

The United Nations Resolution of December 21, 2017: The Idealist Theoretical Perspective

Charles Chidi Eleonu, PhD
Port Harcourt Polytechnic, Nigeria

Abstract - The idealists face hard criticisms and blame for not focusing much on how the world really is but on how the world should be. The significance of this paper is in its ability to actually help to expand the understanding of the implications of the idealist paradigm in particular and the liberal theory for world peace. President Trump of the United States on December 6, 2017 unilaterally declared Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. The UN General Assembly with 128 nations in an emergency meeting held on December 27, 2017, pronounced President Trump's decision null and void. This paper found that the General Assembly resolution and pronouncement stands despite the United States threat of withdrawal of funds to the United Nations and threat of denial of aid to other countries perceived as enemies of the United States. That the 14 Security Council members of the United Nations upheld the decision not to recognize Jerusalem as capital of Israel. That the unilateral decision of the United States was in violation of the Security Council Resolution 478 adopted in 1980 and the international law. In conclusion, this paper supports a framework in which relationships between countries can be analyzed and reinstates the position of the idealists in international relations that conflicts can be resolved amicably without necessarily going to war.

Keywords: Resolution, Idealist Paradigm, Security Council, International Law, UN General Assembly.

I. BACKGROUND

Idealists see the world as a community of nations that have the potential to work together to overcome mutual issues. This accounts for why early international relations scholarship focused on the need for balance of power system to be replaced with a system of collective security. These thinkers were later described as the Idealists (Burchill and Linklater, 2005). Idealists think that human nature is basically good and believe also that good habits such as telling the truth in diplomatic relations with other nations, education, and the existence of international organizations such as the United Nations to facilitate good relations between nations will result in peaceful and cooperative international relationships. Idealists believe that international law and morality are key influences on international events, rather than power alone. International law here refers to principles and rules of conduct that nations regard as binding.

Idealists were particularly active in the 1920s and 1930s, following the painful experience of World War One. Woodrow Wilson and other idealists placed their hopes for peace on the League of Nations, an international organization that existed from 1920 to 1946 to promote world peace and

cooperation. These hopes were dashed when the League failed to stop the German and Japanese aggression in the 1930s, which led to the outbreak of World War II in 1939. Although the term idealism fell out of use, related liberal approaches to international relations continued after World War II ended in 1945.

Liberalism is more idealistic and hopeful and emphasized the problem-solving abilities of international institutions such as the United Nations and World Trade Organization. Liberals focus on the interdependence of the world's countries and the mutual benefits they can gain through cooperating with each other. Unlike realists, liberals believe that by cooperating together, all nations could win. They also think gaining actual wealth is more important than acquiring more power relative to other countries. Liberals tend to see war not as a natural tendency but as a tragic mistake that can be prevented or at least minimized by international agreements and organizations.

International relations scholarship used theories or paradigms to explain events in the international system. According to Ole Holsti theories allow only salient events relevant to the theory to be seen. A theory is an accepted principle and rules of procedure based on knowledge. It is an abstract reasoning devised to analyze and predict or otherwise explain the nature or behaviour of a specified set of phenomena. In the explanations of Burchill and Linklater the study of international relations from the theoretical perspective is traced to Carr in 1939 and Hans Morgenthau in 1948.

According to Snyder (2004), the three theories of realism, constructivism and liberalism were most prominent. In international relations the two positivist schools of thought most prevalent are the realism and liberalism. The two traditional approaches mostly used by political scientists in the study of international relations also remain realism and liberalism. Realism emphasizes the danger of the international system, where war is always a possibility and the only source of order is the balance of power. In 1991, after the Soviet Union was dissolved and the Cold War ended, the balance of opinion briefly shifted in favour of liberalism, but realists were quick to point to the potential for future international conflicts.

It is pointed out here that the Marxist and Neo-Marxist international relations theories are structuralism paradigms which reject the realist and liberal view of state

conflict or cooperation. Instead the Marxian political economy focused on the economic and material aspects of society. Marxist approach argue the position of historical materialism and make the assumption that the economic concerns transcend others allowing for the elevation of class as the focus of study. Marxists view the international system as an integrated capitalist system in pursuit of capital accumulation. This accounts for why Long and Schmidt (2005), in their revisionist account of the origins of international relations as a field claim that the history of the field can be traced back to late nineteenth century imperialism and internationalism.

II. OVERVIEW OF THE UN RESOLUTION OF DECEMBER 21, 2017

On December 6, 2017, the United States President Donald Trump announced the United States recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, and ordered the planning of the relocation of the United States Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The Prime Minister of Israel Benjamin Netanyahu welcomed the decision and praised the announcement. On December 8, the American Secretary of State Rex Tillerson clarified that the President's statement did not indicate any final status for Jerusalem and was very clear that the final status, including the borders, would be left to the two parties to negotiate and decide.

The United Nations Security Council held an emergency meeting on December 7 where 14 out of 15 members condemned Trump's decision. The 14 Security Council members said the decision to recognize Jerusalem was in violation of United Nations resolution and the international law, but the Security Council was unable to issue a statement without the endorsement of the United States. A United States envoy Nikki Haley called the United Nations "one of the world's foremost centers of hostility towards Israel". Britain, France, Sweden, Italy and Japan were among the countries who criticized Trump's decision at the emergency meeting. It is recalled that during the 2016 United States Presidential election campaign, one of Trump's campaign promises was to move the United States embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, which he described as the "eternal capital of the Jewish people.

The United Nations General Assembly resolution ES-10/L.22 was an emergency session where the resolution declaring the status of Jerusalem as Israel's capital by President Donald Trump null and void. It was adopted by the 37th plenary meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on 21 December, 2017. The draft resolution was drafted by Yemen and Turkey. Though it was strongly contested by the United States, it was passed by total of 128 votes of 9 against 21 absentees and 35 abstaining. President Donald Trump, on December 6, 2017 said he would recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital and would begin the process of relocating the United States embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. This was a deviation from previous Security Council Resolutions and prevailing international norms, where no state should recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital or has its embassy

there.

After the United Nations Security Council's resolution was vetoed by the United States three days earlier, the Palestinian United Nations ambassador Riyad Manasour explained that the General Assembly would vote on a draft resolution, to call for Trump's declaration to be withdrawn. This will seek to invoke Resolution 377 known as the "Uniting for Peace" resolution to circumvent a veto. The Resolution states that the General Assembly can call an Emergency Special Session to consider a matter with a view to making appropriate recommendations to members for collective measures if the Security Council fails to act.

On December 21, 2017, the General Assembly voted overwhelmingly during a rare emergency meeting to ask nations not to establish diplomatic missions in the historic city of Jerusalem. The delegates warned that the recent decision by the United States concerning the status of Jerusalem risked igniting a religious war across the already turbulent and volatile Middle East and possibly beyond. By a record vote of 128 in favour of the United Nations against 9 and 35 abstaining the General Assembly adopted the resolution concerning the status of Jerusalem. The General Assembly declared null and void any actions intended to alter Jerusalem's character, status or demographic composition and called on all states to refrain from establishing embassies in the Holy City. It also demanded that nations must comply with all relevant Security Council resolutions and work to reverse the negative trends impairing a two state resolutions of the Israeli - Palestinian conflict.

The United Nations resolution demanded that all states must comply with the Security Council resolutions regarding the City of Jerusalem, and not recognize any actions or measures contrary to those resolutions. The General Assembly further affirmed that any decisions and actions which purport to have altered the character, status or demographic composition of the holy city of Jerusalem, have no legal effect and are therefore null and void, and must be rescinded in compliance with relevant resolutions of the Security Council. In that regard, the General Assembly also called upon states to refrain from the establishment of diplomatic missions in the City of Jerusalem pursuant to the Security Council Resolution 478 adopted in 1980. Reiterating its call for the reversal of the negative trend that endanger the two-state solution, the General Assembly urged greater international and regional efforts and supports aimed at achieving without delay a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

A country by country breakdown of the General Assembly votes rejecting United States decision of recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel is explained. The General Assembly voted by a huge majority to declare a unilateral United States recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel null and void. In an emergency session of the General Assembly on Thursday December 21, 2017, 128 countries voted in favour of a resolution rejecting United

States President Donald Trump's controversial decision of December 6, 2017. Nine countries voted against, while 35 abstained though Trump had earlier threatened to cut aid to United Nations and its members who would vote against his decision.

Member states that voted in favour of the United Nations resolution are: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cape Verde, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, China, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Cote d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guinea, Guyana, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea (South Korea), Russia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syria, Tajikistan, Thailand, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Vietnam, Yemen, Zimbabwe

The Member states that voted against the resolution are Guatemala, Honduras, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Togo, and the United States and those member states that abstained are Antigua-Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Bahamas, Benin, Bhutan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cameroon, Canada, Colombia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Dominican Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Fiji, Haiti, Hungary, Jamaica, Kiribati, Latvia, Lesotho, Malawi, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Rwanda, Solomon Islands, South Sudan, Trinidad-Tobago, Tuvalu, Uganda, Vanuatu

III. UNDERSTANDING IDEALISM AND REALISM

In an attempt to gain clearer understanding of the utopian or idealist theory, it is observed that the precursor to liberal theories of international relations was idealism. An idealist believe that ending poverty at home should be coupled with tackling poverty abroad. Wilson's idealism was a precursor to liberal international relations theory, which would as it were, arise amongst the institution-builders after World War II. The idealists believe that international law and morality also have overwhelming influences on international events and not power alone. The idealists think that human nature is good and also believe that good habits will facilitate peaceful and cooperative international relationships.

Linked here is the theory of Liberalism born out of idealist thinking. The liberals believe international relations evolved through small changes over time. Liberals focus on the interdependence of the world's countries and the mutual benefits they can gain through cooperating with each other. Unlike realists, liberals believe that by cooperating together, all nations could win. They also think gaining actual wealth is more important than acquiring more power relative to other countries. Liberals tend to see war not as a natural tendency but as a tragic mistake that can be prevented or at least minimized by international agreements and organizations. Kant's writings on perpetual peace were an early contribution to democratic peace theory and the precursor to liberal international relations theory was "idealism".

Liberalism holds that state preferences, rather than state capabilities, are the primary determinant of state behaviour. Unlike realism, where the state is seen as a unitary actor, liberalism allows for plurality in state actions. Thus, preferences will vary from state to state, depending on factors including culture, the economic system or type of government. Liberalism also holds that interaction between states is not limited to the high politics of security and political matters, but also low politics of economic and cultural matters whether through commercial firms, organizations or individuals. Thus, there are plenty of opportunities for cooperation and broader notions of power instead of an anarchic international system. Another reason is that an overwhelming gain can be realized through cooperation and interdependence hence peace can be achieved.

Idealism or utopianism was viewed critically by those who saw themselves as "realists" Theory of political realism has since been dominant. The theory relies on an ancient tradition of thought exposed by Thucydides, Machiavelli and Hobbes. Realists believe that nations act only out of self-interest and that their major goal is to advance their own positions of power in the world. The ideas of realism come from the writings of such historical figures as Sun Tzu of ancient China, Thucydides of ancient Greece, and Renaissance Italy's Niccolò Machiavelli. All of these thinkers argued that the leaders of nations use their power to advance the interests of their own nations with little regard for morality or friendship. In order to survive, realists believe leaders must build their power and avoid feelings of friendship or morality that might make them vulnerable to more ruthless adversaries.

Early realism was characterized as a reaction against interwar idealist thinking. The outbreak of World War II was seen by realists as evidence of the deficiencies of idealist thinking. The main tenets of the realist theory have been identified as statism, survival, and self-help. In statism, the realists believe that nation states are the main actors in international politics, thereby making the theory a state centric theory of international relations. This contrasts with liberal international relations theories which accommodate roles for non-state actors and international institutions. For survival, the realists interpret the international system as governed by

anarchy. To them, there is no central authority and therefore, international politics is a struggle for power between self-interested states (Snyder, Jack. 2004, p.55).

In explaining self-help, the realists believe that no other states can be relied upon to help guarantee the survival of other states. The realists assume that sovereign nations are unitary and geographically based actors in an international system of anarchy without authority. States are incapable of regulating interactions between states as no true authoritative world government exists. In addition the realists insist that instead of intergovernmental organizations, nongovernmental organizations or multinational corporations, the politically sovereign states are the primary actors in international affairs. Thus states as the highest order are in competition with one another. This makes a state act like a rational autonomous actor in pursuit of its own self-interest with a primary goal to maintain and ensure its own security and thus its sovereignty and survival.

Realism states that in pursuit of state interests, states will attempt to amass natural resource and that relation between states are determined by their relative levels of power. That level of power is in turn determined by the state's military, economic, and political capabilities. The human nature realists or classical realists believe that states are inherently aggressive, that territorial expansion is constrained only by opposing powers, while others, known as offensive or defensive realists, believe that states are obsessed with the security and continuation of the state's existence. The defensive view can lead to a circumstance where increasing one's own security can bring along greater instability as the opponent builds up its own arms, making security a zero-sum game where only relative gains can be made (Mearsheimer, John 2001).

The realists believe conflict and war are inevitable and that for one nation to gain something, another must lose. This means alliances with other nations cannot be counted on and cooperation between nations cannot last. Realists believe nations should always be heavily armed and ready for war. Friendships, religions, ideologies, cultures, and economic systems matter little. Nations act selfishly and do not answer to a higher authority. Realists generally believe that the actions of individual nations have the biggest influence on international relations. They believe that nations act rationally, not impulsively, and that nations weigh the benefits and drawbacks of all their options before choosing a course of action.

Realists generally believe that the actions of individual nations have the biggest influence on international relations. They believe that nations act rationally, not impulsively, and that nations weigh the benefits and drawbacks of all their options before choosing a course of action. The realists insist that nations are not driven by psychological or cultural influences. Instead, they act with the knowledge that they live in a world where there is no central government over all nations that they can appeal to for justice

or protection. According to them without that higher authority, nations must protect themselves and look after their own interests.

Realists believe that these characteristics have applied to all nations throughout history and as a result, realists think that international relations is primarily influenced by international security and military power. They consider military force the most important characteristic of any nation. The realists maintain that other characteristics, such as wealth, population, or moral beliefs, matter primarily because they affect military strength. They see international trade as a potential source of national power, because nations can accumulate wealth by controlling trade. They believe a nation's relative power compared to other nations is more important than the well-being of its citizens. In a world with an ever-present possibility of war, winning matters above all.

The realist approach has been criticized for being too simplistic and for failing to capture the complexities of international relations. Because a nation's power typically is very difficult to measure, realists have been criticized for their belief that nations strive only to accumulate power. Critics also argue that a nation's actions result from the conflicting pulls of various interest groups, constituencies, agencies, and individuals. They maintain that the national interest of any nation may be impossible to define because so many different constituencies exist, and a nation's pursuit of its interests may be far from rational. One glaring example is World War I (1914-1918), which seems irrational because almost all participants lost more than they gained.

IV. THE UN RESOLUTION AND THE IDEALIST THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

Idealism holds that a state can avoid harmful modes of behaviour as war, use of force and suggests that violence should be abandoned in favour of new ways and means as determined by knowledge, reason, compassion and self-restraint. Idealism stands for improving the course of international relations, by eliminating war, hunger, inequality, tyranny, force, suppression and violence from international relations. To remove these evils is the objective of humankind. Idealism accepts the possibility of creating a world free from these ills by depending on reason, science and education.

Political idealism in international relations represents a set of ideas which together oppose war and advocates the reform of international community through dependence on moral values and development of international institutions and international law. It advocates morality as the means for securing the desired objective of making the world an ideal world. It believes that by following morality and moral values in their relations, nations cannot only secure their own development, but also help the world to eliminate war, inequality, despotism, tyranny, violence and force.

The main features of idealism includes that human nature is essentially good and capable of good deeds in international relations. That human welfare and advancement of civilization are the concerns of all and bad human behaviour is the product of bad environment and bad institutions. By reforming the environment, bad human behaviour can be eliminated and that war represents the worst feature of relations. That by reforming international relations, war can and should be eliminated and that global efforts are needed to end war, violence and tyranny from international relations. The international community should work for eliminating such global instruments, features and practices which leads to war and that international institutions committed to preserve international peace, international law and order should be developed for securing peace, prosperity and development.

The UN Resolution of December 21, 20017 can be seen as more idealistic in nature. In assessment we see the reasons why majority of the states did not support United States idea of recognizing Jerusalem as the capital city of Israel. It can be observed that most country's reasons given for supporting the resolution in favour of the United Nations was tended towards the avoidance of war, any form of force or infringement on the rights of people. Hanan Ashrawi, a member of Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) Executive Committee, condemned Trump's warning to countries receiving aid from the United States advising that Trump should know that there are matters that are not for sale or subject to blackmail, particularly issues of principle, legality and morality.

The Permanent Observer for the Holy See, Tomasz Grysa pointed that the Holy See called for a peaceful resolution that would ensure respect for the sacred city of Jerusalem and its universal nature. He reiterated that only international guarantee could preserve its unique character and status, and provide assurance of dialogue and reconciliation for peace in the region. Australia explained that her country's government did not support unilateral action that undermined the peace process. Nicaragua explained that unilateral actions jeopardized peace and stability in the Middle East. Mexico's ambassador explained that the United States must become part of the solution, not a stumbling block that would hamper progress. The Czech said it abstained because, it did not believe the draft resolution would contribute to the peace process. Armenia maintains that the situation should be resolved through negotiations which will pave way for lasting peace and security.

The comments by representatives of the various independent nations and the final resolution of the United Nations General Assembly, showed that the peace option was most wanted by the majority of the nations through the joint majority decisions of the United Nations members. Most of the states avoided options that would have jeopardized world peace, stability, and morality, promote inequality, violence force, war and the infringement on the rights of people. The

United Nation's Resolution of December 21, 2017 can theoretically be seen as more "idealistically driven".

V. STATUS OF JERUSALEM

The status of Jerusalem is in the heart of Israel's conflict with the Palestinians. Israel occupied the east of Jerusalem city in 1967 during the Middle East War and regards the entire city of Jerusalem as its indivisible capital. The contest over Jerusalem is as old as the Arab - Israeli War of 1967, in which Israel not only defeated invading Arab armies but also seized control of the Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula from Egypt including the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan and the Golan Heights from Syria. Images of Israeli soldiers praying at the Western Wall, to which they had been denied access during Jordanian rule, became seared into Israel's national consciousness. The victory of the right- leaning party Likud in 1977, under the leadership of Menachem Begin, helped solidify this new emphasis on Jerusalem as integral to Israel's identity. Religious settlers became more prominent in the political life in Israel.

Old socialist line with roots in Russia and Eastern Europe gave way to a more diverse and also more religious population of Israelis with origins in the Middle East, North Africa and other regions. As part of this shift, Jerusalem symbolic importance is intensified. Its role in Jewish history was emphasized in military parade and curriculums, and students from across Israel were taken there on school visits. This process culminated in 1980, when lawmakers passed a bill declaring that Jerusalem complete and united, is the capital of Israel, though Israel stopped short of annexing East Jerusalem, a move that would most likely have drawn international outrage.

The 1993 Oslo accords provided for the creation of a Palestinian authority to govern West Bank and Gaza Strip, while deferring a resolution on core issues such as borders, refugees and Jerusalem's status. In nearly a quarter century the prospects of a lasting peace deal have seemed more elusive than ever. A visit in year 2000, by the right wing politician Ariel Sharon to the sacred complex known to Jews as the Temple Mount and to Muslims as the Noble Sanctuary which contains Al Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of Rock, set off violent clashes and led to a second Palestinian uprising that claimed the lives of about 1,000 Israelis and 3,000 Palestinians over a period of five years.

The Palestinians claimed that Jewish settlers have encroached on East Jerusalem and that Israel has further compounded the problem by revoking residency permits. Even so, the ethnic composition of Jerusalem's population has remained about thirty percent to forty percent Arabs. Prominent scholars believe the entire international community has been in accord that Israeli annexation and settlement of East Jerusalem since 1967 is illegal and has refused to recognize Jerusalem as Israeli's capital. Thus, President Trump's change in position decision, considering

the importance of Jerusalem to Arabs and Muslims, it would not result to sustainable Palestinian - Israeli agreement or a lasting Arab - Israeli normalization of harmony.

The 193 member United Nations General Assembly held the rare Emergency Special Session at the request of Arab and Muslim states, which condemned Mr. Trump's decision to reverse decades of United States policy on 6 December, 2017. The result of the UN General Assembly vote was inevitable. The United States knew that the majority of states would vote for the resolution. The votes for the Resolution from powerful United States Allies such as Germany, United Kingdom and France would be seen as a slap in the face of President Trump, while it could be argued that they simply voted in line with the existing status quo at the United Nations and there was no pressing reason for them to switch from the stance.

The United States Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley announced that USA will move its embassy to Jerusalem and no vote in the United Nations will make any difference on that. She boasted that the United States was by far the single largest contributor to the UN. She also warned that the United States might also cut funding to the United Nations itself. During the 2018 State of the Union Address, Trump said that the countries which voted for the resolution, opposed the United States "sovereign right to make this recognition" and said he would ask Congress to pass legislation which would ensure foreign aid would only go to America's friends, not enemies.

Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu rejected the result out rightly shortly after it was announced, calling it "preposterous", while he also thanked the states that supported "the truth" by not participating in "the theatre of the absurd". He stated that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel and expressed thanks to President Trump and Ambassador Nikki Haley for their stalwart defence of Israel and their stalwart defence of "the truth".

VI. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The analytical framework adopted in this research is the political economy approach as postulated by Karl Marx. The Marxian political economy approach provided alternatives to both realism and liberalism. Marx focused on the inequalities between the rich and poor in society and the tendency for the wealthy, more powerful classes to exploit the poorer, weaker ones. Marxists view international relations as an extension of the struggle between the classes, with wealthy countries exploiting poorer, weaker states. Marxists mainly study imperialism, the practice of stronger nations to control or influence weaker nations. They look at the unfair and exploitative aspects of relationships between the world's rich and poor nations. This approach is rooted in the theory of imperialism developed by Vladimir Lenin just before the 1917 Communist revolution in Russia. Marxists tend to see economic relationships as both the cause of and potential solution to the problem of war.

Political economy is viewed by Karl Marx as the study of laws that govern the production, distribution, exchange, and consumption of material values in the society at different stages of its development (Abalkin, 1983). Political economy studies the economic system of social production, the economic basis of the society, the basis of all political and philosophical, ideological and judicial, aesthetical and other views and convictions. Political economy looks at the material conditions of man and society as the basis for understanding, determining and analyzing the superstructure.

This approach sees the society as made up of antagonistic economic interests. It explains that economic positions determines social life, values and thought, observing that identical economic interest combine to form social classes where by political machinery is controlled. Ake (1981) explains that political economy places economic structure above political structure and exposes the clash of interests. It is understood here that man must first eat before thinking of other things. This is why Ihonvbere (1982) reasoned that political economy is an appropriate approach to the study of foreign relations. According to Amale (2002) the existing international studies literature, especially as it concerns foreign and local economic policy issues ignores the plight of underdeveloped countries. The political economy approach is appropriate for it provides the framework for understanding some of the theoretical problems in use by scholars. This is why Schneider (1974) in support of Hinde (1977) espoused the primacy of economic conditions as they impact on human life and society. Political economy has a multi-disciplinary approach. It takes care of the overlapping character of economics and politics as well as the class cleavages which facilitate an understanding of state policies on the domestic and foreign scenes.

The drive for primitive accumulation as postulated by Marx clearly explains the reasons for the American inability to show respect to age long resolutions and international rules. The American boldness to threaten the United Nations over funding and the attempt to forcefully influence perceived weaker nations to support the United States controversial unilateral decision on the status of Jerusalem is made clearer with political economy approach and of which tended to satisfy the American selfish interests first.

VII. CONCLUSION

The realists criticize and blame the idealists for not focusing much on how the world really is. The political economy framework indicates the significance of the theoretical perspective of this paper. President Trump of the United States on December 6, 2017 declared Jerusalem as capital of Israel. On December 27, 2017, the UN General Assembly pronounced President Trump's decision null and void with a number of 128 nations in support. This General Assembly resolution stands binding despite the United States threats. That the 14 Security Council members upheld the

decision not to recognize Jerusalem as capital of Israel. President Trump's decision was in violation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 478 adopted in 1980 and the international law. In conclusion, this paper supports a paradigm in which relationships between sovereign nations could be explained.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is recommended that the position of the idealists in international relations that conflicts can be resolved amicably without necessarily going to war should be emphasized.
2. America should show respect to age long resolutions and international rules.
3. The United States controversial unilateral decision on international issues should be moderated.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Abalkin, L.Dzarasov, S. Kulikov, A. (1983) Political Economy Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- [2]. Ake, C. (1981) A Political Economy of Africa(Nigeria: Longman).
- [3]. Amale, A. S. (2002), The Constraints of Nigeria's Economic Diplomacy in Ogwu and Olukoshi (eds.) The Economic Diplomacy of the Nigerian State
- [4]. Carr, E. H. (1939) The Twenty Years' Crisis, cited in (Snyder, 2004. p.52)
- [5]. Carr E. H.(1939) cited in (Brian C. Schmidt, 1998, p.219).
- [6]. Cleveland, William L and Martin Bunt: "A History of the Middle East" Read How You Want (2010).
- [7]. Ihonvbere, Julius O. (1982) Resource Availability and Foreign Policy Change: The Impact of Oil on Nigerian Foreign Policy since Independence Africa Spectrum Books.
- [8]. Jacques F, Cecelia. M. L, Karen Mingst (2018) "*United Nations: International Organization*"
- [9]. Encyclopedia Britannica.
- [10]. Morgenthau, Hans (1948) Politics Among Nations cited in (Burchill, and Linklater, 2005, p1).
- [11]. Mona B; Sewell C; Irit P. G; Gala. T. (2017)" *Conflict in Jerusalem is distinctly modern. Here's the History*" New York Times. December
- [12]. Schneider (1974). H. K., Economic Man: The Anthropology of Economics, N. York: the Free Press,
- [13]. *BBC News (2017) "Jerusalem: UN Resolution rejects Trump's Declaration" December 22.*
- [14]. *CNN News (2017)"The UN Resolution of 21 December on Jerusalem's Status"December 22.*
- [15]. United Nations Meetings Coverage and Press Releases: *General Assembly/Plenary; Tenth Emergency Special Session, 37th Meeting.* 21 December 2017.www.un.org
- [16]. The Premium Times Nigeria December 22, 2017.