

# Israel palestine conflict assignment

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CHAPTER-I INTRODUCTION: One thing seems sure; this problem can't be solved on the basis of abstract justice historical or otherwise. Reality is that both Arabs and Jews are here and intend to stay. Therefore in any 'solution' some group, or at least its claim is bound to get hurt. No really satisfactory solution is possible-the best that can be done is a reasonable and workable compromise..."??? Ralph Bunche writing The Report for the UN Special Committee on Palestine in 1947. 1 The developments in the Middle East, since 1947 to the present day, have proven Ralph Bunche's words to be true and prophetic.

The Middle East has been a cauldron of discontentment for decades. The vast economic and human resources of this strife-torn region have made it an extremely important part of the world of international relations and global politics. The significance of the Middle East in global politics is immense. Almost all major players in global politics including the United States, Russia and Western Europe have some interest or the other in the region. However the Middle East is dominated by the Arab-Israeli conflict and it is this conflict, which is the focus of this project.

The Arab-Israeli conflict or more specifically the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that dominates the life of the Middle East is basically a question of self-determination??? self-determination of the Palestinian people. In order to analyze the Israeli-Palestinian conflict it is imperative to look at its history. It is a conflict between two national movements- on the one hand the Zionist movement, and since 1948 its embodiment, Israel, and on the other hand the Palestinian National Movement. 2

The Zionist movement began in 1897, when Theodore Herzl convened the first Zionist Congress in Basle, Switzerland. The basic aim of the movement was to establish a home for the Jews in Palestine. <sup>3</sup> The problem faced by the Zionists was that Palestine was an inhabited country. The Palestinians of today claimed descent from not only their forefathers who defeated Byzantium but also from the people who inhabited Palestine before them. The Israeli claim goes back to Biblical times: their cherished Promised Land. Thus the two ideologies clashed with one another.

The British referred the Palestinian question to the United Nations. ‘ An extraordinarily fleeting convergence of interests between Washington and Moscow produced a UN Resolution in November 1947 to partition the country into a Jewish state and an Arab opposition. ‘ <sup>4</sup> Modus operandi of the Zionists was massive immigration and land acquisition and colonization to secure a home for the Jews. ‘ The demographic, economic and military and organizational infrastructure of the future Jewish state was laid at the expense of the indigenous Palestinian and in the teeth of their resistance. <sup>5</sup> There followed two wars, a civil war largely between the Jewish community and the Palestinian community before the end of the British mandate on 15th May 1948 and a regular war between Israel and units of the regular Arab armies. It was during the civil war that the Palestinian exodus-giving rise to the Palestinian Diaspora began. <sup>6</sup> The second war was in June 1967. During this six-day war Israel succeeded in conquering Sinai from Egypt and the Golan Heights from Syria thus deepening the inter-state conflicts with the Arab countries.

It also succeeded in conquering east Jerusalem, West Bank and the Gaza Strip. 7 For decades the Arabs and Israelis fought each other for affirmation of their national identities, territories and natural resources. For the Israelis, the fight was for a self-recognized sense of nationhood that would gather all the Jews of the world in the holy land of Palestine. For the Arabs the fight was to rectify the ‘ Original Sin’ of uprooting the Palestinians from their historical homeland and thus depriving them of their right to self-determination. Over time, the conflict which was about the partition of Palestine has extended to a host of complicated issues such as the Arab territories occupied since the 1967 war, the arms race, water supplies, Palestinian refugees, the economic boycott, Jewish and Palestinian settlements, terrorism and others.

**CHAPTER-II RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:** The aim of this project is to analyze the Israel-Palestine conflict. The project aims at understanding the reasons for the conflict, its implications in the field of international relations and also studies the steps being taken to bring about peace.

The question of self-determination, which is a core issue in the conflict, has been explored and the project also aims at understanding the key issues involved in bringing about peace and stability in the Middle East. The researcher has endeavoured to satisfactorily analyze the complex issues involved in the conflict, to understand the reasons for the longevity of the conflict and to give some suggestions for resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

**NATURE OF PROJECT:** The project is analytical as well as descriptive in nature.

However the majority of the project is analytical in nature. The descriptive part of the project relates to the Peace process and the history of the Israel-Palestine conflict while the analytical part extends to the question of the application of self-determination to the Palestinians, the suggestions for resolution of the conflict and the reasons for the continuity of the conflict.

**SOURCES OF DATA:** The sources of data used are secondary in nature. Some leading textbooks on the Middle East and the Arab-Israeli conflict have been referred to.

A host of articles from leading journals and magazines like the Economist, the Journal of Conflict Resolution, American Society of International Law and the Middle East Journal have also been referred to. **SCOPE AND LIMITATION:** The scope of this project is limited to the issues involved in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its relevance in the field of international relations and global politics. The scope of this project is limited as Middle East politics involves a large number of varied issues, interests and players and to analyze all of these within such a limited time would not be possible.

Moreover the Israel-Palestine conflict dominates the Middle East and a proper understanding of this conflict would go a long way in helping to understand the significance of the Middle East in global politics. **RESEARCH QUESTIONS:** The Research Questions are: ??? Why and how did the Israel-Palestine conflict arise? ??? What are the reasons for the continuance of this conflict for decades? ??? What are the reasons for the failure of the Peace Process in the Middle East? ??? What are the core issues involved in the Conflict and how have they been dealt with by the parties involved? ??? How can the Conflict be resolved? Is there a realistic hope for peace and stability  
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in the Middle East in the future? MODE OF CITATION: A uniform mode of citation has been adopted throughout the course of this project. CHAPTER-III THE QUESTION OF ‘ SELF DETERMINATION’: President Woodrow Wilson enunciated the concept of self-determination in his address to a joint session of the US Congress. At that time, he concluded his statement by declaring that “ self-determination is not a mere phrase. It is an imperative phrase. It is an imperative principle of action which statesmen will henceforth ignore at their peril. 8 Self-determination, first implicitly embodied in spirit in the mandate system of the League of Nations as a “ sacred trust of civilization” for the well being and development of the peoples of the colonies brought under the mandate, became the legitimizing principle after the First World War. 9 The term has been used to describe one of the major purposes of the United Nations and has become a pivotal human rights concept enshrined in the UN charter and has been extolled and reiterated in several UN declarations and resolutions.

A consensus is certainly lacking on the precise definition, meaning and scope of self-determination that is obviously subject to varying interpretations, and especially pertaining to its means of implementation. However it is accurate to say that self-determination has become a principle of customary international law. 10 The concept of self-determination looms large in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The question is whether the concept of self-determination can assist in finding in a peaceful solution to the conflict where both sides have competing and conflicting claims with respect to human rights and self-determination.

While applying the concept of self-determination to the Israel-Palestine conflict two principal questions are raised: ??? Whether the Palestinian people are entitled to self-determination and independence in their ancestral homeland? ??? Was Palestine a mandated territory entitled to independence at the termination of the Mandate? The Palestinian answer to both these questions is in the positive. The Palestinians claim to be descendants of a cohesion of all the races that lived in or conquered Palestine from time immemorial. They also claim that they have had the right to self-determination since they were a part of the Ottoman Empire.

In 1918 Palestine was occupied by the British and in 1919 was placed under Class A Mandate, with its independence provisionally recognized, subject to the rendering of administrative assistance and advice until termination of the mandate. In 1939 the British Royal Family issued a White Paper which stated inter alia that “ The object of His Majesty’s Government is the establishment of an independent Palestinian State..... The independent state should be one in which Arabs and Jews share in government in such a way as to ensure that the essential interests of each community are safeguarded. 11 In 1948, the population of Palestine was 74% Arabs and 26% Jews. Thus it was clearly established that Palestine in 1948 was a well-developed state politically, socially and economically and should have become an independent sovereign state at the termination of the mandate. The only reason this did not materialize was because Zionist terrorist organizations violated the territorial integrity of Palestine and occupied 80% of it, committed many massacres against the Palestinian Arabs, expelled more than 800000 of them and prevented the Palestinian refugees from returning to their homes.

In 1967 the Israelis waged a war of aggression against the Arabs and occupied the remaining 20% of Palestine. 12 The Palestinians also claim that the inalienable right of the Palestinians to self-determination, independence and permanent sovereignty over their natural wealth and resources has been recognized by numerous international instruments. Palestine was recognized as a “ provisionally independent nation” by Article XXII of the Covenant of the League of Nations. The UN General Assembly has expressly upheld the right of self-determination of the Palestinians in several resolutions. 3 The Palestinians also argue that the existence of the state of Israel is illegitimate as it has acquired its territory through illegitimate means. Palestine thus makes a strong case for its right to self-determination and under international law claims the restitution of all its territory and assets. The Israeli answer to the two core questions is in the negative. The Israelis believe that the approach of the Arab leadership of total denial of Jewish people hood and the right of the Jewish people to elf-determination and independence, irrespective of territories and boundaries has led the Arabs down the road of calamity and disaster. The Israeli view is that Security Council Resolution 242 does not take cognizance of the self-determination rights of the Palestinian Arabs because self determination is not an issue in the Arab-Israeli conflict post 1967. Israel also believes that the Arabs living in Palestine in 1917-18 were no different from the Syrian and Iraqi Arabs and the Palestinian Arabs had no distinctive national features of their own and were not considered a distinctive national group.

Palestine was created as a political entity at the end of World War I and at that time the League of Nations wanted to put the Balfour Declaration of



1917 into effect with a view to establishing a Jewish national state in Palestine. The Israeli viewpoint is that the Palestine Mandate aimed at establishing a Jewish State in Palestine and that Palestine was set aside as the future Jewish State by the Arabs themselves. The question of self-determination no longer exists for Israel as in the eyes of Israel self-determination has already been achieved by both Arabs and Jews in Palestine.

The Palestinian Arabs exercised their right of self-determination within the framework of the kingdom of Jordan. 14 The Israeli and Palestinian viewpoint on the question of self-determination is thus totally different and conflicting. It is the stubbornness of both sides to maintain their view as the right one and the unwillingness to compromise that has been fuelling the crisis. “ There is no common ground between Jewish and Arab Palestinians. Their cultural and social life, their ways of thought and conduct are as incompatible as their national aspirations.

These last items i. e. their ways of thought and conduct are the greatest bar to peace. “ 15 The American position on the question of self-determination in the case of Palestine is that the solution to the Palestinian problem of self-determination lies in settling the Palestinian people in Jordan. 16 However such a view if implemented might infringe upon the sovereignty of Jordan and deny the people who call themselves Jordanians the right to self-determination.

The American viewpoint regarding this problem seems to be the result of the efforts of the strong pro Israeli lobby in the US, which would like to see a

settlement of the Palestinian problem in favour of the interests of the State of Israel. There seems to be an emerging consensus amongst the international community on solving the problem of self-determination in Palestine. This consensus is ??? two states- A Palestinian state on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and a Jewish state within the 1967 boundaries with some finessing of the situation in Jerusalem.

Solving the problem of self-determination in the Middle East is essential to the establishment of peace in the region and such a peace can only be achieved if the Palestinians are given a state of their own in the occupied territories of West Bank and Gaza. This would not pose security threats of a very great magnitude and over a period of time a working relationship could emerge which would bring about peace and stability in the region. CHAPTER-IV THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS: AN OVERVIEW:

The world's most famous handshake between President Yitzhak Rabin of Israel and Palestinian Liberation Organization Chairman, Yasser Arafat at the White House Lawns on 13th September, 1993 marked a breakthrough in the century old conflict over Palestine and is probably the most encouraging and hopeful image of the Peace process in the Middle East. That hand shake meant the mutual recognition between Israel and the PLO and that a Declaration of Principles (DOP) of Self-Government in Gaza and Jericho had been signed between Israel and the PLO to bring the hope of a realistic, lasting peace to people in the middle east.

Before the Oslo breakthrough in 1993 earlier attempts to establish peace in the Middle East had failed. “ This was because the Arabs and Zionist

negotiations left themselves little room for any scaling back of their maximum demands. “ 17 The first Palestine autonomy plan was put forward by Likud leader Menachem Begin, in December 1977 when negotiating the Camp David Accords with President Anwar Sadat of Egypt. But the Palestinians did not agree to the terms and therefore the process failed. 18 “ However it seems that the magic wand of global transformations in the 1990’s has touched the Middle East.

The Gulf War and the end of the cold war changed the attitudes of the major parties in the Arab-Israeli Conflict and opened a window of opportunity for the whole region. “ 19 And the opportunity was not missed. The 90’s saw a host of initiatives to accelerate the Peace Process in the Middle East. MADRID CONFERENCE, 1991 Through active American diplomacy the Madrid peace process started in October 1991 and by 1994 a Palestine-Israeli agreement and an Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty were in place. What was important about the new Arab-Israeli reconciliation process was that it introduced a geo-economic dimension to its traditional geo-political concerns of territory and security. ‘ In addition to the bilateral negotiations, another layer of negotiations was a multi layer one to discuss five issues of interest of the parties: arms control, water, refugees, economic cooperation and the environment. 20 OSLO I The Madrid Conference of 1991 signified political change in Arab-Israeli relations for the 90’s and laid the groundwork for the Oslo Accord, which was a product of secret diplomacy in the Norwegian capital of Oslo.

The Oslo Accord which was sealed by Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat’s celebrated handshake on 13th September, 1993 in Washington marked a

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real development in Arab-Israeli diplomacy. The signing of this accord meant the mutual recognition between Israel and Palestine and the signing of a Declaration of Principles on interim self-government arrangements in Gaza and West Bank. ' A confluence of conditions ??? the rise of an Israeli government specifically committed to negotiation, the financial woes of a PLO desperately in need of a tangible victory and the growth of a mutually threatening common enemy in

Hamas created a unique moment in Palestinian and Israeli history. Veering sharply from the historical pattern, sworn enemies, simultaneously realized that without the other's cooperation each lacked both the power to impose its own solution against the other's objection and the wherewithal to overcome internal opponents. '21 In his letter to Rabin, Arafat observed that the signing of the DOP marked a new era in the history of the Middle East.

He then confirmed the PLO's commitment to recognize Israel's right to live in peace and security, to accept the UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, to renounce the use of terrorism and other acts of violence and to change the parts of the Palestine National Charter, which were inconsistent with these commitments. In his terse one sentence reply to Arafat, Rabin confirmed that in the light of these commitments the Government of Israel had decided to recognize the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people and to commence negotiations with the PLO within the Middle East peace process.

The DOP was essentially an agenda for negotiations governed by a tight timetable rather than a full-blown agreement. The document lay down that

within 4 months of the signing ceremony agreement, Israel's military withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho should be completed. A Palestinian police force made up of mostly pro Arafat Palestinian fighters was to maintain internal security in the Gaza Strip and Jericho with Israel retaining overall responsibility for external security and foreign affairs.

At the same time, elsewhere in the West Bank, Israel undertook to transfer power to 'authorize Palestine' in the spheres of education and culture, health, social welfare, direct taxation and tourism. Within 9 months of the signing of the agreement the Palestinians in West Bank and Gaza were to hold elections for Palestinian Council to take office and assume responsibility for most government functions except defence and foreign affairs. Israel and Palestine agreed to commence negotiations on the final status of the occupied territories within 2 years and at the end of 5 years a permanent settlement was to come into force.

The DOP is silent on vital issues such as the right of return of the 1948 Palestinian refugees, the borders of the Palestinian entity, the future of Jewish settlements in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and the status of Jerusalem. 'The reason for this is not hard to understand: if these issues had been addressed there would have been no accord. Both sides took a calculated risk realizing that a great deal would depend on the way the experiment in Palestinian self-government worked out in practice. '22 CAIRO AGREEMENT It took almost 8 months of difficult negotiations after Oslo to produce the follow-up Cairo agreement.

The agreement detailed arrangements for security, legal affairs, economic relations and the transfer of almost a dozen spheres of administration to the Palestinian authority. 23 OSLO II In September 1995 after continued frustrations and missed deadlines, Israel and Palestine finally moved to the next phase by signing the Oslo II Agreement. It transferred further administrative powers to the Palestine authority and brought about the withdrawal of the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) from all of the Palestinian villages, towns and cities in the West Bank.

The peace process received a considerable jolt when on November 4, 1995 Rabin was assassinated at a peace rally by an extreme right wing Israeli ultra nationalist because he felt that Rabin was compromising Israeli security and sovereignty by negotiating with the PLO and withdrawing Israeli forces from the West Bank. The Israeli elections brought Likud's Benjamin Netanyahu to power with its absolute opposition to the eventual creation of a Palestinian state. However the tension was somewhat eased when the west Bank town of Hebron was returned to Palestinian control after 30 years.

However Netanyahu then approved a large Jewish housing project in east Jerusalem, which incited acts of terrorism and violence by extremist Palestinian groups like Hamas and the Israeli cabinet declared that the peace talks would continue only when the terrorism ended. WYE I The Wye River Memorandum of 1998 ended a 19-month logjam in the Middle East peace negotiations. The deal required Israel to withdraw from a further 13% of the West Bank and to begin the release of Palestinian prisoners. The Palestinians pledged to take action against militancy and to cancel the PLO charter's call for the destruction of Israel.

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However many tough decisions such as, over the future of Jerusalem still remained. In December 1998 Israel suspended the Wye deal owing to the Israeli Cabinet's decision asking Palestine to authority to cease incitement to violence, drop its insistence on the release of Palestinian prisoners and explicitly denounce plans to declare a Palestinian state. 24 WYE II The Labour government headed by Ehud Barak revived the Wye deal. Thus in September 1999, at a ceremony in Egypt Barak and Arafat signed a revised deal based on the stalled Wye river accord. This marked the resumption of the peace process after a suspended period of 8 months.

The new deal entailed: 25 ??? Palestinian prisoners to be released in two strages. ??? Israel to withdraw from 11% of the West Bank in three stages. ??? Implementation to begin within ten days. CAMP DAVID II At Camp David in July, 2000 Yasser Arafat rejected Barak's offer for control of most, but not all territory Israel occupied in the 1967 Six Day war. However the two leaders agreed on the following principles to guide their negotiations: 26 ??? The two sides agreed that the main aim of their negotiations is to put an end to decades of conflict and achieve a just and lasting peace. The two sides commit themselves to continue their efforts to conclude an agreement on all permanent status issues as soon as possible. ??? Both sides agree that negotiations based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 are the only way such an agreement and they undertake to create an environment for negotiations free from pressure, intimidation and threats of violence. ??? The two sides understand the importance of avoiding unilateral actions that prejudice the outcome of negotiations and that their differences will be resolved only by good faith negotiations. Both sides agree that the United

States remains a vital partner in the search for peace and will continue to consult closely with the American administration in the period ahead. The Camp David agreement was an eyewash and failed to contribute positively to the Middle East Peace Process. It served as a public relations exercise and enhanced the reputation of the American president as a global statesman. On September 28, 2000 Likud leader Ariel Sharon visited Temple Mount- Judaism's holiest place which Muslims have renamed Haram al-Sharif and regard as Islam's third holiest place.

Since this visit the Palestinians have engaged in a violent insurrection that has been dubbed the " al-Aksa intifada. " 27 The Palestinians justified this violent uprising as a reaction to the desecration of the holy Muslim place- Haram-al ??? Sharif by Sharon and Israeli soldiers. The violence was a reaction to unprovoked attacks by Israeli forces, which invaded Palestinian controlled territories and massacred defenceless Palestinians, who merely threw stones in self-defence. 28

The Middle East has seen unprecedented strife, violence and clash of interests for a number of years, although the 90's saw a considerable improvement in the situation but the picture presently is not very rosy. The recent intifada has brought carnage and devastation in the region and led to a total collapse of the peace process. Mr. Sharon has gone to war to obliterate the advances made over the past decade by the Palestinian nationalists he is not prepared to accept. The Palestinian leader, Arafat, for his part, cannot or will not stop the suicide bombers who turn Israel's calm streets into scenes from hell.



The present war between Israel and Palestine is a war between an extreme Jewish nationalist who believes in Israel's God-given right to fight for wider borders versus a wily old-time resistance leader, prepared to throw lives to the wind to fight for independence against the occupying power. There can be no meeting of minds between the two. After years of violence and negotiations Arafat is not going to accept a political process that does not eventually end Israel's military occupation in toto.

And Sharon as one of the main architects of the Israeli occupation during 1967 is not going to accept any Palestinian leader who refuses to agree to the continuing existence of Jewish settlements, and the other facts born of the 1967 conquest. The result is that for one will to prevail, the other must be vanquished. And since neither has yet been vanquished, the violence soars. Never before has the Israel Palestinian conflict looked so dangerous, or so insoluble without dramatic outside intervention. In order to revive the peace process it is essential to quell the intifada immediately.

The two parties have to come to a common platform to resolve the conflict. They have to give priority to issues like the future of Jerusalem, the problem of refugees as well as other crucial problems that come in the way of the establishment of permanent peace in the Middle East. CHAPTER-V

RESOLVING THE CONFLICT ISSUES AND SOLUTIONS: As Israel's army crushes the life out of the Palestinian Authority, a negotiated resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict seems as far removed from present reality as flights of fancy can reach.

However, the very desperation of the scene in the Middle East is encouraging outsiders to not merely halt, but to end the conflict once and for all. The immediate measures, intractable enough in themselves, are a ceasefire, followed by a confidence-building period. But it is an undeniable truth that the Palestinians will not end an uprising that is costing them so much pain without the prospect of a reasonable political settlement emerging from the blood and dust.

A reasonable political settlement for the Palestinians would be the formation of a Palestinian state and complete Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank, Golan Heights and the Gaza Strip. It is accepted by both sides that the road to a real and lasting peace in the Middle East lies in the establishment of a Palestinian state. To reach a viable Palestinian State and ultimately to bring about an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict four hurdles have to be overcome. They are: 1. What should the borders of the new state be? 2. What happens to the Jewish settlements that have been set up in the land the state must occupy? 3. How can Jerusalem be shared as a joint capital? 4. What is the future of the Palestinian refugees? With respect to the answers to these questions a consensus must be achieved between the Israelis and the Palestinians if the conflict is to be resolved. Reaching a consensus on the first two questions is probably the most difficult hurdle for both the sides for both parties would be unwilling to compromise and would not like to concede too much. In any land swap between the Israelis and Palestinians the land, which the Palestinians get in exchange, should be equal in quality and quantity to the land that they give up.

The idea is that Israel should evacuate all the settlements in Gaza and most of those in the West Bank ie. 94%. But two or three blocks of settlements would remain under Israeli sovereignty so as to make the withdrawal palatable to the Israeli public. Most of the Jewish settlements in the Jordan valley are farming communities and are politically moderate and in the event of the creation of a Palestinian state they would leave without a fuss if required to do so. The hillcrest settlements, which are in the extreme west, are inhabited by ideological hardliners who are religious Jews.

They would be hardest to remove and some might forcibly resist. Close to the 1967 border in the West Bank lie the non-ideological settlements comprising of ordinary Israelis, mostly centre-right in their politics, looking for subsidized and roomy housing and “ quality of life. ” These settlers would leave easily as long as they were offered adequate compensation. 30 Jerusalem, sacred to Muslims, Jews and Christians arouses passionate emotion. Israel annexed east Jerusalem after the 1967 war but this annexation was unrecognized in the international community.

Both sides now agree that the division of Jerusalem is inevitable if peace is to be achieved and Jerusalem would be the capital of both Israel and Palestine. A division of Jerusalem would entail Palestinian sovereignty over Arab neighbor hoods and Israeli sovereignty over Jewish districts. 31 However the main bone of contention in the issue of the division of Jerusalem is the division of the holy sites especially the Haram-al-Sharif which is holy to both Muslims and Jews. The right of return-the right of Palestinian refugees to go back to ancestral homes in what is now Israel ??? is often assumed to be the most vexed of all these vexed issues.

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Israel insists that granting this right would mean swamping the Jewish state. Palestinians assert that their right is inalienable under international law and that only when justice prevails can they consider the conflict ended. During Israel's birth in 1948 some 750000 Palestinians or three-quarters of the native population fled their homeland never to be allowed to return. Of today's estimated five million Palestinian exiles about half are living as registered refugees in camps scattered across Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

To add these people to Israel or the area of a future Palestinian state in West bank and Gaza would adversely affect the demographic balance of these regions and have calamitous effects. At the same time the refugees cannot forever remain stateless dependants of the United Nations. 32 The point is to create a new Palestinian state. Palestinians everywhere would leap to claim its nationality but only a minority might actually choose to uproot themselves and physically return to an uncertain future in crowded Palestine.

Others would be satisfied by reasonable compensation or resettlement paid for by an international trust to which Israel could contribute. A limited number of refugees could also be allowed to enter Israel over a period of time under a family reunion scheme so as not to affect Israel's demographic balance adversely. 33 The four questions discussed above are the core issues in the context of the creation of the state of Palestine and if Peace in the Middle East is to be achieved these issues have to be addressed by both sides and both sides must see eye to eye on these issues or at least be willing to compromise.

Discussing the issues of the Palestinian refugees, borders of the future state of Palestine, future of the Jewish settlements in the occupied territories and the division of the city of Jerusalem might be a touchy matter and emotionally loaded for both Arabs and Israelis but hard decisions on these issues have to be taken by both sides if the state of Palestine is to be created. The resolving of these controversial issues is necessary to the creation of a viable state of Palestine, which in turn is necessary for a lasting peace and stability in the Middle East. CHAPTER-VI CONCLUSION:

Both sides in the Israel-Palestinian conflict have tended to enter the negotiating process for purposes other than actually making concessions to and peace with one another. Most often they negotiated for appearances, trying to impress upon a powerful third party their willingness to resolve matters as opposed to the extremist, uncompromising posture of the other side. A mercenary instinct often brought Arabs to the negotiating table in search of Zionist resources and Zionists often invited or entertained them out of a desire to weaken Arab opposition by playing off rivals against one another.

The historical record shows that Arabs and Israeli negotiators left themselves little room for any scaling back of their maximum demands. This refusal or inability to prioritize objectives and then compromise accordingly may reflect either genuine incompatibility of the two sides' most basic goals or the fact that the negotiators' aims were something other than a negotiated settlement. The rigors of maintaining rational cohesiveness and morale during their protracted conflict have encouraged the rise of Arab and Zionist leaders well suited to wage war, but not necessarily peace.

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In the process, they failed to prepare their communities for the difficult choices and compromises required for negotiating with the enemy, as opposed to obliterating him. Whole generations of Palestinians and Israelis have grown up in fear and distrust of one another, tutored as to the virtue of their own cause and the evil intentions of the other side. There exists an enormous reservoir of mutual hatred between Arabs and Jews in the Middle East from which the opponents of peaceful compromise have drawn freely over the years.

Proponents of peace have had little to encourage them in counteracting this legacy. The leaders in the Middle East and especially the Israeli and Palestinian leaders should leave no stone unturned in peace making efforts. They should have a vision of a Middle East as a region where real national independence might be achieved, cultural life would be free from bureaucratic control, diversity might be seen as a source of strength, individual rights would not be considered a threat to collective identities, and wasteful spending on arms might be reduced.

This vision is far from becoming a reality; but it is not a vision that is foreign to the aspirations of the people in the region, who, after all, are not so different from people elsewhere. They, like others, hope for lives of security, identity, economic well-being, peace and justice. For too long they have been deprived of these elementary rights, either by foreign powers who saw the middle East as little more than a chess board on which to play out their rivalries, or by indigenous regimes that valued power and gestures over tangible accomplishments for their people.

It is difficult to predict the future of the Middle East. Uncertainties abound on all fronts. In confronting those uncertainties, leaders and citizens of the Middle East will need to be guided by a vision of the future, a future that need not resemble the recent past. Central to that vision should be accountable governance, equitable development and peace. END NOTES [1]

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