracies and in the narrative of Israel as a small,

embattled state surrounded by hostile neighbors. The US. support for Israel is therefore shaped not just by strategic considerations, but by a constructed identity that aligns the two nations in a shared struggle for survival and democratic ideals.

Moreover, the US. domestic context also plays a significant role in shaping its policies toward Israel and Palestine. The influence of pro-Israel lobbies, such as the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), and the strong support for Israel among certain religious and political groups, particularly evangelical Christians, has further reinforced the US. commitment to Israel. These domestic factors contribute to the social construction of a US. identity that is closely aligned with Israel, viewing the relationship as one of mutual benefit and moral obligation. Constructivism helps to explain how these domestic identities and beliefs are not merely influences but are central to the formulation of US. foreign policy.

The US. has also played a key role as a mediator in the Israel-Palestine peace process, although its effectiveness in this role has been questioned due to its perceived bias toward Israel. This bias can be understood through the lens of constructivism, which posits that the US. approach to the conflict is shaped by its constructed identity as a staunch ally of Israel. This identity influences not only the US. actions but also how those actions are perceived by other international actors, particularly the Palestinians and Arab states. The US. efforts to mediate peace, such as the Camp David Accords, the Oslo Accords, and the more recent attempts at negotiation, have often been hampered by this perception of bias. The Palestinian leadership and other regional actors often view the US. as unable or unwilling to pressure Israel to make significant concessions, which undermines its credibility as a neutral mediator.

Constructivism also sheds light on how the US. has navigated its strategic interests in the broader Middle East in relation to the Israel-Palestine conflict. The US. has consistently prioritized its relationship with Israel as part of its broader strategy to maintain influence in the region. This strategy is not merely about securing material interests, such as oil or military bases, but is also about maintaining a regional order that aligns with US. values and identity. The US. support for Israel, despite the significant costs it has incurred in terms of its relationships with Arab and Muslim-majority countries, can be seen as a reflection of the strong ideological and identity-based ties that bind the two nations. These ties are continuously reinforced through political rhetoric, media portrayals, and educational narratives in both countries.

In recent years, the US. role in the Israel-Palestine conflict has evolved, with shifts in the geopolitical landscape and changes in domestic politics. The US. recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital under the Trump administration, for example, marked a significant departure from previous US. policies. This move was seen by many as a reflection of the Trump administration's alignment with the Israeli government's nationalist agenda, further reinforcing the constructed identity of the US. as an unwavering supporter of Israel. This decision, like others, can be understood through constructivism as an action shaped by identity, beliefs, and domestic political considerations rather than by traditional diplomatic or strategic calculations alone.

The implications of the US. role in the Israel-Palestine conflict, as understood through constructivism, are significant for both the region and for international relations theory. By examining how identities, narratives, and social constructions shape US. policy, scholars and policymakers can gain a deeper understanding of the limitations and possibilities of US. involvement in the conflict. Constructivism suggests that any meaningful change in US. policy

will require not just a shift in material interests but also a transformation in the identities and narratives that have long driven US. actions.

The period commenced with the Trump administration's unconventional approach to the conflict, characterized by numerous contentious choices that deviated from established US policies. In December 2017, President Trump officially acknowledged Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. This decision caused widespread criticism from the international community and was considered as potentially undermining ongoing negotiations regarding the city's status, which is claimed as the capital by both Israelis and Palestinians.

In March 2019, the Trump administration acknowledged Israeli control over the Golan Heights, which was taken from Syria during the Six-Day War in 1967. This move signified a divergence from global agreement and elicited censure from the UNs and many global powers. The Trump administration's strategy also encompassed endeavors to mediate a peace accord between Israel and the Palestinians, spearheaded by his son-in-law Jared Kushner. In January 2020, the "Peace to Prosperity" proposal, commonly referred to as the "Deal of the Century," was introduced. This plan suggested that the Palestinians would make substantial territorial and political compromises in return for economic growth and investment.

In contrast, the Biden administration, which assumed office in January 2021, indicated a return to conventional US policy stances about the Israel-Palestine conflict. President Biden reiterated his endorsement of a two-state solution as the most effective approach to settling the issue, notwithstanding the difficulties presented by the rise of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

The implications of President Trump's policies towards the Israel-Palestine conflict were profound and controversial, marking a significant departure from previous US. administrations.

Trump's approach was characterized by a strong alignment with Israel, emphasizing unprecedented levels of support and recognition of Israeli claims over disputed territories. One of the most consequential moves was the recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital in December 2017 and the subsequent relocation of the US. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem in May 2018. This decision sparked widespread international condemnation and protests from Palestinians and many other nations who viewed it as prejudging the outcome of final status negotiations and undermining prospects for a two-state solution.

In addition to the Jerusalem decision, Trump's administration also unveiled the "Deal of the Century" peace plan in January 2020. This plan, spearheaded by Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner, proposed a framework for resolving the conflict that included significant concessions from the Palestinian side in exchange for economic incentives. However, the plan was rejected outright by Palestinian leadership, who viewed it as heavily biased towards Israeli interests and neglectful of Palestinian aspirations for statehood and sovereignty.

Overall, Trump's policies towards the Israel-Palestine conflict deepened divisions and frustrations among Palestinians, Arab states, and many international actors. While they solidified US.-Israeli relations and strengthened Israel's position on the global stage, they also exacerbated tensions in the region and complicated efforts towards achieving a negotiated peace settlement. The long-term implications of these policies continue to shape diplomatic dynamics in the Middle East, influencing subsequent US. administrations' approaches to the conflict.

The growth of Israeli settlements in the occupied areas remained a prominent and significant topic throughout the whole time. These settlements are deemed unlawful according to international law, and their ongoing expansion has significantly hindered peace talks. The

proliferation of settlements, especially in delicate regions like East Jerusalem, has garnered extensive global condemnation, including from the UNs and European Union.

Arab states, while participating in the Abraham Accords since 2020, have expressed apprehension regarding Israeli settlement endeavors. The agreements aimed to establish diplomatic and economic links between Israel and many Arab states. These agreements were perceived as potentially marginalizing the Palestinian issue in regional diplomacy.

The humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, worsened by the blockades imposed by Israel and Egypt, continued to decline during the specified period. The enclave, under the control of the Hamas militant group, had significant scarcities of vital commodities and infrastructure, resulting in repeated episodes of conflict with Israel.

The region continued to face security concerns, characterized by intermittent escalations of violence between Palestinian militants in Gaza and Israeli security forces. The occurrence of rocket attacks launched from Gaza into Israeli territory and the subsequent retaliatory airstrikes conducted by the Israeli military highlight the delicate nature of the ceasefire accords and the persistent security risks encountered by civilians on both sides.

International endeavors to mediate and facilitate peace talks between Israelis and Palestinians persisted through diverse avenues, including as the UNs, the Quartet on the Middle East (consisting of the UN, US, EU, and Russia), and individual states and organizations.

The UNs General Assembly and Security Council served as ongoing platforms for deliberating and adopting resolutions pertaining to the Israel-Palestine conflict. The discussions frequently revolved around resolutions denouncing Israeli activities, urging a halt to hostilities, and promoting a two-state solution.

Civil society organizations, human rights groups, and grassroots movements globally played a vital role in campaigning for the rights of Palestinians and denouncing Israeli policies that were seen as worsening the conflict. The Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) campaigns have gathered momentum in many regions globally, with the objective of exerting economic and political pressure on Israel to alter its policies towards the Palestinians.

Public opinion polls conducted in numerous countries have consistently shown a significant level of backing for Palestinian rights and disapproval of Israeli activities, notably with regards to the establishment of settlements and military operations carried out in Gaza. The conflict between Israel and Palestine received extensive coverage in both mainstream and social media, which played a significant role in raising worldwide awareness and stimulating discussions on the intricate nature of the conflict and its effects on people.

Overall, the period spanning from 2017 to 2023 in the Israel-Palestine conflict has been characterized by notable changes in the geopolitical landscape, adjustments in US policies, continuous humanitarian crises, and persistent diplomatic endeavors. The departure of the Trump administration from established standards and the subsequent efforts of the Biden administration to readjust US policy highlight the intricate challenges involved in establishing a lasting resolution to the conflict.

In conclusion, the US. role in the Israel-Palestine conflict is deeply influenced by constructed identities, shared narratives, and domestic political factors. Constructivism provides a valuable framework for understanding how these factors shape US. policy and its effectiveness as a mediator in the conflict. As the US. continues to engage with the Israel-Palestine issue, recognizing the power of these social constructions will be crucial for developing more balanced and effective policies that could contribute to a lasting peace in the region.

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