

Palestine-Israel Conflict and the Muslim World: Analyzing the Two-State Solution

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Abstract

To sum up, this study has presented a detailed view of the conflict of Palestine-Israel and the two-state solution role in solving it. Understanding the origins, the diplomatic attempts, and the hotspur challenges in the dispute expose the conflict as more than complex than mere. The two-state solution is a crucial milestone in a successful peace process that is to be fair to all the involved parties. This solution's significance is not limited to the region but has a much wider religious scope. The end of hostilities between Palestinians and Israelis, however, is key for not only the two nation's welfare but also, for the stability of the Mid-East region as well as global security. Throughout the process, we have to deeply engage into the talks, diplomatic relations, as well as other international cooperation among the parties to resolve the problem through the two-state solution. Despite the hurdles, the existence of all stakeholders cherishes the mantras of justice, equality, and recognition for each other, makes the dreams of the future golden with prosperity, peace and coexistence become a reality in the Middle East, and possibly all over the world.

Keywords: Palestine-Israel Conflict, Two-state Solution, Global Security, Islamic World

Introduction

The Palestine-Israel conflict, rooted in decades of historical grievances and territorial disputes, holds immense significance in the Muslim world. Emerging from the aftermath of World War II and the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, the conflict centers on competing claims to the land of historic Palestine by both Jews and Palestinians. The displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians during the creation of Israel, known as the Nakba (catastrophe), remains a deeply traumatic event in Palestinian collective memory (Khalidi, 2006). The ongoing Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories, including the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem, exacerbates tensions and fuels Palestinian aspirations for self-determination (Hroub, 2000). Moreover, the status of Jerusalem, revered as a holy city by Muslims, Jews, and Christians alike, is a focal point of contention and a symbol of the broader conflict (Armstrong, 1997). The plight of Palestinians under Israeli occupation resonates deeply with Muslims worldwide, who view it as an affront to justice and an ongoing humanitarian crisis. The conflict's geopolitical ramifications extend beyond the region, shaping international relations and influencing the broader discourse on human rights and self-determination (Roy, 2012). As such, the Palestine-Israel conflict remains a central issue in the Muslim world, reflecting broader struggles for sovereignty, dignity, and peace in the face of injustice and occupation.

The two-state solution, proposed as a means to resolve the protracted Israel-Palestine conflict, advocates for the establishment of two separate states, Israel and Palestine, coexisting side by side in peace and security. Rooted in the United Nations Partition Plan of 1947, which sought to partition the British Mandate of Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states, the concept gained prominence following the Arab-Israeli conflict of 1948 and subsequent wars (UN General Assembly Resolution 181, 1947). Despite numerous peace negotiations and diplomatic efforts over the years, the realization of a viable two-state solution has remained elusive, with challenges including border delineation, security arrangements, the status of Jerusalem, Palestinian refugees, and settlements in the occupied territories (Bregman, 2002). The Oslo Accords of the 1990s represented a significant step towards implementing the two-state solution, outlining a framework for Palestinian self-governance in parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip (Beilin & Abed Rabbo, 2009). Nevertheless, the halt of peace settlement, the status quo of violence, and the expansion of Israeli settlements wasted the process and disappeared peace deal. Nevertheless, the two-state solution stays the most broadly supported model which has been singled out by many international actors including the US, the European Union, UN, and others as the way to solve the unstable situation in the region that lasts a long time.

This article attempts to give a detailed examination of the ramifications of the so-called two-state solution in relation with the Palestine-Israel issue and its influence on the Muslim world. It aims at the detailed study of the background of the conflict, such as its origin, important events as well as some of the diplomatic measures towards ending the conflict. The paper will be examining the options and obstacles regarding the two-state solution being superimposed on aspects like territorial allocation, the issue pertaining to insecurity, Jerusalem's status, Palestinian refugees, and Israeli colonies in the occupied territories. Moreover, its findings will include the reaction of the two-state settlement for the domestic stability, coexistence, and the great geopolitical picture of the Middle East. The study will try to analyze carefully the already-published literature, agreements that international organizations have ratified and the views that are held by key stakeholders with a view of providing some perspectives on how a just peace between Israel and Palestine can be possible and attainable.

Background History

The Palestine-Israel conflict has complex historical ties, which can be traced back to the creation of the State of Israel in 1948 and the ensuing flight of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees. The tension gets back to the termination of British Mandate after the UN resolution namely partition plan suggested to divide the area into the State of Israel whereas another separate Arab State would be created. The Arab leaders however disagreed with the plan and a subsequent war erupt between the armies and the Israelis on May 14, 1948, the same day the UN resolution was published (United Nations General Assembly Resolution 181, 1947). The conflict cause hundreds of thousands Palestinian exodus, were either fleeing or were evicted from their land, thus leading to an extended refugee camp (Pappe, 2006). Hence, this

event, in Arabic called "Nakba" or "catastrophe" forms the crux of what is meant by Palestinian identity and the dynamics that exist since then.

The Muslim world has contributed greatly to the molding and promoting of resolving the said conflict by supporting the Palestinian cause. Muslim-majority countries, together with the Muslim communities the world over, have always come across as the most supportive side of the Palestinian people as they struggle to find their place in the world among the nations and proudly declare their statehood. They have obviously been presented through the different channels of obtaining support which relayed by the diplomatic missions, financial programming, humanitarian affairs and political activities. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation has been the main players in Abu-Nimer (2019) who rely on the member states for coordinating collective actions for Palestinians and access to the international stage. The OIC coordinates the member states for the actions to help the Palestinians but also to have them at the international stage.

More specifically, civil society organizations, as well as grassroots movements spread by individuals belonging to Muslim majority countries and Muslim communities all around the world, have primarily been involved in publicizing information about the agony of the Palestinian people which precipitates international governments to intervene in attempting to achieve a just and lasting solution to the crisis, providing the people of Palestine with security and liberty (Roy, 2018). The support of the Muslim world underscores the significance of the Israel-Palestine conflict as a central issue of concern for Muslims globally and highlights the enduring commitment to achieving a peaceful and equitable solution.

Genesis of the Two-State Solution Framework

The two-state solution, envisaged as a separate Israeli and Palestinian states living together in the region adjacent to each other, has been evolving through revisions from its beginning. First in United Nations' Partition Plan for Palestine in 1947 where the idea was proposed, the aim was to reduce the tension between Jewish and Arab groups of that time in British Mandate Palestine (United Nations, 1947). Nevertheless, the plan went into the rejection by the Arab states and Palestinian leaders and a conflict that lasted since 1948 is a consequence – the Arab-Israeli War and the State of Israel. According to Rabinovich (2005), the following decades implied diverse efforts of restoration of the two-state solution imprint, during which the Oslo Accords were signed in the 1990s in an attempt to give back a part of the occupied territories to the Palestinians with a partial self-governing regime (Oslo Accords, 1993). Intermittent talks and peace initiatives may be the means to satisfy the aspiration of two state solution, and the obstacles like settlement expansion, security concerns and boundary conflicts make the realization of such ideal difficult (Beilin, 2012). The birth of the two-state solution is evidence of evolving political dynamics, as well as how shifts in global priorities and the complex nature of the Israel-Palestine conflict affect the solution.

Several diplomatic actions and peace conferences have been held since ever in attempt to achieve a two-state system of conflictive Israel-Palestine issue. An obvious illustration contains Israel and the PLO, Oslo agreements which were signed on 1993, their resolution was phased

with goals on resolving the conflict (Rabinovich, 2005). On one hand, the nascent peace process provided hope through the Oslo agreement in 1993 and other summit meetings, such as Camp David in 2000 and Annapolis conference in 2007; on the other hand, what followed was a series of failed talks (Ross, 2005). The Quartet on the Middle East, comprising the United Nations, the European Union, the United States, and Russia, has also been involved in facilitating peace talks and promoting the two-state solution (Office of the Quartet, n.d.). However, ongoing challenges, including settlement expansion, security concerns, and disagreements over core issues such as borders and the status of Jerusalem, have hindered progress towards a comprehensive peace agreement (Kemp, 2011). Despite these setbacks, diplomatic efforts continue, underscoring the international community's commitment to achieving a two-state solution and resolving one of the most protracted conflicts in modern history.

The implementation of the two-state solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is hampered by many complexities in the course of decades. The matter of fact is that Israeli settlements located in West Bank keeps on expanding in contravention of the international law which prohibits such ventures (B'tselem, 2020). Besides all this, while settlement growth is simply making the borderline delineation complicated, it also continues to exacerbate the issue of territorial contiguity and sovereignty for the Palestinians, thereby undermining the viability of a future Palestinian state (United Nations, 2016). Furthermore, the question about the status of Jerusalem is often an issue too, with both sides, suggesting their own national capitals there (UN General Assembly, 2017). The stance of the Trump administration, which is to consider Jerusalem as a capital city of Israel, is the root of the problem that is worsening the tensions and complicate the process of achieving a negotiated settlement. (BBC News, 2017). The safety problems, with the ongoing violence and terror, have also given some difficulty to the accomplishment of the two-state solution. As a consequence, there is no trust or any confidence between the two sides (The terms of the two-state solution; BBC News, 2019). Besides that, the fact that Palestinian leadership has different internal divisions like Fatah and Hamas party, where one disagrees with other, continues to break up Palestinian political unity and hence the negotiations to have an enduring peace agreement of the area (Toameh, 2018). These challenges highlight the intricate and possibly multi-dimensional nature of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with definite complexities, gaps and obstructions that have to be crossed to finally to reach the win-win reality.

Perspectives from the Muslim World

Diverse standpoints of the Muslim-dominated countries and organizations on the two-state solution exemplify an array of outlooks and techniques in tackling the Israel-Palestine conflict. For instance, countries like Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Egypt have, through history, propelled the two-state solution method for long peace and stability in the region (Sela and Friedland, 2015). These states have been promoting the idea of a settlement leading to the establishment of a State of Palestine on the previously occupied territories, with Al-Quds as a capital, and in line with the PLO's resolutions. But on the other side, Iran, as well as non-state

actors like Hamas have rejected the two-state solution, arguing instead that the Israeli and Palestinian territories need to be a single Palestinian State, which would include both Israel and the Palestinian territories. This polarization of the ones views refers to deeper political dynamics, ideological views, and to different reasons of inspiration for the conflict. Moreover, Muslim states of the world hold different views where diplomatic dialogue and negotiations are highly being favored compared to use of the military force for gaining freedom (Khalidi, 2017). It is fundamental to realize these different views in the complicated Israel-Palestine conflict process and propose a suitable solution that is supported by all because such proposal is promoting the region at large. Islamic principles, values, and solitude are the three most important issues that form the powerful connection of Muslim people to the Palestinian cause, representing the need of the community to have this issue addressed within the Muslim world. By this support generally central to it is the Ummah meaning the world Muslim community with the pronounced features of solidarity and mutual aid (Esposito, 1998). The core belief of Islamic teaching namely justice, compassion, and the oppressed excuse eloquently fill the desire of a stateless people of Palestinian nationality for justice and self-determination (Said, 1981). Palestine's matter is also imbued with a religious aspect, since it comprises sites of religious significance like the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem which is a very essential site for the Muslims and therefore draws most of their attention (Abu-Lughod, 2005). Therefore, countries and organizations that are mostly made up of Muslims and the Palestinians often tend to justify their positions in terms of justice, solidarity of Islamic values and resistance of the oppression on the grounds of religious and moral principles (Bunzel, 2017). The spiritual connection and unity among the Muslims is an effective agent in the formation of a strong collective force which directs the processes of gathering support outside the community, changing perceptions in the society, and influencing policies and decisions.

The Palestine-Israel conflict eats into the socio-political networks within the Muslim world, consequently reshaping alliances, creating new oppositions and changing diplomatic relations. The Plight of The Palestinian people has been used as a uniting point among the Muslims where they have been able to transcend national boundaries must clear as sectarian divides (Hroub, 2000). But due to the varieties of views on the conflict, different interests of the states – all this has, sometimes, seriously affected mutual relations between Muslims. The conflict has affected the entire political environment of Arab-majority states because of the hardship that the governments in these countries go through with domestic revolutionaries calling on them to take sides in the conflict. Governments are in a dress that they must support the Palestinian cause while having to navigate their own conditions and the relationships with the other countries in the region (International Relations, 2010). On the other side, the conflict has also, to some extent, been used by dimensionless actors inside and outside the region, which have aimed at clannish polarization and instability (Salem, 2007). In addition, Israel-Palestine shows a crossing point to further other regional conflicts including the power battles which, of course, leads to an intense process of achieving unity and cooperation among Muslim-majority

countries (Milton-Edwards & Farrell, 2010). Generally, the Palestinian-Israeli quarrel maintains an important place within the Muslims block agenda and the regional geopolitics panorama and so will define the alliances, target the diplomatic strategies, and of course impact in the bigger picture in the Middle East region.

Critique and Challenges

The two-state solution of resolving the Palestine-Israel conflict has undergone rigorous debates and review on effectiveness and feasibility. Supporters claim that this settlement is not only the most important viable way to understand both peoples' desire for independence and sovereignty, but it also provides an opportunity for reaching peace (Beilin & Abed Rabbo, 2003). They uphold the twin state concept as the best solution to this problem as they could be used as the foundation platform for coexistence, territorial integrity and mutual recognition which in turn would generate stability and security in the wider region (Burg & Harkabi, 2002).

However, the critics mentioned the difficulties and barriers that might be in the process of materializing the particular solution, such as the authority over the territory, the sovereignty question, Jerusalem issue as Sayigh (2019) had commented. They raised the question; does the huge Israeli settlements as well as the security issues and the internal division among the Palestine are the main barriers that prevent a two state solution to come true? Even though, many scholars had argued that the two states solution is the way that will promote peace and security (Halper, 2010). On the other hand, critics may query the underlying assumption of the two-state parity, proposing that it might rather sustain inequalities and of course, shall not deal with the structural issues of the erosion of Palestinian statehood and authority (Khalidi, 2007). In general, while having a two-state solution being widely known and accepted as a principle for resolving the conflict that the Palestine-Israel arise, its effectiveness remains doubtful because of hot debates, which in turn means laying a foundation for more talks, negotiations, and initiatives to achieve a just peace in the region.

Approaching core challenges related to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict means getting involved with multiple issues that are as complex as the territorial disputes, security concerns, and Jerusalem's status. Borders of the potential Palestinian state make up the majority of the dispute; and Israeli settlements, status of the Palestinian refugees, are the points that cause most trouble to the negotiations (Khalidi, 2013). Security concerns are paramount for both parties, with Israel citing the need to protect its citizens from terrorist attacks and Palestinian factions citing the need for protection from Israeli military operations and settlements (Brynen, 2000). The status of Jerusalem, revered by both Israelis and Palestinians, remains one of the most contentious issues, with competing claims to sovereignty over the city's holy sites (Nassar & Kuttab, 2018). These challenges underscore the intricate nature of the conflict and the daunting task of finding mutually acceptable solutions that address the legitimate aspirations and concerns of both Israelis and Palestinians.

Addressing both internal and external factors that have hindered a two-state solution's process in the conflict of Palestine-Israel requires unraveling a multi-layered knot of problems. On the

inside, there is disaggregation among Palestinian groups due to the political divisions, lack of leadership, and no unanimous decisions on the key issues where the Palestinian Nationality seems to be weak (Hroub, 2000). Overall, the problems concerning the Palestinian authority's administration, corruption and lack of accountability have hampered supporting the process of peace (Hidayman, 2004). In conjunction with this, the geopolitical frameworks surrounding the Middle East, which encompass regional conflicts, external actor influence, and a shifting world power landscape, have, to an extent, also impacted progress toward two-state solution (Kerr, 2007). The involvement of regional powers such as Iran and Saudi Arabia each of them has an interest and objectives, so this more complicates the process of negotiation settlements (Nasr, 2006). On the other hand, United States itself as a peace process mediator receives criticism owing to the latter being impartial and should be consistent in engagement (Quandt, 2013).

Future Prospects and Recommendations

It is necessary to conduct research on how favorable the present political and socio-economic context is to the two-state solution taking into account existing obstacles and strengths. However, contrary reality, some territorial disputes, security problems and the status of Jerusalem exists, some potential paths for the peacemaking still exist as we found from the Dumper and Stanley in 2018 book. Economic development projects, confidence-building measures and grassroots reconciliation processes hopefully become the triggers for peace talks (Khalidi, 2014). Additionally, the occasion of the regional dynamics changes, for instance, the normalization agreements between Israel and some Arab states, creates more opportunities for diplomacy and devising more comprehensive cooperative relationship (Berman, 2020). Nevertheless, a durable two-state solution demands from the leaders the audacity to make bold moves, the genuine political will on the part of stalemate parties and the strong backing from international community as well which all of these are highly essential vital principles (Telhami, 2010).

It involves a multi-faceted approach that includes formulation of suggestions for the policymakers, international figures and NGO representatives concerning the issue toward the achievement of a two-state solution. A strategic action of policymakers is to focus on restarting meaningful negotiations across all parties involved on the basis of universally recognized principles and previously agreed terms (Beilin & Hirsch, 2012). The International community, such as the United Nations, the EU and Regional organizations, should put more emphasis on facilitation of dialogue between conflicting parties, they should also provide aid for development programs and trust building activities (Lynch, 2019). NGOs (Non-governmental organization) are found to be very important in developing community driven activities such as people to people interactions, tolerance and human rights for all the communities that are affected (Gordon, 2017). And more importantly connecting with the different actors who compose the society like women, youth, and deprived groups is vital for generating intact and stable peace from the roots (Nasser-Eddine, 2018). Highlighting the significance of the role of continued and

persistent Talks, diplomacy, and mutual engagement to deal with Palestine -Israel conflict and to promote peace in Muslim world should be unavoidable. Aside that, spreading the culture of peace and interracial amalgamation through educational programs, interfaith dialogue among religions and cultural exchanges can be a step forward to counter extremism and develop the mentality of peace and well-being among the people (Baroud & Levy, 2018). Furthermore, the complex web of crises in the Middle East precludes diplomatic efforts that solely focus on the resolution of the conflict without reference to the region's underlying problems; occupation, dislocation, and inequality, being the main causes of the conflict (Khalidi, 2013).

Conclusion

To sum up, this study has presented a detailed view of the conflict of Palestine-Israel and the two-state solution role in solving it. Understanding the origins, the diplomatic attempts, and the hotspur challenges in the dispute expose the conflict as more than complex than mere. The two-state solution is a crucial milestone in a successful peace process that is to be fair to all the involved parties. This solution's significance is not limited to the region but has a much wider religious scope. The end of hostilities between Palestinians and Israelis, however, is key for not only the two nation's welfare but also, for the stability of the Mid-East region as well as global security. Throughout the process, we have to deeply engage into the talks, diplomatic relations, as well as other international cooperation among the parties to resolve the problem through the two-state solution. Despite the hurdles, the existence of all stakeholders' cherishes the mantras of justice, equality, and recognition for each other, makes the dreams of the future golden with prosperity, peace and coexistence become a reality in the Middle East, and possibly all over the world.

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