Conflict Dynamics and the Role of Third Party: A Case Study of United States Inisraeli - Palestinian Crisis, 1990 – 2010

By

Adeniji, Adeyinka Samson, PhD
Department of Political Science and International Relations,
E-mail: yinkaashola@gmail.com, Phone No- +234- 08036265960.

&

Ibeku Margaret Chijioke, M.Sc
Department of Political Science and International Relations,
E-mail: meggyibeku@yahoo.com

Abstract

Conflicts have been a part of human existence which in turn gives rise to the need for conflict resolution; as in most conflicts even in domestic conflicts the role of the third party is often times very crucial in brokering peace. This paper examined the role of the third party in conflict dynamics, focusing on the role of the United States of America in the Israeli- Palestinian Conflict. One cannot talk about International Relations or global politics without this conflict or its spiraling effect come into play. It is within this background that we examined the role of America in this crisis, the implication of this involvement and proffer possible solutions. The methodology employed in the course of this work is secondary source of data; effort was made to interview officials from the three embassies involved. The theoretical framework used is the power theory. In the course of the work, the history of the crisis was examined; the different peace attempts were also looked at. This crisis cannot be solved by apportioning blames as both parties have
valid reasons and goals that they hope to achieve; each party has measured great losses in this struggle. The major bone of contention at this point is the status of Palestine and the issue of the occupied territories. The following recommendations were advanced: the USA should consult with its Arab partners with respect to the Palestinian course; efforts should be made to secure a just peace above regional economic cooperation; the USA should share the burden and responsibility of the peace process with other super powers interested in the middle East; the USA must recognize the sovereignty and national interests of the countries involved.

**Key Words:** Conflict Dynamics, Role, Third Party, United States, Israeli - Palestinian Crisis

**Introduction**

The role of United States in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is as old as the crisis itself which dates back to the late 19th century; this conflict turned more violent in 1920 and continues to the present day. Most United States of America Presidents have struggled to define how best to help Israel and Palestine resolve bitter disputes left behind by wars and dislocations in 1948 and 1967 and deepened ever since.

A significant achievement is the creation and sustaining of a democratic Jewish State in the wake of the Holocaust which was accompanied by considerable and ongoing Palestinian suffering. As the first country to recognize Israel as a nation in 1948 (11 minutes after creation on May 14), the United States has continually supported its right to be a state. The level of cooperation between the two states has differed over the course of time, but never has the U.S. questioned Israel’s right to exist. Throughout the past several decades the U.S. has been eager to develop a relationship with
a like-minded nation in the Middle East; this is partly due to the U.S. goal of achieving regional stability in the region (Kurtzer, 2009).

During the height of the Cold War, the U.S. sought to act as a counterweight to Soviet incursions into the region in order to contain the spread of Communism. The Middle East also has great importance to the world energy market; a market the U.S. now sees itself as a protector of (especially in the absence of the formal Colonial powers of Europe). These U.S. interests have combined to create the impression that the U.S. is in favor of one side (Israel) more than the other (Palestine). This impression, right or wrong, has caused continued difficulty in finding a settlement to an issue that continues to be of great importance to the U.S (Baum, 2013).

The June 1967 war between Israel and its neighboring Arab states changed the geopolitical landscape of the Middle East in more ways than anything had since the 1948 victory. After the proverbial dust settled and the six day war was over, Israel controlled more land than it had at any other time since the states modern inception. Each state that allied to attack Israel also lost significant portions of land. Israel gained control of the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip from Egypt, the Golan Heights from Syria, the West Bank from Jordan, and also gained an important political and symbolic footing in eastern Jerusalem. These acquisitions have since led to decades of diplomatic efforts on many fronts (Levs and Josh, 2009). Each side has continued to vie for the land that they feel is rightfully theirs. Some of the problems have been solved, yet many remain. Through it all, the United States has continued to act as an intermediary for a Middle East peace. U.S. interests in the region are large, and everyone from government officials to the common citizen has voiced their opinion on the matter.

Throughout the 1970’s, U.S. attitude towards Israel became more and more friendly. This friendliness acted to give the perception that the U.S. favored Israel in many cases, but diplomatic efforts continued (www.wcfia.org).
The 1973 war also brought about a much more engaged American foreign policy in working to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. It was also noted that it was a response to a peace overture from Egyptian President Anwar Sadat that led to the U.S.-brokered Camp David Accords which established peace between Israel and Egypt and returned the Sinai to Egypt. Israeli military efforts to repress the demonstrations made the situation worse and turned international public opinion against Israel. Even Israeli domestic public opinion began to react negatively to the military response that often seemed to aim at children throwing stones. The cost of military occupation over the Palestinians was increasing, in terms of lives, financial resources, and damage to the Israeli psyche. Among the Palestinians, the fighting left hundreds dead. Thus, the continued military occupation of Gaza and the West Bank had become too costly for both Israelis and Palestinians. After the Gulf War, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) had been greatly weakened in international opinion because of its support for Iraq. On the other hand, Israel felt somewhat beholden to the United States for leading the coalition forces that expelled Iraq from Kuwait and also greatly weakened Saddam Hussein, considered by many in Israel as the greatest threat to the country’s security. In 1991, talks convened by the United States and the Soviet Union began in Madrid (www.usip.org).

In 1977, a dramatic shift occurred in the Israeli Knesset (Parliament) when the Likud party gained majority control. The increasingly peace oriented policies of the Labor party were now threatened by the decidedly hardline stance of the right-wing Likud government. From September 5 to 17, 1978, President Carter invited Anwar Sadat of Egypt and Menachem Begin of Israel to Camp David to discuss peace (Quandt, 2005). It is within this background that this paper examined the role of America in this crisis, the implication of United States’ involvement and proffer possible solutions.
Conceptual Issues

A number of concepts were used in this study. To avoid any form of ambiguity in the meanings they may convey we have provided the following working definitions.

**Territory:** A geographic area that is owned and controlled by a government or country. It is an administrative division, usually an area that is under the jurisdiction of a state. In most countries, a territory is an organized land controlled division of an area that is controlled by a country but is not formally developed into, or incorporated into, a political unit of the country that is of equal status to other political units that may often be referred to by words such as states. In international politics, a territory is usually a non-sovereign geographic area which has come under the authority of another government; which has not been granted the powers of self-government normally devolved to secondary territorial divisions.

**Security:** According to Nwolise quoted in Balogun who views security as safety, freedom from danger of risk, protection from espionage, infiltration, sabotage, theft etc. in the words of Atlantic charter, Security for individual and the state embodied both freedom from fair and freedom of a state to pursue its own interests by its own method. This implies the absence of threat to life, property and social economic wellbeing of the people. While National security also means the ability to protect the population and the territory against organized force while advancing state through competitive behavior. (Dalbeko, 1995).

**Settlements:** The United States geological survey (USGS) defines three classes of human settlement: “Populated Place”, “Census” and “Civil”. The populated place is defined as a place or area with clustered or scattered buildings and a permanent human population.

**Refugees:** according to the 1951 Refugee Convention establishing UNHCR spells out that a refugee is someone who is outside their country of origin.
or habitual residence because they have suffered "owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country." Such a person may be referred to as an 'asylum seeker' until recognized by the state where they make a claim (UNHCR, 2012).

**Incitement:** Incitement is a crime that occurs when one person tries to motivate another to commit an offense (Akangbe, 2011).

**Conflict:** In his submission Agbaje (1989) submitted that conflict is a mental struggle resulting from incompatible or opposing needs, drives, wishes, or external or internal demands. Also, conflict is a warfare between opposing forces, especially prolong and bitter but sporadic struggle, a disagreement or clash between ideas, principles or people. A state resulting from often unconscious opposition between simultaneous but incompatible desires.

**Crisis:** According to Waltz, (1965) crisis can be defined as a time of great danger, difficulty or uncertainty when problems must be solved or important decisions must be made to avoid war. It is any event that is going to lead to an unstable and dangerous situation affecting an individual, group, community, or whole society. Crises are deemed to be negative changes in the security, economic, political, societal, or environmental affairs, especially when they occur abruptly.

**War:** Akangbe (2009) submitted that a war can be defined as a situation in which two or more countries or group of people fight against each other over a period of time for certain result. It is a state of armed conflict between states or societies. It is generally characterized by extreme aggression, destruction, and mortality, using regular or irregular military forces.
**Insecurity:** Can be defined as a state of being subject or expose to danger or injury which overwhelms the power or abilities of the statutory agencies charged with the responsibility of protecting and safeguarding lives and properties in a society (Ibrahim, 2012).

**Boundaries:** are lines which delimit the area of interest such as Local Government unit, the constituent units (States) of a Federation or a sovereign State. It is a line which separates one object from another (Imobighe, 1993). So in territorial terms, a boundary is a line which separates one territory from another. Hence, administratively and, at least within the context in which the concept is being considered in this paper, a boundary is a line of demarcation which delimits the scope of two or more administrative jurisdictions.

**Literature Review**
The reviewed literature linked United State role in the Israeli-Palestine crisis with conflicts from the region which is the Middle East to global. Palestinians have continuously resided in Palestine since four thousand years before Christ, their ancestors built the cities of Jerusalem, Nablus, Jericho, Beisan, Acca and Jaffa. The Hebrews arrived in the land between 1400-1200 B.C., and only maintained control over it during the lifetimes of King David and his son King Solomon – a period of about 80 years. The land then came under Greek and Roman rule, and was then conquered by Islam in the year 637 A.D. under the second Caliph, Omar. By that time, the Jews had already left Jerusalem, and Christianity was the dominant religion. The Caliph granted full security to all Christians, including personal safety, and protection of property, religion and churches. The Muslims declared Jerusalem the capital of Palestine, and the city remained under Islamic rule until the end of the Ottoman Empire in 1918, except for a brief time of Christian rule under the Crusaders (Abo-Sak, 2000).
The majority of countries in the Middle East have been U.S. allies throughout the Cold War to the present, including Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, the UAE, Oman, pre-Khomeini Iran, Pakistan, Yemen, Turkey, Morocco, Tunisia, Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt (Abo-Sak, 2000). Not only is the US heavily dependent upon the region’s oil, but it has also used the territory of these countries as strategic American bases. Most Islamic nations have shared in the US goal of opposing communism, and the 1991 Gulf War demonstrated the willingness of the Middle Eastern nations to work with the United States, proving that the U.S. can operate in the Middle East without Israeli land, equipment, or personnel.

Many opinions have been given to proffer a solution to this crisis; amongst the popular solutions are the Single State solution and the Two State solution. Many scholars and politicians have written and spoken on these different solutions, with each party giving reasons to validate their opinion.

Avrum Burg, former Speaker for the Israeli Knesset, held that:

The next diplomatic formula that will replace the 'two states for two peoples' will be a civilian formula. All the people between the Jordan and the sea have the same right to equality, justice and freedom. In other words, there is a very reasonable chance that there will be only one state between the Jordan and the sea - neither ours nor theirs but a mutual one. It is likely to be a country with nationalist, racist and religious discrimination and one that is patently not democratic, like the one that exists today. But it could be something entirely different. An entity with a common basis for at least three players: an ideological right that is prepared to examine its feasibility; a left, part
of which is starting to free itself of the illusions of 'Jewish and democratic'; and a not inconsiderable part of the Palestinian intelligentsia (Avrum, 2011).

Quite simply, Israel has created the one state. This state gives 80% of its citizens (the Jewish population) full democratic and civil rights. 20% of the citizens (Palestinian citizens of Israel) experience institutionalized discrimination in virtually all sectors of civil and political life. The remaining population in the West Bank lives in apartheid like system of separate and unequal rights under full military occupation by Israel. The population of Gaza is surrounded by walls and predator drones which constantly monitor their movements while preventing the growth of a sovereign state.

Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories form one state under complete Israeli control. Israeli negotiators with the cover of continued American aid and diplomatic assistance have taken every opportunity to stop an equitable two-state solution from coming into existence. Since we live in one state and the two-state solution is dead, why not pragmatically work towards bringing democracy to the residents of this unequal state (Joseph, 2011).

In his opinion Riyad al-Maliki, the Foreign Affairs Minister at the Palestinian National Authority submitted that:

A bi-national state is a disaster... The position of the Palestinian Authority is to have a two state solution... and we have been fighting to have an independent Palestinian state next to the State of Israel. We want to live as an independent, sovereign state of Palestine next to the State of Israel. And we don’t want to be
part of a state with Israel. A bi-national state is a disaster to Israel and it is a disaster to us (Riyad, 2011).

In his reaction to the debate of the creation of Palestinian state Muammar Qaddafi, former leader of Libya, argues that:" It is no longer acceptable or reasonable to say that the Jews should be thrown into the sea. Even if you could do it, it's not acceptable. The solution is to join the two - Israelis and Palestinians - into one state, because once a state likes this is established, then the interests of both sides are fulfilled. They can call it 'Israetine” (Muammar, 2003)

While Zehava submits that the one-state solution is a dangerous and mistaken illusion. He further submits that the State of Israel is the self determination of the Jewish Nation, a state for all citizens, and a state which grants communal rights to National minorities within it. Just as he defend Israel’s right to exist, despite his criticism, he also struggle for the establishment of a Palestinian state that will put into practice Palestinians’ right to Statehood (Zehava, 2011).

In another development Rubi Rivlin, Speaker of the Israeli Knesset, wrote in his July 15, 2010 article "The Land Is Not Divisible" in Haaretz: he argues that:

There is a conflict in the Middle East between two entities, and they’re both right, each in their own way. This is our only home, and therefore all kinds of solutions can be found. One could establish a system in one state in which Judea and Samaria are jointly held. The Jews would vote for a Jewish parliament and the Palestinians for an Arab parliament, and we would create a system in which life is shared. But these are things that will take time. Anyone
who thinks that there are shortcuts is talking nonsense. As long as Islamic fundamentalism thinks that Jews are forbidden to settle in the Holy Land, we have a problem. It will not be resolved by an agreement, even if we obtain a promise from all the Arab states that it will be fine (Rubi, 2010).

So if people say to me: Decide one state or division of the Land of Israel; he said that division is the bigger danger (Rubi, 2010).

In a related development Daniel Elazar, Professor of Political Science at Temple University, in his book titled Two Peoples - One Land: Federal Solutions for Israel, the Palestinians, and Jordan, opined that:

It is time to find a way to share the land without an exclusive reliance on partition... the only way to do so is through some form of federal solution which will secure for each party a polity of its own but in such a way that all three (Israel, Jordan and the Palestinians) must share in the governance of the land’s common goods. It is this writer’s deep and considered belief that the federal option is the only option for peace... within which all will find their place without foregoing their separate characters and cultures and their desire for independent development. (Daniel, 1991).

In a related development Alan, Harvard Law Professor, stated that The one-state solution proposal now being made by Palestinian lawyers and some anti-Israel academics is nothing more than a ploy...
designed to destroy the Jewish state and to substitute another Islamic Arab state (Alan, 2004).

In his contribution to the debate Thomas (2003) argues that: It [a one-state solution] would be a nightmare because if you take all the West Bank, all of Gaza and all of Israel together it's about 55 percent Jewish, 45 percent Palestinian. In ten years, given the different growth rates, it's going to be about 51 percent Palestinian, 49 percent Jewish... So this is a real problem for Israel (Thomas, 2003)

In a more precise manner Edward Said Late Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University Culture and Resistance: submits that: To say that the United States is an even-handed broker is a preposterous mischaracterization. The United States is very much in Israel's camp. All the information we have on the negotiations during the last seven years of the peace process has shown that the United States has presented the Israeli point of view in the discussions and remains a partisan of Israel" (Edward, 2003)

**Theoretical Framework**

Bearing in mind the need for holistic approach to the subject matter under investigation, this work assessed and adopts the power theory model for its analysis. Power theory belongs to the realist school of thought in International relations as opposed to the liberal school of thought. While the liberal school of thought emphasizes on international law, morality and international organizations, the realist school of thought emphasizes on power as a key influence in International relations (Nardin, 1992).
The history of the power theory can be traced back to thinkers such as Machiavelli or Thucydides and Sun Tzu. Sun Tzu argued that moral reasoning was not very useful to state rulers of the day, faced with armed and dangerous neighbors. He showed rulers how to use power to advance their interests and protect their survival. (Sun, 1963).

In the same vein, Thucydides stated in his account of the Peloponnesian war 431-404 B.C) that the strong do what they have the power to do and the weak accept what they have to accept (Thucydides, 1972). Years later Niccolo Machiavelli urged princes to concentrate on expedient actions to stay in power, including the manipulation of the public and military alliances (Machiavelli, 1950).

After the World War II, scholars like Hans Morgenthau championed the core of the power theory. He argued that International politics is governed by objectives, universal laws based on national interests defined in terms of power. He reasoned that no nation had “God on its side” (a universal morality) and that all nations had to base their actions on prudence and practicality (Morgenthau, 1978).

The significance of the power theory to the United States role in Israeli / Palestine crisis has shown that it is all related to the endless struggle for the stronger to dominate the lesser. America has been the super power in the world since after the end of the second World War, often times referred to as the Police man in the international community, however to maintain this role America has to constantly make sure that her interests are well protected in the international community and her threats are constantly checkmated.

The case of America’s role in the Middle East cannot be discussed without putting into consideration the large population of the Jewish community in the United States. The Jews have done significantly well in the area of business and have a reasonable economic power in America. Their influence spans across all sectors of the economy; from the media to banking, housing etc. with this strong economic base the Jews are able to
influence policies in America, as they are known to be heavy financiers during politics. The Jews using economic power have been able to silently yet consistently influence America’s role in the Middle East.

An Overview of Israel - Palestine Conflict

Palestine is the crossroads of three continents. It is a land of shifting boundaries, apolitical entity that vanished, only to reemerge like a phoenix. It is bordered by the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River. It is strategically located between Egypt, Syria and Arabia. (Kimmerling, 1993; Migdal, 1994).

On the other hand Israel can first be traced to the Bible (Gen 32: 28) when Jacob had his name changed to Israel, this happened between 1876BCE according to bible scholars. It is believed that the descendants of this man called Jacob are now the present Jewish Israelites. The Israelites multiplied until they became a great nation.

However, this nation was not without its challenges; Israel suffered years of slavery, and regained freedom in 1446BCE when they were led by Moses across the red sea. From hence, Israel had different kings, fought many wars, and was a divided nation and again a united nation under one King; from 1050 BCE – 930BCE under King Saul, King David and King Solomon. However by 930BCE – 586BCE, Israel was a divided kingdom and had been defeated with the overrun of Jerusalem that was the seat of power. Between 600 BCE – 500 BCE Israel had gone into exile, later on by 500 BCE – 400 BCE the people started to return to Jerusalem from exile to rebuild the city. After the exile to Babylon, the nation did not particularly exist as the territories were conquered and ruled by different Kings.

By 66BCE, the Jews of Judea rose in revolt against Rome, naming the new state as “Israel” (Godpan, 2008). From this time onward Jerusalem was
conquered, occupied and ruled by different people, from the Arab, the Crusader, the byzantine and Mamluk.

During the 19th century, Jews were been granted better citizenship rights in Western Europe. In Eastern Europe they faced a lot of persecution, a good number were massacred in pogroms. Many of them fled to America where they had better liberties. As all these were ongoing, national movements began to be birthed across Europe. It began in Russia as a religious movement but spread on as a secular movement coincidentally at this period many Jews were migrants to the Holy land.

While some communities depended on donations from Europe to survive, other communities made plans to become self-sustaining through agriculture. These different waves of Jewish immigration and settlement are known as “aliyah”. In the first aliyah between 1882 and 1903 about 35,000 Jews returned. By 1890 Jews were in the majority in Jerusalem. One Teodore Herzl in 1896 published a book in which he opined that in the face of the growing anti – Semitism the best solution would be to create a Jewish state.

In line with his thought, the Zionist Organization was founded in 1897 and the first Zionist Congress proclaimed its aim “to establish a home for Jewish people in Palestine secured under Public Law” (Herzle and Zionism, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2012).

By 1914 the First World War (World War I) broke out, the Jews supported the Germans against the Russians who they viewed as the worst enemies of the Jews. Britain for strategic reasons began to seek the support of the Jews. In the bid to garner the Jewish support United Kingdom’s foreign secretary Arthur James Balfour wrote to Baron Rothschild a British Jewish leader on the 2nd of November 1917. This document was later described as Balfour declaration. The document states thus:

His Majesty’s government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for Jewish people, and will use their best
endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country (Yapp: 1987)

This document became known as Balfour Declaration of 1917 and became the cornerstone in later battles for the actualization of the state of Israel. The British through this document sought to control this territory and went as far as sharing territories with France.

One cannot talk about the history of Israel without making reference to WWII and the Holocaust. At the onset of the war the Jews in Palestine sought to organize themselves to fight alongside the British. Though this plan met an initial resistance, it was later accepted as about 1.5 million Jews served the allied forces. Though a number of Arab Palestinians joined the allied forces, most of them served in the German army. Many Jews in North Africa were made slaves as these areas came under the command of the Nazis. (Donald, 2000)

Between 1939 and 1945, there was a very detailed and systematic effort by the Nazis aided by local forces to wipe off every one of Jewish extraction. About 6 million Jews mostly women and children were killed in this Holocaust. At this point the Zionist movement was now under the leadership of David Ben Gurion who was anti British.

On 2\textsuperscript{nd} April 1947, Britain transferred the question of Palestine to the newly created United Nations. The General Assembly created the United Nations Special committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) to treat the problem. The majorities report of UNSCOP proposed “an independent Arab State, an independent Jewish State and the city of Jerusalem”, the last to be under “an international Trusteeship System (UN: 1947). Following the declaration of the state of Israel on May 14, 1948; the leading super power
USA led by President Harry S. Truman and USSR led by Joseph Stalin recognized the new state of Israel. Members of the Arab League which included Egypt, Transjordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq refused to accept the new state. Chaim Azriel Weizmann who had been a foremost Jewish nationalist was elected as the President of the new state of Israel.

As at the time of the declaration of the state of Israel, Egypt released an aircraft which attacked Tel Aviv the next morning, (May 15\textsuperscript{th}). The morning of May 15\textsuperscript{th} 1948 saw the British gone (except for a small garrison at the Haifa Port to supervise last minute evacuations) and Israel independent. It also saw the start of a new war, the military intervention of five (5) independent Arab states (Gilbert, 1998). This attack can be said to mark the beginning of the current conflict between Israel as a nation and Palestine. Israel was attacked on all sides and gave back a good fight.

With independence a provisional anal of state had been created, to govern the country until such a time as elections could be held. The annals’ first legislation act was a Law and Administration Ordinance which abolished all restrictions on Jewish immigration. The ordinance also retroactively validated the immigration of every Jew who had at any time entered the country, including those tens of thousands who had done so in contravention of the British Mandate Regulation (Gilbert, 1998).

By May 31, on the order of the Defense Minister Ben Gurion, the Haganah here to a clandestine underground army, was transformed into a regular army known as the Israel Defense Forces “Zera Haganah le- Israel” (Gilbert, 1998). After nearly four weeks of war, the truce proposed by the United Nations General Assembly presented by a Swedish diplomat Count Bernadotte came into being on June 11. The four weeks truce was to end on July 9 doing with Count Bernadotte came up with proposals that were not accepted. Inevitably fighting broke out again. A second truce was agreed on 19\textsuperscript{th} July 1948, after 10 days of fighting during which Israel had gained more territories. Count Bernadotte was ambushed and killed by an independent Israeli army, this led to much tension, following which Ben
Gurion closed down all activities of independent armed forces and confiscated their weapons.

Israel signed armistices with Egypt (Feb 24), Lebanon (March 23), Jordan (April 3) and Syria (July 20). No actual peace agreements were signed. With a permanent ceasefire coming into effect, Israel’s new borders, later known as the Green Line were established. These borders were not recognized by the Arab states as international borders. (Library of Congress Country Studies).

In January 1949 Israel had its first general elections. The social Zionist parties Mapai and Mapam won majority seats. David Ben – Gurion Mapai’s leader was appointed prime minister while Chaim Azriel Weizmann was President. Hebrew and Arabic became the official languages of Israel.

With the legislation passed by the Knesset known as the Law of Return, which granted to all Jews and those of Jewish ancestry and their spouses, the right to settle in Israel and gain citizenship (Warren, 2007); the Jews started to return home in droves. By 1958 the population of Israel rose to about 2 million; this led to austerity measure on food, clothing and furniture had to be rationed. During this period, the United States besides other countries was a major donor to Israel.

In 1952 a military coup in Egypt brought Nasser to power. The United States at this point started pursuing close relations with the new Arab states particularly the Nasser led Egyptian Free Officers Movement and Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia. Israel’s solution to diplomatic isolation was to establish good relations with newly independent states in Africa and with France (Jacob, 1971).

By March 10, 1949 Israel had its first cabinet. During this period a lot of people who were more or less refugees sought to return. The UN had to create the UNRWA – United Nations Refugee and Works Administration for Palestinians. More people continued to return. Israel during this period faced a lot of conflict over territories, one of which was the Suez Canal. All
this tension led to the build-up for an eventual confrontation and was otherwise known as the Sinai campaign. From 1956-1963 Israel enjoyed a bit of respite and could concentrate on growing its nation and economy. Israel as a nation has fought desperately to maintain its territory. Wars have been fought which include the Six days war from June 5- June 10 1967, the October war, Yom Kippur 1973, intifada (1st and 2nd). Israel - Palestine and its Arab neighbors have been in constant skirmishes and different attempts have been made to broker peace. Plan was adopted with few modifications on Nov 29, 1947.

The Role of United States in Israeli - Palestinian Crisis

The United States Congressional Research Service (CRS) in her brief for Congress titled "Palestinians and Middle East Peace: provided the following information: "Palestinians claim that Israel must withdraw from east Jerusalem, seized by Israel in the 1967 war along with the rest of the West Bank. Palestinians maintain that east Jerusalem will become the capital of the Palestinian state. Israel, which has claimed Jerusalem as its capital since 1948, annexed east Jerusalem in 1967, and claims that Jerusalem’s status, is not negotiable. No other country recognizes Israel’s annexation of east Jerusalem (CRS) on Oct. 10, 2003).

The July 25, 1994 Jordan-Israel non-belligerency agreement states that Israel:

Respects the special role' played by Jordan in Muslim religious shrines in Jerusalem. Arafat had stated in the past that the Palestinian entity would be responsible for non-Jewish religious shrines in the holy city. The Jordan-Israel agreement appears to set the stage for a future contest or cooperation
between Jordan and Palestine over the religious sites.

The United States has maintained a policy since 1967 that the future of the city must be negotiated and cannot be decided unilaterally, and that the city should not be divided as it was between 1948 and 1967.

In 1990, Congress [under President H.W. Bush] opposed the Administration position and passed resolutions acknowledging that Jerusalem was the capital of Israel and should not be a divided city (H.Con.Res. 290, passed on April 24, 1990, and S. Con. Res. 106, passed on March 22, 1990). In 1995, Congress passed S. 1322 (P.L. 104-45, November 8, 1995) that stated that the United State embassy should be moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The law provides a presidential waiver if maintaining the embassy in Tel Aviv is in the U.S. national interest (CRS, 1995).

It is important that the United States is involved in the conflict between Israel and Palestine because America must be an intermediary that can restrain Israeli and Palestinian force and temper the emotions of both parties so the conflict between the two groups does not get out of hand. If the conflict were to escalate by certain actions taken by either side, examples such as an attack on Muslim holy targets by Jewish extremists or the killing of Israeli political figures by radical Muslims, it could have far reaching implications for America’s interests in the Middle East by spreading into other nations in the region. If this were to happen, the United States would be at the forefront in the minds of Muslims when it would come time to blame those who are responsible for the expansion of the conflict (Doran, 1999). Even our allies in the region would have to distance themselves from America, which would have grave effects on their efforts in the “War on Terror”. King Abdallah II of Jordan is a prime example (Karp, 2002). He has spoken out in support of the United States and its counter-terror efforts, has pledged Jordan’s full support. However,
Jordan’s population is also about 60% Palestinian. This can be attributed to prior exoduses of Palestinians from Israeli territory. Abdallah and Jordan already have an uneasy peace with Israel (1994 peace treaty with Israel) and have been supporters of American interests in fighting the “War on Terror”, but a spilling over of the conflict would raise suspicions of U.S. Intentions, many of which are already held by the Jordanian people. An eruption of violence in the Israel/Palestine conflict may threaten the stability of the Jordanian government and it would certainly stop Jordan’s cooperation with American in fighting terrorism.

This is only one example of the countries that might be affected by an escalation of violence. Others include Egypt, whose border along Israel and its former ties to Gaza make it especially susceptible to expanded conflict, and Saudi Arabia, who has a quarter of a million Palestinians within its borders and has historically taken an anti-Israel stance in the multiple wars that Israel has been engaged in since its creation (Ali, 2004). The country of Lebanon, who has seen civil strife for many years and also engaged Israel in the Second Lebanon War, would also be thrown into further chaos by the inevitable expansion of the conflict into its borders. The American military could also see a renewal of conflict in Iraq that would totally negate any progress made since the Iraqi Invasion. Another nation that would be affected is Iran. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran has consistently called for the destruction of Israel in many international forums and could use an expansion of the conflict as an excuse to attack Israel as well as the United States presence in Iraq. This has even greater implications because of Iran’s suspected nuclear program. Not only could an escalation of violence cause the above listed military and diplomatic occurrences, but it could also have long lasting economic effects. If Saudi Arabia, Iraq, or Iran were to be entangled in conflict, it could affect the world supply of oil and could cause massive shortages and the price of oil to rise dramatically. Because of the political and economic situations that could arise from the escalation of the conflict
it is in America's best interest to ensure the Israeli-Palestinian conflict does not expand. Not only does the conflict have the potential to have lasting effects in the region and can lead to armed conflict involving the United States, the United States’ involvement in the conflict by backing Israel can seriously undermine America's credibility in the international arena. It can lead to a loss of diplomatic power that they have in other countries, such as Turkey. By US supporting Israeli pre-emptive strikes against minor threats to its people, they are supporting a precedent for states to take any violent action of a small group of people against them as an act of war. This could lead to another, more substantial invasion of the Kurdish regions in northern Iraq by Turkey in order to halt the attacks by the Kurdish Workers Party, an ethnic Kurdish group with the goal of establishing a Kurdish state in Northern Iraq, Turkey, and Iran. Besides America setting a precedent for future attacks, we also undermine the United Nations. The United Nations and the United Nations Security Council have officially adopted many resolutions against the seizure of lands by Israel, the establishment of Jewish settlements on these disputed lands, and the divisions of the city of Jerusalem. However, when many of these issues come up, some are vetoed by the America due the veto power she has on the UN Security Council. Others that have made it through the process have simply been brushed away as meaningless by America and Israel. This has not only undermined and disgraced the United Nations, of which America was its biggest proponent while the UN was taking shape after World War II, it has discredited international law and the United Nations. America, in order to have the political clout to deal with an uncertain international arena in the future, must reign in its reputation, along with Israel's, and make lasting and meaningful changes to their image in order to regain the credibility that has been hurt by our staunch alliance with Israel.
The United States has been a great ally to Israel since May of 1948. Each President from Truman to Obama, has seen U. S. relations with this ally as one of great importance. However, there have been problems as with any nation, since the birth of Israel, there are those that seek its end, or believe that the establishment of the Jewish state is illegal. Because Israel is a vital ally to the United States, her relations toward the state has strengthen over the past 60 years.

The Johnson administration took the United States Foreign policy from neutrality of the previous administrations to being in wholly of support of Israel. Also during this administration was when the United States Foreign policy was geared toward providing more military and economic support toward the Jewish state.

Jimmy Carter’s administration was about the preservation and the fight for human rights. Carter initiated a deal to bring about a peace to the Arab - Israeli conflict since the creation of the state in May 1948. The Camp David Accords was an agreement between The President of Egypt Anwar al-Sadat and the Prime Minister of Israel Menachem Begin. It sought to bring peace and stop any further violence in the region. Within this agreement the Israeli promised to adhere to UN resolution 242 and 338; and provide the people within the occupied territories of the West Bank and the Gaza strip, complete autonomy within five years. Although the Camp David accords began diplomatic relations between the Israelis and the Egyptians, however the move further added fuel to the fire and made the Palestinian question the center of the Arab - Israeli conflict. Since then the Israelis have not withdrawn their settlers from the occupied territories and have added more restrictions to the Palestinians.

The next step toward bringing about peace in the Israeli- Palestinian conflict was the Madrid Peace Conference of 1991. This Conference was sponsored by The USSR and the US, and was hosted by Spain. This conference offered face to face talk between Israel and her neighbours and the Palestinians. These bilateral talks sought to resolve any past conflicts.
that may be prevent the peace process. However, no formal peace agreement came out of the conference, according to Jimmy Carter: “*We can now have peace in the holy land: A plan that will work*” it began secret negotiations between Israeli and PLO leaders.”

Another step in the peace process between the Israeli- Palestinian conflicts was the Oslo Peace Accords of 1993. This was the first face to face agreement between the Israelis and the Palestinians. This agreement called for a period of self -rule of the Palestinians within five years. It provided for the phasing of the removal of Israeli military forces from the occupied territories and for the Palestinians to start having elections. The points of the process were:

i. Transfer of powers to the Palestinians;

ii. The Declaration of Principles does not prejudge the permanent state;

iii. Security remains an Israeli Responsibility.

Because of this agreement, the Israeli recognized the Palestinian Authority as the sole representing body of the Palestinian people; however the Israeli also did not set a time table for the exact removal of the military from the territories.

After the Oslo accord, President Clinton invited Israeli Prime minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian Authority chairman Yasser Arafat to discuss a possible end to the conflict in accordance with the ‘93 Oslo accords; however no agreement was reached but more violence engulfed the country.

George Bush’s approach to the conflict was the road map to peace, which was formed by the International Quartet-- the United States, Russia, EU and the UN. The road map to peace is a proposal of a plan to bring about an end to the Israeli -Palestinian conflict. The road map consisted of three phases:

Phase 1: End of Palestinian Violence

Phase 2: Support of Palestinian economic growth
Phase 3: End of the Conflict, permanent agreement
President Obama’s plan for Israel is to continue the road map for peace ideology originally implemented by the Bush administration, however, Obama seeks for a Palestinian state as well as a secure and safe Israel, Obama would also like for the Muslim world to recognize Israel.
America has also been accused of militarization of the Middle East and her supports for some repressive regimes have been questionable. The Middle East is the destination of the majority of American arms exports, creating enormous profits for weapons manufacturers and contributing greatly to the militarization of this already overly-militarized region. Despite promises of restraint, US arms transfers to the region have topped $60 billion since the Gulf War slender 2009. Arms sales are an important component of building political alliances between the United States and Middle Eastern countries, particularly with the military leadership of recipient countries. There is a strategic benefit for the US in having US-manufactured systems on the ground in the event of a direct US military intervention. Arms sales are also a means of supporting military industries faced with declining demand in Western countries. The US justifies the nearly $3 billion in annual military aid to Israel on the grounds of protecting that country from its Arab neighbours, even though the United States supplies 80 percent of the arms to these Arab states.

Obstacles to Achieving Peaceful Settlement of the Conflict
Despite the different concerted efforts that have been made by America to end this crisis amongst which is the Camp David Accord, the Oslo Peace Process; remarkable peace is yet to be achieved in the Middle East. Perhaps, if facilitating and mediating Arab-Israeli peace were easy, peace would have long ago been achieved. The following list of obstacles is impressive, though possibly not comprehensive.

1. Deep distrust at the popular level - Palestinian feel the crushing, demoralizing weight of occupation and have little confidence in
Israel’s willingness to lift it voluntarily. Israelis see violence and terrorism emanating from the Palestinian side as the continuation of a long history of Jews being targeted because they are Jews.

ii. Weak governments and chronic disunity in Israel - The typical Government of Israelis a multi-party coalition whose unifying theme often amounts to no more than a desire to avoid national elections for as long as possible in order to retain control of key ministries. While the desire to perpetuate in cumbency often inspires grudging party discipline, disloyalty and back-stabbing are often ubiquitous within cabinets. A prime ministers sincerely interested in achieving critical mass for comprehensive peace need enormous political skills, steady American support (sometimes disguised as pressure), cooperation and good will from Arab parties deeply skeptical of Israeli intentions, and considerable good fortune.

iii. West Bank-Gaza/Fatah-Hamas split – Disunity also plagues the Palestinians side. Since June 2007 Hamas which has rejected the Quartet’s conditions for engagement – has ruled the Gaza Strip.

iv. External Negative Influences - Syria and Iran, through their support for Hamas, other Palestinian “rejectionist” groups, and Hezbollah, actively aim to keep Israeli and Palestinian talks from reaching closure.

v. Ineffective, half-hearted American facilitation - The belated Annapolis initiative is a sincere but flawed effort to compensate for seven years of American absenteeism from substantive peace talks. It asks Israelis and Palestinians to negotiate in good faith and simultaneously implement Quartet roadmap obligations, with no Americans in the room to help with talks and an insufficient, part-time U.S. effort to “monitor” roadmap implementation.

Way Forward
To reverse most of the unpopular pattern several recommendations designed to improve the United States’ position in the Middle East vis-à-vis all regional players include the following.

1) To avoid further complications, the United States should consult its Arab partners with respect to the Palestinian cause.

2) United States should prioritize securing a just peace instead of regional economic cooperation. Such cooperation will be a natural result if peace and security are achieved first, as it is now, there is simply a bargain between unequal adversaries, whereas a real solution would be Palestinian self-determination. This would not only silence the extremists, but would produce economic growth and development that has been stifled in the entire region for decades. lasting peace is the mutual and full recognition i.e without reservations that may threaten sovereignty of the separate identities of Israel and Palestine that will invite the surrounding countries, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, etc., to also recognize both sides, to cooperate with them, and to begin to resolve tension throughout the Middle East region. This in turn will create a secure environment, economic stability, cooperation, and an end to the dangerous arms build-up that had characterized the region over the year.

3) The United States share the burden and responsibility of the peace process with other countries interested in the Middle East, such as Europe and Japan. This will encourage them to share the financial burden involved in achieving peace as well as dilute the blame should the peace process fail.

4) The United States’ best interests to institute the principle of promoting peace and preventing war. Such as the dual containment of Iran and Iraq as a prime example of a policy that led to increased
tensions and animosity in the region and jeopardized United State interests, rather than creating stability.

5) The United States must recognize the sovereignty and national interests of the countries involved. It will be necessary for U.S. foreign relations officers to sort through 50 years of false and misleading information which has led to the current crisis.

Conclusion
An externally-imposed solution sounds rather coercive and brutal towards Israel but it need not be. Indeed, if it is brutal, it will backfire. The key to progress is to bring about a change in Israeli public opinion in favour of ending the occupation and conceding to the Palestinians the right to genuine national self-determination. Improbable as it may look today, such a change is not inconceivable. The Israeli public has never been as resistant to the idea of Palestinian statehood as the politicians of the Right. Only America can break the deadlock in Israeli politics. If America does not, no one else will. America’s credentials as a friend are impeccable. Since 1967 America has given Israel more than $106 billion in aid and this aid continues to the tune of $3 billion a year. America should involve the United Nations, European Union, Russia, and its Arab allies in a concerted effort to generate internal pressure on Israel Prime Minister to move forward on the political front, but its own leadership role is crucial. The key point to drive home in this educational campaign is that America remains committed to Israel’s security and welfare, and that the country’s security will be enhanced rather than put at risk by ending the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Arguably, America would be doing the Israeli Prime Minister a favour by walking him into a peace deal against which, given his ideological provenance, he is bound to protest loudly in public. Moreover, a fair number of sensible, level-headed Israelis would be
grateful to America for liberating them from the 55 years-old colonial venture which has so disastrously distorted the Zionist political project. Theirs is a vision of perpetual conflict over real estate and settlement expansion; warfare welcomed, ironically, as a gift of unsurpassed value by the enemies of the United State and Israel. Yet most Israelis understand and appreciate that, at the end of the day, what really matters most for Israel’s security is a relationship of trust, confidence and friendship with the United State and, in particular, with the President of the United States. A Government of Israel deciding to make the hard compromises and painful concessions for peace simply must be able to say, as a matter of domestic political survival,

Security assistance and strategic dialogue aim to guarantee Israel’s “qualitative military edge” over any conceivable array of enemies and strengthen the U.S.-Israel security partnership. Still, within Israel there are strong and vocal minorities opposing peace; not in word, but indeed. The current administration in United State views a complete freeze of construction in settlements on the West Bank as a critical step toward peace. In May and June 2009, President Barack Obama said, "The United States does not accept the legitimacy of continued Israeli settlements,” and the former Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, stated that the President "wants to see a stop to settlements not some settlements, not outposts, not ‘natural growth’ exceptions.” However, Obama has since declared that the United States will no longer press Israel to stop West Bank settlement construction as a precondition for continued peace-process negotiations with the Palestinian Authority.

The fact that the U.S. has been abused and exploited by Israel does not diminish its responsibility to be an honest broker in the Middle East. There might be adverse effects on U.S. relations with the Arab world unless it assumes to an unbiased position and gives up its double

Conflict Dynamics and the Role of Third Party  141
standards in favour of Israel. "That is the greatest guarantor for long-range US interests and justice for each of the entities involved,"

References


http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/503489533b8.html

http://www.usip.org/library/pa/israel_plo/sharm_el-sheikh_09041999.html

http://www.usip.org/pubs/peaceworks/pwks51.html


Kemp, J. (2006) “Israel’s fence, with all its implication is an absolute necessity, United State, townhall.com.


Riyad, A. (2011) A Bi-national state is a disaster…. The position of the Palestinian Authority is to have Two State Solution, presentation at the Peres center for Peace.


Rubi, R. (2010) "There is a conflict in the Middle East between two entities, and they’re both right, each in their own way”. In "The Land Is Not Divisible" published by Haaretz.


Thucyclides, (1972) History of the Peloponnesian war, translated by R. warner, Penguin


Russian-Israeli relations have historical roots regarding the existing Jewish population in Russia and the Israeli population with Russian origin. Russia has sought to represent a mediating role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, seeking to encourage the interest of both sides with respect to permanent peace. Perhaps the most important aspect is the apparent cooperation between Russia and Israel in the Syrian conflict. Where Russia holds Syrian airspace open for Israeli attacks, which has been protested by Iranian and Bashar al-Assad forces. During a meeting with Putin, Netanyahu discussed the apparent cooperation between Russia and Israel in the Syrian conflict. Where Russia holds Syrian airspace open for Israeli attacks, which has been protested by Iranian and Bashar al-Assad forces. During a meeting with Putin, Netanyahu discussed the ability of both sides to meet the exigencies of a fifty-year-old occupation.

The accompanying debates recalled questions concerning the legal treatment of prolonged occupation. This article seeks to fundamentally alter this recurring discourse. Understanding these dynamics may also yield insights regarding both the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and policy uncertainties such as the manner in which third parties can intervene to promote positive outcomes. Save to Library. Download.


Both Israeli security and the political-economic situation in the Palestinian areas have not improved as was expected from the Road Map’s performance-based agenda. The breakdown of formal peace negotiations has been accompanied by a growing unilateralism on the Israeli side in response to public demands for increased security. Israeli unilateral withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000 merely increased the capacity for Hezbollah to arm and recruit followers. Any possible model of third party involvement revolves around the prerequisites of an international force and its compatibility to conditions on the ground.