

Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Study on Peace Agreements and Future Mediators

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ABSTRACT

This article delves into the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, emphasizing the need for a comprehensive reassessment of past peace efforts and strategies. It underscores the importance of imparting a nuanced understanding of the conflict to new generations, as this protracted issue threatens global political, security, social, and economic stability. With a focus on international aid factors and the influence of major powers, this study seeks to analyze the failure of peace agreements by examining the competing interests of both parties. The central argument posits that effective diplomatic efforts in addressing this conflict require the identification of suitable mediators and an unwavering commitment from all parties involved.

The research aims to identify and evaluate relevant concepts and approaches for mediators in managing the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. It asserts that a holistic method is essential for conflict resolution, which extends beyond mere negotiation and mediation, encompassing conflict management strategies. The study suggests a combination of simultaneous and sequential approaches involving all stakeholders to facilitate mutual reconciliation. Lessons from past reconciliation efforts, notably the 1993 Oslo Peace Agreement and its shortcomings, provide invaluable insights to guide future mediation endeavors.

This research is situated within the context of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict's far-reaching impact on global politics. Consequently, it advocates for a comprehensive investigation into the effectiveness and weaknesses of diplomatic efforts involving mediators. The study concludes by proposing several strategies aimed at mitigating this conflict's ramifications for the benefit of both parties and the global community as a whole.

Keywords: Palestinian-Israeli conflict; analysis; mediator; implications; diplomatic efforts

INTRODUCTION

Understanding and analyzing a conflict is the essential first step in finding an accurate and suitable solution. In the case of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, comprehending its structure, the key actors, and the historical chronology of peace processes is vital. This study aims to analyze the concepts and approaches that mediators can employ to address the Palestinian-Israeli conflict effectively. We will examine the diplomatic efforts made by mediators, assessing their effectiveness and identifying areas of strength and weakness.

The protracted Israeli-Palestinian conflict has had a significant impact on the world political landscape. While this conflict is deeply rooted and enduring, it is crucial for the international community to pursue

diplomatic solutions relentlessly. Diplomatic efforts should be supported by the creation, adaptation, and amendment of international rules to structure the global system. To gain a comprehensive understanding of this conflict, it is essential to examine its historical background, the triggering factors, and its current state of development.

Early History of Palestine

Palestine is a country located in the middle of Western Asia surrounded by the republic of Syria and Lebanon in the north, the Mediterranean Sea in the west, the Sinai desert area (Egypt) and the Hejaz area (Saudi Arabia) in the south, and Jordan and the Dead Sea in the east (Bharat Bhushan Gupta 1978: 4). The name 'Palestine' is said to be taken from the word 'Philistine' (Filastin) which is the name of one of the earliest races to occupy the territory of Palestine before the 12th century B.C (Before Christ) (Cattan 1969:1). The earliest civilization born in the land of Palestine consisted of a semi-nomadic group (Bedouins) believed to have been pioneered by the Canaanites (Ismael & Ismael 1991: 291).

Before the arrival of the Jews, there were three main races that occupied the territory of Palestine, namely Canaan, Jebusite and Philistine (Cattan 1969: 6). The Jews came to conquer Palestine after Prophet Ibrahim migrated until Prophet Musa (Moses) was sent to lead the local community (Cattan, 1969: 1). The Jews were then expelled from Palestine by Prophet Moses a.s. following their refusal to obey God's command and the advice of Prophet Moses before returning again in the 12th century B. M. The Jews have also been expelled from Palestine several times during the rule of Babylon and also Rome (Ferguson 1973: 20).

Palestine has a rich historical background. It was initially inhabited by various races, including the Canaanites, Jebusites, and Philistines. The Jews arrived in Palestine under the leadership of figures like Prophet Moses, and their history in the region has been marked by periods of expulsion and return. The formation of Israel as a state is deeply rooted in the Zionist movement, which sought to establish a Jewish state in Palestine. The British government's Balfour Declaration in 1917 played a pivotal role in supporting the Zionist cause.

History of the formation of Israel

The Jews claim they come from the land occupied by the Palestinians. Relying on the lineage from the descendants of Prophet Ibrahim, Prophet Daud and Prophet Solomon. They demand the land of Palestine as their right to be the state of Israel. The ideals of the Jewish nation are driven by the Zionist movement. Zionism is an international movement that seeks to establish a Jewish state in Palestine. The first Congress of Zionism in 1897 appointed Theodor Herzl as its leader. The Zionism movement gained world support after Adolf Hitler's actions killed thousands of Jews. Zionism succeeded in establishing the state of Israel in 1948. Zionism is now a movement that controls and supports politics, economics, finance and the military in Israel (Heater & Berridge, 1992:134).

This Zionist movement has received strong support from Britain in defending the fate of the Jewish people against the struggle of Nazi Germany. The British government declared the "Balfour Declaration" on November 2, 1917 to recognize the Zionist struggle to create a sovereign Jewish state in Palestine (Macridis, C. Roy, 1985:366). The mandate through the "Balfour Declaration" was approved by the "League of Nations" organization in 1922 where with this mandate, Britain was required to help realize the existence of a Jewish state in the Middle East region, especially the new settlement in Palestine.

Structure and Actors

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict revolves around historical factors, with Jerusalem as a central focus. This

conflict coexists with a recognized peace agreement that acknowledges the existence of Israel while granting autonomy to the Palestinian National Authority in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

The 1993 Oslo peace agreement has been successfully signed and can open the door to subsequent peace efforts. The Oslo agreement is seen as different from previous reconciliation agreement plans because it is expected to bring both parties to sit at the same table and meet face to face to resolve issues that have long been wanted to be discussed. This declaration was agreed in Oslo, Norway on August 20, 1993 and then officially signed in Washington on September 13, 1993 between Mahmoud Abbas representing the *Palestine Liberation Organization* (PLO) and Shimon Perez representing Israel. This agreement was also witnessed by Warren Christopher from the United States and Andre Kozyrev from Russia. This ceremony was also attended by Bill Clinton, the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Israel, Yitzhak Rabin together with the Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), Yasser Arafat. This agreement is the beginning of Arabs and Israelis who want reconciliation and end all conflicts and wars that occur (Mahler, 1990) .

The 1993 Oslo Peace Agreement, a significant milestone in the peace process, allowed both parties to sit face to face and discuss longstanding issues. Witnessed by international leaders, this agreement marked the culmination of conflicts in the Middle East. The reconciliation process, initiated in 1991 and ongoing, must involve thorough consultations and uphold principles of justice. The role of mediators in negotiations is critical, and their strategies and approaches need evaluation.

Chronology of Peace

Violence has proven ineffective in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Negotiated solutions are the most viable path to reconciliation. The Oslo Peace Agreement of 1993, signed in Washington, marked a turning point. This agreement aimed to bring both parties to the negotiation table, addressing issues that had long awaited discussion. Its success was paramount to the peace process in the Middle East, as it signified a shift towards peace through diplomacy.

From past experiences, it is clear that violence cannot solve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, rather it makes the situation more difficult. A negotiated solution is the best path to reconciliation. If the negotiation towards peace fails and does not reach its target, this means that the parties involved, namely Israel and Palestine, are not yet ready to give concessions and tolerate (Kirdi Dipoyodo, 1977:135).

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has shown the seeds of a solution with the conclusion of the Peace Agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) on September 13, 1993 in Washington. This agreement is seen as a starting point for the peace process in the Middle East because the dispute between the PLO and Israel is considered to be the culmination of all conflicts in the Middle East. It is also a measure of the effectiveness of negotiations and subsequent diplomacy that ensures the question of whether there will be peace in the Middle East. The existence of lasting peace in the Arab countries and Israel is based on the question of the Palestinian problem (Slaim, 1994). Therefore, the Peace Agreement is interesting to study because it is the beginning and benchmark in the protracted conflict between Arabs and Jews in Palestine.

The reconciliation process that started in 1991 and has been delayed until now is because it did not involve basic consultation on the problem and did not fulfill basic justice. The same is the case with the involvement of intermediaries (third parties) in the negotiation process who are either too close to one party in the conflict or are afraid of the strength and skills shown by the other party through the policy of the party involved (Chapman, 2002).

The rise of two phases of the Intifada movement that took place in December 1987 until 1993 and was followed by the second phase that started from September 2000 until now and there is no sign of stopping. The intifada struggle by the Palestinian people was used as an “instrument” to show their anger and the September 11, 2001 event made Western leaders aware of the reality that had happened. To ensure regional and world peace, we cannot allow this conflict to continue. The international community through whatever means it chooses and thinks is most appropriate to bring the parties involved to discuss and find a way to live together where the majority of both parties are willing to accept it.

The term intifada can be translated as shaking/shaking and it has triggered two initial phases, namely in 1987-1993 and 2000-2003, failing to achieve its goal of obtaining autonomous power or independence. The first stage is known as the stone war by the Palestinians against the Israeli army and police which takes place almost every day. This conflict gained the attention of top leaders because it interfered with Israel’s strategic interests and held peace talks with PLO leaders. The second intifada broke out after Ariel Sharon’s visit to the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem (Jerusalem) in 2000. At this time the pattern of fighting has changed with the use of weapons, suicide bombings and terrorist activities. This has resulted in the construction of a security wall that isolates Israelis from smuggling and attacks from Palestinians (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast>).

The protracted Israeli-Palestinian conflict has indirectly changed the world political scenario. This conflict can be contained if there is a commitment from the international community. With that, it is necessary to make an effort to assess the extent to which the conflict can be dealt with and then carry out efforts to ensure that the conflict can be resolved while creating a stable situation in the Middle East that can guarantee the stability of the world community as a whole.

A significant peace effort against this conflict is the Oslo Peace Agreement of 1993. The result of the peace agreement has enabled the Palestinians to obtain the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. The status of Jerusalem will be determined in the determination stage (final status). With the existence of this peace agreement, autonomy has been given to the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. As a conquering country, Israel is seen to benefit from this peace agreement. The international community’s recognition of Israel’s existence has given them ample opportunity to engage freely in the international arena. The peace agreement also had a positive effect on Israel’s economy, which has brought the Jewish state into the lucrative Middle East market, which is a trade door that has been closed since Israel was established in 1945. Thus, the peace agreement is a starting point towards peace and reconciliation for both – both parties if each opens the door to discussion in resolving the conflict.

Impact of the Peace Agreement

The Oslo Peace Agreement had far-reaching effects. For Palestine, it meant obtaining the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, with the status of Jerusalem to be determined later. The agreement provided autonomy to Palestinians in these regions. This development had profound political and socio-economic impacts on the Palestinian people. Israel, as the conquering nation, also benefited. It gained international recognition and access to Middle East markets, which had been largely closed since its establishment in 1948. However, from a security perspective, the agreement did not bring peace; conflicts persisted, and breaches occurred.

With the conclusion of the PLO-Israel Peace Agreement, Palestine is in a different situation than before. Palestine is in the process of getting its own state and no longer under the constant influence of Israel. There is a very significant effect, especially in terms of politics, for the Palestinian people who have been plagued by Israeli rule for a long time. Likewise, if seen from their socio-economic aspect, the peace agreement has contributed to their economic stability. With that, it can be clearly seen the drastic changes in studying the

effects of the Peace Agreement from the political and socio-economic point of view of the Palestinian community. Palestine is seen not only back on the world map but has its own administrative system and although still influenced by Israel in its administration.

Impact on Palestine

Since the establishment of the state of Israel, the Palestinian people have been fighting to regain their homeland. However, their efforts did not yield results. With the existence of a peace agreement characterized by *land for peace (area given in return for existing peace conditions)* has given them space to get their own country. The result of the peace agreement has allowed the Palestinians to get the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. The status of Jerusalem will be determined in the determination stage (*final status*). To begin with, the Palestinians have gained the Gaza Strip and the city of Jericho in the West Bank. These two areas were transferred under the authority of the *Palestine Interim Self Government Authority (PISGA)* through the agreement "*The Cairo Agreement on the Gaza Strip and Jericho*" which was signed on May 4, 1994 (*The Peace Process*' in the *Journal of Palestine Studies* . 1996. Volume xxv, No. 2. Issue 98. p. 123-140). Next through the Agreement "*Israel-Palestine Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip*" or known as Oslo II which was signed on September 24, 1995. PISGA's powers have been expanded in stages. The West Bank area has been divided into three parts, namely areas A, B and C. Through the Oslo II agreement, Areas A and B which have 5 cities (Jenin, Nablus, Ramallah, Tulkurem and Kalkiya) will be transferred to the PNC no later than 18 months from date of establishment of PNC.

With the existence of this peace agreement, autonomy has been given to the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. The Palestinians are now recognized as having their own country and for the first time have officially competed in the Olympic Games in Atlanta, USA. With that, the peace agreement is a starting point towards peace and reconciliation for both parties if each opens the door to discussions in resolving the conflict between the two parties. Michels, J. has stated that the PLO-Israel peace agreement: "does prevent for the first time since the state of Israel was founded the dominance of either side's claims." (Michels, J. 1994: 30). Both sides have agreed to "co-existence" by dividing the disputed area between them through discussion and tolerance. It is in line with the view that the best and most appropriate way to resolve the conflict is through diplomacy between two parties (*Two-State Solution*) (Merle, 1994: 43).

Impact on Israel

Although the peace agreement gives more positive impact and is often given special emphasis to the Palestinian side, it cannot be denied, it also gives implications to the Israeli side. With that, the researchers also looked at the impact of this peace agreement on Israeli politics and socio-economics. As a conquering country, Israel is seen to benefit from this peace agreement. The international community's recognition of Israel's existence has given them ample opportunity to engage freely in the international arena. The peace agreement had a positive effect on Israel's economy where the Peace Agreement brought the Jewish state into the lucrative Middle East market, which is a trade door that has been closed since Israel was established in 1945. However, from a security point of view it is clear that the 1993 Peace Agreement cannot create peace in Israel and in Palestine. Riots and fighting ensued and Israel acted violently against what it considered Islamic extremists by shooting, injuring and imprisoning opposition groups. On the other hand, Israel does not act at all and if anything only acts within certain limits against the Jewish opposition, it is clear that injustice is happening. The hostility between these two nations still continues despite the signing of the Peace Treaty.

Problem Statement

Previously, many negotiations involving third parties or mediators were carried out, but so far none have

been successful. Looking at this situation, the question arises as to what is the factor for this failure and how this process is carried out so that it has not yet achieved the expected success. Although this conflict is fundamental and protracted, it should be dealt with relentlessly by the international community through diplomacy. The importance of the diplomatic function should also be played immediately by creating, drafting and amending international rules to create structure in the international system (Barston, RP 2006:1-10). Therefore, special research needs to be done on the efforts that have been implemented, especially the Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement (PLO) of 1993. This agreement resulted from the rise of the first phase of the Intifada in December 1987 until 1993. This is also because the Peace Agreement was the peak of the use of diplomacy in resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Although many studies on conflict management have been done, little is known about the role of neutral mediators as mediators in the negotiation process of a conflict that occurs. (Tahir Suliman, 2007; Thurston & McNall, 2010). This situation encourages researchers to continue to study the nature and role of mediators in dealing with a conflict. Therefore, this research will look at the effectiveness of the intermediary role (*mediat* or) involved in peace negotiations between Israel and Palestine. With an agreement resulting from negotiations, there must be a third party who carries out the commitment to manage the negotiations. Every negotiation that leads to a peace agreement often involves the role of a mediator that leads to the success of the peace negotiations. Therefore, the effectiveness of the mediator's role in peace negotiations between Israel and Palestine needs to be studied to be used as a guide and ethical guidelines in the future.

Research questions

1. How can the historical perspective and nuances of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict be effectively communicated to new generations to ensure a sustained focus on its resolution?
2. What are the critical factors contributing to the failure of previous peace agreements in this conflict, particularly concerning the competing interests of both parties?
3. How have lessons from the failed 1993 Oslo Peace Agreement guided future reconciliation efforts, and how can they be further employed in mediating this protracted conflict?

Importance of the Study

This study is intended for academic use and reference to understand about conflict with the discovery of effective concepts and theories on how to deal with conflict appropriately in the future. The results of this study are also for the guidance of the government, the country to make policies and policies in the future that are better and more effective. With this study it is also hoped that the community's understanding of the conflict that has existed for a long time can be applied and needs to be applied to the new generation so as not to ignore the conflict that exists because this conflict threatens the political, security, social and economic stability of the world. With the results of this research, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict will be better understood and facilitate the international community to approach this issue more effectively. With the understanding and recommendations that will be produced, the Palestinian community will also be given the attention of the international community in the formation of their foreign policy. The importance and effectiveness of mediation should be given serious attention for future peace efforts.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts a multidisciplinary approach to investigate the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the role of diplomacy in its resolution, primarily focusing on the 1993 Oslo Accords. The research methodology combines qualitative analysis and documentary research, allowing for an in-depth examination of historical events and diplomatic initiatives. A comprehensive literature review was conducted to assess existing

scholarship on the conflict, the Oslo Accords, and related diplomatic efforts. This critical review informed the development of research questions and hypotheses, providing a theoretical framework for the study.

This research employs a case study approach, specifically focusing on key historical events and diplomatic negotiations, including the 1967 Six-Day War, the Camp David Summit of 2000, and China's recent mediation efforts. These case studies offer detailed insights into the complexities and challenges of diplomacy in the context of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Content analysis was utilized to extract relevant data from documents, speeches, and media reports. This approach facilitates the identification of recurring themes, policy shifts, and diplomatic strategies employed by various stakeholders.

The peace efforts that have been made need to be reviewed to ensure the existence of space and opportunities for peace that can resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In addition, the understanding of the conflict that has existed for a long time needs to be applied to the new generation in order not to ignore the Israeli-Palestinian conflict because this conflict threatens the political, security, social and economic stability of the world. With that, it is necessary to make an effort to assess the extent to which the conflict that occurs can be dealt with and then try to carry out efforts to ensure that the conflict can be resolved while also being able to create a stable situation in the Middle East that will continue to guarantee the stability of the world community as a whole. This conflict is seen to be heavily influenced by international aid factors and major powers. Both sides are very dependent on foreign aid, but Israel is relatively less dependent on foreign aid because it has received economic aid and support not only from the United States and the European Union but also military aid (Alpher & Khatib, 2004).

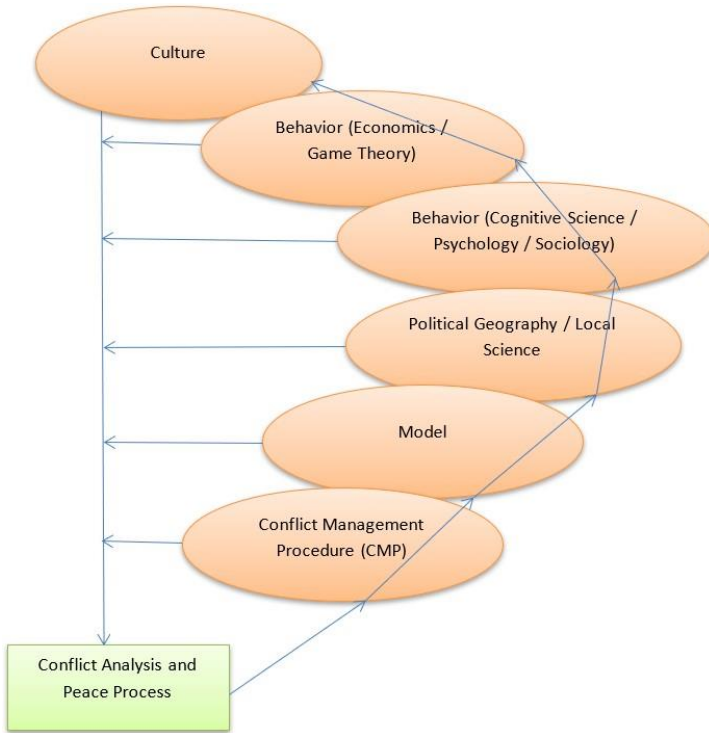
The failure of the implementation of the peace agreement needs to be seen when the interests of both parties arise while also trying to present matters that enable diplomatic efforts in dealing with this issue. With that, all aspects should be examined, especially identifying suitable mediators and giving a high commitment in dealing with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This is because conflicts need to be discussed in order to improve relations between countries in the world and major powers do not need to focus only on any of the conflicting parties. Every peace negotiation undertaken by the mediator needs to see its effectiveness to ensure the success of the peace negotiations between Israel and Palestine.

Research needs to be done to analyze and then identify concepts/approaches that can be used by mediators in dealing with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. An appropriate method that is able to deal with conflict or at least mitigate the conflict with a peace agreement that is addressed by the conflicting parties. Kriesberg (1998) stated that the resolution approach to a problem or conflict requires a broader concept that is not just negotiation and mediation but should also include ways to combat conflict. A combination of various approaches is necessary and sometimes it needs to happen simultaneously and involve the whole simultaneously and sequentially. This combination can ensure mutual reconciliation efforts between superiors and subordinates. Directly this is a guide to look back at the reconciliation process that has been implemented in an effort to deal with the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, especially the role played by the mediator in the Oslo Peace Agreement 1993. The failure of this negotiation is used as a guide for the next reconciliation effort.

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THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Conflict Management Procedures (CMP)



(Source: Adapted from Isard, W. (1992). *Understanding Conflict And The Science Of Peace..* Massachusetts : Blackwell Publishers. Pg. 200).

Conflict Management Procedures (CMP) are essential elements in comprehending and seeking ways to address conflicts holistically. To effectively manage a conflict, every peace-seeking party must emphasize the most crucial element, which is the cultural aspect. It needs to be examined from various angles to understand the involved parties. In the category of behavior involving economics/game theory, it explains how peace-seeking interests consider the overall backgrounds of the conflicting parties, involving their economic and political conditions. The need for mediators to understand the behavioral aspects of cognitive science/psychology/sociology of the conflicting societies is crucial, as this knowledge facilitates the understanding of the real desires and attitudes of the conflicting parties. The fourth item is knowledge of political geography/local science. Additionally, the fifth crucial item is examining models that have been and can be used as guides to pursue lasting peace between the conflicting parties. Each of these items is the reality of the existence of a conflict and must be carefully examined by the mediator before any proposal is presented for the agreement of the conflicting parties. These items can be referred to as listed in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.3: Items and Categories of Conflict Management Procedures (CMP)

Item	Category
Culture	Religion, Ideological Differences, Nationalism, Us-Them Categories
Behavior (Economics/Game Theory)	Attitude, Decision-Making Freedom, Strategy, Progress/Regress
Behavior (Cognitive Science/Psychology/Sociology)	Representing Thought (Learning from History), Learning, Political Group, Group Crisis Pathology

Political Geography/Local Science	Short-term Perspective, Support Costs, Lobbying, Political Competition, Coalition Formation/Interference, Resources, Barriers
Model	Backward Approach, Econometric, Input-Output, Adjustment Analysis
Conflict Management Procedures (CMP)	Basic Conflict Characteristics, Negotiation Principles, Qualitative/Quantitative Mediators

After each item is examined and understood, diplomatic efforts to manage a conflict can commence by analyzing the conflict. The peace process starts by considering all available items, and it is a continuous process until full peace is successfully achieved, and the conflict can be resolved. Conflict resolution is not an easy task and requires continuous commitment from all parties involved, especially the mediators, who need to think about the best solution for both conflicting parties.

The peace efforts that have been made need to be reviewed to ensure the existence of space and opportunities for peace that can resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Additionally, the understanding of the conflict that has existed for a long time needs to be applied to the new generation to prevent them from ignoring the Israeli-Palestinian conflict because this conflict threatens the political, security, social, and economic stability of the world.

The failure of the implementation of the peace agreement needs to be seen when the interests of both parties arise while also trying to present matters that enable diplomatic efforts in dealing with this issue. With that, all aspects should be examined, especially identifying suitable mediators and giving a high commitment in dealing with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This is because conflicts need to be discussed to improve relations between countries worldwide, and major powers do not need to focus solely on any of the conflicting parties. Every peace negotiation undertaken by the mediator needs to see its effectiveness to ensure the success of the peace negotiations between Israel and Palestine.

With that, research needs to be conducted to analyze and then identify concepts/approaches that can be used by mediators in dealing with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. An appropriate method that is able to deal with conflict or at least mitigate the conflict with a peace agreement that is addressed by the conflicting parties. Kriesberg (1998) stated that the resolution approach to a problem or conflict requires a broader concept that is not just negotiation and mediation but should also include ways to combat conflict. A combination of various approaches is necessary and sometimes it needs to happen simultaneously and involve the whole simultaneously and sequentially. This combination can ensure mutual reconciliation efforts between superiors and subordinates.

This serves as a guide to revisit the reconciliation process that has been implemented in an effort to deal with the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, especially the role played by the mediator in the Oslo Peace Agreement 1993. The failure of this negotiation is used as a guide for the next reconciliation effort. The upheaval between these two parties has an impact on world political phenomena. Therefore, it is appropriate that diplomatic efforts that have been carried out with the involvement of mediators should be investigated to see their effectiveness and weaknesses. There are several strategies that are used to ensure that this conflict can be mitigated for the benefit of the conflicting parties and the world community in general.

Breach of the Peace Agreement

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been a long-standing and deeply entrenched issue in the Middle East. Various peace agreements and negotiations have been attempted over the years, yet a lasting resolution remains elusive..Fisk (2002) highlights that Israel's path to security and peace hinges on compliance with UN Security Council Resolution 252. This resolution emphasizes the need for Israel to withdraw from

territories, including the West Bank, Gaza, Golan Heights, and East Jerusalem. The failure to address the conflict effectively has led to numerous atrocities, with innocent Palestinian civilians often bearing the brunt. Notable incidents include the Deir Yassin massacre by groups like the Stern Gang and other Jewish organizations, which serves as a grim reminder of the brutality during the conflict. It is essential to acknowledge that atrocities have occurred on both sides, with approximately 750,000 Arab lives lost and the tragic events at Sabra and Shatila in 1982 claiming 1,700 Palestinian lives. Additionally, actions such as “mopping up” operations have resulted in civilian casualties, raising concerns about the conduct of the conflict.

The conflict’s impact on the world stage remains significant. Despite the tragedy of September 11, 2001, it’s worth noting that Israel’s occupation of Lebanon and Palestine in 1982 resulted in the loss of more than 17,000 lives, which is over five times the casualties of September 11. Yasser Arafat’s decision to turn down an offer for a Palestinian state with its capital in Jerusalem and 96 percent of the land in the West Bank and Gaza has added complexity to the conflict. The status of Jerusalem, referred to as the ‘eternal capital of Israel’ at the Camp David negotiations, was a contentious point. Arafat was offered limited sovereignty over the Haram al-Sharif and was tasked with building the Palestinian parliament in Abu Dis, creating an uneven distribution of land and power. This included giving Arafat only 46 percent of the remaining 22 percent of Palestinian land.

The involvement of the United States (US) further complicates the situation, with Colin Powell’s actions potentially delaying critical developments in the conflict. Instances like Israel’s establishment of a 10-mile buffer zone in the West Bank and the expansion of settlements have exacerbated the situation. These actions challenge the prospects of achieving lasting peace in the region.

Potential Mediators in the Future

China is emerging as a potential mediator in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, although this role presents challenges. Historically, China has supported the Palestinian struggle for freedom, positioning itself as an international opponent of Israel. However, China now seeks a more active role on the global stage and has offered to mediate between the conflicting parties. While China’s interest in mediation is noteworthy, Palestine still requires global support and solidarity to resist Israeli occupation and apartheid. To build geopolitical significance, Palestine must unite as a strong political entity in an evolving world.

In recent developments, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas paid an official visit to China following Beijing’s expressed willingness to facilitate peace talks between Israel and Palestine. China’s Foreign Ministry official, Wang Wenbin, described Abbas as an “old and good friend of the Chinese people.” This visit aligns with China’s commitment to cooperating on a just and sustainable solution to the Palestinian issue. In April 2023, China’s Foreign Minister, Qin Gang, announced readiness to assist peace negotiations and endorsed the “two-state solution” (Aljazeera Report, 2023).



Figure 1: Relations between China and Palestine (<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/6/9/palestinian-president-abbas-to-visit-china-after-mediation-offer>).

China's mediation efforts in the Middle East are gaining recognition, particularly as an alternative to traditional Western involvement. This evolving dynamic has caught the attention of the United States. US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, urged restraint in actions that could hinder the prospects for a Palestinian state, recognizing the stalled peace negotiations between Israel and Palestine (Aljazeera Report, 2023). Although China has strong economic ties with Israel, its impartial stance regarding the Palestinian struggle positions it as an international opponent of Israel. The recent diplomatic overtures by China, as demonstrated in its support for Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, offer new possibilities for mediating peace negotiations between Israel and Palestine. While China's role is significant, it's crucial to emphasize that Palestine still requires global support and solidarity in resisting the Israeli occupation and apartheid regime.

The international landscape is evolving, as highlighted by China's role in mediating between Iran and Saudi Arabia. This shift in global dynamics has caught the attention of the United States. Hence, China's involvement in mediating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict could potentially influence the overall geopolitical landscape.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has persisted for decades, marked by a history of breached peace agreements and unresolved disputes. Diplomacy remains an essential tool for resolving this protracted conflict. Israel's willingness to negotiate is crucial, even with its strong support from the United States. The involvement of international actors and mediators is essential to address the complexities of the situation and encourage all parties to engage in meaningful dialogue.

However, diplomacy alone may not overcome Israel's military strength and historical victories in wars. It is vital to emphasize the importance of international law in addressing territorial conflicts. The ongoing conflict demands continued international attention and diplomacy to advance peace efforts. To create a conducive environment for lasting peace, both parties involved must demonstrate a sincere commitment to the negotiation process. While diplomatic efforts may not yet have yielded a final resolution, they remain a critical avenue for progress and are indispensable in the pursuit of peace in the region.

Looking ahead, the challenges of diplomacy in this conflict remain complex. Success in diplomacy depends on the willingness of all parties to negotiate and reach a compromise. The involvement of the United States, a long-standing partner of Israel, further complicates the situation. Achieving peace and justice in the region requires serious commitment from all parties involved.

As the Israeli-Palestinian conflict continues to impact global politics, the effectiveness and weaknesses of diplomatic efforts, with the involvement of mediators, need to be scrutinized. While diplomacy may not provide immediate solutions, it plays a crucial role in keeping the conflict on the global agenda.

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