



Palestine-Israel Conflict: Analyzing Role Of Russia And China

Hina Hanif Former MPhil Scholar Department of Political Science AWKUM.

Dr.Manzoor Ahmad Associate Professor Political Science AWKUM.

Sumayya Feroz PhD Scholar Department of Political Science AWKUM.

Aftab BiBi MPhil Scholar Department of Political Science AWKUM.

Muhammad Aqeel Khan Assistant Professor Department of Law AWKUM.

Abdus Samad Khan Assistant Professor Department of Law AWKUM.

Abstract

The conflict between Arabs Palestinians and Israelis began in 20th century and many historical wars and events had accelerated the pace of contradictions between the two states. Palestine/Israel has a small area of 10,000 square miles, but the dispute over this tiny area has great impact not only on Middle East but also on the international politics. The earlier nature of the conflict was religious, but in fact it was more political than religious. Until 1948, the disputed area was known as Palestine, but in 1948 it was divided into 3 parts: Israel, the west bank and Gaza strip. As Palestinians were in majority and they were the old inhabitants of the area, so they claimed that this land belongs to them. They were not agreed to give the land to Israelis (they were hated by the world and were migrated from Europe). The major powers and the UN has so far failed to resolve the issue and any step towards resolving the issue favored Israel rather Palestine. This research paper discusses the historical evolution of Palestine conflict and the role of Russia and China in the resolving the conflict.

Keywords: Palestine, Israel, UN, World War I, Veto, China, Russia.

Introduction

The Zionist movement started in 1882, European Jews migrated to Palestine. Palestine was the part of Ottoman Empire at that time. The northern districts of Acre and Nablus were the part of Beirut province. The cities of Jerusalem and Bethlehem were the two main important religious centers for the Muslims, Jews and Christians. The district of Jerusalem was directly controlled by Istanbul (the Ottoman capital). Jaffa and Nablus were the economically

strongest towns of the Arabs. Most of the Jews were penetrated in Jerusalem, Hebron, Safad and Tiberius: having more religious importance in Arab. Some of the Jews were studying the religious texts; some of them spent lived more secular lifestyle and struggling for creating an independent Jewish State. (Kimmerling, 2000)

In 1914, when the first world war started, the number of Jewish migrants risen up to 60,000, out of which round about 33,000 were recent settlers. And the total Arab population was 683,000 in 1914. Zionism is a modern political movement. The Zionist organization was established by the founder of modern Zionism, Theodore Herzl in 1897. The Zionist believed that all the Jews should possess their own land in Israel, where they remain free and safe from European Anti-Semitism. The nationalist and colonial ideas about Europeans' rights to claim and settle other parts of the world had influenced the politics of Zionism. During Second World War, the Nazi genocide killed over six millions of European Jews, which compelled them for the creation of a Jewish state. (Kimmerling, 2000)

From 1920's Labor Zionists established the Kibbutz movement in Palestine. David Ben-Gurion was the top leader of the Labor Zionist and then became the first Prime Minister of Israel. Labor Zionism sought to link Socialism and Nationalism. Vladimir Jabotinsky led the second form of Zionist Revisionist Movement. They wanted to revise the boundaries of the Jewish territorial yearnings. They focused on an independent Jewish state rather than a National Home-land for Jews in Palestine. And according to them, strong Armed forces would be required for this purpose. (Slater, 2012)

The Ottoman Empire was waning at the turn of the 20th century, and European influence was becoming stronger. During the First World War, which lasted from 1915 to 1916, Hussein Ibn-Ali, the Ottoman governor of Mecca and Medina, was secretly promised by the British High Commissioner Sir Henry McMahon that if the Arabs supported Britain in the war against the Ottoman Empire, which was allied with Germany, then Britain would support the creation of an independent Arab state, including Palestine. (Friedman, 1970) Feisal, the son of Hussein, and T.E. Lawrence successfully led the Arab uprising, which resulted in British authority over the territory once ruled by the Ottoman Empire. Another promise made by Britain during the battle led to conflict between Hussein and McMahon. (Friedman, 1970) In 1917, Lord Arthur Balfour made a proclamation. In which they proclaimed that the British Government will back the establishment of an independent Jewish Home-land in Palestine. The third promise was a deal between France and Britain that the territory of the fallen Ottoman Empire would be split between them. And they will maintain authority over these regions until they can manage their own affairs.

After the First World War, Britain and France convinced League of Nation to grant them control over the Ottoman territories. France took control over Syria and Lebanon, while

Britain obtained mandate over Israel, the west Bank, Gaza strip and Jordan. In 1933, when the Nazi Hitler came into power in Germany, so the many European countries, including Britain restricted the migration of Jews allowed in. So the number of Jews migrated to Palestine and they purchased lands and settled there. This migration of Jews was resisted by Palestinians, and once again the Arab revolt started in 1936 to 1939, which was brutally suppressed. To maintain peace and stability in the region, the Britain tried to limit the future Jewish migration, so as a result the British-Zionist alliance came to an end. (Karsh & Karsh, Myth in the Desert, or Not the Great Arab Rrevolt, 1997)

After the Second World War, the increasingly tension between Palestinians and Zionists, and Zionists militia and Britain Army, compelled the Britain to give up on the Mandate of Palestine. So UN was requested by Britain to decide the future of Palestine. UN formed a committee of different countries representatives, and sent them to Palestine for investigation. An estimated 126,9000 Arabs and 608,000 Jews were the resident of mandate Palestine in 1946. On November 29, 1947, UN General Assembly passed a resolution in which they divided Palestine into two Zones: one for Jews and the other for Arabs Palestinians (Gorny, 2013)

It was decided that each side will have its majority population, while the Jews who settled in Palestinian side, would be the part of Palestine, and the Palestinians on Jewish side would be the part of Jewish proposed state. 56 percent of Palestine was given to Jews, as taken into consideration the future Jewish migrants. While 43 percent of the land was given to Arab Palestinians. Jerusalem and Bethlehem became the international Zones.

The Zionists accepted this UN Partition Plan, because they had enough territory and they could also expand the area. While the Palestinians and the surrounding Arab states rejects this Partition Plan, because Jews were one third part of the population and could owned under 10 percent of the population. And UN had given a larger part to Jews. (Englander, 2009)

The other Arab states objected that British permitted Jews to migrate to Palestine against the will of Arab majority. After the adoption of UN Partition Plan, the fight between Arabs and Jewish residents of Palestine began to start. The Jewish Army was smaller in number and was well equipped and trained, while the Arab Army was poorly trained, organized and armed. (Hajjar, 2014)

On 15 may 1948, the Zionists leaders announced and proclaimed the state of Israel, and they took control over the areas given to them by UN Partition Plan. So the neighboring Arab countries, including Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Iraq intervned to help Palestine. Because they do not want Zionists to become powerful in the region.

The outcome of this first Arab-Israel war was doubtful. The Armistice agreement in 1949 had ended this war. And once again Palestine was divided into three parts: 77 percent of the

territory was given to state of Israel, the West bank and East Jerusalem was given to Jordan, and Gaza was given under the control of Egypt. So the Palestinian Arab state, envisioned by UN Partition Plan was never established. Over 750,000 Palestinians fled for their lives, leaving behind their homes and belongings and became refugees. (Schmitt & Green, 1956)

In 1967, in response to a warning from Nasser, the president of Egypt, Israel declared war. Israel took the Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula from Egypt, the West Bank from Jordan, and the Golan Heights from Syria during the brief six-day conflict. Egypt was given back the Sinai Peninsula. But starting that day, Israel took control of Historic Palestine and set up military rule in the West Bank. Anwar Sadat, the president of Egypt, spoke with UN representative Gunnar Jarring in 1973 about their desire to strike a peace accord with Israel, but on the condition that Israel return the Egyptian areas lost in the 1967 war (Sinai Peninsula). Against Yom Kippur, the Jewish holy day, in October 1973, Egypt and Syria launched an attack on Israel forces in the Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights after the United States and Israel rejected this offer. (Fillmon, 2007)

Henry Kissinger, the US secretary of state at the time the war ended, advocated a diplomatic limited bilateral deal that allowed Israel to withdraw partially from the Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights while forgoing further talks on the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. All efforts to reach a peace agreement between Israel and the Arab world failed in the latter part of 1975.

China's Role in Palestine-Israel Conflict

In 1949, after the establishment of People Republic of China, the main focus of china was to support and cooperate with the Arab "Revolutionary groups". In China's policy towards the Arab world, the public support for the Palestinian Liberation Movement became more significant to the extent that even George Habash said that Palestine is the "best friend" of China.

Palestine was supported by Beijing because it was the staple of ideology and identity. Because the people of China and Palestinians both were suffering from the imperialism and capitalism. The leaders of CCP were interested to provide military assistance and training to the Palestinians to overcome this capitalism. China rejected the recognition of the state of Israel while it was the first non-Arab state who diplomatically recognized the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). In 1978, China supported a UN motion according to which they classified Zionism as a "form of racism". However the other reason was that the China was supporting Palestinians to please the other Arab states so that they would recognize the People's Republic of china as the "legitimate" Chinese state, independent of Taiwan.

In the early years of 1980s, the policy of China towards Palestine was going toward new segment. While it characterized the 1982 instances at Sabra and Shatila camps as "Hitlerism", Beijing was also shaping covert stalemates with Tel Aviv. This was the direct result of Deng

Xiaoping attainment to power and the later rationality that he brought to the Foreign policy of China. In the middle of 1980s, when Israel supplied a high technology to China and became its main supplier, then China realized that Israel has right to security and existence. At last, in 1992, China developed formal relations with Israel. (Chen, 2017)

Nowadays, China is trying to build up a strong image in Muslims world and it's also want to balance itself and compete with United States (Rabkin, 2013)of America. China also wished for obtaining recognition in United Nation. China has some security issues, as there is dispute of Uighur Muslims in the northern side of China, who are demanding non-Chinese identity and want to become distinct. So according to some Beijing's officials, China is supporting Palestinians to gain the attention of Muslim world and it's trying to divert and deflect the Arab's criticism on the cold behavior of Beijing towards the Uighurs.

Support to Palestine will improve the image of China into Middle East and the western influence of United States will be replace by the Chinese dominancy in the region. And the Palestine UN bid provided a golden chance to China for the expansion of its soft power, economic growth, and modernization of military in the region. Beijing did not promote and support the "Arab Regimes" and it wants to see an independent Palestinian state. No doubt that China is playing an important role in Arab-Israel conflict but it is somehow dependent upon the United States for the maintenance of peace in Middle East. China also announced five-point peace proposal for the settlement of Palestine-Israel conflict, when the Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Israeli Foreign Minister jointly met with press. Israel and Palestine, both would instantly and absolutely cease fire. The harming conduct of military and any other forces would be unacceptable if they caused any civilian casualties. The cease fire initiatives of Egypt and other countries are supported by China. Palestine and Israel must find a way to build a common security plan. Israel should elevate the blockade at Gaza Strip and release the prisoners of Palestine. (Chen, 2017)

China supports the establishment of independent Palestinian state and it recognize the legal rights of the Palestinians. China said that the root cause of this Arab-Israel conflict is the none-establishment of the Palestinian state, so both Israel and Palestinian parties should start peace talks with good will and find out a better solution.

Arab-Israel conflict has influence on international security and peace as well. So United Nation Security Council should play an effective role in containing this dispute. The other members of international community must also cooperate with each other and propose better solutions. The public situation in Palestine, especially in Gaza is the main focus of large attention and the international community should provide aid to them. Chinese Red Cross Society had provided support to the people of Gaza and China will also deliver 1.5 million USD aid to the Palestinians of Gaza Strip.

Russian Role in Palestine-Israel Conflict

When U.S invaded in Iraq, so along with U.S-Russian relations, the relations between Russia and Israel were also chilled. And at the same time Moscow improved relation towards Palestine as well. When Israel once more captured West Bank communities in 2002 as a result of Palestinian terrorist attacks, Palestinians were more aware of Moscow's propensity. Moscow's secondary objective was to undermine Arab support for the Chechen uprising. When Russia sent help and support to Iraq and Israel built a security fence to defend itself from terrorist attacks, Russia and Israel got into conflict with one another.

Putin was correct to note out the continued strength of the bilateral ties between Russia and Israel. In the early 2000s, trade had increased to more than \$1 billion yearly, cultural ties had deepened, and 50,000 Russian tourists were travelling to Israel each year. Additionally, an agreement was reached between Russia and Israel that called for Russian rockets to launch Israeli satellites into orbit. These bilateral cooperation areas were also becoming more and more obscured by diplomatic disputes. (Smith, 2002)

The deepening diplomatic rift between Russia and Israel was clear when Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon paid a visit to Moscow in September 2003. Putin proposed a UN Security Council resolution when Sharon was in Moscow, taking Israeli concerns into account. The Road Map for Peace established by the Quarter (the United States, Europe, United Nations, and Russia) was enshrined in that resolution. Israel had stopped corresponding with Yasser Arafat by 2002. The Al-Aksa Intifada's wave of terrorist assaults were attributed to him. Putin, though, argued that Arafat was still important politically.

Regarding Israel's security barrier, Russia joined the majority of the member states of the European Union. The majority of governments, including Russia, voted in favour of the resolution in the UN General Assembly condemning the construction of the Israeli Barrier and urging Israel to demolish it in accordance with the majority ruling of the International Court of Justice. This resolution was opposed by the US and six other nations.

The majority of the 332 people killed in the attack by Chechen terrorists on a Russian school in Beslan in September 2002 were children. In the wake of that terrorist attack, Russia also had plans to erect a barrier separating Chechnya from the rest of the Russian Federation. On a post-Beslan Middle East tour, Foreign Minister Lavrov may have been influenced by this to accept an Israeli offer of counterterrorism collaboration. Russia was seeking foreign assistance against Chechen terrorists at the time. The Israeli offer includes the sharing of information on protecting important installations as well as the exchange of intelligence data and training for counterterrorism specialists. (Rabkin, 2013)

Any illusions Israel may have had that Moscow would adopt a more pro-Israeli attitude were quickly destroyed by the security agreement, though. In October 2004, just one month after the Russian-Israeli agreement, Moscow supported a US-supported UN security council resolution criticizing Israel for its military incursion into the Gaza Strip, which was meant to

kill as many Hamas terrorists as possible before the Israeli Knesset voted on Ariel Sharon's proposal to withdraw from Gaza.

Conclusion

The Palestine-Israel conflict is no more a regional issue, it is now become an international issue and it has impacts on the international politics. Because as the international community is composed of many sovereign states, each state is playing its role at international levels. There are Muslims and non-Muslim states that politically, economically, culturally, educationally, diplomatically interact with each other. And there is also an international law for all of them and they are bound to obey that law otherwise sanctions are imposed on them.

The duties of these states are to maintain law and order, to prevent wars, not to intervene into other state, non-violation of the sovereignty of the other independent states and to solve the international disputes. But the world is dominant by some strong and major powers, given priority in the United Nation. They have more power to contain the international conflicts and issues and the other small and medium states have to support them through voting.

But unfortunately, no state medium or small, major or minor, succeeded to end the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Because each state, especially the major powers including United States of America, Russia, China, Britain and France, that has approach to whether Palestine or Israel are only trying to pursue hegemony in the region and want to expand their economic capability and modern military technology to have dominancy over the other states. They all are trying to preserve their national interests and their image in the world.

In today's world, United States has the greatest power and it should use its power to decide the Israeli-Palestinian dispute, but historically, as the role of U.S was to only expand and promote Capitalism in the world and Israel was in the favor of this ideology so U.S supported Israel and it played a very big game. U.S was playing a unilateral role and it was totally ignoring the innocent Palestinians during the wars of 1948, 1967 and 1973. As to some extent Russia was supporting Palestine because it did not wanted the Zionists expansionism in the region. And there was also a tussle between Russia and U.S during cold war, so they were fighting a proxy-war.

And on the other side Europe also took advantage of the situation when the Ottoman Empire was weakening in 20th century and Britain used its power to take control on the area. Britain played a triple sided game by promising to Arabs, France and Zionists, but when the selfish interests of the British was fulfilled it stepped back from its promises. Britain and France jointly enjoyed mandates over the areas of the Ottoman Empire but they also fled over without resolving the issue between the state of Israel and Palestine.

No doubt that the Muslim world always tried to settle down the issue of Palestine because of the sense of oneness. But the Muslim states are not enough strong to support the Palestine against the cruel and harsh Israel. The western and European states are selfish to the extent that they do not permit Jews of the world to be migrated in their countries but they took advantage of the weakness of the Muslim state and sent all the Jews to Palestine. Even nowadays, Palestinians are brutally and very harshly treated by the Jewish Army, many Palestinians leave their country, homes, and belongings but no European or western country was willing to give them refuge with an open heart.

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