


**A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT PROCESSES. A  
CASE STUDY OF THE PALESTINE-ISRAELI CONFLICT, 1993-2010**

**BY**

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**DECLARATION.**

This project is my original work and has not been submitted for a degree to any other college, university, or institution.

Sign   
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Date 8/11/2012

This project has been submitted for examination with my approval as a University supervisor.

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Date 8/11/2012

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my mother, brothers, wife (Mwanatena Ibrahim), and daughters (Asya Bahati and Tasneem Zawadi) for their support and understanding for the whole duration of my studies.

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## **GLOSSARY AND LIST OF ACRONYMS**

<b>Balfour Declaration</b>	<b>British declaration promising a Jewish national home in Palestine</b>
<b>Fatah</b>	<b>leading Palestinian Arab nationalist organization, founded by Arafat</b>
<b>Haganah</b>	<b>the defence arm of the Yishuv and forerunner of the Israel Defence Forces (IDF).</b>
<b>Hamas</b>	<b>leading Palestinian Islamist organization founded in 1988</b>
<b>Intifada</b>	<b>Palestinian uprising</b>
<b>Irgun Zvai Leumi</b>	<b>nationalist military group, led by Begin from 1943</b>
<b>Islamic Jihad</b>	<b>Palestinian Islamist organization influenced by Iranian Revolution</b>
<b>PLO</b>	<b>Palestine Liberation Organization founded in 1964</b>
<b>Stern gang</b>	<b>Zionist terrorist organization</b>

## ABSTRACT

This study argues that conflicts are endemic in human society and that conflicts are disruptive. Proper management of conflicts is therefore a necessary tool to lessen their negative impact on human society and the environment. Conflict management analysis and approach that does not right the parties' asymmetry in a conflict structure does not yield a long-term mutual settlement. The purpose of this study was to identify and critically assess attempted conflict management processes in the Palestine-Israeli conflict, 1993-2010. The study also analyzed the linkages among actors, conflict management processes and conflict escalation/de-escalation. The study adopted a qualitative descriptive design. The study established that the key challenges in conflict management are sticking issues, power asymmetry of the parties, poor political handling of negotiated settlements, and the perception of third party interveners. The principle conclusion was that third party perception, the audience, constituents, patrons, and allies in a conflict structure and conflict structure transformations are integral to the success of conflict management process.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

#### 1.0. Introduction

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict is an on-going struggle between Israelis and Palestinians that started in the early twentieth century. The conflict is wide-ranging for the Arab population living in Palestine under the Ottoman Turks, and then British rule. From the colonial and post-colonial times, there has been no end in sight to the intractable conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinian Arabs. Various conflict management processes such as negotiations, mediations, conciliations, inquiry and good offices have been used but with no permanent resolution in sight. Such processes have only recorded low levels of success and failures. This study seeks to explore the linkages between such conflict management processes, actors, and conflict escalation/de-escalation.

The current conflict is “approximately sixty years old...”<sup>1</sup> and traces its origin from the European Jewish immigration in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the subsequent creation of the Israeli state in 1948. Successive conflict management processes have not yielded sustainable peace. For instance, Ramsbotham argues that “...the prospects for conflict resolution were destroyed by ‘spoilers’ on both sides, and by the fundamental asymmetry

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<sup>1</sup> D.Stewart., *The Middle East Today: political, geographical, and cultural perspectives*,( New York: Routledge, 2009), pp. 157.

of the parties.”<sup>2</sup> This observation explains the reasons for the failure of the Oslo Accords of 1993.

Referring to the Oslo Accords Jones argues that the peace process became a means where “a stronger party slowly and deliberately crushes the aspirations of the weaker party.”<sup>3</sup> In other words the Oslo process and other subsequent processes were launched at a time when the Israeli government was overwhelmingly strong while the PLO was weak and desperate.<sup>4</sup> Again political power structures in both Israel and Palestine have had contending visions of the peace processes. Whereas Israeli Labor party and PLO have favored peace by coming closer to a mutual framework of an agreement in various peace processes, the Likud and religious parties have often not favored peace. Today the al-Aqsa *intifada* continues. This is interpreted as an indicator of growing desperation and lack of hope between the parties. There is lack of progress on negotiated final status agreement. Too, there is little attempt by the international community to initiate peace process anew.

### **1.1. Statement of the Research Problem**

The Palestine–Israeli conflict is one of the long drawn conflicts in recorded history. This conflict is reported to have intensified shortly after the World War I. Despite numerous

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<sup>2</sup> Ramsbotham et al ., *CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT RESOLUTION*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), pp. 181.

<sup>3</sup> D.Jones., *Cosmopolitan Mediation? Conflict Resolution and the Oslo Accords* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp.130

<sup>4</sup>H.Khatchadourian, *The Quest for Peace between Israel and the Palestinians* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 2000), pp.79.

initiatives, over time, undertaken by various actors to approach, analyze and manage this intractable conflict, there has been no viable and sustainable resolution in sight. Since 1948 when the state of Israel was carved out of Palestine, different actors especially the US have employed various processes in managing the smoldering conflict. This study seeks to investigate the linkages between various actors in the conflict and management processes employed in an attempt to arrive at a mutual settlement.

The founders of the state of Israel believed that they had changed the direction of history by placing a marginalized and discriminated people (Jews) to the centre.<sup>5</sup> They had claimed victory over their oppressors, from the Egyptian Pharaohs to the Spanish Inquisitors, from the Church Fathers to the Russian Tsars.<sup>6</sup> By 1948 majority of the Jews had turned their faces towards Zion, an old name for Palestine, and identified with the new state of Israel. For most of these Jews, who had triumphed over the Holocaust, Israel, the new state, was the new force to drive Jewish history based on security and prosperity.

For the Palestinian Arabs, both in the occupied territories and in the Diaspora, the end of the British mandate was to herald a new era of self-determination.<sup>7</sup> This dream of self-determination became elusive. Whereas regional political order supported their dream in theory the Western and American political worlds did not. Armed with international institutions such as Zionism, the U.N, the Western and American political leadership had

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<sup>5</sup>See C. Shindler., *A HISTORY OF MODERN ISRAEL*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) pp.50.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> See R.Ovendale., *THE ORIGINS OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI WARS*, 4<sup>th</sup> Ed (London: Longman, 2004)

helped carve Israel out of Palestine in 1948. This reality was met with outrage and violence by the Palestinian Arabs. The new state of Israel, keen to consolidate herself, swiftly responded with effective and efficient force resulting in displacements, deaths, casualties, and loss of property. Military force, and not dialogue/diplomacy became the defining diplomacy of Israel in its relation with the Palestinians. Many Palestinian villages left empty by the violence and war became the sites of new settlements for Jewish settlers. Indeed, Ariel Sharon's farm was situated on the former Arab village of Hodj.<sup>8</sup> This is the picture that depicts the tortuous Palestine-Israeli conflict; a conflict that has challenged dreams of self-determination, security and prosperity held by both parties to the conflict in varying degrees.

Studies on the historiography of this conflict have been extensively done. However, these studies have not provided insight into the psychology of the actors and the linkages between the attempted management processes and conflict escalation or de-escalation. This study seeks to fill this void by answering the question, "What are the stumbling blocks to the success of conflict management processes in the Palestine-Israeli conflict?"

## **1.2. Objectives of the study**

The objective of this study is to assess attempted conflict management processes in the Palestine-Israeli conflict. Specifically the study intends to:

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<sup>8</sup> C.Shindler., *A HISTORY OF MODERN ISRAEL*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp.13

- (i) Provide an overview on the impact of third party intervention on conflict escalation or de-escalation.
- (ii) Assess conflict management processes.
- (iii) Explore the linkages between conflict management processes and conflict escalation or de-escalation.

### **1.3. Literature Review**

To undertake this study, there will be need to understand conflict and its nature, its management processes, and its actors/parties in society. Given its endemic nature man has evolved various processes of managing it over time. There exists a body of knowledge and research findings written by scholars on these subjects. To establish potential gaps in this study area and attempt to fill the gap, it is invaluable to carry out literature review. Therefore the study will review literature from three main themes: conflict generally, conflict management processes, and attempted conflict management processes in the Palestine-Israeli conflict.

### 1.3.1. The Society and Conflict.

Webb argues that conflict is endemic in society.<sup>9</sup> This implies that conflict will always be an important part of human relationships and that all societies experience conflict from time to time. What may vary from society to society are the causes and contents of conflict. There is a close relationship between conflict and culture/ideology/religion. What may be perceived as divisive in one cultural setting may not be as such in other cultures. This then presupposes application of different conflict management processes in analyzing and managing conflicts in different cultures.<sup>10</sup> Conflict arises when two or more parties have incompatible goals about something.<sup>11</sup> Other analysts such as Laue<sup>12</sup> and Mwangiri<sup>13</sup> have variously argued that conflict is a natural and an inevitable part of human social relationships. Yet others see conflict as the opposite of order.<sup>14</sup>

The function of conflict in society, irrespective of time and space is to dislocate value relationships and to cause stress and strain on the structure on which relationships are based. This notion suggests that conflict processes are negative in effects. However, if managed properly conflicts can be beneficial.<sup>15</sup> They signal that structural inequalities

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<sup>9</sup> E.Keith., 'Structural Violence and the definition of Conflict' World Encyclopaedia of Peace, Vol. 2 (Oxford:Perganon Press, 1986) pp. 431-434.

<sup>10</sup> See M. Mwangiri, *Conflict in Africa: Theory, Processes and Institutions of Management*, (Nairobi: Centre for Conflict Research, 2006), pp. 4.

<sup>11</sup> C. R Mitchell., *The Structure of International Conflict*, (London: Macmillan, 1998), pp. 15-25.

<sup>12</sup> H.J.Laue, "The Emergence and Institutionalization of Third-Party Roles" in Conflict in J.Burton & F.Dukes., *Conflict: Readings in Management and Resolution*,( LONDON:THE MACMILLAN PRESS LTD, 1990), pp. 256.

<sup>13</sup>M. Mwangiri., *Understanding Conflict and its Management*, (Nairobi: Centre for Conflict and Research, 1998), pp. 1

<sup>14</sup> P. Wehr., *Conflict Resolution* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1979).

<sup>15</sup> See A. de Reuck, The Logic of Conflict: Its Origin, development and resolution in M.Banks (ed.), *Conflict in World Society: A new perspective on international relations* (Brighton: Witsheaf Books, 1984), pp. 96-111.



exist in society hence causing unequal power relations among individuals or groups. These structural inequalities need to be analyzed and consequently addressed. If this is not done, then conflicts that arise out of them acquire dysfunctionality. Mwangiru argues that dysfunctional conflict leads to the breakdown of social order and to the breakdown of social and personal relationships in society.<sup>16</sup> Often conflict of this type leads to injury, destruction of property and even death. Since conflicts are embedded in human relationships, the concern should be not to eradicate them but to manage them properly. Proper management of conflict should aim at removing its negative and harmful effects/implications.

There is no consensus among scholars about causes of conflict in society. Mwangiru contends that, "... in political conflict, particularly in the third world, the causes of conflict include the illegitimacy of governments and regimes, and conflicts of constitutionalism..."<sup>17</sup> Most regimes in the third world resist challenges or opposition to their authority and legitimacy. This resistance causes conflict. At the international level, Holsti observes that causes of war and conflict are diverse and include the need for raw materials, search for resources and territory.<sup>18</sup> Other scholars such as Sigmund Freud and Konrad Lorenz argue that the origin of interpersonal and inter group conflict is traced to biologically determined factors.<sup>19</sup> Psychologists, propose that experience of frustration produce tendency to attack other people. On the other hand, basic needs theorists such

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<sup>16</sup> M. Mwangiru, *Conflict in Africa: Theory, Processes and Institutions of Management*, (Nairobi:Centre for Conflict Research, 2006), pp. 4.

<sup>17</sup> M. Mwangiru, "The Constitution as a Source of Crisis: A Conflict Analysis of Democracy and Presidential Power in Kenya" in L. Chweya (ed), *Constitutional Politics and the Challenge of Democracy in Kenya* (Nairobi, SAREAT, 1999), pp. 173-195.

<sup>18</sup> See K. J. Holsti., *Peace and War: Armed Conflict and International Order 1648-1989* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

<sup>19</sup> H. Jeong., *Peace and Conflict Studies; An Introduction*, (Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2005) pp. 65.

as Coate and Rosati attribute protracted social conflict to dissatisfaction of both physical and psychological needs.<sup>20</sup> The denial of such needs required in human development is inherent to many oppressive societies "... and conflict often derives from malfunctioning system."<sup>21</sup>

### **1.3.2. Competing paradigms in conflict management discourse**

There are three competing paradigms in conflict: the Strategists, the Conflict Research and the Peace Research paradigms. The Strategist perspective is exclusively based on the framework of power politics. This realist approach, argues that states are the dominant actors and they are viewed as internally integrated. This argument then assumes that states are equal in their mutual relations and fully sovereign in the management of their internal affairs<sup>22</sup>

Whereas it is assumed that there exists sovereign equality among states, the realist school offers a caveat here. That sovereignty is a function of power and this variable varies from one state to another. Consequently, there is a hierarchy of states. Those at the top of the hierarchy are assumed to have the power and obligation to impose their will on weaker powers and non state actors. Therefore, the strategist perspective is a competitive process

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<sup>20</sup> J.A.Rosati et al, "A Critical assessment of the Power of Human Needs in World Society" in J.Burton & F.Dukes, *Conflict: Readings in Management and Resolution*, (London: MACMILLAN PRESS LTD, 1990), pp 156.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid, pp. 65.

<sup>22</sup> A.J Groom, "Paradigms in Conflict: The Strategist, the Conflict Researcher and the Peace Researcher" in Burton et al., *Conflict: Readings in Management and Resolution*, (LONDON: MACMILLAN PRESS LTD, 1990), pp.73

that is "... power based, adversarial, confrontational, zero sum, win- lose."<sup>23</sup> Therefore, the strategist perspective is designed and advanced to enhance or protect the interests of one or other of the parties to the conflict.

On the other hand Conflict Research Paradigm is predicated on World Society perspective that "treats the role of states as an empirical rather than axiomatic question."

<sup>24</sup> This means that states are on many occasions the most overarching actors but this is not necessarily always. States as well as select non state actors can have effective means of self help. In fact the main theme of World Society approach is system of transactions that are carried out by states or non-state actors that transcend state boundaries.<sup>25</sup> This argument suggests that a system of transaction, which is a set of pattern interactions, is the basic unit of analysis. Therefore, in conflict research discourse the conception of conflict embraces many different levels, crosses disciplinary boundaries because it is non partisan in spirit, is supportive of all parties without exception etc. In this case, a movement may take place towards a resolution based on legitimized relationships that are self sustaining.

Conflict Research approach denies that cause of conflict is an instinct in man with the motivation to dominate. Instead conflict behavior is reaction to an actor's perception of the environment or structures. It is a learned behavior caused by circumstances, situations

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<sup>23</sup> Sandole et.al, (ed), *Conflict Resolution theory and practice: Integration and Application* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), pp.5.

<sup>24</sup> A.J Groom., "Paradigms in Conflict : the Strategist, the Conflict Researcher and the Peace Researcher" in J.Burton et al, *Conflict: Readings in Management and Resolution* ( London: MACMILLAN PRESS LTD, 1990), pp.74

<sup>25</sup> See Sandole et.al, (ed), *Conflict Resolution theory and practice: Integration and Application* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993)

etc. Further still, conflict research conceives conflict as functional or rational: it is meant to serve a useful purpose. But if the cause of the conflict outweighs the purpose being served then conflictual behavior will end. This is not, however, always the case. Those that pay the costs may not always be those that get the benefits or take the decisions. None the less, Conflict Research perspective is most hope full with regard to conflict resolution for it suggests that decision making process is amenable to a cost-benefit analysis. This cost-benefit analysis is not confined to the parameters of power politics.

Peace Research Paradigm argues that the destruction of oppressive structures in society should be the main goal in conflict management.<sup>26</sup> It further advances the view that the mediator should side with the weaker party to empower him or her to overthrow the oppressive structures that benefit the strong party. This is done to enhance the cause of social justice. Edward Azar agrees with this contention. He argues that, "protracted social conflicts have typical characteristics that account for their prolonged nature. In particular, they have enduring features such as economic and technological under development, and unintegrated social and political systems."<sup>27</sup> He further argues that such conflicts have other features that are subject to change, but only when conditions allow for far reaching political changes. This means that features that have inbuilt distributive injustice which need elimination or substantial modification must be transformed to ensure equitable

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<sup>26</sup> A.J Groom., "Paradigms in Conflict : the Strategist, the Conflict Researcher and the Peace Researcher" in J.Burton et al, *Conflict: Readings in Management and Resolution* ( London: MACMILLAN PRESS LTD, 1990), pp.74

<sup>27</sup> E. Azar & L.Burton (eds), *International Conflict Resolution: theory and practice* ,(Brighton, England: Wheatsheaf; Boulder Co. Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1990), pp. 145

power and opportunity. Certain types of economic structures perpetuate a situation where basic standards necessary for staying alive are not met.<sup>28</sup>

Human needs theorists such as Rosati, Carroll, and Coate agree with Peace Research paradigm. For them, social systems must be responsive to individual needs if they are to maintain their legitimacy, and survive and consequently prevent conflict and war<sup>29</sup>. Any system, therefore, political or otherwise should help individuals satisfy these needs.<sup>30</sup>

### 1.3.3. Conflict management Processes

Conflict management and resolution have attracted attention considering that conflict is endemic in international relations.<sup>31</sup> Incompatible claims and demands by adversarial parties (states) continue to dominate and shape international politics. These have generated violent conflicts that have consequently led to destruction and high costs in terms of human lives and material resources. Peaceful management, therefore, is a better way of handling conflict considering high costs of complex conflict (s) or war. Managing conflict peacefully, however, requires strong commitment from conflicting parties. Various processes have been used to manage conflicts that arise from a dispute that is either an issue of law, policy or fact.

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<sup>28</sup> H. Jeong , *PEACE AND CONFLICT STUDIES: An Introduction*, (Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2005), pp. 21

<sup>29</sup> See Rosati et al., *The Power of Human Needs in World Society*, (Boulder, Co: Lynne Rienner, 1998)

<sup>30</sup> See R.E.Rubenstein, "Unanticipated Conflict and the Crisis of Social Theory" in J.Burton & F.Dukes: *Conflict: Readings in Management and Resolution*, (London: THE MACMILLAN PRESS LTD, 1990), pp.316.

<sup>31</sup> See United Nations, *Handbook on the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes Between States*, (New York, 1992)

The 20<sup>th</sup> Century witnessed an increasing awareness of the importance and institutionalization of conflict management processes.<sup>32</sup> The League of Nations Covenant required conflicting states to submit their dispute to judicial settlement, arbitration, or to enquiry. Jeong argues that though international judicial settlement is a slow process and does not allow parties to the conflict to identify and deal with underlying issues, it can guarantee fairness in situations of power imbalance.<sup>33</sup> On the other hand arbitration involves parties choosing arbitrators settle their dispute. However, arbitration is not effective for value conflicts that involve religion and ethnicity.<sup>34</sup> Under enquiry disputed issues are investigated by specific institutions such as an international commission of enquiry. However, Jeong observes that, “Enquiry manages a relatively narrow range of disputes.”<sup>35</sup> This implies that enquiry may not manage complex or protracted conflicts.

Further still, the U.N Charter (Chapter VI) stipulates an obligation of disputing states to peaceful settlement with the use of processes such as negotiation, mediation and conciliation. Occasionally, U.N organs use traditional methods of conflict settlement. Sometimes the U.N Secretary General uses his offices to act as a mediator, conciliator, or a fact-finder in international conflicts. Disputes can be submitted to the General Assembly or the Security Council; this serves as a procedure of conciliation. Furthermore, the U.N General Assembly can be a convenient place to hear and determine grievances. However, some economic and environmental disputes, and human rights

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<sup>32</sup> M. Mwangi, *Conflict in Africa: Theory, Processes and Institutions of Management*, (Nairobi:Centre for Conflict Research, 2006), pp. 4.

<sup>33</sup> H. Jeong, *PEACE AND CONFLICT STUDIES: An Introduction*, (Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2005), pp. 178.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid* pp.175.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid* pp.174.

abuses have also been investigated and decisions made thereon by some international agencies such as Human Rights Watch, Transparency International, Amnesty International, etc.

Cases in which negotiation process has not worked then arbitration, adjudication, mediation and other third party interventions have been used in resolving conflicts arising from pursuit of competing interests, values, or ideology. All these are processes for achieving peace. However, all the literature on these processes speaks generally how these processes can be applied to the real world. They do not situate their explanations or evaluation of such processes in the context of particular conflicts such as the Palestine-Israeli conflict. Ramsbotham analyses this conflict in the context of the Oslo Accords of the early 1990s but his is not a critical assessment of the process of management<sup>36</sup>. Jeong describes conflict management processes ranging from Good offices to second track diplomacy without situating them to relevant conflict situations in particular<sup>37</sup>. Therefore, this study is appropriate for it shall attempt to critically assess past attempted conflict management processes in this protracted conflict.

#### **1.3.4. Conflict Management Processes in the Palestine-Israeli conflict**

Ramsbotham observes that, “When the Oslo Accords were signed in 1993, it was widely believed that the Norwegian facilitation had brought about a breakthrough in the long

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<sup>36</sup>See Ramsbotham , *CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT RESOLUTION*, (Cambridge, Polity Press, 2005), pp. 181-184.

<sup>37</sup>See H. Jeong, *PEACE AND CONFLICT STUDIES: An Introduction*, (Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2005), pp. 167-192.

conflict.”<sup>38</sup> Yet most of the provisions of the Accords were suspended, the final status issues remained unresolved, forceful occupation of the West Bank and Gaza by Israel continued, and Palestine suicide bombers avenged occupation by blowing up Israeli civilians and facilities. He further argues that, “...the attempt at conflict resolution was fundamentally flawed from the outset, in the context of Israeli-Palestinian asymmetry.”<sup>39</sup> Others like Jones have argued that the peace process became a means whereby a stronger party slowly and deliberately crushes the aspirations of the weaker party.<sup>40</sup> In his view the Oslo Accords and their prior processes, merely reproduced structures of inequality and domination and this implied that conflict resolution in such contexts is fundamentally problematic.<sup>41</sup> This state of affairs dominated subsequent conflict management processes way up to 2010.

The Norwegian as well as the Geneva interventions were made in good faith with the hope of lessening the suffering caused by the conflict.<sup>42</sup> The facilitation sought to grant autonomy in Gaza and Jericho as a preamble to the two-state solution. This could only be achieved through negotiation and exploration. Aggestam proposed that negotiation and exploration were aimed at giving an opportunity to the two sides to reframe their views of

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<sup>38</sup> O.Ramsbotham et al., *CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT RESOLUTION*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), pp.181.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, pp.181.

<sup>40</sup> D.Jones., *Cosmopolitan Mediation? Conflict Resolution and the Oslo Accords* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp.130.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, pp.160.

<sup>42</sup> O.Ramsbotham et al., *CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT RESOLUTION*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), pp.181.



a conflict and create a new reality that could help open the potential for new relationship.<sup>43</sup>

Furthermore, the Oslo process, as well as other subsequent processes, was launched at a time when the Israeli government was strong and the PLO was weak and desperate. Said observed that in such asymmetrical negotiations, the outcome would have been one in which the stronger party crushes and humiliates the weaker party thus leading to a dismembered and impoverished Palestinian territory that lacked both statehood and autonomy.<sup>44</sup> In fact the spirit of the Oslo process dissolved before the accords were signed as lawyers from the Israeli government weakened the agreements with caveats and restrictions.<sup>45</sup> Indeed national political leaders of Israel especially Rabin and Perez rejected the idea of a Palestinian state. Again influential constituencies on both sides had opposed the Accords. Further still, violence was perpetrated by both sides as the Israeli government accelerated construction of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories. However, at the Camp David II talks in 2000 Prime Minister Ehud Barak softened his stance by accepting Palestinian sovereignty over east Jerusalem and was willing to return 91% of the West Bank to the Palestinians.<sup>46</sup>

In October 2003, the Geneva Accords brought the Oslo process to an end. Under the Geneva peace process, Israel was to pull out of West Bank and Gaza to the

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<sup>43</sup> K.Aggestam., *Reframing and Resolving Conflict: Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations 1988-1998*, (Lund: Lund University Press; Lund Political Studies 108, 1999), pp.173.

<sup>44</sup>See E.Said., *The End of the Peace Process: Oslo and after*, (London: Granta, 2002)

<sup>45</sup> See J.Corbin., *Gaza First: The Secret Norway Channel to Peace Between Israel and PLO*, (London: Bloomsbury, 1994)

<sup>46</sup> See H.Agha & R.Mulley., "Camp David: the tragedy of errors", *New York Review of Books*, 48 (13), 9 August, 2001.

internationally recognized 1967 borders. Again under this process, Palestine after becoming a state would exercise sovereignty over Jewish settlements constructed by Israel in Eastern Jerusalem. Meanwhile there has been noticeable change in perspective and discourse for hard line Jews who appear to accept a two-state solution. On the other hand 'Islamists' such as Hamas, the Islamic Jihad, and the Al-Aqsa Martyr Brigade on the Palestinian side need to recognize the existence of the Israeli state.

Conflict management process cannot be left to the conflict region alone but must also address the broader context in which the conflict is situated.<sup>47</sup> According to Etzioni, conflict transformation process must extend from the local level to the broader levels in which conflict is situated.<sup>48</sup> To do this the task of mediation should seek to overcome the asymmetry of the conflict. This implies that mediation requires both advocacy and support for the weak party. According to Galtung conflict must be balanced by situating both Israel and Palestine within the context of Middle Eastern community.<sup>49</sup> This can be realized by modifying the U.S economic, military, and political support for Israel which remains one of the drivers of the conflict. At every stage of conflict management process transformations in the issues, the actors, the structure, and the context are vital to move the conflict resolution process forward.<sup>50</sup> All in all there has been many conflict management processes initiated by various third parties in an attempt to resolve the

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<sup>47</sup> O.Ramsbotham et al., *CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT RESOLUTION*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), pp.183.

<sup>48</sup> A.Etzioni, "On self-encapsulating Conflicts," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 8 (3), pp.242-255.

<sup>49</sup> J.Galtung., *Transcend and Transform: An Introduction to Conflict Work*, (London: Pluto, 2004), pp 103-109.

<sup>50</sup> O.Ramsbotham et al., *CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT RESOLUTION*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), pp.184.

Palestine-Israeli conflict. However, there has been an apparent lack of critical assessment of the effectiveness of third party intervention in this protracted conflict since 2000.

#### **1.4. Justification of the study**

The construction created by both the local and international print and electronic media has been and still is that the Palestinian Arabs are the real threat to peace in Middle East.<sup>51</sup> They have often resorted to suicide bombings, blowing up rail lines, blowing up open markets in Israel in an effort to realize their “selfish” interests, the media reports. In response, Israeli authorities sanctioned bombardment of refugee villages believed to house suicide bombers with massive force and violence. What the media does is to paint Israeli authorities as innocent and defensive while the Palestinian Arabs as the offensive villains in the Palestine–Israeli conflict.

Indeed the founders of the state of Israel believed that they had changed the direction of history by placing a marginalized and discriminated people (Jews) to the centre. They had claimed victory over their oppressors, from the Egyptian Pharaohs to the Spanish Inquisitors, from the Church Fathers to the Russian Tsars. By 1948 majority of the Jews had turned their faces towards Zion, an old name for Palestine, and identified with the new state of Israel. For most of these Jews, who had triumphed over the Holocaust, Israel, the new state, was the new force to drive Jewish history based on security and prosperity.

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<sup>51</sup> A.Gresh & D.Vidal, *A to Z of the Middle East* (London: Zed Books Ltd, 1990), pp.vii-xii

For the Palestinian Arabs, both in the occupied territories and in the Diaspora, the end of the British mandate was to herald a new era of self-determination, security, and prosperity. This dream of self-determination became elusive. Whereas regional political order supported their dream, the Western and American political worlds did not. Armed with international institutions such as the U.N the Western and American political leaders had helped carve Israel out of Palestine in 1948.<sup>52</sup> This reality was met with outrage and violence by the Palestinian Arabs. The new state of Israel, keen to consolidate herself, swiftly responded with effective and efficient force resulting in deaths, casualties, displacement, and loss of property.<sup>53</sup> Military force, and not dialogue/diplomacy became the defining ethic of Israel. Many Palestinian villages left empty by the violence of war became the sites of new settlements for Jewish settlers. Indeed, Ariel Sharon (former Israeli Prime Minister)'s farm was situated on the former Arab village of Hodj.<sup>54</sup> This is the picture that depicts the tortuous Palestine-Israeli conflict; a conflict that has challenged dreams of self-determination, security and prosperity emotionally held by both parties to the conflict in varying degrees.

Studies on the historiography of this conflict have been extensively done. However, these studies have not provided objectively conclusive insight into the psychology of the actors and the efficacy of the approaches employed in the resolution of this conflict. This study seeks to fill this void by answering the question, "What are the stumbling blocks to the success of conflict resolution processes in the Palestine–Israel conflict?"

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<sup>52</sup> See G.Lenczowski, *American Presidents and the Middle East*, (London: Duke University Press, 1990)

<sup>53</sup> See D.J.Stewart, *The Middle East Today: Political, geographical and cultural perspectives*, (New York: Routledge, 2009)

<sup>54</sup> See D.J.Stewart, *The Middle East Today: Political, geographical and cultural perspectives*, (New York: Routledge, 2009)

This research is, indeed very important because it will fill the gap existing about the real stumbling blocks to peace. It could provide an alternative conflict resolution approaches such as judicial settlement as opposed to negotiation, mediation and conciliation. The findings of this research could be used by international community in seeking to resolve once and for all the Palestine– Israeli conflict that continues to threaten regional peace and security in the Middle East.

### **1.5. Hypotheses**

The study will test the following hypotheses

1. Hard-line positions of parties to a conflict lead to a stalemate,
2. Partisan intervention complicates the process of conflict management, leading to conflict escalation.
3. There is a direct link between conflict management processes and conflict escalation or de-escalation.

### **1.6. Theoretical Framework**

This study shall be guided by the theory of Functionalism/Structuralism. Functionalist approach has a long history in sociology. It traces its perspective from the works of Auguste Comte and Herbert Spencer who are said to be the founding fathers of

sociology. Their primordial ideas were developed later by Emile Durkheim and refined by Talcott Parsons.

Functionalism/Structuralism advances the view that society is a system.<sup>55</sup> It envisions a society that is made up of a set of interconnected parts which collectively form the whole. For functionalism the basic unit of analysis is society, and its different parts are understood essentially in terms of their relationship to the whole. The concept of function in functionalist perspective refers to the contribution of the part (s) to the whole. In other words the function of any part of society is the contribution it makes to meet the functional needs (prerequisites) of the social system. Therefore, parts/units of society are functional in so far as they maintain the system and contribute to its survival. In the functionalist world view, the parts of society are the family, religion, education etc. However, these parts or institutions can be a source of tension/stress in society. Some parts can be dictatorial in their organization and function; producing, reproducing and or entrenching inequality in society. This ensures that a large section of society is targeted and marginalized by the elites in terms of access, control, and use of resources and, or power. In turn the marginalized sections gang up with whatever means available to them to acquire what they believe is rightfully theirs. These means could vary from protests to localized terrorism.

The entire population of the world lives in one global society. This population is divided into separate political communities, or independent states that affect the way people live.

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<sup>55</sup> J.Henselin.,*SOCIOLOGY: A Down-to-Earth Approach; CORE CONCEPTS*, (Boston:PEARSON, 2009), pp.13.

A state, according to Jackson and Sorensen is "...a clear-cut and bordered territory with a permanent population, under the jurisdiction of supreme government that is constitutionally independent of all foreign governments: a sovereign state."<sup>56</sup> Whereas Goldstein et al define a state as "a territorial entity controlled by a government and inhabited by a population."<sup>57</sup> These two definitions indicate that states and the system of states are territory-based social organizations which are established to establish, defend, and maintain basic social functions and values such as freedom, security, justice, order, and welfare. Apart from states in the international society, there are also non-state actors (transnational actors) comprising Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs), Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs), Multinational Corporations (MNCs), Quasi-state actors such as the Catholic Church (or the Holy See), Extra-judicial non-state actors such as the terrorist groups, drug-traffickers and human traffickers of global reach.

### **1.7. Research methodology**

This research will rely on secondary data. It will explore and critically analyze works that have been published and that are in public domain. Such works may include books, journals, articles, newsletters, relevant papers presented at different fora, print and electronic media that have a relation to this area of study. International instruments such as Conventions and Charters on human rights law and war will be of significant use.

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<sup>56</sup>R. Jackson & G.Sorensen., *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and approaches*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 2.

<sup>57</sup>J. Goldstein & J. Pevehouse., *International Relations*, (New York: PEARSON, 2011), pp. 12.

Furthermore, the secondary data shall also be obtained from published data available from libraries including online libraries such as J.Stor and Emerald. Unpublished projects will provide useful information in this study. Further still, internet sources also be significant sources of information for this study. They will be used especially to provide current information on the latest developments in this area.

Research on the relationship between third party interventions, conflict management processes, and conflict escalation/de-escalation is limited with respect to this study. However, studies conducted in similar conflict situations will provide useful information to the study.

### **1.8. Chapter Outline**

This study shall be divided into five chapters. Chapter One covers the historical background to the study, the statement of the research problem, the objectives, the literature review, the justification of the study, the theoretical framework, the hypothesis, and the research methodology. While the historical background, trends, and developments are outlined in chapter two. Chapter three outlines the conflict management processes in the Palestine-Israeli conflict employed in the period 1990-2010. The analysis of issues emerging from chapter three is carried out in chapter four. While chapter five gives the summary and outlines recommendations for future approach, analysis, and management of international conflicts.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **PALESTINE-ISRAELI CONFLICT: AN OVERVIEW**

#### **2.0. Introduction**

The previous chapter outlined the background of the study, the research problem, and objectives of the study, the literature review, the justification of the study, the hypotheses, the theoretical framework, and the research methodology. In the literature review section, scholarly works and debates have been reviewed while identifying the gap that this study seeks to fill. Structuralism-Functionalism has been identified as the theoretical framework underpinning this study. Methodologically the research shall rely on secondary data that shall be sampled randomly.

This chapter will focus on the historical overview of pre, colonial and post colonial Palestine. It will further attempt to discuss the dynamics, both internal and external, which have (and continue to) shaped the International relations of the Middle East region. Finally, it will demonstrate how these relations have impacted on Palestine-Israeli conflict analysis, management and resolution.

## 2.1. Palestine-Israeli conflict in a historical perspective

The background to the Palestine-Israeli conflict forms an episode in imperial history.<sup>58</sup> It is a narrative of how Britain attempted to exercise control over the Arabs, Jews and their territory. British control over the Middle East lasted until the end of World War II. However, the British control was thwarted by U.S presidential politics. President Truman, eager to win a second term in office by riding on Jewish nationalism in the U.S, ordered British colonial authorities to allow unlimited European Jewish immigrants into Palestine. Since then the Middle East became a region of Super Power rivalry as the U.S and Russia competed for control of the reservoir of World's oil.<sup>59</sup> On the other hand many American Jews began to think of themselves as not Americans but as Israelis. Fuchs wrote that American administrations found themselves faced with powerful electoral groups that threatened punishment through elections, not based on American concerns, but on those affecting Israelis.<sup>60</sup>

It was the creation of Israel that precipitated the Palestine-Israeli conflict. The idea of a Jewish state was conceived and popularized by Theodore Herzl in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. About fifty years later Ben-Gurion presided over its formation. Ovendale observes that, Chaim Weizmann nurtured the growth of Yishuv (Jewish community) in Palestine by winning the support and sympathy of influential people in British public life.<sup>61</sup> Between 1947 and 1948 managed to persuade U.S President Truman to support creation of the state of

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<sup>58</sup> R.Ovendale., *THE ORIGINS OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI WARS*, (London: Longman, 2004), pp.328.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid*, pp 329.

<sup>60</sup> See F.Fuchs., *The Political Behavior of American Jews*, (Glencoe, III: 1956)

<sup>61</sup> R.Ovendale., *THE ORIGINS OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI WARS*, (London: Longman, 2004), pp.329.

Israel. Indeed Israel was created through Ben-Gurion's policy of using Zionists to exert pressure on the U.S successive governments to instruct British colonial authorities to implement a policy favorable to Zionist aspirations in Palestine. Soon Israel achieved indomitable military preparedness that enabled it to occupy more territories during the 1967 War. Subsequent Israeli administrations were able to win and secure American sympathy and support. Golda Meir was able to develop American sponsorship into an assurance that the United States would guarantee Israel's survival.<sup>62</sup>

In the estimation of the Arabs it was Britain that created Israeli state. To them it was the "British government that issued the Balfour Declaration in 1917, held the mandate and permitted Jewish immigrants who took land."<sup>63</sup> There existed sympathy for Zionism within British establishments. Reasons for this sympathy varied from compensation for guilty feelings over covert anti-Semitism to lobbying by Zionists.

However, it was the U.S that nurtured the nascent state of Israel. President Truman exerted pressure on British colonial administration to allow unlimited Jewish immigrants into Palestine. Indeed it was tax-free contributions from American citizens that enabled Israel to absorb immigrants from the Middle East during the 1950s, and industrialize and rearm during the 1960s.<sup>64</sup> Bill & Springborg observe that, "Prior to the collapse of the Soviet Union, Israel was generally considered by U.S administrations to be vital to U.S

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid, pp.329.

<sup>63</sup> R.Ovendale., *THE ORIGINS OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI WARS*, (London: Longman, 2004), pp.329.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid, pp.529.

security interests in the region because it provided military assets that could be used against both the USSR and radical Arab nationalism.”<sup>65</sup>

## 2.2. The Rise of Zionism and the Israeli State Formation

Israel’s struggle for independence was concluded in 1949 with the signing of a truce with Lebanon, Egypt, Syria and Jordan.<sup>66</sup> Since then Israel has arisen as a powerful state with the necessary infrastructure for political parties, a parliament, a stable economy, and an ideology. These achievements can be attributed to the legitimating ideology of the state of Israel-that is Zionism. Zionism was an ideology conceived in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe. Ovendale attributes the first use of the term ‘Zionism’ to Nathan Birnbaum in his published article in 1886. He further argues that the term has come “to be understood as meaning a movement for the re-establishment of a Jewish nation in Palestine.”<sup>67</sup>

The father and founder of Zionism was Theodore Herzl, an assimilated Viennese Jew. In his writings responding to anti-Semitism, especially *Der Judenstaat* [“The Jewish State”] he visualized an established Jewish state. In Eastern part of Europe, especially in Russia, Jews were subjected to persecution and forced isolation from the rest of the society. In this environment of hostility, ideas and thoughts of establishing a state for the Jews began

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<sup>65</sup> J.Bill & R.Springborg, *POLITICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST*, (New York: HarperCollinsCollege Publishers, 1994),pp.362.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, pp.313.

<sup>67</sup> R.Ovendale., *THE ORIGINS OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI WARS*,4<sup>th</sup> Ed (London:Longman, 2004), pp.3

to be expressed and concretized. This led to the formation of *Hibbat Zion* (The Love of Zion) movement that sent immigrants to Palestine<sup>68</sup> (whose old name was Zion).

Europe provided organizational, financial, and ideological resources to crystallize Zionism and its vision. Europe further provided the education and training for the individuals who conceptualized Zionism. It was also the venue for Zionist activities. For instance, Theodore Herzl organized the first conference of the World Zionist Organization in Basel in 1897. It was agreed in this conference that Palestine should be the location for the proposed Jewish state. Western ideas and objectives of nationalism, colonialism, and racial supremacy formed the bedrock of Zionism.<sup>69</sup>

Chaim Weizmann, the successor to Herzl, asserted, "One of the most neglected corners of the miserably neglected Turkish empire needed to be redeemed by Jewish capital and labor."<sup>70</sup> Furthermore, Max Nordau, the contemporary of Herzl observed that, "We are going to Palestine to extend the moral boundaries of Europe as far as the Euphrates."<sup>71</sup> In fact Palestine was visualized as a land without people for a people without land. Indeed such attitude and perception reflected the view that the Zionist objective was part of the style of European colonialism that required for its realization cooperation with colonial powers and subordination of the colonized population. The organizational infrastructure of Zionist movement including the Jewish National Fund was created along the great

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<sup>68</sup> J. Bill & R. Springborg, *POLITICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST*, (New York: HarperCollinsCollege Publishers, 1994), pp.314.

<sup>69</sup> J. Bill & R. Springborg, *POLITICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST*, (New York: HarperCollinsCollege Publishers, 1994), pp.315.

<sup>70</sup> C. Weizmann, *Trial and Error: The Autobiography of Chaim Weizmann*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1959), pp.128-129.

<sup>71</sup> K. Brown, "Iron and a King: The Likud and Oriental Jews," *Merip Reports* 114 (May 1983), pp.7.

companies' model that facilitated colonial settlement and control. In fact, the Belfour Declaration of 1917 drafted by the British sought to establish in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people. Additionally, the declaration was incorporated into the terms of the Mandate for Palestine that were awarded by the League of Nations to Britain.<sup>72</sup>

Indeed two forms of organization facilitated the creation and consolidation of the new state and absorption of immigrants. First, the infrastructure of international Zionist groupings (World Zionist Organization, Jewish National Fund, and Jewish Agency) that coordinated their activities within and without Israel raised funds, propagated Zionism, facilitated migration, lobbied Western governments, purchased and managed land in Palestine and in Israel.<sup>73</sup> Secondly, political movements within Palestine matured into Political parties that contested elections after the creation of Israel in 1948. These political movements had served as platforms for the articulation of Zionist issues and demands, the recruitment and consolidation of political leadership.

Of importance are the Palestine-Israeli war and its relation to the creation of the state of Israel. Hostilities started in 1947 with the announcement of the United Nations partition plan. Arabs had rejected the partition of Palestine because the partition had awarded the Jews (then the minority) 55% of the land area of Palestine.<sup>74</sup> Before this partition plan, the Zionist had been preparing for war. The Haganah, the Irgun, and the Stern gang (all Zionist groups), by April 1948, had fully prepared for war. The Israelis fought the war

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<sup>72</sup> J.Bili & R.Springborg, *POLITICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST*, (New York: HarperCollinsCollege Publishers, 1994),pp.318.

<sup>73</sup> J.Bill & R.Springborg, *POLITICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST*, (New York: HarperCollinsCollege Publishers, 1994),pp.318.

<sup>74</sup> N.Dupuy, *Elusive Victory: The Arab-Israeli Wars 1947-1974*, (London 1978), pp.xxiv.

and subsequent wars in both 1967 and 1973 with a united front and occupied more Arab territories. But the Arabs could not put up a united front against Israel owing to old rivalries. They also faced logistic challenges; they could not secure arms from abroad.

### **2.3. Palestinian State Formation**

The process of Palestinian state formation began in 1948 and has not been completed.<sup>75</sup> Indeed Palestinians were from 1948 referred to as refugees; the term used to refer to them in the U.N Security Council Resolution 242. However, they wanted to be referred to as Palestinians or Palestinian Arabs. To them this recognition entitled them to the right of existence and the right to a state. In fact the intervening period between 1948-1960s Palestinian politics were organized along traditional lines and dominated by conservative notables. In essence Palestinian politics lacked ideological and organizational force. Yet Palestinians were able to redefine their personal and political identities as Arabs rather than as Muslim, Christian, tribal, or familial.<sup>76</sup> They began to formulate nationalist aspirations and identity based on the territory that was divided and colonized by both the British and the French. For the Palestinians this territory was Palestine.

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<sup>75</sup> J. Bill & R. Springborg, *POLITICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST*, (New York: HarperCollinsCollege Publishers, 1994), pp.339.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid pp.339.

### **2.3.1. Pan-Arabism versus Palestinian nationalism**

The Arab identity superseded the Palestinian identity in 1947-1949. This was because Arab states sought instead to reinforce Arabism rather than Palestinian nationalism.<sup>77</sup> This pan-Arabism weakened Palestinian nationalism; too weak to fight Israeli occupation alone, Palestinians sought to join hands with Arab states to further their cause. At this time Gamal Abdel Nasser stood out as the champion of Arab rights and was perceived by Palestinians as their savior. But Palestinians discovered that their nationalism and Pan-Arabism were at variance with each other. According to Bill and Springborg, Palestinians began to center once again their nationalism not on Arabism but on their identity instead.<sup>78</sup>

### **2.3.2. Deconstructing Palestinian Nationalism and Identity**

When Palestinian nationalism became intense, there were attempts at weakening it. Israel, the United States, and the Arab states sought to subdue it.<sup>79</sup> For instance, Israel attempted to weaken Palestinian claim to land by negating references to Palestinians and expression of their culture.”<sup>80</sup> Indeed Bill and Springborg observe that, “Since 1948, Israel has bulldozed 385 of the 475 Palestinian villages that were inside the “Green Line” (that is the border between Israel and West Bank from 1949 to 1967) and wiped their

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<sup>77</sup> See B.Berberoglu., *POWER AND STABILITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST*, (London: Zed Books Ltd, 1989)

<sup>78</sup> J.Bill & R.Springborg, *POLITICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST*, (New York: HarperCollinsCollege Publishers, 1994),pp.339

<sup>79</sup> Ibid. pp.339.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, pp.339



names from maps, in many cases replacing them with Hebrew names.<sup>81</sup> In fact, Prime Minister Gold Meir declared in 1969 that there was no such a thing as Palestinian people.<sup>82</sup> Bober further writes that Menachem Begin said,

“If this is Palestine and not the land of Israel, then you are conquerors and not tiller of the land. You are invaders. If this is Palestine, then it belongs to a people who lived here before you came.”<sup>83</sup>

Furthermore, Yitzhak Rabin, then Israeli Prime Minister in 1974-1977 asserted that, “a third state between Israel and Jordan...will not be created.”<sup>84</sup> All these efforts were aimed at impeding the formation, legitimization, and international recognition of Palestinian nationalism/state.

Successive U.S administrations have exhibited political ambivalence towards Palestine and Palestinians. This has helped Israel to systematically obliterate Palestinian history and identity. In 1982 Secretary of State Alexander Haig had given covert permission to Israeli invasion of Lebanon in the hope that PLO would be destroyed. Furthermore, President Jimmy Carter at Camp David in 1978 mediated peace agreement between Israel and Egypt. This mediation was interpreted by Israeli administration to be compatible with her policies of settling Jews in the occupied territories and denying Palestinians both civil and national rights.<sup>85</sup> Again when campaigning in 1980, Ronald Reagan observed that he saw nothing illegal about Israel’s settlements in the occupied territories. Eight years later the U.S government intensified her anti-Palestine policy by shutting down PLO

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<sup>81</sup> J.Bill & R.Springborg, *POLITICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST*, (New York: HarperCollinsCollege Publishers, 1994),pp.339

<sup>82</sup>See *The Sunday Times*, June 15, 1969.

<sup>83</sup> A.Bober.,*The Other Israel* (New York: Doubleday, 1972), pp.77.

<sup>84</sup> . J.Bill & R.Springborg, *POLITICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST*, (New York: HarperCollinsCollege Publishers, 1994),pp.341.

<sup>85</sup> J.Bill & R.Springborg, *POLITICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST*, (New York: HarperCollinsCollege Publishers, 1994),pp.341.

information office in Washington in 1988. In fact when the U.N General Assembly invited PLO chairman Yasser Arafat to address its annual debate on Palestine, the U.S government denied him a visa to enter the United States arguing that PLO was a terrorist organization.<sup>86</sup> Just like Israeli administration, the U.S government language in 1970 onwards till 1980 was carefully selected to avoid both terms Palestine and Palestinian.<sup>87</sup>

Regionally the Arab states did not act any better in promoting Palestinian nationalism. Flapan argues that between 1947 and 1949 both Transjordan and Israel pursued a policy of 'politicide' that sought to eliminate any Palestinian leadership that strove for an independent Palestinian state.<sup>88</sup> Indeed Bill and Springborg further observe that some Arab states in 1947-1948 rejected Palestinian pleas for money, arms and reinforcements.<sup>89</sup> Again in 1950 Jordan prohibited the use of the term Palestine in reference to the land west of River Jordan under its jurisdiction and instead referred to this land as West Bank. In 1970 king Hussein of Jordan undertook to eliminate the Palestinian National Movement. On the other hand Egyptian authorities arrested all Fatah leaders in 1964 in Gaza, then territory under Egyptian jurisdiction when the latter led raids into Israel. Palestinian opposition was further compounded when Syria from 1983 used her own troops to liquidate the Palestinian national movement in Lebanon.<sup>90</sup> All these developments from both within and without the Middle East region have convinced

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid. pp.341.

<sup>87</sup> K.Christison., "Blind Spots: Official U.S Myths about the Middle East," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 66 (Winter 1988), pp.57.

<sup>88</sup> S.Flapan., *The Birth of Israel: Myths and Realities*, (New York:Pantheon Books, 1987), pp.150.

<sup>89</sup> J.Bill & R.Springborg, *POLITICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST*, (New York: HarperCollinsCollege Publishers, 1994),pp.343.

<sup>90</sup> See B.Nuwaihed, "The Nature of the Palestinian Organization" in *Palestinian Rights*.

Palestinians to believe that not only is Israel and the United States but also Arab states are opposed to their aspirations for independence.<sup>91</sup>

Furthermore, Khalidi observes that most Palestinians consider their 'martyrs' to have been killed by Arab regimes.<sup>92</sup>

### **2.3.3. Re-membering Palestinian Nationalism and Identity**

Hence Palestinians sought other strategies of renewing and asserting their identity and nationalism. The strategies involved writing of nationalist poems and adopting and using terrorist methods on a global scale. The aim of these strategies was to communicate to the world society that they were a people in need of a state. Therefore, armed struggle represented re-assertion of Palestinian identity and national consciousness. These values were expressed in absolutist claims that declared both the partition of Palestine and the establishment of Israel in 1947 as illegal objectives. However, armed struggle failed to deliver a state for the Palestinians. Hence reformed Palestinian identity and nationalism from 1968 began to carve in to a realistic position-negotiating a compromise peace with Israel.

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<sup>91</sup> F.Moughrabi., "The International Consensus on the Palestine Question," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 63 (Spring 1987), pp 126-131.

<sup>92</sup> R.Khalidi., "The Palestinian Dilema: PLO policy after Lebanon", *Journal of Palestine Studies* 57 (Autumn,1985), pp.100.

#### **2.3.4. The Organization and institutionalization of Palestinian politics**

The Palestinian society by 19<sup>th</sup> century was rural and had no national political organization.<sup>93</sup> What were regarded as political leadership were traditional notables of cities such as Jerusalem. Such notables were associated with religious traditions and institutions of the city. However, during the 1936-1939 Palestinians were able to mobilize peasants against Zionist settlers and the colonizing British. Anxious to consolidate this strategic area before outbreak of World War II, the British crushed this revolt. With the creation of Israel in 1948, there was an organizational vacuum within Palestinian politics and peasantry.<sup>94</sup>

Modern Palestinian political organizations trace their origin in the 1960s. In the 1960s a generation of educated middle-class Palestinians, inspired by nationalism and identity, sought to modernize Palestinian society and politics. In Cairo, a group of student leaders emerged in 1964 that formed a guerrilla organization Fatah. In Beirut, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PDFLP) were formed by Palestinian university students. These groups recruited guerrillas from the peasants of the refugee camps. Again these small but growing organizations created a climate in which Palestinian nationalism and identity formation could crystallize. Syria supported Fatah to undermine Egypt's emerging regional hegemony. To checkmate Syrian rising political leverage in the region, Egypt plotted and supported the formation of Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). By

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<sup>93</sup> J. Bill & R. Springborg, *POLITICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST*, (New York: HarperCollins College Publishers, 1994), pp. 346

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 347.

February 1969 Yasser Arafat was elected chairman of the executive committee of the Palestine National Council (PNC).

In the 1970s PLO had become a conglomeration of guerrilla organizations. It had expanded its membership to include representatives of many sectors of the Palestinian population.<sup>95</sup> There was also growth of bureaucratic infrastructure within PLO. By 1982 these infrastructures dealt with health care, vocational training, information and culture, mass organizations, social affairs and welfare, education, and politics. However, these organizational infrastructure located in Lebanon was destroyed during the Israeli invasion in 1982.

During its period of consolidation, PLO faced both external and internal challenges. Arab states as well as Israel attempted to direct physical attacks on either individuals or groups associated with the Palestinian national movement. For instance, PLO leaders Salah Khalaf and Khalil al-Wazir were at different times and places assassinated by PLO enemies.<sup>96</sup> Egypt attempted to bring the PLO into its sphere of influence by using her diplomatic leverage it has had with the U.S and in the Middle East. Yet at different times, the U.S supported efforts aimed at weakening PLO as a political actor driving Palestinian national movement. However, Palestinians have been able to counter these external threats. Palestinians realization and conviction that PLO is the only instrument for the achievement of their nationalist aspiration, has enabled Palestinians to overcome these

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<sup>95</sup> C.Rubenberg, "The Civilian Infrastructure of the Palestine Liberation Organization," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 47 (Spring 1983), pp.57.

<sup>96</sup> J.Bill & R.Springborg, *POLITICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST*, (New York: HarperCollinsCollege Publishers, 1994),pp.349.

external challenges. Furthermore, the interaction and interplay between Palestinian national movement's enemies and allies have worked to the advantage of the Palestinians.

Internal challenges have been difficult to counterbalance. The social structure and geographical spread have worked against organizational unity within PLO. About a fifth of Palestinians are registered as refugees living in camps in occupied territories, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Kuwait, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Libya.<sup>97</sup> About 45% of all Palestinians live under direct Israeli jurisdiction. Further still, about 7% of all Palestinians took up residence in Europe, North America, and elsewhere.<sup>98</sup> Again majority of Palestinians are Sunni Muslims living in squalor and poverty in camps while the minority Christians are politically powerful. Maintaining unity of purpose and order on such diversities within the Palestinian society was a daunting task.

Palestinian political activity shifted base from Beirut and Amman to the occupied territories by 1987. PLO which had emerged as a Diaspora movement in the 1960s was able to connect politically and geographically with Palestinians both in the occupied territories and Israel. However, the proliferation of other organizations in the 1980s overshadowed PLO's power and influence. These organizations pursued different persuasions, that is, secularist and Islamist perspectives. While Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas ('zeal') rejected nationalist aspirations and called for the establishment of an

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<sup>97</sup> J.Bill & R.Springborg, *POLITICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST*, (New York: HarperCollinsCollege Publishers, 1994),pp.349.

<sup>98</sup> J.Abu-Lughod, "The Continuing Expulsions from Palestine: 1948-1985," in E.Perry., *Palestine: Continuing Dispossession*, (Belmont, Mass: Association of Arab-American University Graduates, 1986), pp.17-45.

Islamic state, Islamic Jihad and PLO have jointly pursued nationalist aspirations.<sup>99</sup> Again Westernized Palestinians living in West Bank and Gaza have become critical of 'old-guard' PLO leadership-which they accuse of being old-fashioned and not equipped to negotiate with Israeli decision makers. This disunity between secular PLO and its cognate organizations in the occupied territories has militated against unified peace negotiations with Israel. Nonetheless, PLO has been able to manage conflict within itself, recruit new leadership and develop negotiating strategy.<sup>100</sup>

## 2.5. Conclusions

It was indeed during the British leadership and control that the conflict between Palestinian Arabs and Israelis (Jews) began. At first it was a conflict between the Arabs and the British colonial administration. This was because the British administration had succumbed to the U.S pressure to allow unlimited influx of Jews from Europe into Palestine. Palestinians opposed this immigration policy through protests and violence. When the British appeared unrelenting in this policy, the Arabs reasoned that both the British and the Jews were their enemies. They enlisted pan-Arabism to their cause- Palestinian nationalism and identity. Arab leaders spurned this attempt and instead hijacked Palestinian nationalism and identity to propel their regional hegemony. However, further influx of immigrants into Palestine angered the Palestinians and their leadership; they feared loss of their land and sovereignty. The British, faced with difficult

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<sup>99</sup> See R.Khalidi, "The PLO and the Uprising," *Middle East Report 154* (September-October 1988).

<sup>100</sup> J.Bill & R.Springborg, *POLITICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST*, (New York: HarperCollinsCollege Publishers, 1994),pp.356.

immigration policy decisions to make, took the mandate back to the United Nations. Consequently, the .U.N passed a resolution in 1947 that sought to partition Palestine into two territories: Israel for the Jews and Palestine for the Palestinians. This partition plan caused even more violence by the Palestinians who had rejected it.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **CONFLICT MANAGEMENT PROCESSES: A CASE STUDY OF THE PALESTINE-ISRAELI CONFLICT, 1993-2010**

#### **3.0. Introduction**

The previous chapter historically analyzed the origins, development, and implication of the Palestine-Israeli conflict over time. The chapter further demonstrated two major contending narratives about Palestine and its 'natural' occupiers. It divided the historical Palestine into pre-, colonial, and post-colonial time frames. Various endogenous and exogenous actors, during different time frames, through either commission or omission, are demonstrated to have been responsible for the origin, development, and implication of the conflict. Lastly, the chapter examines the current status of this intractable conflict.

Chapter three will examine and analyze conflict management processes employed, at different times and places, to resolve the Palestine-Israeli conflict. This will be done by looking specifically at each conflict management process with emphasis laid on demonstrating the linkages among actors, conflict management process, and conflict de-escalation/escalation. The chapter will also analyze the dynamics, both from within and without Palestine-Israeli confines, which have shaped the direction, content, spirit, success, failure, and or implication of each conflict management process. Finally, the chapter will also illustrate the critical issues/concerns on both sides of the divide that harden positions during and after negotiations.

### 3.1. Background

In the early 1990s Israel had militarized her economy and society and this militarization contributed to the escalation of the on-going conflict.<sup>101</sup> Compromises necessary for conflict management processes with the Arabs were made politically difficult owing to the American *carte blanche* given to Israeli administration.<sup>102</sup> Moderate Israeli voices who had opposed occupation of Palestinian territories and willing to compromise to give negotiation a chance became unpopular with their countrymen. To the moderates, suppression of Palestinians and aggression on Arab states by Israel would lead to escalation of the conflict.

That Israeli hard line position started to change due to the U.S diplomatic efforts following Gulf War II. In March 1991 President Bush announced that the U.S would undertake to facilitate a settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict on the proviso that Arabs recognize Israel in exchange for the return of the occupied land. This was followed by a series of seven visits to the Middle East by Secretary of State James Baker. In fact he announced that an Arab-Israeli peace conference would be convened in Madrid in October 30, 1991. However, the Madrid talks were marred with bitter exchanges among the Israeli, Syrian and Palestinian delegations.<sup>103</sup> Nonetheless, this conference demonstrated a willingness of Arabs and Israelis to jointly negotiate a settlement to the

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<sup>101</sup> J.Bill & R.Springborg, *POLITICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST*, (New York: HarperCollinsCollege Publishers, 1994),pp.371.

<sup>102</sup>See D.Shipler, "Close U.S-Israeli Relationship Makes Keeping Secrets Hard," *New York Times*, December 22, 1985.

<sup>103</sup>See J.King., *Handshake in Washington: The Beginning of Middle East Peace?* (Reading 1994).

conflict that has had negative consequences. Three more rounds of talks were attempted in Washington in January-March 1992 but were characterized by stagnation especially on key Middle Eastern concerns: water, refugees, the environment, the economy, and arms control.<sup>104</sup>

However, the June 1992 elections in Israel brought about change of government with a promise that Israel would make compromises. Indeed the new administration led by Yitzhak Rabin announced that Israel would cease establishment of new Jewish settlements. This development led to a flurry of diplomatic activities. Again Secretary of State Baker travelled to the Middle East. In these travels he sought to convince various parties to re-engage in negotiations in Washington. Threatening to withhold U.S loan guarantee for \$10 billion of Israeli loans if Israel did not cease constructing new settlements in the occupied territories, President George Bush (snr) succeeded in bringing the Israelis and Arabs to the negotiating table.<sup>105</sup> This effort paved the way for potential negotiations.

Transition to the new Clinton administration exerted more pressure to the parties to negotiate for a settlement. However, there were erected bottlenecks to the realization of this dream. Israeli settlers and their supporters in the Knesset warned Prime Minister Rabin that compromises he might make would be resisted. Furthermore, the *Intifadah* by 1993 had evolved into an institution of violence against Israelis. This violence was met with deadly Israeli retaliations. Further still, the formation and growth of Islamism posed

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<sup>104</sup> J.Bill & R.Springborg, *POLITICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST*, (New York: HarperCollinsCollege Publishers, 1994),pp.371.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.* pp.372.

danger to the unity and continuity of the Palestinian nationalism, identity, and participation in the negotiations. Hence both parties by 1993 had visualized the need for a negotiated settlement to their conflict.

### **3.2. Conflict Management Processes in the Palestine-Israeli conflict**

#### **3.2.1. The Oslo Accords of 1993**

These accords (also referred to as the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-government Agreement) were sponsored by the Norwegian government in Washington D.C.<sup>106</sup> Motivated by the Norwegian government support, Israel and Palestinians engaged in secret direct negotiations and by September 13 1993 the parties signed the agreement on the basis of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.<sup>107</sup> The signing was marked by the handshake between Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO leader Yasser Arafat. The documents themselves were signed by Mahmoud Abbas for the PLO, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres for Israel, U.S Secretary of State Warren Christopher for the United States and Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev for Russia. The Accord set out stating its goals for the Israelis and Palestinians are to "...recognize their mutual legitimate and political rights, and strive to live in peaceful coexistence."<sup>108</sup> As a more direct confirmation of the accords intent, the framers argued that they intended to "...to

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<sup>106</sup> D.J.Stewart., *The Middle East Today: Political, Geographical and Cultural perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2009), pp.171.

<sup>107</sup> E.Oded, "Arab-Israel Peacemaking" *The Continuum Political Encyclopaedia of the Middle East*.Ed.Avraham Sela. New York: Continuum, 2002, pp 137.

<sup>108</sup> C.D.Smith., *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A History with Documents*, "The Israeli-PLO Declaration of Principles, Washington D.C." (New York: Bedford Books, 2004), pp.476.

establish a Palestinian interim Self-Governing Authority, the elected Council, (the 'Council') for the Palestinian people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip."<sup>109</sup>

In Article V of the Declaration of Principles, the accord further provides that permanent status negotiations will commence as soon as possible, but not later than the beginning of the third year of the interim period, between the Government of Israel and the Palestinian people representatives.<sup>110</sup> This document further recognized the ability of Palestine to self-govern. For instance, in Article VI, many governmental powers and responsibilities of the area are intended to transition to Palestinian control. Most of these powers were infrastructural, related to functions such as providing education and health to the citizens. The Oslo Accords created a period of calm, peace and optimism in both Israel and Palestinian territories which lasted from 1993 until the al-Aqsa *intifada* in 2000.<sup>111</sup> However, this part of the agreement did not envision any future sovereign state for the Palestinians; the agreement clearly recognized both the Palestinian people and the authority of PLO, but there is no mention of recognizing any Palestinian state, not at the time of the agreement, or in any future agreements. Furthermore, the Al-Fatah Central committee supported these accords but Hamas and many Palestinians in the Diaspora rejected them.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>109</sup>Op cit pp.476.

<sup>110</sup>See C.Shindler., *A HISTORY OF MODERN ISRAEL*, (Cambridge: CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2008), pp 232-243.

<sup>111</sup> D.J.Stewart., *The Middle East Today: Political, Geographical and Cultural perspectives*, (New York: Routledge, 2009), pp.171.

<sup>112</sup> G.Usher., 'Zero-sum game in Palestine', *Middle East International* (8 March 2008), pp 4-5.

Yet by 2000 the peace agreement had failed to establish a lasting peace. Why? While the two parties signed the Oslo Accords, both engaged in actions that created mistrust during the Oslo period. Hamas continued to call for the destruction of Israel. Meanwhile Israeli authorities continued to expand rapidly Jewish settlements in the Palestinian territories. Furthermore, the drafters of the peace plan assumed that by resolving peripheral issues, it would create goodwill for resolving the major ones. This did not happen. Further still, Norwegian government did not have sufficient political leverage to ensure that both parties enforced the peace deal to the letter. Again this was an open-ended peace agreement. The deal did not spell out punitive measures to be leveled against the party that violated the terms of the peace agreement.

Some critics such as Edward Said criticized the PLO for engaging in negotiations in complete secrecy and in English, a language in which Yasser Arafat and his team of negotiators were not competent.<sup>113</sup> He further argued that Arafat and his subordinates did not have any legal advisor present to interpret the legal language used in drafting the documents during and after negotiations.

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<sup>113</sup> See S.Edward., *The Politics of Dispossession: The Struggle for Palestinian Self-Determination 1969-1994*, London, 1994).

### **3.3.2. The Hebron Agreement of 1997**

Newly elected Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu proclaimed a new policy following suicide attacks by Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad since 1993.<sup>114</sup> He declared a tit-for-tat policy which he termed as “reciprocity” whereby Israel would not engage in the peace process if Yasser Arafat continued with what Netanyahu described as the Palestinian revolving door policy, that is, incitement and direct or indirect support of terrorism and violence. The Protocol Concerning the Redeployment in Hebron, also referred to as The Hebron Protocol or Hebron Agreement, began on 7 January and was concluded from 15 January 1997 between Israel and PLO.<sup>115</sup> This agreement dealt with the redeployment of Israeli military forces in Hebron in accordance with the Oslo Accords.

### **3.3.3. The Wye River Memorandum of 1998**

This was a political agreement negotiated to implement the Oslo Accords, completed on 23 October 1998. Madeleine Albright, then U.S Secretary of State, had earlier persuaded Netanyahu and Arafat to speak to one another.<sup>116</sup> It was signed by both Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat. The agreement was negotiated at Wye River Conference Center in Maryland in the U.S and signed at the White House with President Bill Clinton as the witness. Under this agreement Israel agreed to withdraw its “troops from an additional 13 % of the West Bank, in effect

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<sup>114</sup> See P.Hinchcliffe., *Conflicts in the Middle East since 1945*, (London: Routledge, 2007).

<sup>115</sup> See R.Ovendale., *THE ORIGINS OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI WARS*, (L ondon: Longman, 2004), pp.284-285.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid, pp.293.

trading land for security over a period of twelve weeks, and to release, initially, 750 Palestinians whom it would select from the 3,000 in question, in jail.”<sup>117</sup> Besides Israel agreeing to renew negotiations on safe passage for Palestinians between Gaza and other Palestinian areas, it also agreed to allow the Palestinian airport to operate in Gaza. Also the agreement provided for the American Central Intelligence Agency to supervise a security arrangement for the Palestinians to arrest suspected terrorists and to impound their weapons.<sup>118</sup> Under the same understanding, Palestinian security officers were trained in North Carolina in the United States to enhance their capacity.

#### **3.3.4. The Camp David II of 2000**

U.S President Bill Clinton attempted to broker a final status agreement.<sup>119</sup> He was able to convince Ehud Barak, then Prime minister of Israel and Yasser Arafat, then chairman of the Palestinian Authority, to settle for talks at a negotiating table.<sup>120</sup> The talks touched on the following issues;

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid. pp.293.

<sup>118</sup> See C.Shindler., *A HISTORY OF MODERN ISRAEL*, (Cambridge: CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2008), pp 271-275.

<sup>119</sup> D.J.Stewart., *The Middle East Today: Political, Geographical and Cultural perspectives*, (New York: Routledge, 2009) pp.173.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid. pp.173.



## **1. Palestinian Statehood and Conditions**

On the question of Palestinian statehood the Camp David II proposals sought to establish a Palestinian state in most of the West Bank and the entire Gaza strip. Further the proposals envisioned the state to operate under these conditions.<sup>121</sup>

- The state would not have an army with heavy weapons,
- The state would not make alliances with other countries without Israel approval and would not allow introduction of foreign forces west of the River Jordan,
- Israel would be allowed to deploy troops in the Jordan Valley if Israel were to be threatened by invasion from the east,
- Israeli aircraft could overfly Palestinian airspace,
- Israel would install early warning stations in the mountains overlooking the Jordan valley and other areas,
- Palestinians would control border crossings with Jordan and Egypt along with Israeli security observation,
- The Israelis would retain management over water sources in the West Bank while approving limited quota to the Palestinians,
- Israel would lease areas in the Jordan valley or maintain temporary sovereignty over them for up to 25 years.

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<sup>121</sup> See A. Rubenberg, *The Palestinians: In Search of a Just Peace* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003)

## 2. Refugees

The Palestinian refugee problem was to be solved by the Camp David II proposals in the following way.<sup>122</sup>

- Israel would not accept any legal or civilian responsibility for their displacement.
- Israel would allow the return of around 100,000 refugees under “humanitarian” grounds in the form of family reunions and considers such a step as compliance with U.N Resolution 194.
- The Palestinian state would be limited in the number of refugees it could absorb to half a million refugees according to a fixed time table.
- An international fund would compensate refugees.<sup>123</sup> Israel, the U.S and Europe are to contribute. This fund was also to provide compensation to Jews who were forced to leave their possessions in Arab countries when they fled to Israel.

## 3. Jerusalem

The proposals allowed for Palestinian, Arab, Islamic and Christian administration of holy sites in the old city of Jerusalem. The Palestinians would be allowed to hoist the Palestinian flag over the Islamic and Christian shrines along with a safe passage linking

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<sup>122</sup> See D.Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A History with Documents*, (New York: Bedford Books, 2004).

<sup>123</sup> B.Michael., *Power, Faith, and Fantasy: American in the Middle East, 1776 to the Present* (New York: W.W.Norton & Company, 2007) pp.579.

northern Jerusalem, which would be annexed to the West Bank, to those areas so that Palestinians and Muslims would not pass through lands under Israeli sovereignty.<sup>124</sup>

#### 4. Land Area of Palestine

The area of the Palestinian state would comprise about 73% of the land area of the West Bank and all of Gaza. Furthermore, the West Bank would be divided by the road from Jerusalem to the Dead Sea and a corridor on either side of it. This would form two large Palestinian areas and one small enclave surrounding Jericho. The three areas would be joined by a free passage without checkpoints, but the safe passage could be closed by Israel in case of emergency.

In later stages (10-25 years) Israel was to cede additional territories, especially in the mountains overlooking the Jordan valley, to bring the total area to under 90% of the area of the West Bank (94% excluding greater Jerusalem). However, the major settlement blocks adjacent to Jerusalem and in the Jerusalem corridor would be annexed to Israel. Again the Jewish settlement town of Qiriat Arba would remain under Israeli administration in the heart of Palestinian territory, with a single road through Palestinian territory reaching it from the south.

Again this summit ended in failure. What went so wrong? Before the parties had exhausted all the thorny issues and subsequently arrived at a mutual resolution, President Clinton allegedly tried to force the parties into an agreement before he left office. Again

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<sup>124</sup> See A. Rubenberg, *The Palestinians: In Search of a Just Peace* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003)

both parties were accused of bad faith at Camp David. Both parties disagreed over the status of Jerusalem and resolution of the Palestinian refugee problem. Frustrated and disappointed the parties abandoned the talks.

### 3.3.5. The Taba Talks of 2001

After the collapse of the Camp David II talks, President Clinton proposed what came to be referred to as The Clinton Parameters.<sup>125</sup> This was a plan for the Palestinian state to include 94-96% of the West Bank, and around 80% of the Jewish settlers were to remain under Israeli sovereignty, and in exchange for that, Israel would concede some territory within the Green Line (1967 borders). This swap would comprise 1-3% of Israeli territory, such that the final borders of the West Bank part of the Palestinian state would include 97% of the land of the original borders.

At the Taba negotiations (at Taba in Egypt) in January 2001 talks were conducted based on the Clinton parameters. The Israeli team presented a new map that excluded the Israeli temporarily controlled areas from the West Bank. The Palestinian negotiating team accepted this new map as the basis for further negotiation. However, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak did not carry on further negotiations; the talks ended without an agreement. Furthermore, the right-wing Likud party candidate Ariel Sharon was elected prime minister of Israel in February 2001.

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<sup>125</sup> See E.Oded, "Arab-Israeli Peace making." *Continuum political Encyclopedia of the Middle East*, (New York: Continuum, 2002)

### 3.3.6. The Beirut summit of 2002

Under the aegis of the Arab League, this summit of Arab governments took place in March 2002. The summit concluded its negotiations by presenting a plan to end the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Hence the Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres welcomed the plan and made this observation, "...the details of every peace plan must be discussed directly between Israel and the Palestinians, to make this possible, the Palestinian Authority must put an end to terror..."<sup>126</sup> However, the Beirut summit failed to address the Netanya suicide attack that had been perpetrated the previous night. This development made Israel not to enter negotiations as called by the Arab League plan. Israel submitted that it did not wish for "full withdrawal to 1967 borders and the right of return for the Palestinian refugees".<sup>127</sup>

### 3.3.7. The Road Map of 2003

The Camp David II talks ended in failure. Violence and destruction worsened for two consecutive years by both actors in the conflict. This development motivated a multiplicity of third party interveners including the U.S, the European Union, Russia and the U.N.<sup>128</sup> These parties jointly drafted a plan with the object of ending violence and hopefully lead to a permanent status agreement. The draft plan, popularly called then The

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<sup>126</sup> E.Oded, "Arab-Israel Peacemaking" *The Continuum Political Encyclopaedia of the Middle East* Ed.Avraham Sela. New York: Continuum, 2002, pp 137.

<sup>127</sup>R.Ovendale, *THE ORIGINS OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI WARS*, (London: Longman,2004), pp.238-322.

<sup>128</sup>See D.J.Stewart., *The Middle East Today: Political, Geographical and Cultural perspectives*, (New York: Routledge, 2009) pp.173.

Road Map, had to be implemented in three stages. Stage 1 was hoped to help end violence, provide mechanism to hold elections in Palestine, and help stop expansion of Jewish settlements in Palestinian territories. Both parties to the conflict were to unequivocally issue statements committing themselves to the two-state vision of an independent, viable, sovereign Palestinian state living in peace and security alongside Israel.

Furthermore, they were also to commit themselves to end violence against Palestinians everywhere. Once these objectives were achieved under phase 1, stage 2 sought to establish a Palestinian state with provisional borders.<sup>129</sup> It also sought to convene an international conference that would pledge to provide economic support for the Palestinian economy. This would help foster negotiation on a number of thorny issues. Finally, stage 3 also anticipated to convene another international conference to help negotiate a final status agreement. In short the Road Map touched on the following issues.<sup>130</sup>

#### a) Security

Palestinians were to declare an unequivocal end to violence and terrorism and commit to undertake visible efforts on the ground to arrest, disrupt, and restrain individuals and groups conducting and planning violent attacks on Israelis anywhere. Furthermore, Palestinian Security forces and IDF counterparts were progressively to resume security co-operation and other undertakings that included regular senior-level meetings, with

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<sup>129</sup> See R.Ovendale., *THE ORIGINS OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI WARS*, (London: Longman, 2004) pp.318-322.

<sup>130</sup> See R.Ovendale., *THE ORIGINS OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI WARS*, (London: Longman, 2004) pp.318-322.

participation of U.S security officials. Again there was a provision that required Arab states to cut off public and private funding and all other forms of support for groups that supported and engaged in violence and terror.<sup>131</sup>

#### **b) Palestinian institution-building**

The Road Map envisioned an immediate action on credible process to produce draft constitution for Palestinian statehood. This was to be done by a constitutional committee. The draft document was to be submitted after elections for approval by appropriate Palestinian institutions. In addition to the constitutional committee, there was to be an independent Palestinian election commission to review and revise election laws. Other institutions that were to be created include the cabinet, Task Force, and the Palestinian Chamber of Commerce.

#### **c) Settlements.**

The Israeli government was to dismantle settlement outposts erected since 2001. Furthermore, the Israeli government was to freeze all settlement activity (including natural growth of settlements).

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<sup>131</sup> See D.J.Stewart., *The Middle East Today: Political, Geographical and Cultural perspectives*, (New York: Routledge, 2009) pp.173.

#### **d) Humanitarian response**

Both Israel and Palestine were to improve humanitarian conditions, lift curfews and ease restrictions on movement of persons and goods, and allow full, safe, and unfettered access of international and humanitarian personnel.<sup>132</sup> The government of Israel was to continue revenue clearance process and transfer funds, including arrears, in accordance with agreed, transparent monitoring mechanism. Lastly, all humanitarian efforts were to be directed toward stimulating economic development in the West Bank and Gaza.<sup>133</sup>

#### **e) International conferences**

The Quartet was to convene two international conferences in consultation with the parties at different times. The first conference was to be convened immediately after conclusion of Palestinian elections. The object of this conference was to support Palestinian economic recovery as well as launching a process that would lead to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with provisional borders in 2003. Furthermore, apart from Arab states being required to restore pre-*Intifada* links to Israel there was to be revival of multilateral engagement on issues that included regional water resources, environment, economic development, refugees, and arms control issues.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> See C.Shindler., *A HISTORY OF MODERN ISRAEL*, (Cambridge: CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2008), pp 275-307.

<sup>133</sup> See D.J.Stewart., *The Middle East Today: Political, Geographical and Cultural perspectives*, (New York: Routledge, 2009) pp.173.

<sup>134</sup> See R.Ovendale., *THE ORIGINS OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI WARS*, (London: Longman, 2004) pp.318-322.



The second international conference was to be convened, in consultation with the parties, at the beginning of 2004. The objective of this conference was to endorse agreement reached on an independent Palestinian state with provisional borders and formally launch a process with the active, sustained, and operational support of the Quartet, leading to a final, permanent status resolution in 2005.<sup>135</sup> It was further hoped that this conference would consolidate international efforts to facilitate reform and stabilize Palestinian institutions and the Palestinian economy, in preparation for the final status agreement. Again the parties to the conflict were required to reach final and comprehensive permanent status agreement that would end the conflict in 2005, through a settlement negotiated between the parties based on UNSCR 242, 338, and 1397, that would end the occupation that began in 1967. This arrangement would also include an agreed, fair, just, and realistic solution to the refugee issue and a negotiated resolution on the status of Jerusalem that would take into account the political and religious concerns of both sides, and would protect the religious interests of Jews, Christians, and Muslims worldwide, and would fulfil the vision of two states-Israel and sovereign, independent, democratic and viable Palestine, living side-by-side in peace and security.

Under The Road Map a Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas was appointed. The U.S and Israel mistrusted Yasser Arafat, the immediate former Palestinian Prime Minister. Yet again the road map failed. Both actors in the conflict reneged on the goals set in stage 1 of the road map for they had not been involved in its drafting. Furthermore,

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<sup>135</sup> See C.Shindler., *A HISTORY OF MODERN ISRAEL*, (Cambridge: CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2008), pp 232-243.

Israel did not withdraw from the Palestinian territories it had reoccupied during the *Intifada*.

### **3.3.8. The Geneva Accord of 2003**

This accord was also known as “track-two-talks” or Draft Permanent Status Agreement.<sup>136</sup> It involved an Israeli politician, Yossi Beilin and a former minister in the Palestinian Authority, Yasser Abed Rabbo. Negotiations went on well but did not include the conflicting parties. These negotiations resulted in three resolutions. First, Palestinian state would be established and the Palestinians would recognize Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people. Secondly, Palestinians would get most territory inside the Green Line. Lastly, Israel was to accept return of an unspecified number of Palestinian refugees. Given that Israeli and Palestinian authorities had not participated in this process, they refused to endorse this accord.

### **3.3.9. The Israeli-Hamas ceasefire of 2008**

Egypt brokered this ceasefire. The ceasefire lasted half a year starting from 19<sup>th</sup> June 2008 until 19<sup>th</sup> December 2008.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> See D.J.Stewart (2009), *The Middle East Today: Political, Geographical and Cultural perspectives*, (New York: Routledge) pp.173.

<sup>137</sup> “Israel Agrees to Truce with Hamas on Gaza,” *The New York Times*, 18 June 2008.

U.S President Barack Obama in September 2010 made effort to revive the stalled peace process by getting Israel and PLO to agree to direct negotiations.<sup>138</sup> Through the Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton who went through months of convincing reluctant parties to the negotiating table.<sup>139</sup> The aim of the negotiations was to forge a framework of a final agreement within one year. However, Hamas and Hezbollah threatened the peace talks and vowed to frustrate any progress achieved by the talks. Israeli officials were skeptical that once the final agreement has taken place and responsibility falls on Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, Hamas and Hezbollah would still get support to fuel a new violence and terror. Israel further argued that it would not engage in talks as long as the Palestinian side refused to recognize Israel as a Jewish state. Furthermore, during this stalemate Mahmoud Abbas insisted that Israel should agree in principle to land swap on a ratio of 1:1 in exchange for keeping settlement blocs. Israel on the other hand was willing to offer land on less ratio than the one proposed by the PLO. Owing to these hard-line positions the negotiations did not take off.

However, in April 2012, it was reported that Mahmoud Abbas sent a letter to Benjamin Netanyahu reiterating that for peace negotiations to resume; Israel must stop building settlement in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and accept the 1967 borders as a basis

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<sup>138</sup> B.Robert, "Obama Opens Long-Shot Talks on Mideast Peace", *Associated Press, ABC News* (2010-09-01).

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*

for a two-state solution.<sup>140</sup> In May 2012, Abbas reportedly reiterated further his readiness to engage the Israelis if they propose “anything promising or positive”.<sup>141</sup> In his reply to Abbas April letter, Netanyahu officially recognized the right for Palestinians to have their own state, but declared that it would have to be demilitarized.<sup>142</sup>

### 3.5. Key Challenges

#### 3.5.1. Contending Visions/Narratives of the State

Both the Israelis and the Palestinians have the desire to have a state for each.<sup>143</sup> Each party believes in its nationalist narrative and works to convince the international society that its narrative is right while the other’s is wrong. The Israeli narrative claims that the Jews are the legitimate owners of Palestine after many years of persecution and statelessness in the Diaspora. On the other hand the Palestinian narrative argues that creating a Jewish homeland out of Palestine would be a disaster for it would mean uprooting entire Palestinian communities.<sup>144</sup> These competing narratives have and still inform positions these parties assume in the course of any intervention.

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<sup>140</sup> Bronner & Ethan., “Palestinians Restate Demands to Netanyahu”, *New York Times*.(17 April 2012)

<sup>141</sup> Stott & Michael; Nakhoul, Samia., “Abbas ready to engage with Israel but says settlement building ‘destroying hope’”, *Al Arabiya News*. (9 May 2012).

<sup>142</sup> Winer & Stuart; Ahren, Raphael (14 May 2012), “PM promises Abbas a demilitarized Palestinian state.” *The Times of Israel*. (14 May 2012).

<sup>143</sup> D.Stewart, *The Middle East Today: Political, geographical and cultural perspectives*, (New York: Routledge, 2009), pp.163-169.

<sup>144</sup> D.Stewart, *The Middle East Today: Political, geographical and cultural perspectives*, (New York: Routledge, 2009), pp.163-169.

Whereas it is desirable to create a Palestinian state as a component of any peace agreement between Israelis and Palestinians, the bone of contention has been the exact territory this state will include. Palestinians desire complete Israeli withdrawal from all the territories the latter seized in 1967. However, Israel opposes this desire as untenable because there are vast Israeli settlements built inside the Green Line around Jerusalem.

### **3.5.2. The issue of refugees and compensation**

Stewart documents that “1948 Arab-Israeli war resulted in 711,000 Palestinian refugees.”<sup>145</sup> He goes further to document that as of December 2006, the number of refugees and their descendants had increased to 4.44 Million. Available accounts indicate that these refugees live primarily in the neighboring Arab states, in the Gaza and in the West Bank. The United Nations attempted to solve this refugee problem in 1948. Through its resolution 194 it called for the return of these refugees to their homeland. However, “under the Absentee Property Law passed by Israel property formerly belonging to refugees was confiscated and transferred to Israeli citizens.”<sup>146</sup> Therefore, much property in the Arab villages was either destroyed or transferred to new owners, so the return of the refugees to their actual homes would be impossible for many.

Israeli authorities resent the actual return of these Palestinian refugees and their descendants to Israel. Palestinian return, Israeli authorities believe, would distort the

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<sup>145</sup>Ibid, pp. 168.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid. pp.168.

demographic equation inside Israel by threatening its character as a Jewish state. Stewart further argues that,

“Presently there are approximately 6.5 Million Israelis, of which 1.3 Million are Israeli Arabs. Both Israeli Arabs and Palestinians have higher birth rates than Israelis-a further concern for Israelis desires to maintain a Jewish majority.”<sup>147</sup>

However, most Palestinian refugees would not desire to return to Israel and live under Israeli law. Most would prefer to be compensated and be left to live either in the envisioned Palestinian state (to be formed in the Gaza and the West Bank) or remain in their host country. On its part Israel doesn't accept liability for the creation of refugees in the 1948 war. Again Israel is not willing to provide compensation for these refugees. This issue of the refugees return and their compensation continue to dog any peace process by hardening positions on both sides of the divide.

### **3.5.3. The issue of Jerusalem**

Three monotheistic faiths and religions lay competing claims on Jerusalem. In other words Jerusalem has holy sites for the three. The Temple Mount is the holiest site in Judaism. According to the Talmud (a Jewish holy scripture) the world was created from a foundation stone in this temple. Furthermore, this is the site where Abraham is believed to have offered his son in sacrifice to God. To the Jews, Jerusalem is inviolable and needs state protection. Kollek & Pearlman observe,

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<sup>147</sup> D.Stewart, *The Middle East Today: Political, geographical and cultural perspectives*, (New York: Routledge, 2009), pp.108.

“To these Jews of Alexandria, as indeed to the growing Jewish communities in other cities of Egypt and elsewhere in the world, Jerusalem remained the city of their devotion, and the Temple the target of their spiritual loyalty.”<sup>148</sup>

Christianity and Christians consider the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem very significant. This is the site, Christians believe, Jesus was crucified and buried. Hence to the Christians, Jerusalem embodies a holy shrine. On the other hand, Muslims believe the Dome of the Rock Marks the site of Muhammad’s (God’s last prophet) night journey. According to Islamic faith, Muhammad ascended into the heavens and met the prophets such as David. It is believed by Muslims that on this night journey Muhammad convinced Allah (God) to allow humankind to pray only five times a day instead of fifty.

These contending claims over Jerusalem mean that any arrangement for Jerusalem in the final status agreement must reflect this status quo. Currently Israeli authorities control Jewish holy sites while Palestinian authorities control Muslim holy places. The most holy core of the old city is jointly administered by representatives of the three major religions.

#### **3.5.4. Israel’s overarching power and influence**

There has been relative imbalance of power between Israel and the Palestinians. This was created by the U.S providing Israel with both financial and military assistance over the years, and later the fall of the Soviet Union (an ally of Palestine) and the consequent result that placed the United States (an ally of Israel) as the world’s main power. According to Owendale, “Between 1997 and 2002 official aid from the United States to

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<sup>148</sup> Kollek, T & Pearlman, M: *JERUSALEM: Sacred city of Mankind, a history of forty centuries*,(Jerusalem: Steimatzky’s Agency Limited, 1968), pp 80.

Israel had totaled \$24,073M.”<sup>149</sup> Stauffer contends that over the previous twenty five years American policies in the Middle East, most of which derived from Washington’s support for Israel, had cost more than \$2.6 trillion.<sup>150</sup> With respect to military power of Israel Khatchadourian writes,

“Israel’s military superiority is bound to continue during the twenty-first century, by virtue of its great technological advantage over the Arabs, and its great superiority in the air and on the ground, thanks in good measure to U.S military beneficence.”<sup>151</sup>

This state of affairs made and continues to make Israel to enjoy disproportionate political and economic power. Therefore, the political power of Israel was much greater than that of the Palestinians. This lack of balance gives Israel a strong position in the agreements and subsequently engendered among the Palestinians a perception of unfairness of the agreements. Khatchadourian concurs with this observation. He observes,

“Given the patent fact that the Palestinians were the weaker party, it is unrealistic to think that Arafat and his advisers could have gotten most, let alone all, of what they wanted. Compromise on the Palestinian no less than the Israeli side was essential for any agreement to be reached.”<sup>152</sup>

Another reason for the imbalance of power between Israel and the Palestinians can be explained in terms of changes in the international balance of power, owing to two major developments: the fall of the Soviet Union, the U.S rival for influence in the Middle East, and the subsequent United States involvement in the first Gulf war. The collapse of the Soviet power meant a weakening of the forces which opposed U.S hegemony in the

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<sup>149</sup> R.Ovendale., *THE ORIGINS OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI WARS*, (L ondon: Longman, 2004), pp 320.

<sup>150</sup> T.R.Stauffer., ‘The cost of Middle East conflict, 1956-2002: what the U.S has spent’, *Middle East Policy X*, 1 (Spring 2003), pp45-102.

<sup>151</sup> H.Khatchadourian., *The Quest for Peace between Israel and the Palestinians* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc, 2000), pp 72.

<sup>152</sup>H.Khatchadourian., *The Quest for Peace between Israel and the Palestinians* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc, 2000), pp 79-80.



Middle East and the Gulf war demonstrated that the USA could act and pursue its interests in the region without significant opposition.<sup>153</sup>

Furthermore, Palestinians perceived the agreements as being more symbolic than they were functional. Distrust of the powerful Israel, still perceived by the Palestinians as an occupying power, was stronger than their motivation to believe that the agreements would actually give them freedom, rather than take it away. This same perception that Israel's power grip over Palestine was a major contributor to the failure of successive agreements lingered on for many years. This indicates that Israel, using its strong political position in dealing with Palestine, approached negotiations knowing what concessions they were willing to make and those that were off limits. With respect to the Oslo Accords Giacaman & Lonning observe,

“As these letters indicate, the Oslo Agreement is not an agreement between equal partners. It is an agreement between an occupying power and an occupied people without this fact being explicitly recognized in the text. Arafat's concessions on behalf of the PLO are staggering and much more far-reaching than Rabin's on behalf of the Israeli government-however significant the Israeli recognition of the PLO may be. The PLO called off their armed struggle and civilian uprising against the occupation without getting any guarantee for the right to national independence and statehood in return.”<sup>154</sup>

### **3.5.5. Lack of stability in the political leadership**

Lack of stability in the political leadership on both sides starting in the years of the Oslo Accords in 1993 made the situation worse. This state of affairs resulted in inefficient

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<sup>153</sup> See D.Jones., *Cosmopolitan Mediation?: Conflict Resolution and the Oslo Accords* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), pp 113-114.

<sup>154</sup> G.Giacaman & D.Lonning, *After Oslo: New Realities, Old Problems*, (London: Pluto Press, 1998), pp 22.

handling of future concessions contained in successive agreements. From the beginning of the Oslo agreement, parties that opposed the agreement made their views heard, and often successfully swayed public and political opinion on the agreements themselves. Jones further argues that resistance to the agreements created political instability in both Israel and Palestine for many years.<sup>155</sup> He further argues that the rise of Hamas and the subsequent deteriorating situation in Gaza placed political pressure on both the PLO and the Israeli government. This development concerned Arafat, given that support for Arafat's Fatah was being threatened by the growth in support for Hamas. This growth in Hamas and other anti-Israeli factions such as Islamic Jihad in Palestine led to the rise in the intensity in suicide bombings and other acts of violence. This did not help the integrity and success of various peace processes.

On the side of Israel, another source of political instability, for instance, following the Oslo Accords of 1993 was the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. This assassination led to the rise of hard line Israeli leaders with little stability from election to election. After the assassination of Rabin, Shimon Peres assumed office as Prime Minister of Israel. The year that followed, Benjamin Netanyahu was elected Israeli premier, and only three years later, in 1999, Ehud Barak was elected to the position.<sup>156</sup> In 2001 Israel elected a Likud candidate Ariel Sharon as its new Prime Minister. These frequent changes in Israeli leadership had adverse effects on the status of the Oslo Accords and other subsequent agreements. Potential leaders eager to win elections or re-

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<sup>155</sup> D.Jones, *Cosmopolitan Mediation?: Conflict Resolution and the Oslo Accords* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp 117.

<sup>156</sup> C.D.Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A History with Documents*, (New York: Bedford Books, 2004), pp 474-475.

election were forced by circumstances to concentrate on domestic issues rather than international relations. Consequently each new prime minister elected was guaranteed only two years to make a difference in the agreements, and the political risks involved with positively dealing with the Palestinians often appeared to be worth not the trouble.

### **3.6. Conclusions**

Both parties to the conflict have the desire to have a state for each. Each party believes in its nationalist narrative and works to convince the international society that its narrative is right while the other's is wrong. There is also imbalance of power between Israel and the Palestinians that continues to make Israel to enjoy disproportionate political and economic power. This lack of balance gives Israel a strong position in the agreements and subsequently engendered among the Palestinians a perception of unfairness of the agreements. Furthermore, lack of stability in the political leadership on both sides starting in the years of the Oslo Accords in 1993 has complicated conflict management processes. From the beginning of the Oslo agreement, parties such as Hamas, Islamic Jihad and other anti-Israeli factions in Palestine that opposed the agreements made their views heard, and often successfully swayed public and political opinion on the agreements themselves. In Israel, the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin following the Oslo Accords and subsequent changes in leaderships up to 2001 engendered political instability. From the Oslo Accords of 1993 to the Road Map of 2008, there has been a demonstration of change in positions by both parties to the conflict. There is now

recognition and acceptance by the Palestinian leadership of the state of Israel's right to exist in return for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **CONFLICT MANAGEMENT PROCESSES IN THE PALESTINE-ISRAELI CONFLICT: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS**

#### **4.0. Introduction**

Chapter Three analyzed historical background to the peace processes in the Palestine-Israeli conflict from 1993 to 2010. This background demonstrates that hard line positions on the sticking issues adopted by both parties from 1947 began to be moderated with time and by 1990s these parties demonstrated a willingness to negotiate for a mutual settlement. It also analyzed conflict management processes in this conflict from 1993 to 2010. In these peace processes, the issues of a Palestinian state, Jerusalem (and its status), refugees (and right of return), and political instability on both sides remain sticking. It further demonstrates that vested-interest mediation leads to unfavorable win-lose outcome that escalate the conflict. Finally, the chapter illustrated the key challenges to the Palestine-Israeli conflict management processes.

Chapter Four analyzes critically attempted conflict management processes in the Palestine-Israeli conflict. To achieve this it will focus on the processes, issues, actors (parties), context, structure of relationships, and third party interveners in conflict analysis and management. This analysis argues that transformation of issues, actors (parties), context, and structure of relationship is necessary if a win-win settlement is to

be arrived at. It further argues that the perception of third party managers, constituents, audience, allies and patrons in the conflict, in varying degrees influence, individually or severally, the final settlement.

#### **4.1. Analysis of key issues in the Palestine-Israeli Conflict**

##### **i) Competing Visions/Narratives of the State**

Both the Israelis and the Palestinians have the desire to have a state for each. However, for the last 60 years Israeli nationalism and Palestinian nationalism have been at variance about this envisioned state. Each party believes in its nationalist narrative and works to convince the international society that its narrative is right while the other's is wrong. The Israeli narrative claims that the Jews are the legitimate owners of Palestine after many years of persecution and statelessness in the Diaspora. On the other hand the Palestinian narrative argues that creating a Jewish homeland out of Palestine would be a disaster for it would mean uprooting entire Palestinian communities. These competing narratives have and still inform positions these parties assume in the course of any intervention.

Whereas it is desirable to create a Palestinian state as a component of any peace agreement between Israelis and Palestinians, the bone of contention has been the exact territory this state will include.<sup>157</sup> Furthermore, Palestinians desire complete Israeli

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<sup>157</sup> D.J. Stewart., *The Middle East Today: political, geographical and cultural perspectives*, ( New York: Routledge, 2009), pp. 108.

withdrawal from all the territories the latter seized in 1967. However, the Israeli perspective opposes this desire as untenable because there are vast Israeli settlements built inside the Green Line around Jerusalem. This issue is further complicated by the Israeli construction of a security barrier (about 436 miles long) along and inside the Green Line. Further still this barrier cuts into the West Bank-a hotly contested Palestinian territory.

## ii) The issue of Refugees and Compensation

Stewart documents that “1948 Arab-Israeli war resulted in 711,000 Palestinian refugees.”<sup>158</sup> He goes further to document that as of December 2006, the number of refugees and their descendants had increased to 4.44 Million. Available accounts indicate that these refugees live primarily in the neighboring Arab states, in the Gaza and in the West Bank. The United Nations attempted to solve this refugee problem in 1948. Through its resolution 194 it called for the return of these refugees to their homeland. However, “under the Absentee Property Law passed by Israel property formerly belonging to refugees was confiscated and transferred to Israeli citizens.”<sup>159</sup> Therefore, much property in the Arab villages was either destroyed or transferred to new owners, so the return of the refugees to their actual homes would be impossible for many.

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<sup>158</sup>See D.J. Stewart., *The Middle East Today: political, geographical and cultural perspectives*,(New York: Routledge, 2009)

<sup>159</sup> Ibid, pp.168.

Israeli authorities resent the actual return of these Palestinian refugees and their descendants to Israel. Palestinian return, Israeli authorities believe, would distort the demographic equation inside Israel by threatening its character as a Jewish state. Stewart further argues that, “Presently there are approximately 6.5 Million Israelis, of which 1.3 Million are Israeli Arabs. Both Israeli Arabs and Palestinians have higher birth rates than Israelis—a further concern for Israelis desires to maintain a Jewish majority.”<sup>160</sup> However, most Palestinian refugees would not desire to return to Israel and live under Israeli law. Most would prefer to be compensated and be left to live either in the envisioned Palestinian state (to be formed in the Gaza and the West Bank) or remain in their host country. On its part Israel doesn’t accept liability for the creation of refugees in the 1948 war. Again Israel is not willing to provide compensation for these refugees. This issue of the refugees return and their compensation continue to dog any peace process by hardening positions on both sides of the divide.

### **iii) The Issue of Jerusalem**

Three monotheistic faiths and religions lay competing claims on Jerusalem. In other words Jerusalem has holy sites for the three. The Temple Mount is the holiest site in Judaism. According to the Talmud (a Jewish holy scripture) the world was created from a foundation stone in this temple. Furthermore, this is the site where Abraham is believed to have offered his son in sacrifice to God. To the Jews, Jerusalem is inviolable and needs state protection. Kollek & Pearlman observe “To these Jews of Alexandria, as indeed to

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<sup>160</sup>D.J. Stewart., *The Middle East Today: political, geographical and cultural perspectives*, ( New York: Routledge, 2009), pp. 108.



the growing Jewish communities in other cities of Egypt and elsewhere in the world, Jerusalem remained the city of their devotion, and the Temple the target of their spiritual loyalty.”<sup>161</sup> Christianity and Christians consider the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem very significant. This is the site, Christians believe, Jesus was crucified and buried. Hence to the Christians, Jerusalem embodies a holy shrine. On the other hand, Muslims believe the Dome of the Rock Marks the site of Muhammad’s (God’s last prophet) night journey. According to Islamic faith, Muhammad ascended into the heavens and met the prophets such as David. It is believed by Muslims that on this night journey Muhammad convinced Allah (God) to allow humankind to pray only five times a day instead of fifty.

These contending claims over Jerusalem mean that any arrangement for Jerusalem in the final status agreement must reflect this status quo. Currently Israeli authorities control Jewish holy sites while Palestinian authorities control Muslim holy places. The most holy core of the old city is jointly administered by representatives of the three major religions.

#### **iv) Israel’s Overarching Power and Influence**

There has been relative imbalance of power between Israel and the Palestinians. This was created by the U.S providing Israel with both financial and military assistance over the years, and later the fall of the Soviet Union (an ally of Palestine) and the consequent result that placed the United States (an ally of Israel) as the world’s main power.

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<sup>161</sup> Kollek, T & Pearlman, M: *JERUSALEM: Sacred city of Mankind, a history of forty centuries*, (Jerusalem: Steimatzky’s Agency Limited, 1968), pp. 80.

According to Ovendale, "Between 1997 and 2002 official aid from the United States to Israel had totaled \$24,073M."<sup>162</sup> Stauffer contends that over the previous twenty five years American policies in the Middle East, most of which derived from Washington's support for Israel, had cost more than \$2.6 trillion.<sup>163</sup> With respect to military power of Israel Khatchadourian writes,

"Israel's military superiority is bound to continue during the twenty-first century, by virtue of its great technological advantage over the Arabs, and its great superiority in the air and on the ground, thanks in good measure to U.S military beneficence."<sup>164</sup>

This state of affairs made and continues to make Israel to enjoy disproportionate political and economic power. Therefore, the political power of Israel was much greater than that of the Palestinians. This lack of balance gives Israel a strong position in the agreements and subsequently engendered among the Palestinians a perception of unfairness of the agreements. In fact Israel's strong political position in comparison to the Palestinians caused Arafat and his team of negotiators to give concessions to the Israelis from a weak negotiating position.

Khatchadourian concurs with this observation. He observes, "Given the patent fact that the Palestinians were the weaker party, it is unrealistic to think that Arafat and his advisers could have gotten most, let alone all, of what they wanted. Compromise on the Palestinian no less than the Israeli side was essential for any agreement to be reached."<sup>165</sup>

Another greatest reason for the imbalance of power between Israel and the Palestinians

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<sup>162</sup> R.Ovendale., *THE ORIGINS OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI WARS*, (London: PEARSON, 2004), pp.320.

<sup>163</sup> T.R.Stauffer., 'The cost of Middle East conflict, 1956-2002: what the U.S has spent', *Middle East Policy X*, 1 (Spring 2003), pp45-102.

<sup>164</sup> H.Khatchadourian., *The Quest for Peace between Israel and the Palestinians* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc, 2000), pp 72.

<sup>165</sup>H.Khatchadourian., *The Quest for Peace between Israel and the Palestinians* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc, 2000), pp 79-80.

finds its origins in changes in the international balance of power, owing to two major developments: the fall of the Soviet Union, the U.S rival for influence in the Middle East, and the subsequent United States involvement in the first Gulf war. The collapse of the Soviet power meant a weakening of the forces which opposed U.S hegemony in the Middle East and the Gulf war demonstrated that the USA could act and pursue its interests in the region without significant opposition.<sup>166</sup>

Furthermore, Palestinians perceived the agreements as being more symbolic than they were functional. Distrust of the powerful Israel, still perceived by the Palestinians as an occupying power, was stronger than their motivation to believe that the agreements would actually give them freedom, rather than take it away. This same perception that Israel's power grip over Palestine was a major contributor to the failure of successive agreements lingered on for many years. This indicates that Israel, using its strong political position in dealing with Palestine, approached negotiations knowing what concessions they were willing to make and those that were off limits. With respect to the Oslo Accords Giacaman & Lonning observe,

“As these letters indicate, the Oslo Agreement is not an agreement between equal partners. It is an agreement between an occupying power and an occupied people without this fact being explicitly recognized in the text. Arafat's concessions on behalf of the PLO are staggering and much more far-reaching than Rabin's on behalf of the Israeli government-however significant the Israeli recognition of the PLO may be. The PLO called off their armed struggle and civilian uprising against the occupation without getting any guarantee for the right to national independence and statehood in return.”<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> See D.Jones., *Cosmopolitan Mediation?: Conflict Resolution and the Oslo Accords* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp 113-114.

<sup>167</sup> G.Giacaman & D.Lonning, *After Oslo: New Realities, Old Problems*, (London: Pluto Press, 1998), pp 22.

#### v) Lack of Stability in the Political Leadership

Lack of stability in the political leadership on both sides starting in the years of the Oslo Accords in 1993 made the situation worse. This state of affairs resulted in inefficient handling of future concessions contained in successive agreements. From the beginning of the Oslo agreement, parties that opposed the agreement made their views heard, and often successfully swayed public and political opinion on the agreements themselves. These were the constituents of the parties to the conflict. Constituents are important element of conflict and its management. Mwangi observes that, "Indeed when parties in a conflict make public statements, they usually address them to their constituents."<sup>168</sup> Jones further argues that resistance to the agreements created political instability in both Israel and Palestine for many years.<sup>169</sup> He further argues that the rise of Hamas and the subsequent deteriorating situation in Gaza placed political pressure on both the PLO and the Israeli government. This development concerned Arafat, given that support for Arafat's Fatah was being threatened by the growth in support for Hamas. This growth in Hamas and other anti-Israeli factions such as Islamic Jihad in Palestine led to the rise in the intensity in suicide bombings and other acts of violence. This did not help the integrity and success of various peace processes.

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<sup>168</sup>See M.Mwangi, *Conflict in Africa: Theory, Processes and institutions of management*, (Nairobi: Center for Conflict Research, 2006).

<sup>169</sup> D.Jones, *Cosmopolitan Mediation?: Conflict Resolution and the Oslo Accords* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp 117.

On the side of Israel, another source of political instability, for instance, following the Oslo Accords of 1993 was the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. This assassination led to the rise of hard line Israeli leaders with little stability from election to election. After the assassination of Rabin, Shimon Peres assumed office as Prime Minister of Israel. The year that followed, Benjamin Netanyahu was elected Israeli premier, and only three years later, in 1999, Ehud Barak was elected to the position.<sup>170</sup> In 2001 Israel elected a Likud candidate Ariel Sharon as its new Prime Minister. These frequent changes in Israeli leadership had adverse effects on the status of the Oslo Accords and other subsequent agreements. Potential leaders eager to win elections or re-election were forced by circumstances to concentrate on domestic issues rather than international relations. Consequently each new prime minister elected was guaranteed only two years to make a difference in the agreements, and the political risks involved with positively dealing with the Palestinians often appeared to be worth not the trouble.

#### **vi) Power Balance Between Disputants**

According to Moor to derive mutually satisfactory and acceptable decisions from negotiations, all parties must have some means of influence that is either positive or negative on other disputants on the table.<sup>171</sup> Indeed this is a prerequisite for a resolution that recognizes mutual needs, interests and values. In the case of Palestine-Israeli peace processes, Israel has been the stronger party at the negotiating table while PLO has been

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<sup>170</sup> C.D.Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A History with Documents*, (New York: Bedford Books, 2004), pp 474-475.

<sup>171</sup> W.Moor., *The Mediation PROCESS: Practical Strategies Resolving Conflict*, (San Francisco: JOSSEY-BASS, 2002), pp.71.

the weaker party. Unless a weaker party has some power or influence, recognition of its needs and interests will materialize if the stronger party is altruistic.<sup>172</sup> If the power or influence of the parties are developed, equal in strength and recognized by all the parties, then the task of mediation will be to assist the parties in deploying their power or influence to produce a win-win outcome. However, if the power and influence of each side is not equal then the stronger party has the ability to impose on the weaker party a win-lose settlement. This type of agreement will not hold over time. This implies that for a satisfactory resolution to be arrived at the mediator will assist the weaker party by modifying the influence and power of the stronger one.

This requires structural transformation. If, say, the root causes of the conflict are traced in the structure of relationships of the parties, then a transformation of this structure is vital to the resolution of the conflict. Empowerment of the weaker side, say, through international support or recognition can be the route to achieving structural transformation. Sometimes weaker parties withdraw from unbalanced structural relationships as a strategy aimed at achieving this transformation. The international community, led by the U.S and the European Economic Community sought to mobilize resources in order to strengthen PLO during and after the Camp David II peace process. These resources were aimed at improving Palestinian economy and enhancing the infrastructure in the sectors such as education, health, agriculture, etc. However, this strengthening of PLO and enhancing her power and influence at the negotiating table has not led to a mutual settlement with Israel throughout the peace processes.

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<sup>172</sup> W.Moor., *The Mediation PROCESS: Practical Strategies Resolving Conflict*, (San Francisco: JOSSEY-BASS, 2002), pp.71.

Furthermore, conflicts trace their origins in the social, regional, and international contexts. In relation to context transformation, Ramsbotham et al observe, “Changes in the context may sometimes have more dramatic effects than changes within the parties or their relationships.”<sup>173</sup> For instance, the end of the Cold War in the 1990s led to international context transformation that culminated in unlocking complex conflicts in Central America, Asia and South Africa. The new factor here “was the reduction in the capacity or willingness of the Super Powers to support fighting factions.”<sup>174</sup> Hegre has demonstrated that global incidence of civil wars had fallen since the end of the Cold War, reversing a 40-year increase to 1990.<sup>175</sup> Therefore, lack of financial or military support made some combatants especially rebel groups to turn to either contraband or exploitation of natural resources to finance their insurgencies. However, on the peripheries of weak states there remained insurgent groups that remain hostile to peace processes.<sup>176</sup> Paradoxically, the end of the Cold War did not modify U.S financial and military support for Israel. Israel remains the U.S’s gateway to the Middle East and an instrument deployed to safeguard the latter’s national/strategic interests.

What is also crucial for parties in protracted conflicts to reach a win-win outcome is their transformation. In this case, parties or actors may have to reframe directions, modify or abandon valued goals and pursue different perspectives. This can come about through

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<sup>173</sup> O.Ramsbotham et al., *CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT RESOLUTION: The prevention, management and transformation of deadly conflicts*, (Manchester: Polity Press, 2007), pp.163.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid, pp 165.

<sup>175</sup> H.Hegre, “The duration and termination of civil wars,” *Journal of Peace Research*, 41(3) 2004, pp 243-252.

<sup>176</sup> J.Fearon, “Why do some civil wars last much longer than others?” *Journal of Peace Research*, 41 (3) 2004, pp 303-320.

a change of an actor, a change of leadership, a change in the constituency of the leader, or adoption of new goals and beliefs.<sup>177</sup> In the Palestine-Israeli conflict there have been noticeable actor transformations. Israeli leadership from Ben-Gurion to Menachem Begin adopted a hard line discourse that rejected Palestinians' right to a state. However, when Yitzhak Rabin took over the premiership a transformation occurred when the perspective of a two-state solution was adopted. Since then successive leaderships have demonstrated a willingness to negotiate and arrive at a win-win settlement to this complex conflict. Likewise PLO in the 1960s and early 1970s adopted a reductionist discourse that sought to eliminate Israel from the World map. Over the years PLO and Fatah have demonstrated a willingness to recognize the right of Israel to exist. However, this perspective has been rejected by the Hamas and the Islamic Jihad both of whom reject the right of Israel to exist. Transformation of these two actors is also necessary if a mutual resolution to this conflict is to be arrived at. In this respect Ramsbotham et al observe, "Changes in the circumstances and interests of the constituency a party represents also transforms conflicts, even if such changes in the constituency takes place gradually and out of view."<sup>178</sup>

The willingness of the conflicting parties themselves to consider a negotiated settlement is also crucial.<sup>179</sup> In armed conflicts, this willingness to consider negotiated settlement is brought about when conflicting parties lose hope of realizing their goals by force. According to Zartman conflicts are ripe for negotiated settlement when conflicting parties

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<sup>177</sup> O.Ramsbotham et al., *CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT RESOLUTION: The prevention, management and transformation of deadly conflicts*, (Manchester: Polity Press, 2007), pp.165.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid, pp 163.

<sup>179</sup> O.Ramsbotham et al., *CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT RESOLUTION: The prevention, management and transformation of deadly conflicts*, (Manchester: Polity Press, 2007), pp.165.



reach a 'hurting stalemate'.<sup>180</sup> At this stage the parties realize that they cannot achieve their goals by intensifying violence. In Zartman's perspective, if negotiations are to succeed then there must be valid spokespersons for the parties, a dead line, and a vision of an acceptable resolution.<sup>181</sup> Again recognition and dialogue are vital since both parties have to be accepted as legitimate. Non-recognition can lead to bad faith or mistrust in both parties. During the Oslo process Israel refused to recognize PLO as the legitimate organ to represent Palestinians in the negotiations. This led to a standoff of parties and subsequently to the non-recognition of the negotiated settlement. In a protracted conflict such as the Palestine-Israeli conflict, the Israeli government should reach a point where it recognizes the rebel or insurgent group as a negotiating partner.

#### **vii) Third Party Intervention**

Moor defines mediation as "the intervention in a negotiation or a conflict of an acceptable third party who has limited or no authoritative decision making power, who assists the involved parties to voluntarily reach a mutually acceptable settlement of the issues in dispute."<sup>182</sup> Mediation assists involved parties, who are unable to resolve their differences on their own, establish or strengthen relationships of trust and respect between themselves or end their relationship in a way that minimizes psychological costs or harm. Therefore the mediator who is a third party not directly involved in the conflict or the substantive issues in the conflict, participates as an outsider to provide parties with new

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<sup>180</sup> W.Zartman (ed), *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of legitimate Authority*, (Boulder, CO:Lynne Rienner, 1995), pp 18.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid, pp 18.

<sup>182</sup> W.Moor., *The Mediation PROCESS: Practical Strategies Resolving Conflict*, (San Francisco: JOSSEY-BASS, 2002), pp.15.

perspectives on the sticking issues dividing them. He/she further develop processes that would help build problem-solving relationships.<sup>183</sup> To achieve this he/she needs authority. The mediator's authority is a function of his/her personal/institutional credibility and trustworthiness, expertise in managing peace processes, experience in managing similar conflicts, ability to bring conflicting parties together on the basis of their own interests, and his/her relationship with the parties. Moor has identified three types of mediators: social network mediators, authoritative and independent mediators.<sup>184</sup>

Social network mediators are sought owing to their connection with the conflict parties. Indeed the person is someone with whom those parties have an on-going relationship.<sup>185</sup> Such a mediator can be a neighbor, a religious figure (such as a priest, an Imam, a rabbi, etc), a personal friend, or a business associate. Some mediators may have authoritative relationship with the parties to the conflict, that is, he/she is in a more powerful position to influence the outcome of negotiations. Indeed authoritative mediator enjoys status and access, use and control of resources valued by the rival parties. In some cases an authoritative mediator can also be a vested-interest mediator. In this case, the mediator has both procedural and substantive interests in the outcome of the peace process. An example of a vested-interest mediator in the Palestine-Israeli conflict is the United States. The United States has had political, economic and strategic interests in the Middle East and has mediated conflicts in an effort to promote stability in the region.<sup>186</sup> Moor further

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<sup>183</sup> W.Moor., *The Mediation PROCESS: Practical Strategies Resolving Conflict*, (San Francisco: JOSSEY-BASS, 2002), pp15.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid, pp 43-55.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid, pp 43.

<sup>186</sup> W.Moor., *The Mediation PROCESS: Practical Strategies Resolving Conflict*, (San Francisco: JOSSEY-BASS, 2002), pp 51.

argues that, "The United States has played the role of a mediator with muscle. Its representatives have at various times persuaded, cajoled, or aggressively pressured involved parties to seek a permanent peace; they have offered both arms and resources for development to help achieve these ends."<sup>187</sup>

#### **4.4. Conclusions**

This chapter argues that parties' asymmetry in a conflict structure does not yield a final mutual settlement. Underdogs (weaker parties) require empowering to equal the stronger party and hence secure substantive interests at the negotiating table. Even if third party intervention is done in good faith, as long as this asymmetry endures, a mutual settlement would be difficult to secure. The chapter further argues that transformations of issues, actors (parties), context and structure are necessary in order to secure a mutual settlement to a protracted conflict. Further still, the chapter argues that third party perceptions, constituents, allies and patrons in a conflict impact on the content and scope of the final settlement. Therefore proper management of these variables is necessary to safeguard the gains of a mutual settlement. Lastly, the chapter argues that there is a linkage between conflict management processes, the actors, and third party interveners and conflict escalation/de-escalation.

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<sup>187</sup> Ibid, pp 51.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSIONS**

#### **5.1. Summary**

It was indeed during the British leadership and control in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Palestine that the conflict between Palestinian Arabs and Israelis (Jews) began. This was because the British administration had succumbed to the U.S pressure to allow unlimited influx of Jews from Europe into Palestine. To fight this immigration Palestinians enlisted pan-Arabism to their cause-Palestinian nationalism and identity. Arab leaders spurned this attempt and instead hijacked Palestinian nationalism and identity to propel their regional hegemony. The British, faced with difficult immigration policy decisions to make, took the mandate back to the United Nations. Consequently, the .U.N passed a resolution in 1947 that sought to partition Palestine into two territories: Israel for the Jews and Palestine for the Palestinians.

Furthermore, both parties to the conflict have the desire to have a state for each. There is also an imbalance of power between Israel and the Palestinians that continues to make Israel to enjoy disproportionate political and economic power. Further still, lack of stability in the political leadership on both sides starting in the years of the Oslo Accords in 1993 has complicated conflict management processes. Yet from the Oslo Accords of 1993 to the Road Map of 2008, there has been a demonstration of change in positions by both parties to the conflict. There is now recognition and acceptance by the Palestinian leadership of the state of Israel's right to exist in return for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Poor management of the parties' asymmetry in a conflict structure does not yield a final mutual settlement. Underdogs (weaker parties) require empowering to equal the stronger party and hence secure substantive interests at the negotiating table. Even if third party intervention is done in good faith, as long as this asymmetry endures, a mutual settlement would be difficult to secure. The study further argues that transformations of issues, actors (parties), context and structure are necessary in order to secure a mutual settlement to a protracted conflict. Further still, the study argues that third party perceptions, constituents, allies and patrons in a conflict impact on the content and scope of the final settlement. Therefore proper management of these variables is necessary to safeguard the gains of a mutual settlement. Lastly, the study argues that there is a linkage between conflict management processes, the actors, and third party interveners and conflict escalation/de-escalation.

## **5.2. Key Findings**

Ramsbotham observes that, "When the Oslo Accords were signed in 1993, it was widely believed that the Norwegian facilitation had brought about a breakthrough in the long conflict."<sup>188</sup> Yet most of the provisions of the Accords were suspended, the final status issues remain unresolved, forceful occupation of the West Bank and Gaza by Israel continues, and Palestine suicide bombers avenge occupation by blowing up Israeli civilians and facilities. He further argues that, "...the attempt at conflict resolution was

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<sup>188</sup> O.Ramsbotham et al., *CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT RESOLUTION*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), pp.181.

fundamentally flawed from the outset, in the context of Israeli-Palestinian asymmetry.”<sup>189</sup>

This state of affairs dominated subsequent conflict management processes way up to 2010.

The Norwegian as well as the Geneva interventions were made in good faith with the hope of lessening the suffering caused by the conflict.<sup>190</sup> The intervention sought to grant autonomy in Gaza and Jericho as a preamble to a two-state solution. This could only be achieved through negotiation and exploration. Aggestam proposed that negotiation and exploration were aimed at giving an opportunity to the two sides to reframe their views of a conflict and create a new reality that could help open the potential for new relationship.<sup>191</sup>

Furthermore, the Oslo process, as well as other subsequent processes, was launched at a time when the Israeli government was strong and the PLO was weak and desperate. Said observed that in such asymmetrical negotiations, the outcome would have been one in which the stronger party crushes and humiliates the weaker party thus leading to a dismembered and impoverished Palestinian territory that lacked both statehood and autonomy.<sup>192</sup> Indeed national political leaders of Israel especially Rabin and Perez rejected the idea of a Palestinian state. Again influential constituencies on both sides had opposed the Accords. Further still, violence was perpetrated by both sides as the Israeli

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<sup>189</sup> Ibid, pp.181.

<sup>190</sup> O.Ramsbotham et al., *CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT RESOLUTION*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), pp.181.

<sup>191</sup> K.Aggestam., *Reframing and Resolving Conflict: Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations 1988-1998*, (Lund: Lund University Press; Lund Political Studies 108, 1999), pp.173.

<sup>192</sup> See E.Said., *The End of the Peace Process: Oslo and after*, (London: Granta, 2002)

government accelerated construction of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories. However, at the Camp David II talks in 2000 Prime Minister Ehud Barak softened his stance by accepting Palestinian sovereignty over east Jerusalem and was willing to return 91% of the West Bank to the Palestinians.<sup>193</sup> Under the Geneva peace process, Israel was to pull out of West Bank and Gaza to the internationally recognized 1967 borders. Again under this process, Palestine after becoming a state would exercise sovereignty over Jewish settlements constructed by Israel in Eastern Jerusalem. Meanwhile there has been noticeable change in perspective and discourse for hard line Jews who appear to accept a two-state solution. On the other hand 'Islamists' such as Hamas, the Islamic Jihad, and the Al-Aqsa Martyr Brigade on the Palestinian side need to recognize the right of the existence of the Israeli state.

Conflict management process cannot be left to the conflict region alone but must also address the broader context in which the conflict is situated.<sup>194</sup> According to Etzioni, conflict transformation process must extend from the local level to the broader levels in which conflict is situated.<sup>195</sup> To do this the task of mediation should seek to overcome the asymmetry of the conflict. This implies that mediation requires both advocacy and support for the weak party. According to Galtung conflict must be balanced by situating both Israel and Palestine within the context of Middle Eastern community.<sup>196</sup> This can be realized by modifying the U.S economic, military, and political support for Israel which

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<sup>193</sup> See H.Agha & R.Mulley., "Camp David: the tragedy of errors", *New York Review of Books*, 48 (13), 9 August, 2001.

<sup>194</sup> O.Ramsbotham et al., *CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT RESOLUTION*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), pp.183.

<sup>195</sup> A.Etzioni, "On self-encapsulating Conflicts," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 8 (3), pp.242-255.

<sup>196</sup> J.Galtung., *Transcend and Transform: An Introduction to Conflict Work*, (London: Pluto, 2004), pp 103-109.

remains one of the drivers of the conflict. At every stage of conflict management process transformations in the issues, the actors, the structure, and the context are vital to move the conflict resolution process forward.<sup>197</sup>

### **5.3. Recommendations**

The study holds key solutions to the protracted Palestine-Israeli conflict; the conflict that has since mid 19<sup>th</sup> century wrought unrelenting human suffering: refugee crisis, loss of livelihoods, psychological trauma, and loss of material wealth. Whereas Zionists achieved their political aspiration of establishing a Jewish national home in Palestine, they should also recognize and help the attainment of the Palestinian national aspiration—the establishment and recognition of the Palestinian state. The U.S that helped create and nurtured the Israeli state and her supporting institutions over the years should help Palestinians to establish their state, strengthen their institutions, and rebuild their lives and livelihoods. In fact the U.N should be the instrument for the realization of this goal. This effort would be worthwhile because it would ensure security for both Israel and the U.S interests in the region. By now it should be clear that crushing manifestations of resentment in society with violent force, further fuels more resentment and more violence.

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<sup>197</sup> O.Ramsbotham et al., *CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT RESOLUTION*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), pp.184.



The Israeli use of armed violence and blockading Palestinian villages in the occupied territories whenever suicide bombing incidence occurs, will not transform desperate, destitute, and anxious Palestinians into lovers of peace without justice. Structural conditions that not only create but also reproduce destitution, despair, and a sense of dismemberment and dispossession within the Palestinian community must be righted. The United States, owing to her power and influence globally, should in good faith deploy the diplomacy of conflict management to restart the stalled peace processes between Israel and PLO. The goal here should be to reach a long-term mutual settlement as soon as possible.

The key challenges in conflict management are sticking issues, power asymmetry of the parties, poor political handling of negotiated settlements, and the perception of third party interveners. The principle conclusion is that third party perception, the audience, constituents, patrons, and allies in a conflict structure and conflict structure transformations are integral to the success of conflict management process.

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