THE UNITED NATIONS UN-CAPTURED PEACE PROCESS
THE CASE OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE ISRAEL-PALESTINE
CONFLICT (1948-2012)

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A Thesis Submitted to the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the United States International University-Africa in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of a Degree of Masters of Arts in International Relations

UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY-AFRICA

SPRING 2019
DECLARATION

I, undersigned, declare that this is my original work and has not been submitted to any other college, or university other than the United States International University- Africa for academic credit.

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This thesis has been presented for examination with my approval as the appointed supervisor

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I take this opportunity to give my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Mr. Maurice Mashiwa who played a key role in ensuring that I remained committed and motivated me throughout my research.
DEDICATION

I thank God for His guidance throughout my studies and dedicate this project to my family for their patience, encouragement, and support.
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>EC</td>
<td>European Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECOSOC</td>
<td>Economic and Social Council</td>
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<td>ESCWA</td>
<td>Economic and Social and Social Commission for Western Asia</td>
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<td>General Assembly</td>
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<td>DELP</td>
<td>Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine</td>
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<td>ICC</td>
<td>International Criminal Court</td>
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<td>International Court of Justice</td>
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<td>IDF</td>
<td>Israeli Defense Forces</td>
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<td>OCHA</td>
<td>Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs</td>
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<td>OPEC’S</td>
<td>Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries</td>
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<td>PA</td>
<td>Palestinian Authority</td>
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<td>PCP</td>
<td>Palestine Communist Party</td>
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<td>PELP</td>
<td>Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine</td>
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<td>PLO</td>
<td>Palestine Liberation Organization</td>
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<td>PM</td>
<td>Prime Minister</td>
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<td>UN</td>
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<td>United Nations Conciliation Commission</td>
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<td>UNEF</td>
<td>United Nations Emergency Force</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDOF</td>
<td>United Nations Disengagement Observer Force</td>
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<td>UNGA</td>
<td>United Nations General Assembly</td>
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<td>United Nation Security Council</td>
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<td>United Nations Secretary-General</td>
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<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations Human Rights Commission</td>
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<td>United Nations Relief and Works Agency</td>
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<td>US</td>
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<td>USSR</td>
<td>Union of Soviet and Socialist Republics</td>
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<td>WBGS</td>
<td>West Bank and Gaza Strip</td>
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ABSTRACT

This thesis aims at analyzing the UN un-captured process of peace in the Israel-Palestine conflict. It also contributes to the ongoing discussion on conflict resolution in the region by evaluating the impact of peacebuilding initiatives in the conflict and also adds to the discussion of enhancing sustainable long term peace amongst the parties. The central question of the study is to find out why the conflict is still in existence, this is guided by the assumption that the UN’s involvement has not yet enhanced peace. The theoretical perspective that guided the study is liberal institutionalism which claims that institutions can increase and aid cooperation between states and Functionalist theory which emphasizes on the role of technical and inter-governmental organizations in the creation of a cooperative international polity.

The thesis will use the historical approach method which involves studying, understanding and interpreting events. This approach will rely on secondary data obtained from published literature. The study found out that the conflict is as a result of parties fighting over land, resources and security reasons. It also found out that at the beginning the UN’s had been very active in trying to find a lasting solution however during the eighties and nineties it faced exclusion during peace processes, to date UN has been politically sidelined in the peace processes. Additionally, the UN faces challenges in its contribution to peacebuilding as a result of actors influence, preferential treatment of Middle East refugees and protected values by parties. The study, therefore, recommends that the UN cannot fully succeed in peacebuilding unless it plays an active political role. Additionally, the UN would do better if it avoids biases while handling the conflict as this will help build the parties trust in the UN, also the UNSC should establish a mechanism to enforce their will once they reach a decision.
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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Since the end of the Second World War, the Middle East has experienced an unusually high number of full-scale interstate wars that made the region to be considered one of the most volatile regions in the world. The Middle East conflict has two major dimensions: the Israeli-Palestinian dimension and the Israeli-Arab dimension. These two dimensions of the conflict have had an adverse effect on the stability of the Middle East. However, the conflict between Israel-Palestine is believed to be the most profound and protracted conflicts in the region. The origin of the conflict between Israel and Palestine goes back to the end of the nineteenth century as a result of rising anti-Semitic persecution against the Jews in Europe that led to the formation of the Zionist movement which eventually conceived the idea of establishing a national homeland for the Jews in Palestinian land.

After the 1947 partition vote by the United Nations (UN), the state of Israel was established in 1948 and hundreds of thousands of Jewish people resettled from Europe to what was then British-controlled Palestine. This migration of Jewish people to Palestinian land was not well received by Palestine and Arab states, as they viewed the migration of Jews as a European colonial movement, and thus the settlement was met with bitter opposition resulting in a clash for possession of Palestine that exists to date.

The UN’s involvement in the Israel-Palestine conflict has been extensive, complex and wide-ranging. It has engaged in political mediation, monitoring of human rights violation as well as a variety of humanitarian relief activities within the region. However, the conflict has been of enormous complexity that limits the UN’s role in the Middle East as a result efforts to restore peace have not been successful and the situation in the region continues getting worse with Palestinians suffering the most. This thesis aims to highlight
the historical bases of the conflict, evaluates the efforts adopted to restore peace and identifies the challenges faced by the UN in its approach to peacebuilding.

1.1 Background of the study

In the course of Jewish history, there were several proposals for a Jewish state. For instance, in 1903 the British government offered territory known as the ‘Uganda Scheme’ located in modern day Kenya in British East Africa to act as a homeland for Jews who were fleeing Russian persecutions, however, the proposal was declined. In 1934 a little known province in Russia called the Jewish Autonomous Oblast was established by the Soviet Union to provide for a Yiddish cultural site according to the Stalin’s Plan, a number of Jews called the region home, however today only a little more than one percent of the population is Jewish. The Slattery Report of 1938 proposed to settle the Jewish refugees to the then territory of Alaska, the plan, however, never came to fruition.

In 1940, Germany considered deporting its Jewish populace to French Madagascar however the Madagascar plan was abandoned and the mass slaughter of the Jewish people known as the Holocaust followed. It is widely believed that the Holocaust had a pivotal influence on the establishment of the state of Israel. The Holocaust triggered a supreme effort towards statehood; this was based on the understanding that only a Jewish state might avoid the horrors experienced by the Jewish community in Europe. Moreover, the desire to establish a Jewish nation had always been dominant in Zionist thought and action with the ultimate aim being the creation of a state in Palestine.

In the history of Zionism, two major events marked the creation of the State of Israel, the Balfour Declaration, issued by the government of Britain and the UN vote for the partition of Palestine. In fact, it is argued that these two events are the reason why the state of Israel exists today. The “Balfour Declaration” was published in its final form on
4th November 1917 (Smith C. D., 2007). The declaration by the British government is regarded as a major diplomatic triumph for Zionist goals in the Middle East region. The declaration constituting of an agreement between the British imperialism and organized Zionism is one of the earliest measures taken by a major international actor to recognize the right of the Jewish people to establish a national homeland.

Indeed, this declaration laid the foundation for Israel-Palestine enmity that continues to pose a major threat to the stability of the Middle East region to date. The declaration allowed for the massive migration of Jews from all parts of the world to Palestine land and eventually, it led to the formation of the State of Israel in 1948. However, in late 1938, Britain changed its position by issuing a “White Paper,” also known as the "MacDonald White Paper" which stated that creating a Jewish state was no longer a British policy and was to be abandoned in favor of an independent Palestine governed jointly by both Arabs and Jews.

Since the formation of the state of Israel in 1948, the region has known no peace with as Israel and Palestine continuously engage in a series of war. The UN has been at the forefront in trying to resolve the conflict. UN has been part and parcel of efforts towards peacebuilding which is in line with the preamble to the UN Charter, signed by its founding member states in June 1945, which states that the organization’s goal is “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war” and to “establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained.” Article 1 of the Charter further describes the U.N.’s purposes as being to “maintain international peace and security in conformity with the principles of justice and international law.” The Charter also recognizes “the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples.”
The UN continues to be involved in the conflict with the hope of finding a solution to the crisis that has destabilized the region for decades. Both the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and its 15 member security council, have passed resolutions relating to the division of the former British mandate of Palestine and the subsequent Arab-Israeli conflict since 1947. The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) alone has passed over 200 resolutions. Despite attempts by the UN to find long term settlement to the conflict, the world still witnesses the persistence of the conflict.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Following Britain's announcement to terminate its Mandate government in February 1947, the UNGA appointed the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) to make recommendations on the land's future government. The UNSCOP recommended the establishment of two separate states, Jewish and Arab.

On 29 November 1947, the UNGA voted on the partition plan, adopted by 33 votes to 13 with 10 abstentions. However, the plan to divide the Palestinian land into two states in 1947 did not result in a lasting settlement instead it acted as a catalyst to conflict. This study, therefore, is aimed at finding out why the conflict is still in existence despite the UN’s involvement in managing the conflict to promote regional stability and international peace and security.

1.3 Objectives of the study

i. To trace the historical bases of the conflict.

ii. To evaluate the efforts adopted by the UN to restore peace.

iii. To identify the challenges of the UN in its approach to peacebuilding.

1.4 Research questions

i. What are the historical bases of the conflict?
ii. How has the UN adopted efforts to restore peace?

iii. Why is the UN facing challenges in its approach to peacebuilding?

1.5 Justification of the Study

This research is relevant because it will give an important insight into the discussion of contemporary international conflict. A lot of research has focused on the causes of the Israel-Palestine conflict and the solutions, many scholars have written about UN’s role in the conflict but there exists scarcity of Knowledge concerning why the conflict is still in existence yet the UN has been largely involved in trying to find a solution. Therefore this study will offer important insight to actors on peacebuilding approaches to managing the conflict. Moreover, it will sensitize actors on the strategies that enhance sustainable long term peacebuilding mechanisms in the conflict.

1.6 Scope of the study

This study shall focus on the Israel-Palestine peace processes from the period of 1948-2012. The choice of the period between 1948 and 2012 is informed by the fact that the conflict is still ongoing, thus this timeframe offers a chance to give accurate findings that will be useful to actors on peacebuilding approaches. The study shall also focus on the historical bases of the conflict, efforts adopted to restore peace and lastly it will discuss the challenges faced by the UN in its approach to peacebuilding.

1.7 Chapter Outline

This thesis is organized into five chapters. Chapter one introduces the topic of the research which is the assessment of the United Nations Un-captured process of peace. The chapter sets the broad context of the research, the statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions and the justification of the study as well as the
scope of the study. Chapter two focuses on the literature review of the study as well as the theoretical framework.

Chapter three outlines the methodology utilized by study and outlines the research design, research study site, study population and procedures, data collection methods, data collection instruments, data analysis methods as well as the research ethics to be observed. Chapter four analyzes the data and present the findings thematically and lastly, chapter five gives a summary of the study, the conclusion of the study and give recommendations.

1.8 Chapter Summary

The purpose of this study is to determine why the conflict is still in existence despite the UN’s involvement in managing the conflict to promote regional stability, international peace, and security. The study is based on the following objectives: to trace the historical bases of the conflict, to evaluate the efforts adopted by the UN to restore peace, and to identify the challenges of UN in its approach to peacebuilding.

Chapter one has clearly shown that the UN partition of the Palestinian land into two states in 1947 did not result in a lasting settlement instead it acted as a catalyst to conflict. The problem statement identified that despite the UN’s continued involvement in the conflict peace is yet to be found. Secondary data will be used as the main source of data for the study.
CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter discusses the asymmetrical conflict between Israel and Palestine, the struggle of national identity between the parties and finally looks at the different wars that have been fought in history between the parties. At one stage, this conflict might appear to be simply a human rights struggle. Israel being a sovereign state, it must comply with all constraints listed by international human rights law for state sovereignty. Yet at another stage, the parties’ political arrangements confuse the attention for sovereignty, colonization and human rights.

Human rights laws tend to presuppose a postcolonial setting where sovereignty and self-autonomy are paired together, whereas, in this conflict, the political order is less than postcolonial. The division of the region had been conducted by the UN, the result was fifty-four percent of the region belonged to Israelis, and forty-six percent belonged the Palestinians. Interestingly, the population of Israelis was about thirty-one percent of the total population (Flapan, 1987). This caused the Palestinians to make a counter effect to struggle for their freedom in their own land and ever since the two groups have engaged in a never-ending war.

2.1 General Assessment of Nation, Nationalism, and Territoriality

Undeniably, for anyone studying nationalism putting forward a concrete definition of a nation could be a challenging task. However, for many people, a nation could simply mean a group of individuals sharing common characteristics such as language, religion, and a common history. It could also mean a group of individuals living within the same territory and are ruled by a single independent authority.
According to Smith (2013), he describes the nation as a human community occupying a homeland and sharing similar characteristics such as common myths, history, as well as a common public culture, a single economy, and outline common rights and duties for all its members. Hence these elements bring people together with the aim of strengthening their identity. This then concludes that the deciding aspect in defining the nation is the emotion of belonging to a group.

According to Montserrat (1996) identity is simply the definition and interpretation of the self in psychological and social terms, thus identity basically tries to explain which community the self belongs to. He further argues that the nation represents the community while national identity is simply the product of the nation (Montserrat, 1996).

One can then argue that national identity seems to be meaningful in an autonomous entity. This entity is in many instances described as a nation-state. The nation-state is the product of nationalism and can also be defined as devotion and loyalty to a nation while putting emphasis on the interests, cultural and social values, or religion of one group above all other groups.

On the other hand, the ideas around nationalism have been objected to intense scrutiny, debate, and theories. In fact, nationalism appears to be a rather problematic concept, because it is considered too diverse to allow a single theory to explain it. However, even though defining national identity is difficult, Anthony D. Smith a historical sociologist defined nationalism as “an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity, and identity for a population which some of its members deem important to constitute an actual or potential ‘nation’” (Smith A. D., 1983).

Thus within this context, nationalism was once based on ‘invented traditions’ which the masses adopted in order to achieve social cohesion. This cohesion stemmed from
ideological and emotional belonging of every member of every nation because the ideas of nationalism generally proved nationalism to be both an emotion and an ideology (Montserrat Guibernau, John Hutchinson., and Walker Connor, ed., 2001).

Without a doubt, Nationalism as an ideology standardizes the people and at the same time constitutes national solidarity within the political and national borders. In fact, nationalism makes members of a group to feel emotional attachment and loyalty to the same political authority. In addition, these emotions of loyalty and national solidarity are established on the identical language, culture, and religion separating them from the rest. Knight (1982) states that:-

“...a past belonging might tie a group to a specific territory, be it presently occupied or not. In case the nation does not have its own territory, it may be desired again, and conflict with the current settlers emerged” (B.Knight, 1982).

This then reveals that territoriality is one of the significant factors that consolidate the ideas of nationalism and national identity. Thus a territory can be defined as a shell under which the nation flourishes the common identity that is based on identical elements such a religion, language, and culture. In other words, territory brings together members sharing the same national identity. Nationalism, on the other hand, identifies the individuals as a nation in accordance with their belonging to a certain country or culture while territory basically represents the membership every member of a community derives from living within borders. As a result, members are loyal to the supreme authority within a territory. (B.Knight, 1982).

This then shows that a nation only exists when a state has a unified administrative reach over the territory over which its sovereignty is claimed. This ensures people on a particular territory are united around common cultural characteristics and tries to defend the elements of the identity to which the nation feel belonging.
Therefore the sovereignty of the national identity is represented by the territory which keeping apart the nation from the others. According to Smith (1983), he states that territorial nationalists are obliged to pick out the existing other as alien and in order to exercise control over the territory.

Without a doubt, when these definitions are taken into consideration in terms of Arab and Jewish nationalisms, they might also appear to be akin with other nationalisms, however, territoriality modifications its nature. In fact, for both Arabs and Jewish nationalism territoriality is no longer the product of a formation but the construction of national identity aimed at achieving superiority on the same territory. After the First World War, both nationalisms developed feelings of loyalty to the same territory, this proved to be one of a kind national constructions that escalated territorial dispute between the two nationalisms.

2.2 Israel and Palestine struggle for national identity

Israel’s national identity is characterized by fear stemming from their historical experiences of being a prosecuted minority whilst Palestine’s national identity is developed in relation to the occupation of Palestine territories. Undeniably, fear is part and parcel of the identity for both Israelis and Palestinians, security is a core issue in the conflict and practicing the same religion is important for both parties.

According to the New Standard Jewish Encyclopedia, a Jew is any person that confesses to practicing Judaism (Persson, 2012). Likewise, the Arabs are a group of people brought together by a common language and practice the same religion, Islam. During the previous decades, the Israel-Palestine conflict has been defined as fighting between two distinct national groups the Jewish Israelis and Arab Palestinians (Caplan, 2010). This
fighting stemmed from the clash of the loyalty of Jews and Arab Palestinians to the same land.

In the wake of exclusion of Jews and growing anti-Semitism in Europe during the nineteenth century, Zionism was formed. As a reaction to Zionism and Jewish influx in the region Arab nationalism and national identity were proliferated in the 1920s. The clash of Zionism and Arab nationalism was as a result of two major developments; the settlement of the Jewish people in Palestine and the rise of the Palestinian resistance towards the ideas of Zionism within the (Palestine Liberation Movement) PLO. Noteworthy is that the ideas of Arab nationalism put a lot emphasis on the loyalty of the Arab land that was inhibited by the Arab Palestinians and to which the Jews immigrated into.

Interestingly, the Arabs nationalism and Zionism were constructed on religious, historical and cultural commitments to the land. However, Zionist ideas urged the Jewish populace around the world to immigrate and settle in Palestine in order to establish a Jewish country. According to Moor (2012), the Zionists slogan for a Jewish state in Palestine was: “A land without people for a people without a land”.

Certainly, the formation of the State of Israel in 1948 is one of the principal elements in the development of the Palestinian identity. According to Ahmad H. Sa’edi (2002), collective reminiscences are imperative for national identity, and accordingly, Nakba is the starting point for Palestinian history and the point of reference for the contemporary Palestinian identity. It is also essential to note that the formation of Zionism is the root cause of the Palestinian refugee problem, specifically with the convening of the Zionism Congress in Basel, Switzerland. During the meeting, the delegates agreed that Zionism aimed at creating a national homeland for the Jews in Palestine that will be secured by
public law. The delegation also declared to encourage emigration of hundreds of thousands of Jews to Palestine.

Without a doubt, the declaration at the Zionism congress in Basel made it is obvious that the dispossession of the Palestinian majority, either physically or politically, would definitely be an inevitable requirement for establishing a state of a Jewish majority. Furthermore, Zionists ambitions focused exclusively on Palestine as the site for a Jewish state. At the time of the Basel Congress, the Arab Palestinians represented ninety-five percent of the population of Palestine and owned ninety-nine percent of the land (Walid, 1987).

For the Arab Palestinians, Zionism turned out to be a tragically successful invasion by an alien people that ended in the expulsion of Palestinians people from Palestine land. In fact, one can argue that there would have been no Israel without the violence that led to massive slaughter and transfer of the Palestinian population.

According to Hassassian (2002), the Palestinians have all through the existence of the State of Israel claimed their right in terms of the Palestinian people right to the land. Palestinians emphasis on national identity and nationalism is still an existing agenda. In 2011 Palestine officials adopted a strategy of internationalizing the conflict. This strategy basically entailed the Palestinian application for membership at the UN as a state and a bid to the International Criminal Court (ICC) in 2009 (Azarov, 2014; Quigley, 2010).

2.3 The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict as an Asymmetric Conflict

With the end of the Cold War and the emergence of intra-state and inter-ethnic wars, the concept of asymmetric conflict has come to the fore in conflict theory. The term “asymmetric conflict” is used in different ways to denote situations that, although sharing
some commonalities, are often pretty diverse. There exist three types of asymmetric in conflict power asymmetry, strategic asymmetry, and structural asymmetry.

The boundary between these different types of asymmetry is often quite blurred, and in most cases, more than one type is present at the same time. In many cases, the asymmetry of the parties in the conflict or rather their perception of this asymmetry is vital in explaining their behaviors and attitudes. Noteworthy is conflict most often shares more than one type of asymmetry and with different degrees of intensity.

Structural asymmetry is considered one of the most relevant features in the Israel Palestine conflict. This type of asymmetry arises when there is a robust imbalance in status between the parties, at the root of the conflict is the structure of the relationship between the conflicting parties. In conflicts characterized by structural asymmetry, the real object of the battle is to change the structure of relations between the parties. Generally, one party seeks to alter it, while the other party struggles to avoid any change.

In fact, structural asymmetry is what characterizes most of the “conflicts over access and control over land which have been endemic in the agrarian societies of the past and still loom large in a world in which forty-five percent of the population make their living directly from the land” (Miall, 2007).

The start of structural asymmetry between Israel and Palestine started in 1897 during the inaugural congress of the Zionists organization in Basel. Although the Balfour Declaration was a turning point because Britain declared its aim to establish "a national home for the Jewish people", thus demonstrating the support the Zionist movement had been able to gain. On the other hand, the Arab Palestinians could not claim the same achievement as Arab nationalists had not taken into consideration Palestinian national aspirations. As a result, the Zionism movement became stronger than their Palestinian
counterparts during the 1920 and 1930s after the Balfour Declaration, both for internal and external reasons (Khalidi R., 2006).

Indeed, the Zionist intra-party cohesion was far more advanced than any form of cohesion among the Arab and Palestinians thus motivating the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine. According to Pappe (2004) the main reason why the Zionists had been able to succeed and to create the state of Israel and while the Palestinians did not, simply lies in the weakness of the latter compared to the strength of the former in terms of cohesion. The structural asymmetry between the two parties became an extremely relevant characteristic of the conflict during the 1950 and 1960.

During this period Israel was able to build the strongest and the best-equipped army of the Middle East, while the Palestinians could only create armed groups that carried out resistance actions. This almost made the Palestinians disappear from the struggle throughout these two decades. However, they re-emerged after the 1967 Arab states’ defeat due to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Fatah, the political faction that dominated it, led by Yasser Arafat.

Legal asymmetry in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict begins with the basic difference of Israel being internationally recognized while Palestine is not yet an internationally recognized state (United Nations, 2012). Since the formation of the state of Israel by the UN in 1948, Israel has been a state with its own territory, with borders that are internationally recognized, it also possesses a clear political agenda and an effective and well-organized army. On the other hand, Palestinians had to fight to move from the status of “non-existence” to recognition as a nation.

Legal asymmetry was also evident throughout the years of the British Mandate, despite the fact that both Jews and Arabs were living in Palestine under British power, the Jews
were recognized as a nation, while the Palestinians were not. To date, Israelis continue to enjoy the stability a state provides to society, in terms of monetary parameters, human capital, political awareness, and social structure, while Palestinians continue to suffer from political instability and a bad economy that survives on aid.

Power asymmetry can also be derived from Israeli’s policy of continually choking Palestine land. An illuminating example is the illegal occupation of the West Bank and army blockade over Gaza, creating a situation where both areas are de facto controlled by Israel (Amnesty International, 2012). The occupation in itself is very much an act of dominance and control over the occupied. Power asymmetry is also visible in the political impetus of the Middle East. Israel has a close alliance with powerful states such as the United States (US), for this reason, they gain from widespread useful resources and military cooperation, making Israel an effective political actor in contrast to Palestine. According to Rouhana (2006) when one side has the ability to control interpretations of conflict-related events, they have a tendency to communicate a version aiding their agenda and accordingly affect the perceptions dominating the news.

Without a doubt, asymmetric features directly affect the conflict narratives by accentuating their importance. According to Auerbach (2010) asymmetry in the stages of identity building makes the narratives differ in outlook, strength, and in the way, the Israeli and Palestinian societies relate to their narratives. Rouhana (2004) emphasizes that power asymmetries are decisive to how the societies experience the conflict by defining concepts present in both conflict narratives in very different ways, depending on whether one is the oppressor or the oppressed.

Noteworthy is that the most powerful party in a conflict in most instances does not have enough incentives to engage in a comprehensive peace process. Undoubtedly the history of force that governs relations between the parties decreases the number of incentives for
Israel to engage in reconciliation (Rouhana N. M., 2006). Thus Israel would have to make the first move in whatever initiative related to the peace process since it has the upper hand and does not have enough to lose. This makes it easier for Israel to continue turning to the use of force to deal with Palestinians in order to maintain power asymmetry.

2.4 Wars between Israel and Palestine

According to Garner (1993) war proved to be an inevitable approach to settling disputes. However, none of the wars between Israel and Palestine settled the basic conflict rather they worsened Israel’s security problem and at the same time increased the Palestinians refugee problems and hostility towards the Israelis. As the struggle for obtaining strategic territories in Palestine continued in order to constitute superiority, both parties noticed the advantage of the continuation of the conflict. The Israelis made efforts to conquer more land while Palestinians strived to reclaim their lands through armed conflict.

2.4.1 The 1948 War of Independence

Israel’s war of independence in 1948 was the inevitable result of decades of bitter, protracted and intractable hostilities between two national movements namely Zionism and Arab Nationalism. These two movements of Arab nationalism and Zionism had been building up significantly since the nineteenth century. The two movements aimed at attaining emancipation and self-determination, both evolving around the concepts of identity, history, nationhood, culture, and religion (Schulze, 1999).

In the aftermath of the World War II (WWII), the UN endorsed the plan to divide Palestine into an Arab state that included Golan Heights to Syria, West Bank, and eastern Jerusalem to Jordan, Gaza Strip to Egypt, a Jewish state in the remainder and lastly it included internationalization of Jerusalem. However, the Arab states and the Palestinians protested the decision as opposed to the Zionists who accepted it (Goldscheider, 2002).
Interestingly, the first civil war between the parties took place under the watchful eyes of the British troops in 1947, immediately after the UN Partition plan and lasted until the end of the British mandate. The second war commenced in 1948 when an alliance of Arab countries launched military attacks on the newly formed state of Israel. It continued intermittently until the conclusion of separate armistice agreements between the parties’ in 1949. According to Schulze (1999), the war in 1948 Arab-Israeli war was the first instance of a bloody and hostile battle, triggered by the announcement of Israel’s independence.

At the end of the Arab-Israeli war, Israel acquired more territory thus expanding its control over the Palestine land. However, Israeli’s victory had significant consequences not only regionally but also internationally, which are still visible to date. Schulze (1999) describes Israel’s victory as a highly complex and an intricate topic which has been subject to great historiographical debate.

Without a doubt the one main obvious consequence was the emergence of the refugee problem in Palestine, though the Palestinian refugees hoped to return to their lands, Israel appeared to deny them the right to return. Additionally, the war also caused destruction and loss of life. Noteworthy is that not only was there the loss of life from soldiers on both sides, but also civilians were killed. For instance, the Deir Yassin massacre witnessed the loss of life of approximately two hundred and forty-five men, women, and children. Similarly, the Arabs retaliated by killing seventy-seven people mainly Jewish doctors and nurses (Ovendale, 1999).

In the aftermath of the war, both parties held radically different positions. As a result heir, a common search for national identity and self-determination resulted in diversified ends. The Jewish people attained statehood through the establishment of the state Israel while Palestinians were denied the self-determination. In the following years, the
different conditions of both parties determined their rapprochements to the transformation of the conflict. As the Jewish people formulated their statehood, Palestinians began to regulate their national movement (Smith C. D., 2010).

In an attempt to end the hostilities the UN played a central role in negotiations between Israel and the Arab states that fought in the war. The UN efforts focused on bringing a permanent ceasefire between Israel and the Arab states. The UN-led negotiations led to the signing of Armistice Agreements that dealt with core issues concerning armistice lines, exchange of prisoners of war and so forth. The agreements were signed between Israel and Egypt on 24th February 1949, Israel and Lebanon on 23rd March, Israel and Jordan on 3rd April, and finally between Israel and Syria on 20th July.

In addition, the UNGA voted resolution 273 to admit Israel to UN membership in May 1949. Israel’s admission to the UN was under the condition that it would accept the UNSC Resolution 194. Thus under the UN’s pressure, Israel declared that it accepts the obligations of the UN Charter and that it undertakes to honor them from the day when it becomes a member.

However, Israel did not keep its word of honoring the obligations it had accepted upon its admission to the UN. As a result, the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine (UNCCP) was set up by resolution 194, which consisted of the Arab states of one side, Israel on the other side, plus France, Turkey, and the US. However, the UNCCP did not succeed due to the fact that Israel preferred to deal on a bilateral basis with the Arab states and disputed the newly created borders while the Arab states were focused on a multilateral approach and on the return of the Palestinian refugees to Palestine.
2.4.2 The Suez Canal war of 1956

The Suez crisis began in 1956 as a result of the nationalization of the Suez Canal by the Egyptian President Nasser. Before nationalization, the canal had been owned by the Suez Canal Company and controlled by British and French interests. This war marked a new chapter in the development of Middle East politics; this is attributed to the facts that the conflict gained global dimension in the context of the Cold War as a result of the clash of interest between British imperialism and Egyptian Pan-Arabism (Takeyh, 2000).

Suez war was provoked by the decision of British and the US not to finance Egypt’s construction of the Aswan High Dam, in response to Egypt's growing ties with the Soviet Union. Nasser reacted to the decision by declaring martial law in the Canal Zone and also seized control of the Suez Canal Company, predicting that within a duration of five years the tolls collected from ships passing through the canal would pay for the dam’s construction. According to Milton-Edward (2001), Nasser argued that by nationalizing the Canal Egypt would be able to fund the construction of the Aswan Dam; he further argued that the decision by Britain and the US not to finance the project meant that Egypt had to find other means of raising funds to finance the construction of the dam.

Additionally, Britain and France feared that Nasser might as well shut the canal and cut off shipments of petroleum flowing from the Persian Gulf to Western Europe. Thus, as a result, Britain and France together with Israel secretly organized military action to regain control of the canal and, if possible, overthrow Nasser. Britain and France allowed Israel to play its part in the conspiracy by invading the Sinai Peninsula on the 29th of October (Khalidi R. , 1989).

Indeed, Israel’s action to conspire with Britain and France against Nasser was justified as Israel feared Nasser’s growing support from the Arab world and its existence was being
threatened by the spread of militant Pan-Arabism. In addition, the state of the Palestinian
refugees motivated the hostility towards Israel thus the Arab states refused to negotiate
with Israel. According to Golani (1998) accepting the support of the Soviet Union meant
that Nasser inclined to take the revenge of the defeat in 1948. Furthermore, the rejection
by Western powers to sell military equipment to Egypt in order to keep a balance of
power in the region motivated Nasser to close the Suez and not to participate in the
containment policy towards the Soviet Union.

Additionally, Israel’s motivation to participate in the war was because it wanted to benefit
from the commerce passing through the Suez in order to prosper from its worsening
economic system that suffered from heavy army expenditure thus putting Israel in a hard
economic situation (Morris, 1997).

In a bid to settle the crisis, the UNSC met at the request of the US on the 30th of October.
At the meeting a resolution asking for Israel’s withdrawal was drafted, however, France
and Britain vetoed it. Instead, Britain and France issued an ultimatum to the authorities of
Israel and Egypt demanding a cease-fire which Israel accepted. Furthermore, in 1950 the
UNSC invoked to Unity for Peace resolution and also organized for a (General
Assembly) GA emergency session aimed at passing a resolution that called for the
immediate cease-fire (Robertson, 1964).

Interestingly, Britain and France commenced their bombing campaign against Egypt as
part of the ‘Operation Musketeer’ on the 31st of October. Although the operation enjoyed
military success, it failed on political grounds as it did not have the UN’s consent. In
response to the reaction of Britain and France, the GA adopted resolution 997 requesting
for the immediate ceasefire that was advanced by the US (Robertson, 1964).
In the aftermath of the crisis, Egypt appeared to have gained support amongst the Arab states as a result of its defiance to the West. In addition, Israel agreed to leave Egypt only if the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) assured them that they have free passage and freedom to navigate in the Gulf Aqaba. Lastly, both British and French armies withdrew by the end of 1956 and Egypt regained control of the Suez Canal.

Without a doubt, Egypt and Israel were aware that support from Western countries granted them a stronger standpoint in the conflict. The is because the rivalry that existed between the Soviet Union and the U.S. served the interests of both parties concerning the consolidation of their power on the strategic points that would contribute to the development of the state of Israel as well as the Palestinian Arab national movement.

2.4.3 The Six Day War of June 1967

According to Lenczowski (1980), national survival was the foundation for Israel's preemptive attack that initiated the 1967 War. Undeniably, after the Suez Canal crisis, the conditions in the region changed deeply. First, Egypt appeared to have gained a major impact on the political unrest, civil wars, and revolutions experienced in the other Arab states such as Lebanon, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan.

Secondly, there existed an armament race in the region between the Soviet Union and the US. Thirdly the persistent border clashes with Syria, water disputes with Jordan, and the close proximity of Israeli cities to Arab artillery put the Israelis under immense pressure to act before the Arabs could join their military might (Sela, 1999).

Moreover, Oren (2017) argued that the foundation of the PLO under the auspices of Nasser and initiatives put forward to overcome inter-Arab rifts such as the 1964 Cairo Summit that convened all the Arab countries around the purpose of creating opposition against the state of Israel, intensified Israelis feeling of encirclement which basically
stemmed from the rise of Egypt and the US support to the Arab neighbors of Israel (Oren, 2017).

Indeed the six-day war was very disastrous to the Arab states. For instance, causalities in Arab countries were more compared to Israel, Egypt’s casualties were more than eleven thousand, with six thousand for Jordan and one thousand for Syria, compared with only seven hundred for Israel. Additionally, Arab armies also suffered losses of weaponry and equipment. Also, Israel had managed to overturn the balance of power in the region as it defeated its Arab foes and hopes of destroying the Israeli state became totally out of question.

As a result, Israeli managed control territories that were previously Arab-controlled. It seized Sinai desert in Egypt, Golan Heights in Syria, and in Jordan, Israel seized the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Thus these conquests added 42,000 square miles to Israeli controlled territory and with it came significant strategic depth (Cordesman, Anthony H., & Wagner, Abraham R, 1990).

Thus the war has commonly been interpreted by scholars and 20th-century historians as a watershed moment within the larger history of Middle Eastern politics (Bordeaux, 1996). Without a doubt, the war appeared an essential crucial step for Israel in the course of its aim of establishing a ‘Greater Israel’. On the other hand, the defeat intensified Arabs hatred for the Israelis. In addition, Arab countries experienced massive economic damages, the collapse of the Arab morale as well as loss self-confidence as a result of the defeat. As a result, the Arabs refused to recognize the state of Israel.

In addition, the leaders of Egypt, Jordan, and Syria suffered political punishments as a result of their poor performance. For example, Nasser’s Egypt experienced mass protests; King Hussein's Jordan was forced to contend with the machinations of Palestinian
guerrillas and Syria experienced protests as a result of an elite power struggle between the civilian Baathist Salah Jadid and Defense Minister Hafez al-Assad, that eventually led to Jadid being overthrown (Waterbury, 1983).

Israel’s victory created a sense of superiority and invulnerability in the Israeli leadership and Zionism came to the threshold in Israeli politics. Furthermore, citizens of the West had been solidly behind Israel, as a result, Israel’s victory came to be seen by the US as a great military/strategic asset and ultimately resulted in a US-Israel strategic cooperation agreement.

Thus the Middle East region became one of the battlefields of the Cold War, with Israel enjoying the support of the US and other Western powers, and Arab states seeking military and diplomatic support from the Soviet Union. At the end of the war, the UNSC adopted resolution 242 on November 22, 1967. It called for Israel to withdraw its forces from territories it occupied during the war and also called for a just settlement of the refugee.

2.4.4 The October War of 1973

The previous Arab-Israeli war was followed by years of intermittent fighting, which later developed into a full-scale war in 1973. After the 1967 war, The Arab states suffered a humiliating defeat, which was felt most by President Nasser of Egypt. As a result of the defeat Nasser tendered his resignation; however, a demonstration of popular support within Egypt and the Arab world caused him to withdraw this resignation (Dupuy T. N., 1978).

Throughout the early 1970s, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt were focused on persuading Israel to return to the armistice lines. The 1973 war also known as the Yom Kippur was initiated
by Egypt and Syria on 6th of October, on the Jewish holy day of Yom Kippur and during Ramadan, the month of fasting in Islam, and it continued until October 26, 1973.

Interestingly, despite a substantial military build-up on the Egyptian and Syrian sides of the border, Israeli military intelligence remained convinced that the Arab armies would not attack. The war was launched with the aim of convincing Israel to negotiate terms that are more favorable to the Arab countries. The Yom Kippur war drew both the US and the Soviet Union into an indirect confrontation in order to defend their respective allies.

After receiving false Soviet intelligence that Israeli forces had mobilized on the border, Nasser sent his own troops to the Sinai Peninsula. Two weeks later, the Israeli Air Force launched surprise attacks on Egyptian airbases destroying Egyptian, Syrian, and Jordanian aircraft. As a result, King Faisal held a rally in Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia and exclaimed that “Saudi Arabia will cut off the flow of oil to anyone who aids Israel” (William E. Mulligan Papers).

Without a doubt, the OPEC’s (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) petroleum embargo and the increase in oil prices seemed to be the most extreme repercussion of the war. The Arab states viewed petroleum as an important tool that was to redress the power imbalance that existed between the Arab countries and the Western countries. In fact, the Arab states opted to use oil as a bargaining tool in exchange for support. This mindset of the Arabs typically displayed that the high-level support displayed by the West to Israel would definitely have a significant economic cost. This move by the Arab nations eventually resulted in a change in the relationship between the industrialized powers and Arabs.

On October 22, 1973, a ceasefire was ordered, and resolution 338 a companion to resolution 242 was passed by the UNSC. The resolution called for the termination of all
military activity, implementation of Resolution 242 and the commencement of negotiations aimed at establishing peace in the region. Furthermore, the US persuaded Egypt to decrease its troops east of the Canal and to establish a buffer zone in Sinai patrolled by a United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) and to reopen the canal to non-Israeli shipping. Israel was also requested to withdraw its military from the Sinai to some 20 miles east of the Suez Canal. In addition, a buffer zone to be patrolled by UNDOF was also established in the Golan Heights between the forces of Israelis and Palestinians. Also, President Assad Nasser’s successor agreed to prevent Palestinian guerillas from attacking Israel (Don, 1996).

At the end of the war, Sadat focused on regaining respect at home and internationally. He initiated new peace efforts and opted to have direct negotiations with the State of Israel. His new peace approach surprised the Israelis and the Arabs as well as the US. His first visit to Jerusalem in 1977 broke the psychological barrier that prevented the Arab side from discussing core issues face to face with Israel. Furthermore, his visit implied the possibility of Egypt’s recognizing the state of Israel.

### 2.4.5 The Lebanon war of 1982

In the pursuit of an activist foreign policy Israel under the leadership of PM Begin invaded Lebanon in order to remove the PLO from its bases. Following its invasion, Israel managed to annex East Jerusalem in 1980 and Golan in 1981. Israel’s occupation had sparked fear and resistance on the Palestinians as they strongly believed that the Likud government could easily annex West Bank. Thus, in response, militant nationalists and Islamic fundamentalists in Egypt came to the fore in the conflict with the Israelis.

Even in the face of this resistance, the Israelis focused only at undermining PLO’s impact amongst the Palestinians. Without a doubt the main reason that the 1982 war officially
named “Operation Peace for Galilee” was more controversial than earlier military activities because it was not merely to assure Israel's security but instead, it was “designed to destroy the PLO and settle the Palestinian question by force”, thus going beyond what was necessary for survival (Shafir and Peled 2002).

According to Helmer (2007), the war was supported by a majority of the population of Israel, perhaps because of the proposed limited objectives and potentially advantageous political results; polls placed levels of support at 7/8 of Israelis. However, as the war continued, dissent and objection came to be a feature of the Lebanon War, the aftermath of the Sabra and Shatila massacres led to protests against the Israel Defense Forces (IDF).

As a result of the massacres anti-war groups emerged, such as Yush Gvul, Mothers Against Silence and the Committee Against the War in Lebanon, furthermore, the Peace Now Movement held demonstrations in Tel Aviv and drew in crowds of four hundred thousand (Tessler, 2009). This marked the first time an Israeli government lacked support from its citizens during a time of war, leading to the resignation of Begin, the removal of powers from the Defense Minister and the growth of a political schism between Likud and the Labor parties. Subsequently, in the US, the War Powers Act limited the ability of the President to commit troops abroad.

Israel staged a partial withdrawal in 1983 and after the elections of 1984; Israel withdrew to a narrow ‘security zone’ along the border. Obviously, the Lebanon invasion proved to be a major political failure for the Israelis. In fact, its economic cost was equally tremendous and the international community condemned the events triggered by Israel following the cease-fire such as Sabra and Shattilla massacres.

Though Israel continued with intermittent incursions, the PLO consolidated its power in south Lebanon. In addition, national sentiment identified with the PLO in the West Bank
and Gaza intensified (Dupuy & Paul, 1986). On the other hand, Israel stuck to its policy of refusing to recognize the existence of the Palestinians and instead it referred to them as ‘Arab refugees’.

2.4.6 Israel Palestine wars (1987-2012)

Intifadas emerged as a spontaneous and politically inspired rebellion that generally controlled organized civil resistance movement. These uprisings marked the first time Muslim radicals together with communists and secular nationalists united to fight Israel’s oppression. The uprising was under the leadership of the Unified National Command (UNC), with representatives from Fatah, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), the Palestine Communist Party (PCP) and it also included Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

Pretez (1979) states these groups called for the total destruction of the state Israel as opposed to having any meaningful negotiations with Israelis and expressed the Palestinians plight to the world. In addition, intifadas represented the Palestinian refusal for the foreign interventions on their territories and flamed their desire to have an independent state.

The first Intifada in 1987 was an uprising against the occupation of the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem. The Palestinians were frustrated and angry with Israel’s increasingly oppressive policies, they were forced to pay taxes to Israeli authorities, they were subject to army raids, random detentions, denied basic civil rights and their national aspiration for their own state was denied. Thus this repression of Palestine people led to an underground movement which deepened their feelings for liberation and ultimately found expression in the intifada. (Meghdessian, 1998).
The uprising witnessed the deaths of thousands of Palestinians. Moreover, Palestinians engaged in a variety of civil disobedience, such as strikes, demonstrations, refusal to pay taxes and boycotts of Israeli products. Israel, on the other hand, responded harshly, by closing Palestinian schools, making mass arrests, imposing closure and curfew, and shutting down demonstrations with brutal force.

While the Palestinians defense was no match for Israel’s impressive arsenal, an Israeli commander observed that “The essence of the intifada is not in the actual level of activity but in the perception of the population the sense of identity, direction, and organization” (Reische, 1991). The first Intifada generated international sympathy for the Palestinian cause. UN’s intervention led to the adoption of resolution 605 which condemned Israel for the mass deaths of Palestinians that occurred in the first weeks of the Intifada as they violated the Geneva Convention.

In 2000 the second Intifada began as a result of Israeli occupation policies that continued to deprive Palestinians of their basic human rights including constructing the Apartheid Wall, which was built on Palestinian land that the ICJ (International Court of Justice) ruled illegal. Ariel Sharon’s visit to the Temple Mount an area that is sacred in both Judaism and Islam prompted a large riot among Palestinians and Israeli soldiers at the site.

During the second intifada, Israeli forces enforced an oppressive siege on the entirety of Palestine. Israel crushed the Palestinians by targeting (Palestine Authority) PA infrastructures with extreme violence, not only the Muqatas in Ramallah and other West Bank cities, but also ministries, governmental buildings, and even registry offices (Kimmerling, 2003). The second intifada led to the adoption of resolution 1322 citing Israel for the use of excessive force against the Palestinian people.
The Second Lebanon War in 2006 was a 34-day military conflict in Lebanon and northern Israel between Hezbollah paramilitary forces and the Israeli military. Hezbollah is an organization that came from Israel’s first invasions of Southern Lebanon, in 1982. Israel invaded southern Lebanon with the aim of eliminating the PLO because of its terrorist activities. The people in southern Lebanon welcomed the Israeli military because they were tired of the oppressive regime of the PLO (Jaber, 1997). However, the IDF did not leave after they invaded. This turned the people of Southern Lebanon against Israel liberating the people of Southern Lebanon as they were no longer liberating but occupying.

At the end of the conflict, it was clear that Israel's leadership was ill-prepared for the war against Hezbollah; as a result, Israel lost its strongman status when it failed to beat Hezbollah. The Loss instilled fear amongst the Israeli’s as Israel thought her neighbors more likely to attack her in the future. (Makovsky, D., & White, J, 2006). The UN-brokered ceasefire on 11 August 2006 and resolution 1701 was unanimously approved by the UNSC in an effort to end hostilities. Although, the Lebanese government admitted that it cannot fully implement UNSC 1701, which called for an arms embargo against Hezbollah.

The small strip of land between Egypt and Israel is known as the Gaza Strip has been a combat zone in the ongoing Arab-Israeli Conflict since the 1940s (Sockol, 2008). On December 27, 2008, Israel commenced a military operation dubbed “Operation Cast Lead” on the Gaza Strip. The attack lasted only twenty days but the scale destruction visited upon Gaza was catastrophic; many Palestinians were killed and Gaza was brought the brink of collapse. Israel initially claimed that the assault was an exercise of Israel's sovereign right of self-defense. Israel's operations violated international law in a number of respects.
Israeli troops were failing to discriminate between military and civilian targets, they were also using disproportionate force, additionally, there were reports that suggested that Israeli troops had used white phosphorous shells in densely populated parts of Gaza, thus leading to deaths and terrible wounds among Palestinian civilians (Bronner, 2009). In an attempt to resolve the conflict the UNSC passed a resolution calling for an immediate halt to fire from both Israel and Hamas on January 8, 2009. Nonetheless, the assault continued until January 18, when Israel and Hamas each instituted unilateral ceasefires.

Following the conclusion of Operation Cast Lead, tensions between Israel and Hamas continued to escalate. As a result, Israel saw a resumption of major rocket attacks from Gaza, wounding dozens of civilians and damaging property. While Israel often responded to these attacks with occasional airstrikes, the Israeli military largely stayed away from the large-scale bombardments and ground assaults. Finally, on November 14, Israel launched Operation Pillar of Defense, in the Hamas-governed Gaza Strip targeting to disrupt Hamas.

During the operation Israel targeted 1500 sites in the Gaza Strip, resulting to deaths of Palestinians. In response Hamas launched Operation Stone of Baked Clay to counter Israeli’s operations; Hamas fired rockets into Israel with some reaching as far as Tel Aviv. To end the attacks Egypt and US-brokered a ceasefire between Hamas and Israel in November 2012. The ceasefire called for all Palestinian factions to stop firing rockets into Israel and to halt land attacks and required Israel to re-open border crossings between the Gaza Strip and Israel.

All the wars discussed showed different perspectives between the parties concerning the conflict. The Arab Palestinians fought because they tried to rescue their existence in Palestine, while the Jews fought because they wanted to protect their state from neighbors who were unhappy of their existence at the same time they wanted to gain control over
strategic points of the region so as to be guaranteed of their safety. Most importantly the wars between the parties show the strategic importance of territory.

2.4.7 Theoretical Framework

**Liberal Institutionalism**

This study utilized the liberal Institutionalism theory which emphasizes that international institutions or organizations can increase and aid cooperation amongst states. The theory addresses the core question of instability and insecurity while emphasizing on the need for institutional arrangements to initiate and sustain state cooperation.

By focusing on International organizations like the UN, liberal institutionalism puts a lot of emphasis on soft power and cooperation through ‘the forms and procedures of international law, the machinery of diplomacy and general international organization (Donahue, J., and Nye, J, 2000).

This theory best describes the UN’s involvement in the Israel-Palestine conflict. The UN took up the question of Palestine in 1947, immediately after Britain’s decision to place the Palestine question before the UN. As a result, Palestine land was divided into Jewish and Arab state and conflict erupted.

The UN formed the UNSCOP to investigate the conflict and make a recommendation for Palestine, if possible, devise a solution. Since the conflict began the UNGA has tried to address the conflict by adopting a number of resolutions on both the “Question of Palestine” and on the wider “Situation in the Middle East”.

The UN’s institutional power continues to be felt in the Middle East region as it continues to make efforts to find ways of ending the conflict. Indeed, through its involvement the organization has continuously made efforts to address issues such as illegal Israeli
settlements; it has also supported the work of the United Nations Division for Palestinian Rights (UNDPR) and the peace processes in general.

Despite the conflict still being in existence, the UN has highlighted some gains in the peace process, noting that through the UN parties had engaged in direct, intensive negotiations that are still ongoing.

**Functionalist theory**

The study also utilized the functionalist theory because it pays more attention to commonalities that exist among nations as well as non-states in promoting global integration. The theory arose during the inter-war period principally from the concern about the obsolescence of the state as a form of social organization. Functionalists mainly focus on the common interest and needs shared by both states and non-state actors. The theory was initially concerned with the creation of peaceful and stable world order. Over time it has identified with international organizations such as the EU and the UN.

Functionalists have put a lot of emphasis on the role played by inter-governmental organizations in creating a cooperative international polity. According to the ideas of functionalism international integration, the collective governance, as well as maternal interdependence (Mitrany, 1932) between states, develops its own internal dynamic as states integrate into the limited functional, technical and economic area.

Functionalist argue that the society is an organism, in which each component performs a vital role, thus if one organ in the society fails, it impacts on the rest of society and brings about societal challenges, creates social problems and consequently leads to the transformation of society.

In addition, functionalists lay more attention on the agreement as well as orderliness existing in society, concentrating on societal stability as well as mutual values.
Therefore, on this understanding, a disorder in the society, for instance, deviating behavior, results in changes thus organs of society have to react in order to attain stability.

Functionalist approach in the area of integration is seen in the UN charter which refers to “promoting conditions of stability and the promotion of higher living standards. Thus the theory is relevant since it emphasizes on global unity, collectiveness, and co-existence among nations (Mitrany, 1932).

As a result, the UN is working to try to resolve a problem that faces two of its members. Undeniably, the conflict affects the entire UN system directly or indirectly. Thus the UN is actively involved because it requires all its members to function well for it to be complete and for the attainment of social order in the society.

2.5 Chapter Summary

Chapter two has reviewed several studies related to the conflict and some studies have it that it is important to take stock of the importance of territory among the Israelis and Palestinians. As the two groups continue fighting in order to acquire strategic territories that will enable them to constitute superiority on others. These wars only seem to worsen Israel’s security problem and increase Palestine’s hostility towards the state of Israel.

Noteworthy is that the Jewish people placed their focus on extending control over strategic points of the region claiming they are concerned of their security while the Arabs were forced to engage in armed conflict in order to rescue their existence in Palestine. Existing literature has argued that both parties ended up adopting different approaches to conflict that prevented them from agreeing on a territorial compromise. The literature review argues that the need to acquire strategic territory motivates the parties to continue with the conflict. Israelis continued to make efforts to conquer more
land than it had been allocated, while the Arabs Palestinians strived to protect their existence in Palestine.
CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Purpose of the Chapter

This chapter outlines the instruments, processes, and procedures that the researcher will employ in regards to the collection and analysis of data on UN’s contributions in the peace process in the Israel-Palestine conflict.

3.2 Research Methodology

The study will use the historical approach method in order to understand the dynamics generally in the peacebuilding approaches used in managing the conflict and specifically in the UN. Historical approaches are categorized into primary or secondary sources. The study shall purely use secondary data to provide us with information about the evolution of the Israel-Palestine conflict, the UN’s contribution in the peace processes as well as challenges faced by UN in its approach to peacebuilding. Secondary data will be obtained from sources such as books, online source materials, articles, reports conference, papers, and journals, past research work, dissertation, and UN reports.

3.3 Reliability and Validity of the Study

The data used in this study is purely secondary. For this matter, the researcher will consider the following factors:-

- Whether the site or publication is reputable, (i.e. a journal, government, education or textbook.
- Whether the information relates to the problem being investigated.
- The credential of the author
3.4 Ethical considerations

This research was conducted in an ethical manner, respecting the University policy, intellectual property rights and good intellectual practices.

3.5 Chapter Summary

Chapter three has covered the method to be applied to carry out the study. The study will use secondary data from written literature to answer the research questions. The study will also eliminate all biases and limitations appropriately and accordingly by considering key issues such as: whether the site or publication is reputable, credentials of the author, relevance of the information and research methodology.
CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND DATA PRESENTATION

This chapter will deal with among other things the historical basis of the conflict. It will discuss various peace processes which have been put in place to restore peace. Lastly, it will also focus on the challenges faced by the UN in its attempt to find a lasting peace between the Israelis and Palestinians as well as the presentation of the research findings. The study will use figures and tables for data presentation. The findings will be based on the objective of the study listed in chapter one. In addition, the study shall purely use secondary data to provide relevant information.

4.1 Tracing the historical bases of the conflict

The Israel-Palestine conflict is without a doubt one of the longest and most controversial conflicts that have been ongoing for well over a century now. At its heart, it is a conflict between two groups with competing desires aiming to establish national identities over a contested territory (Shinar, 2003; Kelman H., 1999).

The desire to control the contested territory is a geopolitical battle that is rooted in the quest to establish a Jewish national identity and a Palestinian nationalism over the right towards self-determination, statehood, and justice. Historically the origin of the conflict can be traced back to the end of the nineteenth century and the birth of Zionism movement. Drawing on a religious narrative, Zionism aimed at promoting the development and protection of the Jewish national identity through Israeli citizenship within the state of Israel (Kelman H., 2005).

Equally, the rise of Arab nationalism significantly influenced Palestinian identity and made Arab countries in the region to look into advancing their independence. Thus to
accomplish this, Pan-Arab ideologies dominated the narrative for the construction of Palestinian identity as well as the pursuance of an independent state of Palestine.

In 1917 the Zionist movement gained the formal support of the British government to establishment of a Jewish home in Palestine. This was documented as the Balfour Declaration and in 1922 Palestine became a protectorate of Britain (Qumsiyeh, 2004). During this period the Jews migrated into Palestine with the intention to establish a Jewish homeland, in addition, Israeli settlement expansion and the formation of social institutions was facilitated through the purchase and acquisition of land (Kelman H., 1999; Kelman H., 2005). However, the Arabs felt threatened by the growing presence of Jews in Palestine who appeared to threaten their existence in Palestine.

When the British mandate over Palestine came to an end, the UNGA adopted a resolution that proposed for the division of the Palestine land into a Jewish and an Arab state (Kelman H., 2005). The UN partition plan championed the idea of a two-state solution; that became unanimously accepted by Zionist leadership and the international community but was rejected by the Arab Palestinians and the Arab leadership as it was seen to be against the Palestinian population living on the land (Anon, 2003).

Additionally, the progression of the conflict is also considered to be influenced by the events of the Six Day War. This war is significant, in terms of the historical context of the conflict, because the aftermath of this war motivated the Palestinians to fight in order to regain control of their land, struggle for self-determination and the establishment of Palestinian statehood. Barak (2005) states that prior to this, the conflict had been defined as a struggle by Arab states to maintain control of the region and avert Israel’s encroachment policies.
Historically land and resource also motivated the conflict. Israel’s policy of continuously choking Palestine resources has created an atmosphere of conflict and uncertainty with a profoundly negative effect on all economic activities. Its policies towards land, water, and settlements have direct adverse effect felt most strongly in agriculture, where the area of irrigated land has declined, and prices of land and water increased to a very high level (World Bank, 1993).

Since the start of the occupation of territories by the Israeli’s, Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip areas have increasingly lost control over their land and resources particularly supply of water. Israeli authorities have used complex measures and policies, all of which have placed Israel in control of the largest possible fertile land and maximum amount of water.

According to UNCTAD (1996), the Israeli’s have confiscated about sixty-eight percent of the total land of the West Bank, and forty percent of that of Gaza Strip. As a result, Palestinians in the West Bank are subjected to use only about fifteen to twenty percent of the annually available water originating in the area; the rest is used by Israeli settlers and within Israel (World Bank, 1993). Additionally, the Jewish settlements were built on part of the land taken from Palestinian control, while the rest of the confiscated land was turned into closed military areas.

Will (2000) states that in spite of the attempted negotiations and peace processes between the parties a large part of the complexity of the conflict lies in the fact that Israel, as a settler state, has continued to implement its policies of choking the Palestine land in order that keep the demographics in its favor. Indeed, Israel has continually worked to forward its national interest in creating a Jewish national homeland by expanding its geographical borders (Zellman, 2012). This has resulted in the continuous process of illegal settlement expansion throughout the West Bank, the Gaza strip and the Golan Heights and in
addition has acted as a hindering factor to the success of peace processes (Newman, 1996).

The Palestinians view the settlements as an infringement of Palestinian territorial integrity; on the other hand, Israelis view settlements as part of the process of Judaizing the homeland. As well as maintain demographic in their favor. Noteworthy is that the settlement projects in and around Jerusalem began immediately after the annexation of East Jerusalem in the 1967 war, it is also important to note that all settlements are controlled by the Israeli authorities.

The first phase of settlement created a ring around Jerusalem in order to effectively separate the Arab area of Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank; thus undermining the territorial contiguity between East Jerusalem and the West Bank. Additionally, it prevented East Jerusalem from ever becoming the capital of any future Palestinian state (Napolitano, 2012). Without a doubt, the continued expansion of Israeli settlements has resulted in increased social, political and economic tensions between the parties.

Moreover, the security question has undeniably been employed differently by each side of the conflict. For instance, Israeli’s definitions of security emphasize on the perceptions of threats to their national existence. On the other hand, Palestinians place emphasis on safeguarding the struggle for Palestinian statehood. Thus from an international relations perspective, for both parties, prominence is placed on ensuring national security as opposed to securing the individual (Falah, G., and Newman, D, 1995).

Additionally, Israel invokes security as a justification for its increasing securitization and militarization strategies, which the Palestinians perceive as oppressive. Israel’s strong emphasis on security is based on the fact that historically the Jewish people have been a group of people constantly in exile and thus find strength in the need to protect Jewish
and Israeli citizens residing within the state of Israel and settlements from any form of threats.

Plonski (2005) argues that the feeling of collective victimhood situated in the collective consciousness of Israeli Jews motivates their demand for security and thus legitimizes the actions of the government of Israel on attacking Palestinian citizens. Similarly, Plonski (2005) alludes “that the land of Israel has become a symbol of safety and security, central to the survival of Jews as a nation constantly surrounded by hostile neighbors”. Thus the creation of a collective social narrative that is purely based on assumptions of fear and mistrust and the need to protect oneself from the enemy by whatever means necessary has allowed a culture of violence to take center in the Israel-Palestine conflict.

Interestingly, both parties have been socialized into believing that each state can only survive if there is a clear boundary drawn to separate them as a measure of security. Thus from past negotiations, attempts have been made to create stable boundaries of separation between the two groups (Falah, G., and Newman, D, 1995). Looking at past negotiations security considerations that were proposed by the parties were simply strategic measures meant to protect them from both real and perceived threats.
Figure 1 the United Nations Partition Plan, 1947

This map shows how the UN divided Palestine into an independent Arab and Jewish state and a special International regime for the city of Jerusalem.

Source: United Nations Map
This map shows the territories occupied by Israel since the 1967 Six-Day War, between Israel and its Arab neighboring. UN Resolution 242 demanded Israel withdraw its forces from the territories occupied within the conflict. However, Israel disagreed with the wording of the resolution and claimed that the territories are in dispute.
4.2 UN and Peacebuilding efforts in the Israel and Palestine Conflict

Since the conflict began, the UN has tried to end one of the most entrenched and controversial conflicts in the world. Its efforts have led to humanitarian interventions, adoptions of resolutions and mediation. However, reasons as to why peace processes in the Middle East have failed continue to puzzle many, raising questions as to whether the UN resolutions and peace agreements are poorly done, is it that they are not implemented, or is the UN helpless.

4.2.1 Origin of UN Intervention

After the Second World War, the UN sought to help establish a mutually acceptable compromise in the face of continuing Jewish-Arab tension. International attempts to resolve or mediate the question of Palestine started at the very birth of the UN with the GA’s 1947 partition plan. UN’s partition plan was drawn up under the Resolution 181 in November 1947, recommending the separation of the region into an Arab state of Palestine, and a Jewish state of Israel.

The UN partition plan also set out the steps to be taken prior to independence. The plan dealt with important issues such as the questions of citizenship, transit, the economic union, and a declaration to be made by the provisional government of each proposed State regarding access to holy places and religious and minority rights.

However, the plan was rejected by the Palestinians and Israel’s declaration of Independence in May 1948 saw the surrounding Arab states launch a war against it. The Arab objective was to ensure the destruction of the state Israel (Karsh, 2008). At the end of the independence war, Israel controlled approximately seventy-eight percent of what had been Mandatory Palestine, and a large number of Palestinian Arabs had been expelled from what had become Israel.
Another significant peace initiative led by the UN was the passage of Resolution 242 which arguably started a new phase in international diplomacy as it was unanimously adopted and accepted by the parties to the conflict. Resolution 242 and its “land for peace” formula, was concerned with the acquisition of territory by war and the need to work for a just and lasting peace and security. However, Israel has in several occasions claimed that the territories in question are still in dispute.

Hardly any UN resolution is quoted and referred to as much as Resolution 242, it has become the cornerstone for all stages in the settlement of the Israel-Palestine conflict such as the Peace Treaties between Israel and Egypt in 1979, Israel and Jordan in 1994 and the 1993 and 1995 agreements with the Palestinians.

The aftermath of resolution 242 led to the adoption of Resolution 338, which legally forced the Arab states and Israel to reach a cease-fire and added a binding effect to Resolution 242 in various aspects (Rostow.V, 1975). It emphasized that the latter must be implemented and also called for negotiations between the parties in accordance with the general guidelines of Resolution 242. Still, resolution 338 failed to bring a cease-fire in the Yom Kippur War in 1973.

Thus during the 1973 war, Arab armies inflicted heavy losses on the Israelis before the tide of war shifted and Israel defeated the Arab armies. Israel lost an estimated 2,800 men, while the Arabs lost an estimated 15,000 (Bregman, 2000). The war was celebrated in Egypt, as a ‘divine victory’ that erased the shameful memory of the 1967 defeat. The events surrounding the Yom Kippur War seriously damaged U.S.-Soviet relations.

As a result, the UNSC called for peace talks between the US and the USSR as tensions were rising over the Union of Soviet Socialists Republics (USSR’s) determination to protect Egypt against Israeli aggression. Additionally, the oil embargo set on the US was
a big stressor for the US, forcing the US to work with the USSR and call for a ceasefire between Israel and the other warring countries but the peace talks achieved very little.

There were differed interests between each country, the US-sponsored peace agreements between Israel and the Arab nations without the involving the UN and lastly, the talks did not have Palestine’s participation, which in turn resulted in huge international support for the PLO, led by Yasser Arafat. As a result, UNGA recognized the Palestinian right to self-determination, in addition, the PLO was given an observer’s status within the UN and the PLO received overwhelming support for the Palestinian cause.

According to Makdisi and Prashad (2017), the post-1967 international mediation efforts were nominally rooted in core UN resolutions and relevant provisions of international law and backed by the political weight of the GA. However, during the eighties and nineties, the UN continued to participate in a few minor international conflicts but could do nothing against Israel’s occupation of the Gaza strip and West Bank as it faced exclusion in the peace talks. Nonetheless, peace initiatives during the 80s and 90s were anchored on UNs resolution 242.

The Venice Declaration in 1980 was the first European peace effort to adopt a fundamental resolution in the Middle East region. The European Community (EC) wanted Israel and the International community to recognize the Palestinian rights, they also wanted the PLO to be recognized as a party, in addition, the EC required the PLO to be given equal status similar to Israel during peace negotiations and lastly the group called on Israel to withdraw from occupied territories and cease its illegal expansionist policy.
The declaration is considered a huge milestone in the evolution of a collective European policy regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict as it signaled the aspirations of EC to have greater involvement in the Middle East (Hollis, 1997).

According to Hurd (1981), the Venice Declaration demonstrated Europe’s intentions of focusing on the various positions of the EC member states. It also signified that the collective position of the EC diverged from that of the Americans and the issue of Palestinian statehood remained key to European collective foreign policy (Smith M. 2., 2009).

Following Lebanon’s invasion by the state of Israel in early June 1982, US President Reagan outlined what came to be called the Reagan Middle East Peace Plan. The Plan stipulated the same provisions of Camp David and envisaged the existence of Palestinian administration in the West Bank and Gaza under Jordan’s rule. At the same time, this provision implied the PLO’s exclusion and gave the initiative from the PLO to the moderate Arab state, like Jordan (Lenezowsk, 1990). The failure of this plan is attributed to the fact that it was a vaguely worded document that was designed to attract broad support from conflicting parties and it also lacked a solid base of substantive principle.

On the 12th Arab Summit Convened in Fez, in September 1982, the Fez Plan was adopted. Interestingly, the Fez plan is similar to another failed plan that was proposed in 1981 by Saudi Prince Fahd. The Summit adopted an eight-point plan that demanded Israel to withdraw its forces from territories it had occupied during the six-day war. In addition, the Fez plan also called for the formation of an independent Palestine state under the leadership of the PLO with Jerusalem being its capital under the auspice of the UNSC.

In 1983 the UN convened the Geneva conference with an aim to draw the attention of the world community to the inalienable rights of Palestinians and reminded them of their
international responsibility for the Palestine issue. The Conference considered it important that an international peace conference on the Middle East must be convened under the UN’s auspices, with equal participation, of Israeli and Palestine.

4.2.2 The UN and the Madrid Peace Conference

The Madrid peace conference had a historical context. During the Gulf War, Arab states sided with the US against the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait. However, the Arab states accused the US of double standards as it was thought to being comparably tolerant of the Israeli occupation of Arab land. This prompted the American government to want to compensate its Arab allies.

Another motivation was the weakness and isolation of the PLO leadership, convinced the US that it could either bypass the PLO or encourage an alternative leadership from the OPT which was favored by Israel. Above all, the US thought that the regional political environment was conducive to a process Israel could accept, and the Palestinian leadership could not reject (Emma C. Murphy, 1995).

After the Gulf-war the US assumed a leadership role in international politics (IP). The US called for comprehensive and extensive negotiations between the parties at the Madrid Peace Conference in 1991. This particular conference represented a breakthrough in relations between Israel and its neighbors as for the first time, both parties engaged in face-to-face negotiations.

In addition, the U.S gained the respect of the Arab states for undertaking the major role for peace talks. It established “multilateral working groups”, which began work on regional aspects of a variety of issues. Although it was conducted outside the UN’s framework, it had the support of all the parties concerned and had its basis on UNSC
resolutions 242 and 338, both considered as cornerstones of a comprehensive peace settlement.

During the Madrid conference, the UNSG had been largely absent from every significant step of the peace talks, yet the UN was heavily invested in the issues at the stake. In addition, participants had differing views since the basis for the conference relied heavily on the compliance of Resolution 242, which calls for a land peace strategy.

For instance, Israel’s Prime Minister (PM) Shamir’s thinking was that the UNSC Resolution 242 had no relevance in the discussion for peace thereby negating the foundation of the conference. This clearly showed that Israel was focused on ensuring it continues to maintain control of the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem. According to Ibid (2000), Israel’s PM persuaded the delegation that the root cause of the conflict is because Arab states refused to recognize the legitimacy of the state of Israel.

4.2.3 The UN Camp David Accords

Following Jimmy Carter’s election as president of US, attaining peace between Israel and its neighbors was a primary objective of his foreign policy at the start of his administration in 1997. In particular, the complicated history between Egypt and Israel offered insight into the necessity of brokering a peace treaty. Israel and Egypt had fought four wars that led to the need for establishing a compromise between the two states regarding settlements, land disputes and the issue of secure and normalized diplomatic relations between the two countries. Indeed, both states were worn out with the un-prosperous wars between them.

Fortunately, they were both willing to resolve their problems and showed new enthusiasm for peace progress because they realized that they would benefit from a closer relationship with America (Telhami, 1992). In 1978, the Camp David negotiations took
place, the talks involved senior government leaders from Israel and Egypt who met at Camp David to negotiate a framework for peace for the Middle East region.

Without a doubt the negotiations were a tough process; both President Carter and Sadat wanted to successfully reach an agreement as it would have had negative effects on both of them if these negotiations were not completed. For Sadat, it meant another defeat by Israel, and for Carter, it would have been shaming on the US if he failed as a diplomat (Mansfield, 2003).

On the other hand, Israel appeared to have the strongest bargaining tool since they had little to lose. In fact, both President Carter and Sadat feared that Israel was not keen on reaching an agreement. Although Carter tried to keep the negotiations on track, he complained about the position of Israel and the fact that Israel had not indicated to him what their minimal needs were: - (Ibid, 1982)

“‘My problem is with the issues that do not really relate to Israel's security. I must have your frank assessment. My greatest strength here is your confidence but I don't feel that I have your trust. What do you really need for your defense? It is ridiculous to speak of Jordan overrunning Israel! I believe I can get from Sadat what you really need, but I just do not have your confidence’” (Ibid, 1982).

The Accords were signed by President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin on September 17, 1978. Two different agreements were signed; the first agreement was “A framework of peace in the Middle East” which was intended to deal with the Palestinian question. The second agreement was “a framework for peace between Israel and Egypt. In addition, the US committed several billion dollars’ worth of annual subsidies to both governments.

One would assume that the reactions of the Arab and the Jews would have been positive after the signing of the Accords. However, this is not the case. The Arab states felt shortchanged while the Israelis appeared divided. The First Agreement “A framework of
peace in the Middle East” failed because of ambiguous language that left both Egypt and Israel to interpret it differently leaving the Palestinian question unanswered, at the same time it made Israel less open to any future discussions of Palestine. Thus, it failed to set the framework for just, lasting, and comprehensive peace in the Middle East (Dan, 2008).

According to Mansfield (2003), the general view of the Arab leaders was that Sadat was putting Egypt first before their Arab League Partners. As a result, Arab leaders held a meeting in Iraq and they unanimously agreed to impose economic and political sanctions on Egypt because of betrayal.

The Arab league headquarters were moved to Tunis from Cairo and many Arab states closed their embassies, broke off trade and their diplomatic relations with Egypt. The second agreement only restored Egyptian sovereignty over its territory, gave the Egyptians back their land, and meant mutual recognition of each country by the other (Mansfield, 2003).

As common with modern peace processes in the Israel-Palestine conflict, the UN did not participate in the negotiations. A report issued to the GA regarding Camp David caused a lot of anger towards Israel from other countries, as it exhibited Israel’s non-commitment to the UN. It was discovered that the resolutions made by the UN regarding the Israel-Palestine conflict were to be made obsolete by the US during the negotiations and also the framework that dealt with the Palestinian territories was written without the participation of the Palestinians who suffered greatly as a result of the conflict.

4.2.4 The UN and Oslo Peace Accords

The negotiations between Israel and the PLO that ultimately led to the Oslo Accords began in secret, in 1993, in Oslo Norway. The Accords were considered a landmark moment as they marked the first time Israel and the PLO formally recognized one another
in the pursuit of peace in the Middle East. The negotiations led to the signing of two separate agreements signed by the government of Israel and the leadership of the PLO that was ratified in Washington, D.C., in 1993 (Oslo I) and in Taba, Egypt, in 1995 (Oslo II). Interestingly, the provisions drafted during the talks remain in effect today; however, the relationship between the two sides continues to be marred by conflict.

On September 1993 the Oslo process declared the Principles of Interim Self-Government Arrangements officially known as Gaza-Jericho Plan within its context; it also envisaged the Palestinian leadership in the Gaza and the West Bank. In addition this declaration stipulated a two-phase solution; a duration of five years to find the solution of the Palestinian problem as well as the implementation of permanent arrangements that are to be negotiated no later than the commencement of the third year of the interim period, this was inclusive of the status of the city Jerusalem and the refugee problem (King, 1994).

The Accords were viewed as a great step for good relations for the parties. In particular, the exchange of mutual letters of recognition, between the leadership of Israel and the PLO was considered important for the viability of the two-state solution as the PLO embodied the concept of a Palestinian state, its official recognition by Israel ‘implied the legitimacy of such a state (Kelman H. C., 1997).

Indeed, following the signing of the Accords, the first two years were marked by international optimism and a growing urge to for a “new Middle East” characterized by vibrant economic ventures, development projects, and social cooperation, on both regional and Israeli-Palestinian levels. Indeed, both Israel and the PLO seemed determined to cement their partnership by implementing the Gaza-Jericho phase and signing the Oslo II Accord which intended to have Israel withdrew from all Palestinian cities.
Despite intensified efforts, the end of 1993 still saw a period of great disappointment. According to Buchanan (2000) the Accords, and particularly their chief innovation the Israeli-PLO act of mutual recognition, emerged because of the existence of a broad convergence of interests between the Rabin government and the Arafat-led PLO in the early 1990s. He further criticizes how the agreements were highly asymmetrical in structure, often appearing to favor Israel at the expense of the Palestinians.

While the Accords had somehow succeeded to establish cordial relations and mutual recognition between Israel and Palestine; they had not directly addressed important issues of Jerusalem, Palestinian refugees, and Jewish settlements. According to Barak (2005), he argues that with this realization for any negotiations to be successful they must address the most difficult issues that include the status of the city of Jerusalem, the Palestinian refugees, as well as the illegal Jewish settlements, and they must also include the issues surrounding the establishment of the Palestinian state as well as protection of its borders.

Without a doubt, many hoped that Oslo would be the first step multi-stage peace process, where both parties could progressively build mutual trust. However, no such trust materialized. Instead, there was increased internal division by both sides. For example, Palestine’s opposition criticized their leadership’s vision for settlement and offered opposing solutions.

On the other hand, the Jewish extremists opted to derail the peace negotiations because of their disagreement with the Accord’s statement that formation of Palestine state would have to be part of any workable solution to end the conflict. Thus in a strategy to spoil the aspirations of the two-state solution, Israel continued to expand the Jewish settlements within Palestine, even though they were aware that such settlements were considered obstacles to peace by the international community (Tilley, 2005).
Although the UNSG was not present during the Oslo negotiations, the GA expressed full support for the Declaration of principle and stressed the need for the UN to play an active role in the peace process. It also urged the UN system and members to provide greater economic and technical assistance to the Palestinians.

**4.2.5 The UN and the Camp David Summit**

In July 2000 President Clinton called the leaders of Israel and the PA to a meeting at Camp David, Maryland. The meeting was focused on reaching an agreement on “permanent status” issues, such as Jerusalem, settlements, refugees, and borders. However, at the conclusion of the meeting, there was a stalemate as both sides left the Camp David without reaching any agreements.

The Israelis blamed the Palestinians saying that Yasser Arafat did not act appropriately under the Oslo Accord; they claimed he was responsible for the redeployment of Israelis from Gaza and West Bank, and that he gave control of East Jerusalem to the Palestinians. On the other hand, the Palestinian side accused Israel of insisting to gain control over Gaza and West Bank and retaining sovereignty over East Jerusalem, including the area of Harem-Al-Sharif.

With both parties blaming each other, the summit ended in a disappointment and it suspended the hopes of Palestinians and Israelis who had been anticipating peace (White, 2002). When the Camp David ended a new wave of protests rose again and violence began between Israelis and Palestinians.

The UNSC condemned the dramatic escalation of the event by the adoption of resolution 1322 which called on Israel to withdraw from occupied territories and also urged Israel to abide by the Fourth Geneva Convention and also called for an immediate resumption of peace talks.
Nonetheless, Israel ignored the UN resolution and continued to occupy almost all of the West Bank claiming that the trend of terror by Palestinian radicals required this kind of action. After several requests by the UN and consequently Israeli’s withdrawal from Gaza the siege was dissolved in 2002 in the month of November. The siege caused Arafat’s approval rating among the Palestinian radicals to soar (Isserof, 2004).

4.2.6 The UN and the Taba talks

After the collapse of the Camp David summit, President Clinton presented a peace proposal that initiated new negotiations in Taba during the last week of January in 2001. Both conflicting parties arrived at Taba with no confidence in the other. Israeli’s PM Barak demanded that the end of the conflict and the cessation of demands be part of the framework agreement.

On the other hand, the Palestinians were fed up with promises and demands of the Israeli’s thus were prepared to include their demands, only if the agreement stated what demands they referred to. If not, then the end of the conflict and cessation of demands would take force only after full implementation of the agreement (Sher, 2008).

During the negotiations both parties accepted a territorial solution based on the 1967 lines with an agreed territorial exchange, they also discussed security and refugee issues. However, they differed on the specific details of the solution; On Jerusalem, the basis for negotiations was the Clinton Parameters, but talks faltered on the issue of the Historical Basin, in addition, several weeks later, the talks were discontinued as Barak was defeated for reelection by Ariel Sharon. As a result, the summit ended without an agreement.

4.2.7 Peace Talks (2002-2012)

The desire to resolve the Israel-Palestine conflict led to the proposed Roadmap for peace plan by the Quartet. The roadmap is sometimes referred to as a President Bush’s plan, but
it was a product of negotiation among the US, European Union (EU), Russia and the UN. The U.S Foreign Service Officer Donald Blome originally drafted the principles of the plan that were first outlined by President Bush in a speech on June 2002. President Bush called for an independent Palestinian state living side by side with Israel in peace.

The Roadmap had three phases that were to be implemented in measurable incremental steps and based on the foundations laid by the Madrid Conference, the principle of land for peace and UNSC resolutions 242, 338 and 1397. Annan (2012), states that the roadmap was not designed to replace a negotiated agreement between the conflicting parties rather its purpose was to create context the for negotiations by rebuilding the confidence shattered by Oslo’s failure, while at the same time preparing some of Oslo’s defects.

According to Annan (2012), five key features gave rise to debate in the quartet group. First was parallelism, which was the late UNSG Kofi Annan’s mantra that was shared by both the EU and Russia. They believed that they would not be successful if all Israeli’s actions were contingent on the Palestinians first meeting security benchmarks. Secondly, the roadmap was performance driven with timelines laid down for when the process should move to subsequent phases including final status negotiations.

Third, a structure was meant to be put in place through which the international community would closely follow each party’s action or inaction on its obligation. The fourth element was the prescription a clear end goal for negotiation. Finally, the fifth element introduced the option of agreeing on a Palestinian state with provisional borders during the process as a way station to a permanent solution (Annan, 2012).

From 2002 onwards, the Quartet continued to meet regularly at “principals” level and on the ground at envoy level through the facilitation of the Gaza-based UN Special
Coordinator for the peace process. Unfortunately, the goals of the Roadmap were never accomplished; as of today, phase I has not been completely implemented by the two conflicting parties.

However, some little progress has been made on both sides. Palestine has held presidential and legislative elections and Israel has withdrawn from Gaza. In addition, Bush hosted the Annapolis Conference as a means to implement Phase I of the Roadmap. Annan (2012), argued that the Roadmap only had a chance of working if all members of the Quartet insisted on utilizing its potential to the full and did not give parties the chance to wriggle out of their commitment.

As a reaction to the failings of the ‘roadmap to peace,’ the Geneva Accord emerged in December 2003. The accord was launched by representatives of Israeli and Palestinian civil society, led by Yossi Beilin and Yasser Abed Rabo. It was considered a detailed model to end the conflict as it touched on final status issues.

In fact, this blueprint for peace generated a lot of public support among the Israelis and Palestinians. However, the former UNSG Kofi Annan met the founders of the initiative in New York and he remained committed to the Quartet plan. In fact, he acknowledged that the Road Map remained the key mechanism for moving forward, he also insisted that conflict resolution must come from people working together for change.

**Annapolis Conference**

Indyk (2009), remarked that it was baffling that in November 2007 President Bush thought he should have reversed almost seven years of virtual neglect and convened an international conference in Annapolis to launch a new effort to revive the peace process to resolve the conflict. In November 2007, the President and his secretary of state Condoleezza Rice organized the Annapolis Peace conference at The Naval Academy in
Annapolis Maryland. This was the first international conference on American soil organized to resolve the Israel-Palestine conflict. The conference brought together Israeli PM Ehud Olmert and Palestinian President Mahmoud, forty-nine states including regional neighbors and representatives of key international organizations.

In an attempt to end the conflict, the two parties committed to six points: launching good faith negotiations to resolve all outstanding issues, engaging in continuous and vigorous negotiations leading to an agreement before the end of 2008, creating a steering committee that met continuously and holding its first meeting on December 12, 2007, biweekly meeting to follow up on negotiations and providing their assistance to the process in fulfilling their obligations as stated in the Roadmap (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2007b).

A joint understanding, read by President Bush, stated that the parties agreed to launch good-faith bilateral negotiations in order to conclude a peace treaty, resolving all outstanding issues, as specified in previous agreements. During the conference, an agreement was reached that called for the formation of a steering committee that was tasked to develop a joint work plan as well as establish and oversee the activities of the negotiations team.

In addition, biweekly negotiations between the leaders of Israel and Palestine were also recommended. Last but not least they agreed that before the end of 2008, they would implement their respective obligations under the Roadmap for peace and continue its implementation until they had reached a peace treaty (Joint Understanding by President Bush at Annapolis Conference, 27 November 2007).

At the conference, former UNSG Ban Ki-moon welcomed the Joint Understanding and pledged the full support of the UN for the renewed effort. As common with the peace
process, the conference did not manage to achieve the breakthrough all had hoped for. As a result, Hamas and Grand Ayatollah Ali Khamenei of Iran called for a boycott of the conference and held large demonstrations to oppose the conference.

Similarly, Jewish activists and organizations protested in front of Israel’s embassies in New York and Washington D.C. opposing Israel's concession in a peace settlement of any part of Jerusalem or the West Bank.

**Obama’s Administration**

Two years before President Obama took office; peace negotiations between the Israeli government and PA were halted. In fact when President Obama came into office in 2009, he inherited a deteriorating situation in the Middle East, fortunately, he was willing to rebalance the U.S. commitments to the region (Lynch, 2015). In January 2009 Obama officially assumed office and committed himself to actively and aggressively seek a lasting peace between Israel and Palestine as well as between its neighbors (Michael D. Shear., & Glenn Kessler, 2009).

In fact, he provided new hope for both sides in resuming the peace process based on his profile as a knowledgeable ex-activist, and a president with a new approach and agenda with the Muslim world. In his first administration, the president appointed George Mitchell as the envoy for the Middle East Peace, his appointment gave the impression of ‘smart choice’ as he had a rich experience from the mediation procedure (Siniver, 2011). Certainly, the creation of this post by the president indicated the effort to make the parties negotiate directly as well as make communication among parties easier.

In order to fulfill the task, Mitchell launched shuttle diplomacy and held successful meetings with the leaders of Israel and Palestine. As a result of the success of the shuttle diplomacy, President Obama met with Abbas and Netanyahu during bilateral meetings in
May 2009 in Washington, DC to discuss the Israeli settlement policy. In a meeting with Netanyahu, the president demanded that Israel should stop annexation on the territory of the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

Similarly, his speech in Cairo in June 2009 declared his support for the PA. He supported PA’s fight for self-determination through non-violent means and urged Israel to admit such a right for the Palestinians. Moreover, he stressed that the US does not accept the illegal Israeli settlements, as they violate previous agreements and undermine efforts to achieve peace (The White House, 2010a).

Without a doubt, the Mitchell led mission had born considerable fruits, In November 2009, the suspension on settlement construction in the West Bank was imposed after long months of negotiations with Israel’s PM, unfortunately, the freeze did not involve the East Jerusalem, and the Palestinians did not appreciate this Israeli step, thus complicating the progress of the negotiations.

Entous (2009), argued that the insistence of both parties on certain preconditions complicates the progress of the direct negotiations. For example, Israeli PM Netanyahu stated that Israel would participate on negotiations related to the Palestinian state solely if the PA recognizes Israel as a Jewish state.

In September 2010 Obama re-launched direct negotiations between Abbas and Netanyahu. These the negotiation intended to resolve all final status issues. The main goal was a settlement, negotiated between the parties, that would end the occupation which began in 1967 and lead to the emergence of an independent Palestinian state, living in peace with a Jewish state of Israel and its other neighbors (The White House, 2010b). In the beginning, the US focused on the extension of the suspension of settlements in exchange for strengthening Israel’s military capacity.
As a result, the US provided funding for the purchase of military equipment and defense systems together with the assurances about the commitments to Israel’s security after the creation of an independent Palestinian state and promised not to ask further extension on settlement construction (Makovsky, 2010).

In addition, the US offered to veto any UN resolution that would be connected to the peace negotiations. Lastly, the Americans promised to support the Israeli military presence in the Jordan Valley after the creation of an independent Palestine (Abrams, E., and Singh, M, 2010).

In keeping their promises, the US vetoed a resolution that condemned the construction of settlements by Israel in February 2011. As a result the US was accused of supporting the settlements, in its defense the former US Ambassador to the UN Susan Rice stressed that the aim was to prevent setting a new procedure in case parties reach a stalemate, thus it was not desirable to seek a resolution at the UNSC, rather through a direct dialogue (United States Mission to the United Nations, 2011).

In 2012 Obama defended his post, thus the mediation attempts to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict continued again. Obama’s appointment of Sen. John Kerry as Secretary of State signaled a fresh start for the talk. The president also appointed the veteran former ambassador to Tel Aviv Martin Indyk in July 2013 to assist Kerry in his new mission. Sen. Kerry's sense of responsibility and Indyk’s expertise suggested the possibility of reaching a reasonable compromise that the world hoped for. Without a doubt, these appointments indicated Obama’s complete adoption of the embracers’ total vision and methods of brokering a peace that would not come through pursuing pressures on Israel, but through more seductive offers (Thrall, 2017).
Obama’s dedication to the resolution of the conflict was publicly confirmed at the UNGA speech in September 2013. President Obama underlined the goal of negotiations to secure the State of Israel and the State of Palestine as an independent and sovereign entity (White House, 2013a).

Additionally in his interview with the Atlantic’ Jeffery Goldberg in March 2012, President Obama declared that his administration will offer military and diplomatic support to the state of Israel on many levels such as “ensuring that Israel maintains its qualitative military edge, fighting back against delegitimization of Israel, whether at the UNHCR or in front of the UNGA, or during the Goldstone Report” (Goldberg, 2012).

Obama’s administration extended to include the rejection of any attempt to promote the Palestinian rights in the international forums, even symbolically. According to Ruebner (2016) promotion of Palestinian rights for this administration, was a catastrophic setback of the already halted peace talk, and an attempt to delegitimize Israel, so it had to intervene to prevent it.

As a result, his administration mobilized its full resources to stop PA’s bid for a statehood recognition and full membership in the UN. In a speech delivered at the UNGA President Obama criticized the Palestinians openly for their bid saying that they were using the wrong forums that could not achieve peace (Cooper, 2011). Obama asserted, “No vote at the UN will ever create an independent Palestinian state.”

According to Wendy Sherman, undersecretary of state for political affairs, Obama’s administration was doing a very broad and very vigorous demarche against the Palestinian membership in the UN, “of virtually every capital in the world this was high on the agenda for every meeting the secretary has with every world leader” (Rogin, 2011). This impacted a lot on the PA’s application for statehood status; its request
languished in the UNSC committee because of the US rejection. However, the UNGA granted Palestine the status of permanent non-Observer in November 2012. The UNGA resolution 11317 was passed by 138 in favor, 9 against and 41 abstentions, the U.S. was among the opposing votes.

Undoubtedly peace processes have adopted similar approaches to peacebuilding. That was based on UNs resolution 181 of adopting a two-state solution; they also involved arranging high-level diplomatic efforts and appointing a special envoy for peace to the Middle East region. Given that the Israel-Palestine conflict began at the very inception of the UN, the organization is much neglected at the peace table as it has not been granted equal space with other actors to play a political role. According to Annan (2012), the US and Israel are very possessive of the conflict, while the UN is politically sidelined.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conference</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNGA Assembly Partition Plan (1948)</td>
<td>Called for the division of Palestine into a Jewish state and an Arab state.</td>
<td>Accepted by the Jews. Rejected by the Arabs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armistice Agreement (1949)</td>
<td>Agreement between Israel and its Arab neighbor outlining the borders of the newly formed state of Israel.</td>
<td>Accepted by Israel and its Arab neighbors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN Resolution 242 (1967)</td>
<td>Called for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all territories occupied after 1967 war.</td>
<td>Accepted by the Arabs. Israel says the territories are in dispute.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN Resolution 338 (1973)</td>
<td>Reaffirmed the principles of Resolution 242</td>
<td>Accepted by Egypt and Israel. Rejected by Syria, Iraq Jordan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp David Accords (1978)</td>
<td>Aimed at settling the conflict between Egypt and Israel and also set out the Framework for Peace in the region</td>
<td>An agreement was reached</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madrid Peace Conference (1991-993)</td>
<td>Aimed to revive the peace process between Israel and Palestine</td>
<td>No agreement was reached</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oslo I Accords (1993)</td>
<td>Geared towards a two-state solution aimed at resolving the conflict in general</td>
<td>An agreement was reached</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp David Summit (2000)</td>
<td>Continuation of the negotiations and where the Final Status negotiations were to be resolved.</td>
<td>No agreement was reached</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Taba Talks (2001)</td>
<td>Details the five-year interim agreement of Palestinian autonomy. Created Areas A, B, and C in the West Bank. Proposed final agreements between Israel and Palestine.</td>
<td>No agreement was reached</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Roadmap for peace (2002)</td>
<td>Plan to resolve the Israeli Palestinian conflict specifically outlining steps to reach a peace</td>
<td>No agreement was reached</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annapolis conference (2007)</td>
<td>Conference between Israel and Arab neighbors, formally restarting the negotiations and reaffirming the two-state solution.</td>
<td>No agreement was reached</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace-Talks 2010-2012</td>
<td>Direct talks between Israel and Palestine</td>
<td>No agreement was reached</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1 the chronology of Peace Processes**

The table shows the chronology of the various peace processes put in place since the conflict began and their status.
4.3 Challenges that the UN has faced in its approach to Peacebuilding

The UN has often failed to meet their most basic objective of finding long term peace between the Israelis and Palestinians. On many occasions, the UN ends up watching helplessly while the war rages. Thus this section analyses the challenges the UN faces in its mandate of promoting peace and security through mediation in the conflict.

4.3.1 Influence of actors at the peace table

In these Israel-Palestine peace negotiations, international actors have many times been a moderating influence, and at that others enabled further escalation of the conflict. In fact, it is almost true that the UN cannot bring the two conflicting sides together because there are not just two sides but there are many sides. The role of outside actors since the peace talks formally began has been problematic. Instead of suggesting how their difficulties could be overcome, third-party actors have indeed become embroiled in the peace process allowing the parties to use and often abuse their involvement.

One major issue that continues to hinder the UN from playing an effective role in these peace talks is that the US has for a long time claimed the lead role in the peace processes. America appears very possessive of the conflict, yet the UN was very invested in the issues at stake.

Without a doubt it was the UN that had first given legitimacy to the partition mandate in 1948, the UN negotiated the armistice agreement after the 1948 war, UNSC resolution 242 and 338 remain the agreed framework for dealing with issues left unaddressed by the wars on the basis of land for peace and last but not least UN aid agencies continue to work on the ground, yet America continues to be possessive of the conflict and does it best to keep the UN at bay (Annan, 2012).
With the US being Israel's biggest ally, it has used its veto power against UN resolutions on Israel. In fact many have criticized how the US has wielded its veto to protect the Israelis, hence paralyzing the council. Annan (2012) remarked that the US and its political system ought to understand that a reflective and often unthinking support for almost any Israeli action or policy will, in the long run, serve no one.

For example, the final Status issue of Jerusalem has long been the target of the US veto at the UN. Interestingly the Oslo Accord stipulated it would be discussed in the latter stages of any peace deal between Israel and Palestine. In 1976 the UN introduced resolution 12022, which called on Israel to protect the “Holy Places which are under its occupation.” This particular resolution was concerned at the measures taken by the Israeli authorities leading to the present grave situation including measures aimed at changing the physical, cultural, demographic and religious character of the occupied territories. As usual, the US voted against the draft.

Additionally, the US has openly broken the rules of an honest mediator; on several occasion, during negotiations, it has taken sides as a mediator between Israel and Palestine. An illuminating example is, the Camp David Summit in 2000, during its course Arafat and Barak held no substantive meeting and bargaining occurred primarily between each leader and the mediator.

Certainly, this strategy was ill-suited to an intergroup conflict considering there is little trust left between the parties of the conflict. Thus President Clintons, decision to ignore his earlier commitment and blame the Palestinians side for the failure of the summit only undermined the role of US as an honest broker (Malley, Rober,. & Hussein, Aghai, 2001). Another issue is that the UN appears politically sidelined in these peace processes. In fact, it is not difficult for the Israeli leaders to cut the UN out of negotiations. This is because
the Israelis are convinced that they could never get a fair hearing from the UN. In his book interventions, Kofi Annan (2012) states that when he observes the moribund debates in the GA on “the Question of Palestine” all the symptoms of irrelevance and destructiveness were indeed plain.

He agrees that they generated a lot of heat but did not shed much light on who had to do what, when, and how to achieve permanent peace. In addition, the GA and Commission on human rights passed many resolutions against the Israelis and any legitimate criticism they leveled were often overshadowed by the fact that member states applied standards to Israel that they did not apply to Palestine (Annan, 2012).

Moreover, the UN’s record in the peace processes is in some ways less impressive. According to Annan (2012) every time the UNSC took positions, it failed to establish mechanisms to enforce its will. Undeniably the UN has appeared unable to enforce numerous UNSC resolutions that called for “withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from occupied territories”, “for a just settlement of the refugee problem,” “for implementation of the Tenet Work Plan,” “the Roadmap” and in addition it could not stop Israel’s illegals attacks Palestinian territories.

Beyond doubt, the UN plays a diminutive role in the peace process because its role in the conflict is understood by other engaged parties to be humanitarian and not political. Furthermore, selfish interests from actors have hindered the UN’s meaningful involvement in the peace processes.

4.3.2 Treatment of refugees

Annan (2012) states he grapples with the fact that Israelis felt that UN perpetuated hostility towards them. In his last address in the Security Council on the conflict, he summed up what he had learned over decades of watching the handling of the conflict in
the UN. According to Kofi Annan, the endless passing of GA resolutions condemning Israel’s behavior strengthened the Israeli belief that the UN is too one-sided to be allowed a significant role in the peace process (Annan, 2012).

Historically, there was an exchange of populations in the Middle East region as a result of conflict, however, unlike the Arab refugees, the Jewish refugees are often or completely a forgotten case. The Palestinians are the heart of the peace process, with a huge bureaucratic machine dedicated to fighting for the Palestinian cause. They are the only group of refugees with a UN agency that according to its mandate cannot but perpetuate their tragedy.

The GA resolutions have mostly focused on the issues of Palestinian refugees even though they are clearly not the only Middle East refugees. In fact, there are never any resolutions that specifically address the issue of Jewish refugees, nor even mention Jewish refugees from Arab countries. Other UN entities are also guilty of this omission, for example, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has adopted 132 resolutions to address the plight of Palestinians and United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) adopted 122 resolutions to address the same.

Interestingly, there are at least ten identifiable UN entities that have been specifically created, to address issues affecting Palestinian refugees. These include: UNCCP, the UNRWA, the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territories Occupied since 1967, the Committee on the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, the United Nations Division for Palestinian Rights, the United Nations Development Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (UNDP), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Office of the Special Coordinator of the Middle East Peace Process, and the Arab International Forum.
on Rehabilitation and Development in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, sponsored by
the ESCWA, the Arab League, and the Palestinian National Authority Ministry of
Planning. Interestingly, the Jewish refugee, particularly from Arab countries, had no UN
entity created or specifically instructed to address issues affecting them (Quandt, 2010).

The anomalies in addressing the two refugee populations are further evidenced by the
vastly greater sums of money that the UN and its agencies have spent on the Palestinian
refugees. Since the conflict began in 1947 billions of dollars have been spent by the UN,
its affiliated entities as well as member states to provide relief and assistance to
Palestinian refugees.

Noteworthy is that during that same time period, no such financial assistance was
forthcoming from the UNHCR for Jewish refugees fleeing Arab countries. Financially the
Palestine refugees have gained a lot of support from the international community.
According to Levin (2001) by 1986, UNRWA had spent $2.6 billion on services for
Palestinian refugees and its budgeted and real expenditures have continued to increase.
Since 1998 to 2008, UNRWA spent over $4 billion US dollars in the provision of services
on Palestinian refugees, as follows:

Table 2 the UNRWA budget for Palestinian refugees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>NUMBER OF REFUGEES</th>
<th>UNRWA BUDGET</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>3,521,130</td>
<td>330,700 Million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>3,625,592</td>
<td>352,800 Million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>3,737,494</td>
<td>300,891 Million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>3,874,738</td>
<td>310,392 Million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>3,973,360</td>
<td>330,748 Million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>4,082,300</td>
<td>344,081 Million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>4,186,711</td>
<td>350,968 Million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>4,283,892</td>
<td>360,949 Million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>4,396,209</td>
<td>488,566 Million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>4,504,169</td>
<td>505,673 Million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>4,618,141</td>
<td>544,648 Million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>$4,220,416,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ‘UNRWA in Figure’
This table shows the budget allocated for Palestinian refugees by the UNRWA from 1998 to 2008 also the table shows an increase of registered refugees every year as a result of continued displacement of Palestinians by the Israelis. Noteworthy is that the numbers featured in the table above are aggregated from the UNRWA financial including.

During that same period, the UNHCR did not provide any comparable financial assistance to Jewish refugees. In fact, the international resources provided to Jewish refugees from Arab countries were negligible (Kapitan, 1995). Moreover, the expenditures for services to refugee populations for both UNRWA and UNHCR reveal the differential treatment accorded Palestinian refugees.

With a budget of $1,849,835,626 in 2008, the UNHCR spends approximately $56 on each of the 32,900,000 persons under its mandate while UNRWA spends more than double what the UNHCR does on each registered Palestinian refugees (Quandt, 2010). According to Levin (2001), the majority of assistance for Jewish refugees came from international organizations such as the international Jewish organizations, the Red Cross, and the Inter-Governmental Committee for European Immigration, and relevant Governments.

Noteworthy is the lack of UN attention to Jewish refugees was not due to a lack of trying. In fact, Israeli representatives have on numerous occasions presented their plight to the UN, its leadership, and affiliated agencies in a bid to seek its intervention, to no avail. Instead, the UN proceeded to deal exclusively with Palestinian refugees. This preferential treatment continues up to today making Israel highly suspicious of UN’s ability to actually fulfill its role over and beyond any questions concerning perceived bias towards the Palestinians.
4.3.3 The narrative of victimhood

Groups in conflicts often develop narratives that justify their position and increase their members’ readiness to endure the costs of conflict and continue to fight. According to Bar-Tal (2013), these narratives serve to legitimize the group’s position and demonize the enemy. The sense of collective victimhood usually emerges as a major issue in societies involved in the intractable conflict and is a fundamental part of the collective memory thereof. Noteworthy is that the focus of these beliefs is on the unjust harm, evil deeds, and atrocities perpetrated by the adversary. Thus the shared societal beliefs and collective memory portray the group as the victim of the opponent.

For the Israelis, the traumas from the Holocaust in Europe, the encounter with the Arab states and the Palestinian population in the Middle East laid the basis for the strong position of victimhood within the Israeli conflict narrative. Rotberg (2006) states that the belief that Israel and its citizens have been under a continuous security threat from groups who are not happy of their existence has forced the Israelis to be prepared to fight when it’s necessary. As a result, the state has developed a comprehensive defensive mechanism.

Interestingly, a sense of collective victimhood is unrelated to the strength and power of the collectives involved in the conflict. Collectives that are considered strong and powerful militarily, politically and economically still perceive themselves as victims or potential victims in the conflict. For example, Israel’s security focus has its basis in the citizens viewing themselves as beleaguered (Bar-Tal, D., Halperin, E., & Oren, N., 2010). Interestingly there is a dominant view within the Israeli society that they themselves are a peace-loving people, however, they are surrounded by hostile neighbors and thus they are continuously threatened by attacks and wars from their unfriendly neighbors.
Another mirror image refers to Israel’s perception that the Palestinians have completely 
Palestinians refused to recognize Israel as a Jewish state, while Israelis do not refuse to 
accept an independent Palestinian state. Israeli’s argue that this makes them fall victim to 
an absolutist attitude among Palestinians. Thus their feelings of victimization legitimize 
their suspicion towards the intentions of the Palestinians and their neighboring Arab 
countries

Without a doubt the “cognitive biases,” which contain the mirror images, attitudes and 
values connected to the conflict that are found within each society, play a big role in 
encouraging the feelings victimization and gives room for increasingly violent and 
aggressive responses towards the adversary. In addition mirror images in the Israeli 
society unavoidably contribute to escalation of the conflict (Fisher, R. J., & Kelman, H. 
C., 2011).

On the other hand, Palestinians perceive themselves as members of an oppressed national 
group. This perception is attributed by the continuous loss of their land as a result of 
Israel’s expansionist policy and the loss of lives of Palestinians during events like the 
massacres in Sabra and Shatila, clashes during the Second Intifada and the more 
recent wars on Gaza and also because Israel’s policies deprive Palestinian their basic 
human rights. Tzoreff (2010) emphasizes that Palestinians view themselves as victims of 
Israel’s agenda and a paralyzed international society that often fails to come to their 
rescue.

Thus the sense of victimization does not only lead to feelings such as inferiority and 
weakness, but also to the collective fear. This feeling of Inferiority is amongst the 
Palestinians is related both to the discourse on the ‘Palestinian issue’ in Israel, and the 
perception of complete, Israeli control of Palestinians’ lives (Rouhana N. M., 2006). The 
feeling of weakness, on the other hand, is connected to Israel’s control of the Palestine
land and the constant defeats during the war as well as the international support Israel get from powerful countries such as the US. Without a doubt, these feelings lead to the existential fear of Palestine and Palestinians eventually being wiped off the map. Certainly, the Palestinian people often see themselves less valuable than the Israelis.

This feeling of helplessness is expressed in what Tzoreff (2010) terms as “defeatism complex,” This is when the feelings of weakness and helplessness lead Palestinians to leave their faith in the hands of destiny. Noteworthy is a culture of defeatism is rather an extreme expression of victimization in any conflict situation, in fact, in this case, it can be seen as another consequence of the asymmetry and intractability in the conflict.

Indeed, the sense of collective victimhood is based on beliefs about the justness of the goals of one’s group and on one’s positive self-image, at the same time, it emphasizes on the wickedness of the opponent’s goals and characteristics.

4.3.4 Protected/sacred values

The concept of “protected value” describes values perceived by a particular group as so fundamental that they have been granted protected status against any compromise, concession, or tradeoff. They have the status of a taboo, and its violation is considered a violation of the group’s fundamental rules of ethics (Tetlock P. E., 1999; Tetlock P. E., 2003).

There are three core issues that are perceived as protected values by the parties: both parties express fierce opposition to any compromise and even to place the issues on the negotiating table, the holiness of the land is also symmetric across both sides and the issue of refugees is an exception, perceived as a protected value by both parties, but each side ascribes it a different meaning.
During peace negotiations parties have been driven by protected/sacred values which often deviates their willingness to sacrifice self-interest. For example, the Jews base their claim to the land of Israel on at least four premises: God promised them the land, they settled and developed the land, the international community granted political sovereignty in Palestine to the Jews and lastly the territory was captured in defensive wars. Former UNSG Kofi Annan agreed that indeed many Israelis saw the Jewish claim to all the land as stronger than the claim of Palestinians to part of it (Annan, 2012).

During the Oslo peace process, the first and only core issue on which the struggle centered was the territorial division of the land. It was discussed in practice in the intermediate phase of the process when various areas within Judea and Samaria were partially or fully transferred to the rule of the PA. However, groups opposed to the process on both sides reacted angrily. The opposing groups claimed that relinquishing control over part of the land means relinquishing the historical-religious right of the national movement to control over its historic homeland whether its Israel or Palestine (Meital, 2004; Naor, 2001).

Another illuminating example is the holy sites in the heart of Jerusalem. Undoubtedly the city is a symbol that inspires strong emotions among the parties. Over the course of the years, the distinction between the city’s holy and historical sites and its municipal territory has been blurred, as well as the distinction between the religious-historical myth and the national-political ethos of the two peoples claiming sovereignty over the city. Thus the entire area known as “Jerusalem” became a territory with deep symbolic significance for both sides (Lapidoth, 2007; Amirav, 2007).

For Israelis, Jerusalem represents the historical link between the Jewish people and their homeland. On the other hand Palestinians believe that the Temple Mount is not just a holy site and a symbol of the justness of their claims for sovereignty, but also the most
important asset that they expect to receive and that will define their status in the Muslim world generally and in the Arab world in particular (Amirav, 2007).

The phrase “right of return” embodies, first and foremost, the demand for justice at the personal level and the right of every refugee to return to his/her original home. On the other hand, Israel sees this as a threat to its very existence as a Jewish state, as it threatens the right of the Jewish people to self-determination in a state with a Jewish character and majority, while the Palestinians link it to the historical injustice that violated the human rights of the refugees as individuals and as a society.

For the Palestinians, any compromise on the right of return means rendering decades of struggle meaningless (Friedman, 2004). Thus Palestinians require Israelis to acknowledge its responsibility in creating the Palestinian refugee problem and their right of return. However, this will subject Israel to a real existential threat as they fear being flooded by millions of Palestinians who would undermine its character as a Jewish state and threaten its very existence (Friedman, 2004; Zakay, D., Klar, Y. & Sharvit, K., 2002).

In his book Interventions, former UNSG Kofi Annan told the Security Council in his last address on the Middle East in 2006 that Israel needs to confront fundamental Palestine grievances. He argued that the formation of the State of Israel involved the dispossession of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian, turning them into refugees, and was immediately followed by a military occupation that brought more Palestinians under Israeli rule (Annan, 2012).

4.4 Chapter Summary

Historically both parties have claimed to be the rightful owners of the Palestine Land. There is no doubt that this particular conflict has had a direct impact on international security prompting the involvement of third-party interventions. Given that the Israel-
Palestine conflict began at the very inception of the UN, the organization has been at the forefront in trying to find peace.

Undoubtedly peace processes have adopted similar approaches to peacebuilding. That was based on UNs resolution 181 of adopting a two-state solution; they also involved organizing high-level diplomatic efforts as well as appointing a special envoy for peace to the region. However, the influence of actors at the peace table, different treatment of refugees, the narrative of victimhood and lack of compromise by both the parties continue to deny the UN chance to play an effective political role to the conflict.
CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

The study examined the origin of the conflict and its progression and found out that the construction of antagonistic and uncompromising identities by parties were the motivating factors that drive the conflict. The study also established that the clash between the two nationalism resulted from two developments; the settlement of the Jews in territory that belonged to the Palestinians as well as the emergence of the Palestinian resistance against Zionism within the PLO. The study also found out that the ideas Arab nationalism, placed emphasis on the loyalty of the Arab lands that they inhibited before Jewish masses slowly immigrated. On the other hand, the Jewish people developed their nationalism based on religious, cultural and historical commitments to the land

The study also found out that factors such as the sovereignty and security of each state, the persistent redefinition of borders, as well as Israel’s policy of consciously choking Palestine land and resources were driving motivators of the conflict. In fact, the study indicates that each these motivating factors form part of the larger picture of the conflict in the Middle East region thus play a part in sustaining the conflict. Moreover, the study established that the failure to resolve the Palestine refugee problem is a catalyst to the conflict.

The study also found out that during the Arab-Israeli wars, the Israeli forces forced the vast majority of indigenous Palestinians to become refugees. Majority of the Palestinian refugees ended up and remained in the West Bank and Gaza, while the rest were scattered across neighboring Arab countries. For this reason, the Arab states have always engaged in several wars with Israel in order to push for the Palestinian right of return. In fact, Arab
it countries fought with the Israeli because they wanted to assure their citizens and the Palestinian refugees about their commitment to the ‘right of return’.

This study also explored the peace processes in the region alongside the efforts adopted by the UN to resolve the Israel-Palestine conflict. The study found that the UN’s primary role in the peace process is humanitarian rather than political. This is because the US is very possessive of the file and does its best to keep other actors at bay. The study also found that the notion of uncompromising national identity construction and demonization of “the other” made it hard for peace talks to reach meaningful resolutions.

The study also suggests that the UN and the wider international community all have fallen into a pattern of managing, rather than resolving the conflict. Nonetheless, it should be noted that there has been a lot of efforts in attempting to resolve the crisis; with the two-state solution based on UNSC resolutions 242 and 338 being the most widely accepted solution to the conflict amongst the mediators.

This study has also established that the complex nature of the conflict is a significant barrier for the peace process to be advanced. Instead of consolidating the gains parties have had extraordinary influence in the peace process, mediators in peace talks have in several instances favored one side over the other and opposing groups from both sides do their best to keep everyone at bay by causing divisions deliberately so as to not generate support for any agreement reached thus prolonging the negotiations.

In addition, the UN has failed to earn the trust of parties as a result of preferential treatment of refugees and conflicting interests of member states that makes up the UNSC. This has slowed down the peace process through difficulties in adopting a common position. Additionally, the relevant literature suggests that selfish interests by both internal and external actors are a key obstacle to successful peace negotiations.
The study also found out that the continuing absence of a political solution to Israel-Palestine conflict undermines and compounds UN efforts to end the crisis. Last but not least, the UN also faces challenges in its approach to peacebuilding because of the narrative of victimhood from both parties and lack of compromise on protected/sacred values.

5.2 Conclusions

Without a doubt the failure to meaningfully resolve the problem of Palestine, ever since the Balfour Declaration and UN partition plan precipitated the Israel-Palestinian conflict that, has persistently destabilized the Middle East region. In fact, the conflict between Israel-Palestine is one that receives a great deal of attention worldwide. Thus, the most notable element in this war is the national attachment to Palestinian territory by the sides.

Both the Jews and Arabs developed their nationalism with a view to proving that they are the rightful owners of Palestine land. For instance, the Jews believed Palestine is their ‘promised land’. In fact, the Zionists reaped the benefit of this belief so as to establish a Jewish state in Palestine. On the other and the Arabs believed that the land belonged to them as it was the land on which Arab majority had been living since ancient time thus making them the rightful owners.

This study has also tried to display the formation of these approaches by reflecting on the construction of nationalism for both parties in order to understand the deep-rooted national attachment to Palestinian land. In addition, the study demonstrated that the attachment to Palestine land by both parties is unbreakable as territory constitutes the basis of the Jewish and Arab nationalism. Thus the main motive for the constant fighting between Israel and Palestine is the insistence of not making any concession from their territorial aspirations on Palestine.
This attitude of both parties is stemmed from protected values that deviate their willingness to sacrifice or compromise self-interest. Nonetheless, the complexity of the conflict has continuously made it impossible for the peace processes to succeed in putting an end to the violence that negatively affects the Middle East region.

Given that the Israel-Palestine conflict began at the very inception of the UN, the organization has been on the forefront in attempting to resolve the crisis. It has made its own contribution in the peace process through the adoption of resolutions by the UNSC, mediating peace talks as well as providing humanitarian support to the victims of the conflict.

However, the UN has faced challenges that have in one way or another affected the organization’s capacity to restore lasting peace in the Middle East; UNSC member states particularly the US has been biased in its approaches of dealing with the conflict thus peace initiative has been occasioned by parties self-interests. Additionally, the UN’s lacks of proper political participation in the peace processes and lastly the UN’s primary role is considered to be humanitarian and not political.

Furthermore, the Peace talks following the wars appear like the continuation of the conflict of nationalisms on a diplomacy table. For instance, the developments of the Oslo Accords showed that the peace processes will continue to fail unless core issues concerning territorial compromise are settled. In addition, all peace processes, displayed that the main problem was the exclusion of national interests to satisfy the citizens of both Israelis and Palestinians as the hopes of achieving peace were at the peak. As a result of repeated failures in the peace process, both parties assumed they could maintain their surveillance as long as the conflict continues.
Moving the focus back to Israeli-Palestinian relations the peace negotiations have wrongly underestimated the power of security aspects in the conflict narratives. As a result, the potential power of collective fear and rigid security has contributed to a negative view on negotiations and the peace process within both parties. Without a doubt, the characteristics of the Israeli and Palestinian narratives contribute to maintaining a high level of fear thus moving the focus away from the graveness of the situation and the need to generate more rational approaches.

Without a doubt, the peace processes mentioned in the study targeted to find a lasting solution to the conflict. However, the complex nature of the conflict prevented the parties from achieving meaningful reconciliation. Moreover, the peace process only referred to basic national aspirations of the parties thus failed to address hardcore issues that appeared important to the parties.

5.3 Recommendations

First and foremost the UNSC should establish a mechanism that will enable the council to enforce decisions once a position is taken. This will help to ensure that resolutions adopted to address the conflict directly are followed to the latter by the parties. It will also go a long way in making parties understand that resolutions adopted by the UNSC are not simply the meaningless acts of UN diplomats.

In the event that both parties do not adhere to the requirements of the adopted resolutions, the UNSC should consider making economies of both parties extremely difficult. Such measures will greatly alter the political, moral and economic position of both parties. In addition, it will prompt parties to engage in serious and constructive talks that lead to a real protection of Israel’s rights and security needs balanced with real protection for Palestinian human rights and security needs.
Secondly, going by the assumption of actors in the conflict, it is believed that the UN’s primary role is humanitarian rather than political. In previous peace processes, the US has been at the forefront as a mediator while the UN has either faced exclusion or played a minor role as a mediator. Thus the UN is encouraged to fight for a political role in the peace process and to put emphasis on human security over the interests of the state.

Thirdly, individual states in the UNSC should not be biased when handling the conflict. There are so many intra-state and inter-state interests in the region that complicate matters for the UN. Actors continue to compete for power and dominate peace talks, thus making it hard for the UN to sort out the issue easily. In addition members, states forming UNSC are urged to adopt a common agenda and common policies that will effectively deal with conflict. As most of the outcomes of security initiatives that arise from UNSC meetings have not always been acceptable to all members.

Another important recommendation is that member states of the UN should refrain from supporting Israel’s annexation of Palestine land as is there’s no justification for a move that encourages military land grabs. Recognizing annexed lands is simply a terrible idea about the Middle East, as it kills any chance of peace based on a two-state solution.

In addition as both sides opt to continue with conflict so as to refrain from accepting the other, during negotiations mediators should convince the parties to adopt unconditional acceptance of the UNSC Resolutions 242 and 338 as this may eradicate the concerns of Israel over security as well as provide Palestinians with their basic right to return. This will also ensure parties mediators opt for peace based on the compatibility of the national demands over territory.

During negotiations, the recognition of the other’s narrative and its validity has to come before termination of conflict is possible, meaning it is crucial as a facilitator to the
reduction of conflict. For peace talks to be meaningful to parties the power of social-psychological features should be taken more into consideration in the future, this will result in a decrease in mutual fear. Additionally, such a change would have to take place within the Israeli and Palestinian societies themselves and also the way Israeli and Palestinian politicians choose to portray the conflict to their constituency and the rest of the world.

To sum up, mediators should be aware that there are so many factors that inspire the conflict namely historical, geopolitical, geo-strategy and resources. Therefore the peace processes must factor in these issues in order to succeed.
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