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ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

**DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS**

**ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT AND FACTORS THAT
IMPACTED ARAB LEAGUE POLICY TOWARDS THE
CONFLICT RESOLUTION,
2017-2023**

BY

RANIA MOHAMMED ABDLMOKHTAR

**MAY 2024
ADDIS ABABA**

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTERS OF ART IN INTERNATIONAL
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COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Miss Rania Mohammed, entitled “Israel-Palestine Conflict and Factors that Impacted Arab League Policy towards the Conflict Resolution 2017-2023” submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in International Relations and Diplomacy, has undergone the due process of examination and accepted as meeting the essential standards of the University pertaining to quality and originality.

Approved by board of Examiners:

Dr.	_____	_____
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External Examiner	Signature	Date

Declaration

I, the undersigned Rania Mohammed hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. To the best of my knowledge this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgement has been made. This thesis contains no material which has been accepted as part of the requirements of any other academic degree or non-degree program, in English or in any other language.

Rania Mohammed

Signature

Date

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List of Acronyms

API	Arab Peace Initiative
BDS	Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions
KSA	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
LAS	League of Arab States
MENA	Middle East and Northern Africa
OIC	Organization of Islamic Cooperation
PA	Palestinian Authority
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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~~**Rania Mohammed**

ABSTRACT

This academic research examined the factors that impacted the effectiveness of Arab League's policy towards resolving the Israel-Palestine conflict from 2017 to 2023. Utilizing qualitative research methods, primary and secondary data were meticulously gathered and analyzed. Purposive sampling was employed to select key informants for in-depth interviews, providing valuable insights into the League's multifaceted approach. Through a meticulous blend of thematic and content analysis, this study evaluated the League's actions and their tangible impact on conflict resolution efforts. The findings revealed a nuanced landscape where the effectiveness of the Arab League's policy remained a topic of ongoing debate. Over time, the League's approach evolved in response to changing regional dynamics, international relations, and internal Arab politics. The study underscored how external factors, such as US vetoes and UNSC bias, hindered peace efforts by obstructing the adoption of resolutions aligned with the League's stance, thereby testing its influence on international outcomes. Acknowledging the League's enforcement limitations, similar to other international bodies, the study highlighted challenges in implementing its policies towards the Israel-Palestine conflict. Nonetheless, it emphasized that this limitation was systemic, affecting all international organizations involved in conflict resolution. Conclusively, the study refrained from categorizing the League's effectiveness as either fully effective or ineffective, acknowledging the complexity of its role. Implications of this research extend to informing policymakers and stakeholders engaged in regional conflict resolution, suggesting potential adjustments to diplomatic strategies and enhanced cooperation among international bodies. This research contributed to the understanding of the complexities surrounding the Israel-Palestine conflict and highlighted the need for further examination of external influences on regional conflict resolution efforts.

Key Words: Arab League, Conflict Resolution, Israel-Palestine conflict, Middle East, Peace

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1. Background

For more than half a century, the Palestinian question has occupied a prominent position on the international agenda, including within the League of Arab States. It has been the subject of extensive diplomatic efforts, countless negotiations, and innumerable academic analyses. Yet, despite these sustained endeavors, a comprehensive and just resolution remains elusive (Huntter, 2022).

Often portrayed as a religious feud, the Israel-Palestine conflict is in reality a product of a complex interplay of historical, political, and social factors that emerged in the early 20th century (ABC10, 2021). Central to this strife are the dueling aspirations of the Jewish Zionist movement and the Palestinian nationalist cause, both vying for control over the same territory (Beauchamp, 2023).

The aftermath of World War I ushered in a turbulent era for the Israel-Palestine conflict, marked by shifting political landscapes, territorial disputes, and heightened tensions. The establishment of the British Mandate for Palestine in 1920 became a focal point in the struggle for statehood and sovereignty, setting the stage for decades of complex geopolitical maneuvering and conflict (Vox, 2016). Arab sentiments were deeply affected by a sense of betrayal and disillusionment. The 1917 Balfour Declaration, expressing British support for a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine, sparked apprehension and opposition among Arabs. The declaration was perceived as a betrayal of Arab interests and a disregard for their aspirations for self-determination (Britannica, 2023a; Jehan, 2016).

Beyond feeling sidelined in the disposition of the region, Arabs viewed the increasing Jewish immigration and settlement in Palestine as a direct encroachment on their ancestral land, fueling resentment and resistance (Vox, 2016). Arab involvement during this period encompassed grassroots resistance, political mobilization, and diplomatic initiatives aimed at confronting the implications of the British Mandate and the burgeoning Zionist movement. Petitions, demonstrations, and appeals to international forums underscored a concerted effort to safeguard their rights and interests. The Arab Higher Committee, established in 1936, played a pivotal role

in orchestrating widespread protests and strikes, articulating Arab grievances and resistance against the unfolding events (WordPress.com, 1937).

Since its inception in 1945, the League of Arab States, also known as the Arab League¹, has been a steadfast promoter for the Palestinian cause. Guided by its commitment to Arab unity and the principles of justice and self-determination, the League has consistently advocated the rights of the Palestinian people, serving as a pivotal platform for coordinating Arab states' responses and formulating a unified stance.

This commitment to the Palestinian cause was evident in the Arab League's opposition to the 1947 United Nations Partition Plan. While the plan was welcomed by the Jewish community, who subsequently declared independence as Israel, many Arab leaders and populations viewed it as a violation of their territorial integrity and demographic composition, sparking apprehension and resistance (Vox, 2016). Furthermore, newly established Arab states, deeply concerned about their own sovereignty (Bose, 2007), saw the plan as a threat to their national identity. This opposition, coupled with the anxiety over sovereignty, fueled the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, triggered by Israel's declaration of independence and subsequent military intervention by neighboring Arab states. Despite the Arab coalition's efforts, Israel emerged victorious, expanding its territory beyond the boundaries outlined in the UN plan. Israel annexed the western half of Jerusalem and a significant portion of the land designated for Palestine, displacing approximately 700,000 Palestinians and causing the deaths of over 15,000 (Zena and Farah, 2017; Narea, 2023a). This event, known as the Nakba (Arabic for "catastrophe"), resulted in a substantial Palestinian refugee population that continues to experience displacement. The war solidified a sense of collective loss and longing among the Palestinian and wider Arab population, marking the beginning of a protracted conflict.

The Nakba deepened tensions between Israel and its Arab neighbors, culminating in the Six-Day War of June 1967. This conflict, rooted in territorial disputes, military buildups, and complex geopolitical alliances, was fueled by escalating regional tensions (Chen, 2021). The war witnessed intense military campaigns and rapid territorial shifts, culminating in a decisive Israeli victory. Israel occupied the Golan Heights from Syria, the West Bank from Jordan, and both the Gaza Strip

¹ The Arab League, a regional organization in the MENA region (Middle East and North Africa), was initially formed by 7 members and currently has 22 member states.

and the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt (Beitler, 2004; Britannica, 2019). These territorial acquisitions further intensified Arab grievances, solidifying a determination to reclaim lost territories and affirm Palestinian rights.

In the wake of the Six-Day War, the Arab world convened in Khartoum, Sudan, where the Khartoum Resolution was formulated. This resolution embodied a unified Arab stance, encapsulated in the "Three No's": no peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel, and no negotiations with Israel (Tamara, 2012). The Khartoum Resolution underscored a resolute commitment to upholding Palestinian rights and reclaiming occupied territories. However, in 1977, Egypt, under President Anwar Sadat, deviated from the Khartoum Resolution by initiating peace negotiations with Israel (Hani, 2021). This decision was motivated by Egypt's desire to regain sovereignty over the Sinai Peninsula, occupied by Israel in 1967 (Alterman, 1998). Additionally, Egypt faced economic and political challenges and saw an opportunity to improve relations with the United States and secure economic assistance (Aulas, 1982; Alterman, 1998).

The lack of support from other Arab states and the perceived ramifications of Egypt's decision deeply impacted Arab unity. Egypt was expelled from the Arab League, and relations with other Arab nations strained, as they viewed the move as a betrayal of the Arab world's commitment to the Palestinian cause (Rami and Marwan, 2021; Al Jazeera, 2023a). A pivotal turning point occurred in 1988 when the Arab League recognized the proclamation of the State of Palestine, a move articulated in the Algiers Declaration of the Palestine National Council (Bickerton, 2012; Muhammed, 1990). This recognition symbolized a departure from the League's earlier inflexible stance towards Israel, signaling a move towards a more constructive and diplomatic trajectory.

The League's policy shift in the 1980s and 1990s was driven by the realization that military action alone could not effectively resolve the conflict. This led to a strategic reassessment, with the Arab League increasingly engaging in diplomatic initiatives and negotiations to achieve a peaceful resolution. From the Camp David Accords to the Madrid Conference and the subsequent Oslo Accords, Arab states, including Palestine, demonstrated a growing openness to peace talks, marking a departure from the rigid stance of the past. However, the emergence of Hamas and Fatah as pivotal factions, each with distinct ideological and strategic orientations, introduced new layers of complexity within Palestinian politics (Brown, 2010). This diversity further complicated the Arab League's considerations and engagements in the broader Israel-Palestine context.

In 2002, the Arab League adopted a significant policy initiative known as the Arab Peace Initiative (API). Proposed by Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz at the Arab summit in Beirut, the API offered a comprehensive framework for peace between Israel and the Arab world, grounded in international law and UN resolutions (Reliefweb, 2008; BBC, 2013). The API marked a departure from previous Arab policies, offering Israel full normalization with Arab states in exchange for its complete withdrawal from occupied territories, a resolution of the Palestinian refugee issue, and the establishment of a sovereign and independent Palestinian state on the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital (Samih, 2022; Nasim, 2021). The initiative also called for a just resolution to the Palestinian refugee crisis in accordance with UNGA Resolution 194 (AFP, 2002). While the API has garnered international support and been endorsed by the Arab League on multiple occasions (Khoury and The Associated Press, 2017; ADL, 2022), it has yet to be implemented due to Israel's rejection. Israel's continued occupation and settlement expansion have contributed to an ongoing cycle of conflict between Israel and Palestine.

Beyond the API, several other policies have emerged. While not an official Arab League policy, member states like Lebanon and Syria have supported the **Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) Movement** as a means of pressuring Israel to comply with international law and end its occupation (Tripp, 2013). The League has consistently expressed its support for a two-state solution through various resolutions and statements. Furthermore, the League has firmly opposed Israel's annexation plans for parts of the West Bank, deeming them violations of international law that undermine the prospect of a two-state solution (Al Jazeera, 2020a). The League has also provided financial aid and assistance to the **Palestinian Authority (PA)** and promoted development projects in the occupied territories, demonstrating its commitment to Palestinian economic well-being and development.

Following the collapse of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process in 2014, the region witnessed a period of renewed instability and complexity, further complicating efforts towards a peaceful resolution. Despite efforts by the US, with the support of the Arab League, to revive peace negotiations in 2013, the talks ultimately stalled due to several key challenges (Alpher, 2014; Shapland and Mekelberg, 2018). These included disagreements over the status of Israeli settlements in the West Bank, the release of Palestinian prisoners, and the continued expansion of settlements during the negotiations. The breakdown of talks was followed by renewed violence

and tension, including wars in Gaza in 2008-2009, 2012, and 2014. The year 2017 saw significant developments that further complicated the conflict, adding to the existing challenges. The US recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital and the normalization of relations between Israel and some Arab countries and the recent Israeli genocidal war on Gaza brought both progress and setbacks to the region (Mohammed, 2023). The issues of Israeli settlements in the West Bank, the status of Jerusalem, and the ongoing blockade of Gaza remained contentious points of conflict, exacerbating unresolved grievances and deepening political estrangement.

The obstruction of human rights reports and the actions of some major world powers have further impeded progress towards conflict resolution. These powers, often pursuing their own interests and agendas, have complicated matters by hindering international pressure and critical engagement that could promote peace talks (Alpher, 2014; Shapland and Mekelberg, 2018). Despite these geopolitical setbacks, the Arab League's continued willingness to work towards a solution offers a glimmer of hope. This demonstrates a growing recognition of the need for cooperation and compromise in resolving the conflict (Reuters, 2017). However, it remains unclear whether this will translate into meaningful progress towards peace.

Given the complex and evolving nature of the conflict, this study aims to analyze these recent developments and understand the factors that impact the Arab League's policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The Israel-Palestine conflict is an enduring and complex issue that has far-reaching implications for regional stability and global peace (BBC, 2011; Imtiaz *et al.*, 2022). The Arab League, as a regional organization, holds a significant role in shaping policy and fostering efforts towards conflict resolution in the Middle East. However, despite the importance of Palestine Question and the involvement of the Arab League, there is a noticeable gap in research that comprehensively investigates the impact and effectiveness of the League's policy towards conflict resolution, particularly in light of the developments that have unfolded from 2017-2023.

Starting from 2017 until 2023, the Israel-Palestine conflict has witnessed notable shifts in political dynamics, including changes in the US leadership, power dynamics, and geopolitical alliances. These shifts have influenced the overall landscape of the conflict and have had implications for

the Arab League's policy and approach towards resolution. Furthermore, evolving international perspectives and diplomatic engagements have also shaped the context within which the Arab League operates.

Amidst these sensitive scenarios considerable academic literature, journals and articles including several media publications have extensively analyzed the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from various perspectives. While numerous studies have explored different aspects of the conflict, few have specifically examined the role played by the league, but none have tried to look into the factors that affected the League of Arab States efforts in contributing to conflict resolution. For instance; Gallage (2015), attempted at describing the Arab League's role as a regional political organization in resolving conflicts in the Arab world. While the paper highlighted the League's engagement in the Israel-Palestine conflict, the analysis only encompassed the events and developments until 2002. Additionally, it simply presents a summary of events and statements by the Arab League and Israeli government rather than providing a detailed analysis of why the API has not been successful in achieving its goals, despite being endorsed by the Arab League and supported by the **Palestinian Authority (PA)**. It would have been better if the author tried to critically analyze the factors such as the political and ideological differences or the role of external actors' such as the US in the conflict, and the broader regional dynamics instead.

In another research by Danfulani, Leawat and Dinshak (2021), the authors conducted a study review on the past and present actions taken by the UN, Arab Nations, and the US at their attempt in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Although the paper offered a detailed review of the conflict and outlined the major actions taken by various parties, it did not explore the specific actions and initiatives such as the BDS movement or the API taken by the Arab nations. In addition, it mainly focused more on the historical context rather than present cases, as it simply ignored the recent events that occurred under Trump's administrations and their impact on the conflict. Thus, limiting the article's relevance and applicability to current discussions and debates surrounding the conflict.

Moreover, in 2020 an article titled: "It's Time to Close the Arab League" by the author Frank Musmar was published. The article had blatantly deemed the Arab League as a complete failure, and throughout the article, it is evident that the author exhibits bias through his language choices, selective use of evidence, and overall tone. While it is true that the article highlight the Arab

League's shortcomings, it failed to look deeper into the root cause or the actual factors behind its weakness. Ahmad (2021) in his article “Israel-Palestine Conflict: The World’s Most Intractable Conflict,” explores the underlying reasons that have led to the persistent and seemingly unresolvable nature of the Israel-Palestine conflict. It also sheds light on the various actors involved in the peace process. While the article briefly touches on the recent political events that have turned the conflict’s tide; the article did not deeply analyze the challenges it had impacted on the conflict resolution efforts.

Addressing this research gap necessitates a rigorous and systematic analysis of the Arab League's policy towards conflict resolution within the Israel-Palestine context since 2017. This research endeavors to explore the nuances of the League's policies, delve into their implications, and provide insightful findings that enrich scholarly discourse and inform policy decisions. By meticulously examining the Arab League's initiatives, diplomatic efforts, and peace-building strategies—including mediation attempts and regional collaborations—this study seeks to offer fresh insights into the efficacy of these policies. Simultaneously, it aims to uncover the challenges and constraints that the League faces during policy implementation, evaluating their impact on the conflict dynamics.

The culmination of this research will significantly contribute to scholarly discourse by shedding light on the effectiveness of the Arab League's policies towards conflict resolution in the Israel-Palestine context since 2017. By providing an in-depth insights into the League's activities, this study will help guide policy decisions and potentially shape future initiatives aimed at mitigating the conflict's consequences, fostering sustainable peace, and promoting regional stability.

1.3. Core Argument

This study argues that the Arab League's approach to the Israel-Palestine conflict should not be simplistically labeled as either effective or ineffective. Instead, it should be understood as a complex response to a constantly changing environment.

1.4. Objectives of the Study

In line with the general statements and justifications outlined above, the overall objective of this study is to analyze the effectiveness of the Arab League's policy towards the Israel-Palestine conflict resolution from 2017 to 2023, and identify the key factors that have impacted it.

Taking the overall objective as a main sign-post, the study has the following specific objectives:

- To investigate the extent to which the use of veto power by external powers has impacted the Arab League's effectiveness in addressing and resolving the Israel-Palestine conflict.
- To assess the specific influence of recent developments and the potential implications of these events on the Arab League's approach to conflict resolution in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

1.5. Research Questions

The main question that this study attempts to answer is how effective has the Arab League's policy been in resolving the Israel-Palestine conflict from 2017 to 2023, and what are the key factors impacting it?

- To what extent has the use of veto power by external powers impacted the Arab League's ability to effectively address and resolve the Israel-Palestine conflict?
- How have recent developments influenced the Arab League's approach to conflict resolution in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and what are the potential implications of these events?

1.6. Study Area

The Israel-Palestine conflict takes place in the Middle East, specifically in the historically significant and geopolitically strategic “region along the eastern Mediterranean shores” known as the Levant (Britannica, 2023b). This region, with its rich history, diverse cultures, and unique geography, holds immense significance due to its location bridging three continents: Europe, Asia, and Africa. The conflict arises from deep-rooted disputes between Israelis and Palestinians concerning land ownership, borders, and national identities. The complex history of the region, marked by numerous wars, violence, and ongoing political tensions, has made the Israel-Palestine conflict a formidable challenge for regional stability and global peace.

The Arab League is an intergovernmental organization composed of 22 member states in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) (CNN Library, 2013; EEAS, 2021). This regional organization aims to promote cooperation, coordination, and solidarity among its member states. Since its establishment, the Arab League has been actively engaged in seeking a solution to the

Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It has consistently supported the right of Palestinians to self-determination and advocated for the establishment of a sovereign Palestinian state alongside Israel, based on the principles of international law and relevant United Nations resolutions.

Since 2017, the Arab League has maintained its stance on the conflict, reiterating the need for a peaceful and just resolution. The League's policy has evolved to increasingly emphasize the importance of dialogue and negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians as the path towards a lasting solution. It recognizes the significance of these direct exchanges in addressing key issues such as borders, settlements, Jerusalem, and the rights of refugees. To support the Palestinian cause, the Arab League has taken concrete actions, including providing financial aid, diplomatic support, and actively working towards securing international recognition of Palestine as an independent state. The Arab League's engagement in resolving the Israel-Palestine conflict holds immense significance for both regional stability and global peace. Given the historical, cultural, and religious complexities intertwined with this conflict, the League's policy from 2017 to 2023 underscores its commitment to finding a just and lasting resolution that respects the rights and aspirations of all parties involved. Understanding the intricate dynamics of this conflict and recognizing the pivotal role of regional organizations like the Arab League are essential for formulating effective strategies that can contribute towards stimulating meaningful dialogue, negotiation, and ultimately, a durable peace in the region.

1.7. Research Methodology and Method

1.7.1. Methodology

Qualitative research offers a distinct and valuable lens for understanding the complexities of human behavior and experiences. Its in-depth methodology, utilizing methods like interviews, focus groups, observations, and document analysis, delves into the underlying motivations, beliefs, and perceptions that shape individual actions (Bhat, n.d.). This approach transcends mere measurement of responses, seeking to uncover the nuanced "why" behind human thoughts and behaviors focusing not only on the objective nature of behavior but also on its subjective meanings (Crossman, 2020). Qualitative research is characterized by its capacity to explore the subjective dimensions of experience, capturing individual interpretations, emotions, and perspectives that influence attitudes and actions (McLeod, 2023). It also underscores the critical role of context in

shaping human experiences, examining the interplay of social, cultural, and environmental forces that influence beliefs and actions.

The research process itself is inherently dynamic, characterized by its iterative and flexible nature (Aspers and Corte, 2019). Researchers engage in a continuous cycle of data collection, analysis, and interpretation, allowing new insights to emerge throughout the study. This iterative approach enables researchers to delve deeper into complex issues, refine their research questions, and explore unanticipated findings that may surface during the research process (Discuss.io, n.d.).

In the context of the Israel-Palestine conflict and the League's policy towards conflict resolution, qualitative research presents an ideal methodology. Its ability to explore diverse perspectives, provide contextual understanding, examine policy processes, and prioritize lived experiences makes it a crucial tool for informing policy decisions and promoting peace in the region.

1.7.2. Method

1.7.2.1. Sources of Data and Instruments of Data Collection

Research, whether in the realm of politics, social sciences, or any other field, relies heavily on data. This data can be broadly categorized into two types: primary data and secondary data.

In this study, both primary and secondary data sources were utilized to gather a comprehensive understanding of the research topic. Primary data is original information collected directly by the researcher for their specific study (SoPact, 2024). This means the data is fresh, gathered in real-time, and tailored to their research question. It often involves a more involved process, such as conducting surveys, observations, experiments, or interviews, and can be costly and time-consuming (Wagh, 2024). However, this direct approach ensures the data is specific to the researcher's needs and is often considered more accurate and reliable because they have control over its collection. Here, primary data was collected through qualitative methods, with a particular focus on interviews with key informants².

Secondary data, on the other hand, is information already collected and published by someone else for a different purpose (Ibid, 2024). These sources included established journals and publications such as the Journal of Foreign Affairs, the Middle East Journal, along with contents from both

² Key informants are individuals with specialized knowledge, experience or insights relevant to the research topic.

JSTOR and SAGE Publications, etc. Furthermore, the secondary data encompassed a wide array of materials, including but not limited to newspapers, television, YouTube videos, and other social media outlets, governmental records and publications, national archives, books, opinion pieces and editorials, online articles, and additional scholarly literature. By utilizing these sources, I was able to further enrich my research by gaining a richer understanding and a wider lens through which to analyze the topic in hand. Additionally, this approach served as a valuable supplement to the primary data.

1.7.2.2. Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling, also known as purposeful or selective sampling, is a non-random sampling technique widely employed in qualitative research (Rai and Thapa, 2015). Unlike probability sampling methods, which rely on random selection, purposive sampling involves the deliberate selection of specific participants or cases based on predefined criteria, often linked to the research question, study objectives, or theoretical framework (Tongco, 2007; Ritchie, Lewis and Elam, 2003). It entails selecting individuals or cases that provide unique perspectives, rich insights, or deep understanding relevant to the research inquiry.

Within qualitative research, interview purposive sampling specifically concerns itself with the intentional selection of individuals or participants for interviews based on their relevance to the research topic, the need to capture diverse perspectives, or the desire to access specific or unique insights related to the research objectives (Dovetail, 2023).

For this study, a purposive sampling approach was used to select participants for the interviews. The sample was chosen based on their expertise and experience in the field of diplomacy and international relations. The participants were chosen from selected Arab embassies (located in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and professors from recognized institutions who have experience in the field. The sample size consisted of 6 participants, which was deemed sufficient to gather different insights into the research question. The participants were all adults over the age of 18 and had years of experience in the diplomatic or international relations industry. The sample was diverse in terms of gender and age to ensure a broad range of perspectives. In this context, interview purposive sampling becomes a critical component for ensuring that the gathered qualitative data directly addresses the research questions and objectives. By deliberately identifying and selecting participants who possessed the desired characteristics,

experiences, or knowledge, I strived to capture relevant information through interviews, thereby enriching the qualitative dataset.

1.7.2.3. Data Analysis Techniques

Analyzing a data involves the “process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming, and interpreting data to discover valuable insights, draw conclusions, and support decision-making” (Kelley, 2023). The purpose of data analysis is to transform raw data into useful information that can be used to answer research questions, validate hypotheses, and make informed decisions. It is an essential step in any research project as it allows researchers to make sense of the data he or she have collected. There are several types of data analysis that researchers can employ depending on the nature of their research topic, the study objectives and the type of data required. In order to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under investigation, the paper employed a qualitative data analysis approach.

For a study addressing the Israel-Palestine conflict and the Arab League's policy towards conflict resolution, an appropriate method of qualitative data analysis would be thematic analysis as well as content analysis. This is because both thematic analysis and content analysis are useful qualitative research methods for exploring complex issues and identifying patterns within data.

Thematic analysis involves identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the qualitative data to answer research questions or address specific objectives (Clarke and Braun, 2017). Given the complexity and depth of the subject matter, thematic analysis offers a structured and flexible approach to extract meaningful insights from diverse qualitative sources, including interviews, documents, and other textual data (Villegas, 2022). It allows for the exploration of nuanced perspectives, repeated patterns, and underlying themes relevant to the Israel-Palestine conflict and the Arab League's policy initiatives (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis was employed as a versatile qualitative analysis tool. Its adaptability to various theoretical frameworks made it appropriate for investigating the complex dynamics of conflict resolution, geopolitical perspectives, and policy orientations within the context of the Israel-Palestine conflict and the Arab League's involvement.

Content analysis, on the other hand, involves systematically analyzing written or visual content to identify patterns and themes (Luo, 2019). This method is particularly useful for analyzing large

amounts of data, such as official statements, speeches, or media coverage (Humble and Mozelius, 2022). In this study, content analysis was used to analyze the official statements and documents of the Arab League and its member states to identify the key factors that have influenced their policy towards the Israel-Palestine conflict. Similarly, content analysis was used to analyze media coverage and diplomatic records to explore the impact of veto power on the Arab League's decision-making processes.

By employing thematic analysis and content analysis methods, this study tried to systematically identify and interpret key themes, shedding light on the complex interplay of historical, political, and diplomatic factors influencing conflict resolution efforts, and how they intersect with the Arab League's policies and initiatives.

1.8. Ethical Considerations

In conducting this research project, it is important to consider ethical considerations to ensure that all participants are treated with respect and courtesy. To achieve this, a strategy of informed consent was adopted whereby the purpose and methods of the research were made clear to all participants. Additionally, confidentiality and anonymity of individual respondents were assured in case they had asked for it, meaning any information regarding their names or positions would not be disclosed as promised and agreed upon.

Furthermore, ethical standards were maintained when analyzing and reporting data to ensure that the findings were presented accurately and fairly. By following these ethical guidelines, the research project was conducted in a manner that was respectful and beneficial to all participants involved.

1.9. Significance of the Study

The significance of studying the Arab League's policy towards the Israel-Palestine conflict lies in the importance of understanding the dynamics and factors that shape conflict resolution efforts in the region. This study holds significance at multiple levels; firstly it holds an academic significance as it would contribute to the existing body of knowledge in the field of international relations by providing a comprehensive analysis of the Arab League's policy towards the Israel-Palestine conflict from 2017 to 2023. It sheds light on the evolving factors, dynamics, and perspectives that influence the League's approach and decision-making. Secondly, the findings of this study can

have practical implications for policymakers, diplomats, and international organizations involved in conflict resolution and peace building efforts in the Israel-Palestine context. Understanding the factors that shape the League's policy can inform more effective strategies and interventions. Lastly, the study would offer insights into the complex interactions between Arab League member states, their domestic politics, and regional alliances, providing a deeper understanding of the regional dynamics influencing the conflict resolution process. This knowledge can enhance regional collaboration and facilitate more meaningful engagement among stakeholders

1.10. Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is centered around the Arab League's policy towards the Israel-Palestine conflict, specifically focusing on the 2017-2023 events. The study delves into the factors influencing the League's policy, the impact of domestic politics and regional alliances, external influences like veto power by external powers, and the role of international human rights norms and institutions. The scope encompasses a multi-dimensional analysis, incorporating qualitative data from various sources to gain comprehensive insights into the complexities of the conflict and the League's role in conflict resolution.

It is important to note that this study is not intended to provide immediate solutions to the conflict but rather to contribute to a deeper understanding of the factors at play and create a foundation for further research and informed policy discussions on conflict resolution in the Israel-Palestine context.

1.11. Limitations of the Study

- The analysis presented in this thesis places greater emphasis on events concerning the Israel-Palestine conflict rather than providing a comprehensive examination of the policies and actions of individual member states in the region.
- Due to the sensitivity and complexity of the topic, accessing reliable and up-to-date data on the policies and actions of individual member states towards conflict resolution had been challenging.
- The study acknowledged that the Israel-Palestine conflict and the Arab League's policy response were influenced by various geopolitical factors, such as regional power dynamics and global political interests. However, due to the complexity of these factors and the scope

of the study, their influence on the conflict resolution efforts might not have been fully explored.

- The study relied on secondary sources to analyze the stance of Israel. Obtaining access to primary sources directly from Israeli authorities or officials was not feasible, which restricted the depth and first-hand perspective that could have been achieved through direct primary data. As a result, the study relied on existing interpretations, analyses, and accounts of Israel's stance available in the public domain, introducing a potential limitation in terms of the depth and immediacy of the data used for this specific aspect of the research.
- Some interviewees may have been hesitant to answer certain questions due to the sensitivity of the topic or political/organizational protocols. This may have resulted in a lack of candid and comprehensive responses from some participants, potentially impacting the depth and accuracy of the data obtained.

It is important to note that these limitations are not meant to undermine the research but rather to provide transparency and acknowledge potential areas where the study may have constraints.

1.12. Organization of the Study

This study was organized into 5 chapters:

Chapter 1 served as the introduction to the study. It began with a contextual background, providing an overview of the broader context within which the research was situated. This was followed by the problem statement, the core argument, objectives, research questions, study area, methodology, ethical considerations, significance, scope, limitations, and the organization of the study.

Chapter 2 explored the conceptual clarifications, theoretical perspectives, and rationales within the context of conflict and conflict resolution. It began by introducing the fundamental terminology related to conflict and conflict resolution with the aim of deciphering their complex nature, shedding light on the multifaceted definitions and interpretations that underpin them. Furthermore, the theoretical perspectives adopted in the study were discussed as they offered distinct lenses through which an individual could analyze and make sense of this protracted conflict.

Chapter 3 focused on understanding the Israel-Palestine Conflict and the Arab League's Role. The Israel-Palestine conflict had remained a focal point of international attention and regional dynamics for decades. From longstanding territorial disputes to ongoing security concerns, this

complex and multifaceted conflict had proven resistant to lasting resolution. The chapter examined the latest developments that had unfolded from 2017-2023, examining not only the evolving nature of the conflict but also the actions or policy initiatives of the Arab League—a key regional player—in advancing peace and conflict resolution efforts. By analyzing the interaction of these two critical elements, this chapter aimed to provide an understanding of the contemporary landscape of the Israel-Palestine conflict and the role of the Arab League, shedding light on the challenges, opportunities, and prospects for peace in the region.

Chapter 4 presented the empirical findings of the study and their analysis. Finally, chapter 5 delivered conclusion.

CHAPTER TWO

Conceptual and Theoretical Perspectives

This chapter aims to present a concise overview of the fundamental terms and concepts associated with the central theme of the research. The goal is to shed light on the intricate dynamics of conflict and the notion of conflict resolution, laying the groundwork for a better understanding of the key elements that underpin the concept of conflict and the measures taken to bring about resolution. Additionally, the chapter delves into the theoretical framework of the selected theories of international relations, which are pivotal lenses for understanding the Israel-Palestine conflict and Arab League's policy. And is finally followed by a literature review.

2.1. Conceptual Perspectives

2.1.1. Definition of Conflict

The term "conflict" finds its etymological roots in the Latin word "conflictus," symbolizing collisions or clashes stemming from varying interests, ideas, or actions, fostering tensions and opposition (Etymonline, 2018). Conflict epitomizes dynamic interactions marked by divergent viewpoints that demand resolutions. Despite widespread use, the concept of conflict remains intricate, subject to diverse interpretations across academic realms such as psychology, sociology, and political science. Conflict emerges as an inherent facet of human relationships (Zartman 1997 as cited in Miller 2005; Canary, 2003), igniting from various issues encompassing money, time, religion, politics, and culture, drawing almost anyone into its turmoil (Grothe, n.d.). Conflicts persist globally, spanning personal, societal, political, and international realms. The definition of conflict defies simplicity, extending beyond mere disagreement. Within political science, conflict is integral to societal dynamics and 'power relations,' involving diverse manifestations from political disagreements, diplomatic tensions, and economic rivalries to resource competition³ (Bennett and Neiland, n.d). As posited by Wilmot and Hocker (2010), conflict embodies expressed struggles amid interdependent parties perceiving incompatible goals, scarce resources, and external interference hindering goal achievement.

³ These various forms of conflict are studied within political science to understand how they impact governance, international relations, and the functioning of societies as a whole.

Delving into the realm of conflict, the Dictionary of Social Sciences as cited Bennett and Neiland (n.d.) presents five nuanced definitions spotlighting opposing objectives, lack of cohesion, diverging interests, competitive dynamics, and fundamental societal discord. Conflict surpasses mere discord to envelop personal, societal, and resource-based contentions propelled by emotional and perceptual intricacies. Wallensteen (2007) emphasizes conflict's intrinsic incompatibility, attributing conflict not solely to observable behavior but to fundamental clashes in interests and needs, especially in situations of resource scarcity leading to perceived zero-sum games. Conflict, as Wallensteen articulates, involves actors, their actions, and the incompatibility of their interests, highlighting the complexities of conflict dynamics as a social phenomenon rooted in the pursuit of resources by multiple parties concurrently.

Bartos and Wehr (2002) propose another definition of conflict, suggesting that it arises when individuals engage in behaviors aimed at achieving inherently incompatible goals, culminating not only in the pursuit of conflicting objectives but also in the display of hostility. Conflict, as highlighted by Deutsch (1990), as cited in Wall and Callister (1995), can occur at various levels and is fueled by diverse and intricate causes. These causes range from individual factors like personality traits and communication styles to structural elements such as power dynamics and resource allocation, showcasing the complexity and diversity of conflict origins (Gunkel, Schlaegel, and Taras, 2016; d'Estree and Shapiro, n.d.). Conflict can also escalate to armed violence, causing immense harm and disruption (Maiese, 2003), illustrating the potential consequences of unresolved conflicts manifesting in violent acts and widespread turmoil.

Simmel's examination of conflicts delves into the interconnected dynamics of egoistic groups within society, highlighting their complex interrelationships over isolated entities. Viewing conflict as an inherent aspect of social life, he underscores the potential of group interests in both mitigating conflicts and promoting societal stability (Simmel, 1918 as cited in Darlong, 2023). Expanding on Simmel's framework, Coser elaborates on the beneficial functions of conflict, emphasizing its role in maintaining or adapting social structures. Contrary to prevalent beliefs, Coser suggests that conflicts are not inherently dangerous but pose risks in the absence of appropriate containment strategies. Central to Coser's conflict theory is the idea that conflicts emerge from contests over values, power, and resources, with adversaries aiming to neutralize or gain an advantage over each other (Coser, 1956).

Ivančík and Nečas (2013) references Hofreiter (2007), conception of conflict as a defining element in social relationships explores how conflicts arise from parties vying to advance their interests at the cost of others. Building on this, Krejčí (2007) as cited in Trifunovic and Kazansky (2021), sees conflict as purposeful disputes among diverse groups or individuals, driven by contests for well-being, status, or power. Similarly, Waisová (2002) as cited in Kazansky (2020), perceives conflict as a social reality rooted in divergent interests or beliefs, leading opposing parties to confront each other.

Scholars like Ekanola (2005) and Romsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall (2005) pose a critical challenge to the conventional perspective regarding the relationship between violence and conflict. Their analysis underscores the intricate interconnection between these two phenomena, contending that they are not solely dependent on each other. The scholars advocate for an understanding that conflict does not invariably transform into violence, nor does violence inexorably emerge from conflict, basically acknowledging the presence of psychological, ideological, and value-based discrepancies within conflicts, suggesting a broader and more complex understanding of these dynamics. Conflicts, as defined by the **Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (HIK)**, are clashes of interest regarding national values such as territory, secession, decolonization, autonomy, ideology, power, resources, and others (HIK, 2003 as cited in Mildner, Richter and Lauster, 2011). Political conflicts involve clashes of interests, values, or actions among different individuals, groups, or countries. These conflicts vary in intensity and expression, falling into categories such as “latent conflicts (non-violent or of low intensity), manifest conflicts (non-violent but high intensity), crises (violent), severe crises (violent), and wars (violent)” (Mildner, Lauster and Wodni, 2011, p.168).

Building up on that, Wallensteen (2002) categorizes conflicts into three primary categories—interstate conflicts, internal conflicts, and state-formation conflicts—provides a robust framework for comprehending the multifaceted nature of societal discord. These classifications serve as a foundation in political science, international relations, and conflict resolution research, aiding in the understanding and management of various political conflicts by identifying their unique characteristics and the necessary interventions for their resolution. Moreover, scholars have differing views on conflicts—some perceive them as detrimental, leading to hostility, aggression, and violence (Galtung, 1969; Coser, 1956). Conversely, others argue that conflicts can be

beneficial, fostering creativity, innovation, and societal change (Rahim, 2002; Abdul-Fattah and Yaser, 2019). Additionally, some scholars suggest that conflicts can have both positive and negative outcomes, contingent on their effective management and resolution (De Dreu and Weingart, 2003; Jehn and Bendersky, 2003). Furthermore, conflicts can manifest in organized, non-violent movements that aim to influence governmental policies, exemplified by widespread non-violent civil disobedience campaigns.

Mark and Snyder's insights, as referenced in Nwefuru (2017), draw attention to the diverse interpretations of conflicts arising from the inherent complexity of social analysis and compartmentalization within academic spheres. They raise queries about whether these disparities stem from artificial categorization or the rapid expansion of academic disciplines lacking clear guidance. Similarly, Obi's reflections, as cited in Nwefuru (2017), prompt contemplation on the evolving environmental context contributing to perceived intellectual disarray in conflict studies, urging a deeper examination of the dynamic nature of conflict analysis in academic realms.

2.1.2. Definition of Conflict Resolution

The foundation for modern conflict resolution practices can be traced back to the incisive analyses of historical conflicts, particularly exemplified by the substantial work initiated during “the Arab-Israeli conflicts in the late 1960s” (Bennett and Neiland, n.d.). This groundbreaking research not only laid the groundwork for understanding the nature of conflict and its resolution but also fueled a renewed interest in conflict resolution with the resurgence of European conflicts subsequent to the conclusion of the Cold War (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall, 2005). Such influential endeavors marked a pivotal departure in the evolution of conflict resolution, expanding its influence across a wide spectrum of disciplines, including the less traditionally associated fields such as personnel management, as evidenced in the work of scholars like Wallace (1993) and Chen (1991). This confluence of influences highlights how conflict resolution principles have permeated various domains to address disputes and harmonize interactions.

At its core, the essence of conflict theory lies in the crucial concept of conflict resolution, offering a systematic and structured approach toward addressing and managing conflicts in various spheres of human interaction. Hence, whether viewed as the decisive settlement of a conflict or as the establishment of a long-term status quo—akin to the equilibrium status described by Boulding

(1966)—conflict resolution serves as a strategic foundation for promoting understanding, mitigation, and ultimately the harmonization of diverse human interactions.

To put simply, conflict resolution is the process where two or more parties come together, whether officially or casually, to peacefully settle a disagreement (Shonk, 2014). In fields like political science and international relations, handling conflict usually requires using various methods such as diplomacy, negotiation, mediation, arbitration, peacekeeping missions, treaties, economic penalties, military actions, and other diplomatic measures to address conflicts among nations, organizations, or other entities on a national or international scale (Sargsyan, 2003). The ultimate aim is to prevent or minimize violence, encourage peace, and discover lasting solutions to conflicts. Conflict resolution according to Hilal (2011), is a pivotal process where conflicting parties gather to peacefully address their differences and reach a lasting and satisfactory resolution that promotes harmony. The core objective is to satisfy the conflicting forces involved while ensuring all parties feel content (London Premier Centre, 2023). Given the inherent presence of conflict in human interactions, effective conflict resolution strategies are not aimed at sidestepping disagreements but rather at fostering dialogue, enhancing comprehension, and managing emotional reactions (Imm, 2022).

Along this line, Wallensteen's (2015) conceptualization of conflict resolution transcends mere conflict management by delving into the core origins of discord and striving for enduring solutions. He posits that true conflict resolution entails reaching an agreement that resolves fundamental differences, acknowledging the legitimacy of all parties involved, and renouncing violent actions against each other. This stance underscores the imperative of embracing non-violence and transitioning towards peaceful conflict resolution methods. Additionally, Wallensteen underscores the pivotal role of intervention in the resolution process, whether through mediation, negotiation, or other facilitative approaches, to redirect the conflict trajectory and guide parties towards a mutually acceptable resolution. Building on this perspective, Katz and McNulty (1994) and Lewicki and Tomlinson (2003) further stress the importance of cultivating trust, dispelling prejudices, and dismantling stereotypes to pave the way for open communication and a genuine willingness to comprehend divergent viewpoints – foundational elements crucial for successful conflict resolution. Failure to address these fundamental aspects may impede the attainment of a sustainable resolution to the conflict at hand.

Mutisya (2011) references Warters (2000) to elucidate conflict resolution as a multifaceted process encompassing legal procedures, contract negotiations, problem-solving agreements, human relations, and ethical considerations. Fisher (1997) expands on this notion by portraying conflict resolution as a dynamic journey of “de-escalation and reconciliation” within relationships (p.6). Fisher's analysis highlights the evolution of conflict resolution, emphasizing the cultivation of new qualities and mechanisms that facilitate the constructive settlement of disputes. Central to this progression is the gradual adoption of frameworks and approaches that steer conflicting parties away from hostility towards a more amicable and mutually beneficial resolution.

Sanson and Bretherton (2001) further emphasize the significance of employing non-violent techniques in conflict resolution while advocating for equitable structures that prevent the domination or oppression of one party over another, thereby fostering a collaborative and fair resolution process. Conflict resolution strives not only to stop conflicts but also to address their underlying issues, embodying a sustainable, multi-dimensional approach to peace-building for the genuine achievement of positive peace. To effectively address longstanding ethnic conflicts using conflict resolution, experts must thoroughly analyze both the root and immediate causes that have fueled the conflict's escalation. Resolution in this context involves managing conflicts successfully, clarifying them, and identifying viable solutions (Jeong, 2000; Ramsbotham, 2005).

The concept of conflict resolution is subject to several debates that reflect diverse perspectives and approaches to addressing conflicts. One key debate revolves around power dynamics, with critics arguing that traditional approaches may not adequately address power imbalances between parties, leading to unequal outcomes (Narine, n.d.). Another contentious issue is the role of neutrality versus partisanship in conflict resolution, with some advocating for mediators to remain neutral while others argue for taking sides to address deep-rooted grievances (Svensson, 2009). The debate on cultural sensitivity underscores the importance of considering cultural norms and practices in conflict resolution processes, emphasizing the need for context-specific interventions (Menkel-Meadow and Abramson, 2011). Additionally, there is a debate between top-down and bottom-up approaches, with proponents of grassroots initiatives highlighting their sustainability and inclusivity compared to high-level diplomatic efforts (Reed and Ceno, 2015; Coyne, 2023). Lastly, the structural versus behavioral approaches debate centers on whether interventions should focus on changing individual behaviors or addressing systemic root causes, highlighting the complexity

and diversity of perspectives within the field of conflict resolution (Kotzé, 2002). These debates underscore the need for ongoing dialogue and critical reflection to enhance the effectiveness of conflict resolution efforts.

2.2 Theoretical Perspectives

When considering the Israel-Palestine conflict and the Arab League's policy towards conflict resolution, several major conflict theories align with the dynamics and complexities of this ongoing conflict. Here are two major conflict theories that resonate with this specific geopolitical context alongside the Arab League's policy approaches:

2.2.1. Regional Security Complex Theory

The **Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT)**, developed by Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver within the Copenhagen School of security studies, offers a nuanced perspective on international security by focusing on how security dynamics unfold within specific geographical regions. Unlike traditional neorealism, which emphasizes global and state-centric security concerns, RSCT posits that security interactions are primarily regional and socially constructed (Gebru et al., 2023). At its core, RSCT introduces the concept of **Regional Security Complexes (RSCs)**, distinct geographical areas characterized by intense security interactions among neighboring states (Maiangwa, 2016). Buzan and Wæver (2003, p.44) define RSC as the process by which national security threats become regional issues. They explain that an RSC consists of a group of units whose security concerns are so interconnected through securitization and de-securitization processes that these issues cannot be effectively understood or addressed in isolation from each other.

In RSCT, adjacency refers to the geographical proximity among states within a specific region, emphasizing that physical closeness enhances security interactions more significantly than greater distances (Buzan and Wæver, 2003, p.45). Geographical proximity influences how states perceive security threats, cooperate on security issues, and manage regional stability. For example, neighboring states often share common borders, historical interactions, and cultural ties, which can either facilitate cooperation or exacerbate tensions based on mutual perceptions of security threats.

The concept of a self-contained nature within RSCT suggests that RSCs exhibit a degree of insulation from external influences (Buzan and Wæver, 2003). This insulation can be due to natural barriers (such as mountains, oceans, or deserts) or intermediary states that buffer interactions between the focal states within the complex and external actors (Ibid, 2003). As a result, RSCs develop internal patterns of security dynamics, cooperation, and conflict resolution that are relatively autonomous from global or systemic influences. This autonomy allows RSCs to develop distinct security architectures and strategies that cater specifically to their regional context.

Within these complexes, RSCT introduces the concepts of regional sub-complexes and super-complexes. Regional sub-complexes are localized groupings of states within a larger RSC that share intense security interactions and common security concerns, such as economic stability or territorial disputes (Juma, 2020). For instance, within the Middle East RSC, sub-complexes such as the Gulf Cooperation Council or the Levant region highlight unique security dynamics and intra-regional interactions, such as economic cooperation or regional conflicts (Seeberg, 2016). In contrast, super-complexes denote overlapping security interactions between different RSCs or regions, reflecting interconnectedness driven by shared interests or external influences (Juma, 2020). An example could be the overlapping security interests and interactions between the Middle East RSC and the Central Asian RSC or the Middle East RSC and the European RSC, driven by factors like energy resources, terrorism threats, or geopolitical alignments (Seeberg, 2016).

Central to RSCT is the idea that security is not solely determined by material capabilities but is inter-subjectively defined through social processes and historical experiences within RSCs (Buzan and Wæver, 2003). This social construction of security allows RSCT to capture the complexity of security issues, including how certain issues are securitized—framed as existential threats requiring exceptional measures—to garner domestic and international support. Moreover, RSCT recognizes the role of non-state actors, such as regional organizations, transnational groups, and major powers, in shaping regional security dynamics (Juma, 2020). The theory acknowledges the role of non-state actors in governance and security, highlighting their impact on policy processes and decision-making. It also recognizes the distinction between different types of non-state actors, such as private-sector corporate actors and non-governmental organizations (Luitel, 2024). Furthermore, RSCT underscores the interconnectedness between state and non-state actors in networks that influence public policy formulation and implementation. These actors contribute to

the regional balance of power, influence security perceptions, and participate in conflict resolution efforts within and across RSCs.

Although the theory is complicated by the presence of actors with global security interests and the ability to project military power, Buzan and Wæver (2003) argue that even these actors' security concerns are essentially regional. Their involvement in regional security issues is typically a response to problems originating within the region, not a case of global powers imposing their agenda on a RSC, though that can occur as well.

It is also important to note that while RSCT constructs are based on deductive reasoning, they should not be confused with culturally defined regions like Europe or the Middle East.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a prime example of the complexities and challenges inherent in the RSCT framework. Here's how it plays out:

1. A High-Stakes Regional Security Complex

- a) **Interdependence:** The conflict demonstrates the deeply intertwined nature of security in the Middle East. Israel's actions, including military operations, settlements in parts of the west bank, and the Gaza blockades, directly impact the security of Palestinians, while Palestinian resistance directly affect Israeli security and stability (Amnesty International, 2008; Mishra, 2023)..
- b) **Securitization:** Both sides have effectively securitized the conflict, framing it as an existential threat requiring exceptional measures. Israel emphasizes its right to defend itself against terrorism, while Palestinians view Israeli actions as an existential threat to their sovereignty, national identity and survival (Kelman, 1999; Zonszein, 2023).
- c) **Power Imbalance:** The conflict highlights the significant power imbalance. Israel possesses a powerful military, advanced technology, and strong international alliances, while Palestinian groups operate with simple resources and limited external support (TRT World, 2021).

2. The Arab League's Role: A Complex Interplay of Interests

- a) **Regional Actors:** The Arab League, as a regional organization, plays a significant role in shaping the regional security landscape. However, its involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is complex due to internal divisions, varying interests among its member states and external factors.
- b) **Securitization and De-securitization:** The Arab League's stance on the conflict has shifted over time. Early efforts focused on securitizing the issue, demanding Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories. However, recent years have witnessed a de-securitization of the conflict, with a greater focus on economic cooperation and stability over direct confrontation.
- c) **Internal Divisions:** While the Arab League has historically supported the Palestinian cause, internal divisions among member states regarding the best approach to resolving the conflict have challenged its effectiveness. For example, some countries, such as Egypt and Jordan, have prioritized stability and peace agreements with Israel, while others, such as Syria, Lebanon, Algiers, Qatar, and Yemen remain staunchly opposed to any normalization with Israel.

Additionally, the recent years have witnessed a notable shift in some Arab states' policies towards Israel, exemplified by the signing of normalization agreements such as the Abraham Accords (Miraz, 2023). These agreements signify a significant departure from traditional Arab League positions and carry profound implications for regional security dynamics⁴. The normalization trend challenges conventional interpretations of the RSCT by potentially reshaping regional security perceptions and alliances. It introduces new dynamics where certain Arab states prioritize economic and political cooperation with Israel, while maintaining long-term solidarity with the Palestinian cause (Said, 2022; Basma, 2022; Miraz, 2023). Internally, these normalization agreements have exacerbated divisions within the Arab League. While some member states support the agreements as a step towards stability and economic advancement, others vehemently oppose them, viewing

⁴ It should be noted that the Abraham Accords were directly negotiated between Israel and some Arab countries, without the Arab League or broader Arab consensus playing a role.

them as undermining the collective stance on Palestinian rights and restricting the League's role in mediating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Al Jazeera, 2020b).

3. The Challenge of Non-State Actors

- a) **Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad:** The emergence of powerful non-state actors like Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad complicates the conflict (Wilson Center, 2023). These groups have challenged the PA's authority and employed tactics that have further inflamed tensions, adding another layer of complexity to the regional security dynamics.
- b) **International Influence:** The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is also influenced by powerful non-state actors with global reach, such as Hezbollah, which operates with Iranian support, has a significant presence in Lebanon, and poses a threat to Israel (Allison, 2023; Trofimov and Salama, 2023).

4. The Role of Global Powers

- a) **US Support as a Catalyst for Imbalance:** The US has consistently provided substantial military and financial aid to Israel, reinforcing its military dominance within the Middle East (Sharp, 2018; Hammer, 2023; Sharp, 2023). This imbalance of power, fueled by external support, has been a significant factor in perpetuating the conflict.

From an RSCT perspective, the US's actions have:

- **Undermined Security Interdependence:** By bolstering Israel's military capabilities, the US has created a power imbalance that hinders the possibility of achieving a balanced and secure environment for both Israelis and Palestinians.
- **Securitized the Conflict:** The US's support for Israel has been perceived as a form of securitization, reinforcing Israel's narrative of existential threat and bolstering its willingness to pursue policies that many Palestinians

perceive as oppressive. This has created a self-perpetuating cycle of conflict and mistrust.

- ***Limited the Potential for Negotiation:*** The imbalance of power, fueled by American support, makes it difficult to reach a negotiated solution that addresses the concerns of both sides. Palestinians often view US-brokered peace processes as entirely biased towards Israel (Linah, 2017; Dalia, 2024). For example: The Trump Administration's Middle East plan heavily favored Israel, providing them with significant concessions and recognition, while imposing restrictions and limitations on the Palestinian side, leading to widespread Palestinian and international discontent and dismissal of the plan as unfair (UN Press, 2020).

b) **Changes in Global Order and Formation of New Alliances:** The emergence of new powers like Russia and China in the Middle East has introduced new complexities (Elmali, 2023). Their growing influence, with their own interests and agendas, presents both challenges and opportunities for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

From an RSCT perspective, this shift in the global balance of power:

- ***Potentially Creates Opportunities for Mediation:*** China's successful mediation between Iran and Saudi Arabia is a prime example of how a new power can play a role in resolving regional conflicts (Atlantic Council, 2023; Othman, 2023). This demonstrates the potential for China to become a significant player in the Middle East, with its own approach to regional security and its willingness to engage in mediation efforts.
- ***Shifting Alliances and New Regional Dynamics:*** The changing global landscape has also led to the formation of new alliances and partnerships. Russia, for instance, has cultivated closer ties with Iran and Syria, while China has deepened its economic and strategic engagement with the region (Gramer and Mackinnon, 2023;

Mohammad and Papageorgiou, 2023). These new alignments could influence the dynamics of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with the potential to either contribute to peace-building efforts or escalate tensions depending on their goals and methods.

- ***Challenges to Existing Security Structures***: The rise of these new powers challenges the traditional security arrangements in the Middle East, potentially creating a more multi-polar and less predictable environment. This could lead to a situation where regional security becomes more fluid and less reliant on the dominant influence of the US.
- ***Shifting Security Perceptions***: The presence of new actors with different priorities and interests can also influence how regional actors perceive security threats. For example, if China's growing influence in the Middle East leads to a perception that the US is less committed to the region's security, this could embolden regional actors to pursue more assertive policies, potentially increasing instability.

c) **Implications for the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict**

The shift in the global balance of power, marked by the growing influence of Russia and China, could have significant implications for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It could lead to:

- ✓ ***Alternative Peace Initiatives***: New players with different perspectives and approaches may be more willing to engage in peace-building efforts, potentially leading to alternative peace initiatives that could address the long-standing issues of the conflict.
- ✓ ***Increased Regional Instability***: However, these changes could also lead to increased tensions and instability as different powers vie for influence and pursue their own interests. The potential

for unintended consequences, such as arms races, proxy conflicts, and increased militarization, could hinder progress towards a peaceful resolution.

2.2.2. Constructivism and Identity Politics

"Anarchy Is What States Make of It."

(Alexander Wendt, 1992)

Constructivism is a theory in international relations that emphasizes the role of ideas, norms, and identities in shaping state behavior and international politics (Hurd, 2008 as cited in Ouchenane, 2017). Constructivists argue that the international system is not simply a given, but is instead constructed by the ideas and beliefs of the states that participate in it.

In contrast to realism, which focuses on the role of power in international relations, constructivism emphasizes the role of social factors. Constructivists argue that these social factors shape the way that states perceive the world and their place in it, and that this in turn influences their behavior (Adler, 1997). For example, a state that believes that the world is a dangerous place is more likely to be aggressive than a state that believes that the world is a safe place. Similarly, a state that identifies itself as a victim of injustice is more likely to seek revenge than a state that identifies itself as a responsible member of the international community.

Constructivists also argue that the structure of the international system is not fixed, but is instead shaped by the actions of states. For example, if states act in a conflictual manner towards each other, then the nature of anarchy will appear to be conflictual, conversely, if states behave cooperatively towards each other, then the nature of anarchy will appear to be cooperative (Behraves, 2011). This challenges the realist notion that international anarchy is naturally conflictual and suggests that it is the actions of states that determine the nature of the system (Wendt, 1992). Constructivists further argue that the ever-evolving normative institutional structures are the result of social construction and the power of ideas (Theys, 2018). This is in contrast to liberal internationalism, which places greater emphasis on the promotion and maintenance of liberal democratic institutions and economic interdependence as the key to promoting peace and cooperation among states.

Constructivism has been influential in a number of areas of international relations, including the study of war, cooperation, and international institutions. Within the constructivist theoretical framework, the international system is not solely propelled by material forces, but is profoundly influenced by both subjective and inter-subjective perceptions, evolving norms, and the social practices of its constituent actors (Wendt, 1994).

Two key concepts in constructivism are identity and norms (Theys, 2018). Identity refers to how actors within the international system conceive of themselves, define their interests, and interact with other actors based on these self-perceptions (Wendt, 1999). These identities are not static; they are continually shaped and reshaped through interaction and discourse (Hall, 1990). Norms represent shared expectations and understandings regarding behavior and interaction within the international system (Boeree, 1999; Heise and Manji, 2016). They are the collective understandings and principles that guide the actions of actors within the global arena (Katzenstein, 1996). Constructivists argue that identity and norms are constantly evolving. This is because the international system is constantly changing, and states' perceptions of themselves and their place in the world are constantly being shaped by new experiences and interactions.

As a result, constructivism is a dynamic theory that can help us to understand how the international system is constantly changing. Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) developed the concept of the 'life cycle of norms' to describe the process by which new norms emerge, become widely accepted, and are eventually internalized by states. The life cycle of norms has three stages namely the; (a) norm emergence, where a new idea, principle, or standard begins to gain traction and attention, (b) norm cascade, where more and more actors acknowledge and adopt the norm, leading to its widespread acceptance, and (c) norm internalization becomes deeply ingrained in the consciousness of actors, almost becoming second nature. This can happen through education, socialization, and the development of institutions that support the norm. The life cycle of norms is not always linear. Norms can sometimes emerge and then fade away. However, the life cycle of norms provides a useful framework for understanding how new norms emerge, become widely accepted, and are eventually internalized by states.

Constructivists emphasize that identities and norms form the fundamental building blocks of the international system and are instrumental in shaping state behavior, alliance formation, and the management of international conflict and cooperation (Alexandrov, 2003; Rothman and

Alberstein, 2013; Cristol, 2019). Additionally, constructivism places excessive weight on the influence of “regional identities and the discourse of regions and region-building.” (Hurrell, 1995, p.353 as cited in Raslan, 2016).

Constructivists also argue that shared identity among states can lead to unique ways of thinking and behaving within a state of anarchy. These behaviors are often influenced by established norms of either conflict or cooperation which can be shaped through interaction, introduced by external actors and adapted locally, or altered through changes in a state's identity due to domestic occurrences (Rother, 2012). Suppose, if two states share a common identity, they may be more likely to cooperate with each other. Conversely, if two states perceive each other as fundamentally different or threatening, they may be more likely to conflict with each other. This highlights the role of perceived differences and the creation of "us versus them" dynamics in shaping intergroup relations and potential conflicts (Zhao, 2021).

The conception of power takes on a different meaning within the constructivist context. Power is considered a socially constructed value, allocated to actors based on how they are perceived by others (Main, 2023). It is not simply about material capabilities, but also about the influence and prestige that actors hold (Ouchenane, 2017). Powerful states are strengthened because they are perceived as powerful by others in the international system and vice versa. Constructivism emphasizes the importance of addressing power asymmetries and promoting inclusivity in conflict resolution (Pearce, n.d.).

In the case of the Israel-Palestine conflict, constructivism offers important insights by highlighting the role of socio-political realities and national identity construction (İnaç and Ünal, 2013). The socio-political realities of the Israel-Palestine conflict are complex and contested. Both Israelis and Palestinians have their own narratives of the conflict, and these narratives shape their perceptions of each other and their behavior. Israelis for instance, often view themselves as the victims of Palestinian violence, while Palestinians often view themselves as the victims of Israeli occupation. These different narratives lead to different perceptions of the conflict and make it difficult to find a mutually acceptable solution.

Similarly, national identity is a powerful force that can shape state behavior. In the case of the Israel-Palestine conflict, both Israelis and Palestinians have constructed national identities that are based on a series of inclusions and exclusions regarding history, religion, citizenship, and national

belonging. For example, Israelis define themselves as a Jewish state, while Palestinians define themselves as an Arab state. These different national identities lead to different claims to the land and make it difficult to find a mutually acceptable solution to the conflict.

To elaborate further, the historical narrative of both Israelis and Palestinians has played a significant role in shaping their national identities. For Israelis, the experience of the Holocaust and the subsequent establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 have been pivotal in shaping their identity as a nation with a deep connection to the land and a need for security (Henderson, 2018; Scroope, 2020). The Zionist movement, which sought to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine, was driven by a desire to create a safe haven for Jews who had suffered persecution and discrimination throughout history (Rehan, 2023; United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2023). Judaism is not only a religion but also a cultural and national identity for many Israelis (Jewish Virtual Library, n.d; Rochman, 2022). The promotion of Judaism has been an important aspect of Israeli society and has helped to shape its cultural norms and practices. For example, the Hebrew language, which is central to Jewish tradition, has been revived as the national language of Israel (Unpacked, 2019; Osoblivaia, 2023; Scroope, 2020).

Zionist culture and practices also reflect the importance of Judaism in Israeli society. For example, the celebration of Jewish holidays such as Passover and Hanukkah is an important part of Israeli culture (Uche, 2023; Britannica, 2024b). Additionally, many Israelis observe the Sabbath, which is a day of rest and reflection in Jewish tradition. Israel is no longer a state focused solely on survival instead it is now a state with regional ambitions (Rehan, 2023). This shift in identity has had a significant impact on Israel's foreign policy. Israel is now more willing to use its military power to achieve its goals. It is also more willing to engage with Arab states, even those that do not recognize Israel's right to exist.

While Judaism remains central to Israeli identity, there has been an increased emphasis on Israeli nationalism and patriotism. This shift has been reflected in the adoption of national symbols such as the Israeli flag (The Star of David) and the national anthem ('Hatikvah' meaning 'The Hope') (Apsan, n.d.).

In the case of Palestine, the Arabic language and Palestinian culture have played a key role in shaping Palestinian identity. Palestinians often identify themselves as Arabs, and they share a common language and culture with other Arab peoples (Khalidi, 1991). Palestinians often

reference the Nakba (catastrophe) of 1948, when hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were displaced, as a defining moment in their own national narrative, emphasizing their deep historical ties to the land and the longing for statehood (Evason, 2020; Ramzy, 2023). This experience, coupled with subsequent traumatic events, contributed to the emergence of deeply ingrained norms, such as the prioritization of security and the quest for national freedom and independence which intersect and strive to coexist with various ideologies that seek to define Palestinian national identity, “pan-Islam, Arab Nationalism, and Palestinian nationalism” (Massengill, 1998, p.3).

For Palestinians, the struggle for freedom and independence is central to their identity (Rehan, 2023). This has been expressed through national symbols such as the Palestinian flag and anthem, which represent the unity and resilience of the Palestinian people. The flag features three colors: black, white, and green, representing the Arab liberation movement, peace, and hope respectively (Institute for Palestine Studies, 2022). The anthem, ‘Fida’I’ which means ‘Warrior’, expresses the longing for a homeland and the determination to achieve it (Ploeckelman, 2021). Over the years, the Palestinian identity has evolved to become a symbol of resistance, resilience, and perseverance in the face of adversity.

The ‘olive tree’, revered for its significance and role in Palestinian culture, stands as a testament to the enduring spirit and attachment of the Palestinian people to their land, serving as a poignant emblem of their identity and heritage (Nehal, 2023). The ‘Palestinian identity’ has also been shaped by the ‘diaspora’, as many Palestinians have been forced to live outside their homeland (Schulz, 2003). Despite living in different countries and under different circumstances, they have maintained their connection to Palestine and have continued to identify as Palestinians transcending religious distinctions, such as Islam or Christianity (Evason, 2020). This sense of collective identity has been instrumental in maintaining a sense of unity and solidarity among Palestinians, both at home and abroad.

Islam is also a central aspect of Palestinian identity, with many Palestinians seeing themselves as defenders of Muslim values and practices (Hamade, 2002). This has been expressed through the use of Islamic symbols such as the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, which is considered one of the holiest sites in Islam (Shahira, 2023). The conflict with Israel is also often framed in religious terms, with Palestinians seeing themselves as defending their land and their faith against Israeli aggression.

In terms of norms, Palestinians have long emphasized their commitment to freedom and independence, despite ongoing challenges and obstacles. This has led to a focus on resistance and self-determination, with many Palestinians seeing armed struggle as a legitimate means of achieving their goals. However, there have also been efforts to engage in diplomatic alliances and peaceful negotiations, as seen in the Oslo Accords of 1993. The change in identity from a focus on security to diplomatic alliances' reflects a desire for normalization and acceptance in the region (Reham, 2023). This shift has been driven by a recognition of the importance of economic and strategic alliances, as well as a desire to engage in cultural exchanges and dialogue. However, there is also a tension between this new approach and the long-standing commitment to 'one land, one nation', which emphasizes the importance of Palestinian unity and resistance against Israeli occupation (Ibid, 2023).

Religion, particularly in the context of Al-Quds (Jerusalem), plays a profound role in shaping the national identities of both Israelis and Palestinians. Al-Quds holds immense religious significance for Jews, Christians, and Muslims. The religious narratives associated with Jerusalem have been shaped by centuries of tradition and belief, and have been passed down through generations. With "[e]ach side reclaiming strongly that the land in dispute has been somehow handed over by a God according to a made promise made and that the other (side) do not have the right to own a piece of it nor to exist" (Muyo, 2015, p.11).

This influence extends to geopolitical alliances and travel restrictions, reflecting the deep impact of religious identity and beliefs which further shaped the construction of social environment in which international relations take place and shape how allies and enemies are perceived, as well as how fairness and justice are viewed between conflicting states. The Egypt–Palestine relations and the Iran–Palestine relations on one hand and the Israel–US relations on the other could serve as a solid case in point (Rehan, 2023). Palestinians, comprising mostly Muslims, share strong religious and cultural ties with Egyptians and Iranians (Khaled, 2012; Seyed, 2021). These connections, steeped in history and faith, contribute to the formation of geopolitical alliances, fostering a sense of shared identity and solidarity among these communities. Moreover, the unwavering support from Iran and other Muslim-majority nations for Palestine can be attributed to religious beliefs, delineating Israel as Iran's adversary and engendering a broader Muslim inclination towards the Palestinian cause (Menashri, 2004). In contrast, the special relation

between Israelis and the West (particularly the Americans) reflects a distinct geopolitical alignment (Bar-Siman-Tov, 1998). This enduring partnership is characterized by shared values, strategic interests, and political affinities, which have solidified the bond between the two nations over the years (Ramos *et al.*, 2005; Narea, 2023b).

Furthermore, Muslim-majority countries' travel restrictions on Israel reflect their non-recognition of Israel's legitimacy and their support for the Palestinian cause. These restrictions stem from their view of Israel as an occupying force in Palestinian territories. Allowing their citizens to freely travel to Israel would be seen as an acceptance of Israeli control over Palestinian land, which these countries do not recognize.

When examining the Arab Leagues policy on the Israel-Palestine conflict from a constructivist perspective, it becomes evident that the organization's approach reflects the dynamic interplay of historical narratives, social constructions, and evolving norms within the Arab world.

Identity plays a fundamental role in shaping the League's policy. This shared identity is not merely a superficial label; rather, it represents a deeply entrenched connection built upon a historical, cultural, and sociopolitical base (Ahmad, 2023). The historical bonds that tie member states together form an essential part of the Arab League's identity. These historical connections encompass shared experiences, interests, struggles, and triumphs, often spanning centuries (Ahmad, 2017; Hitti, 2018; Halim, 2023). From resisting colonial rule to striving for independence, these historical narratives collectively contribute to the formation of a united, cohesive identity that transcends individual national boundaries (Kurun, 2017). Furthermore, the Arab identity includes a wide variety of shared cultural elements, including language, literature, art, and traditions (The Historian, 2023). At the core of international relations, “identities act as a framework in explaining how states and institutions act in different circumstances” (Rehan, 2023, p.32).

The league's policy formulation and enactment are inherently shaped by the conservative values, beliefs and collective identity fostered within its member states (Farah, 2012). Through a shared Arab identity, the Arab League fosters a sense of regional association and uses this collective identity to establish common policies and agendas across member states (Rehan, 2023). This shared identity underpins the league's policy actions, reflecting a convergence of national principles into unified values, principles, and rules to a considerable degree (Sleilaty, 2023).

Moving on to norms, the reference is to the established standards and expectations within the League as a regional organization. One of the key norms that shapes the identity of the Arab League is pan-Arabism, which is the belief in the unity of all Arab peoples and the importance of their shared history, culture and language (Rubin, 1991). This norm is reflected in the League's founding charter, which emphasizes the need for cooperation and solidarity among Arab states. And this commitment harks back to the league's inception, highlighting its enduring significance in guiding the league's objectives and actions (Charter of Arab League, 1945). Another important norm is anti-colonialism, which reflects the League's historical opposition to the European imperialism in the Middle East and the Arab world (Al Jazeera, 2009; Farah, 2012). This norm is evident in the League's support for the Palestinian cause and its condemnation of Israeli occupation and settlement building (Aziz, 1956; News in brief, November 2015–January 2016, 2016). The Arab League also places a strong emphasis on Arab nationalism, which is the belief in the importance of national sovereignty and independence (Aziz, 1956).

The construction and utilization of specific terms by the Arab League—such as occupation and colonization—serve as a lens through which the conflict is framed and understood by the organization and its member states. The utilization of terms like occupation by the Arab League when it comes to Israel-Palestine case, conveys a deliberate framing of the Israeli presence in Palestinian territories as an unjust and illegal encroachment. By labeling Israeli actions as an occupation, the Arab League projects a discourse that emphasizes the illegitimacy of these actions and underscores the plight of the Palestinian people, thereby advancing a narrative that centers on Palestinian victimhood and Israeli transgression (Wafa News, 2023a).

Similarly, the use of the term colonization by the Arab League in addressing Israeli actions echoes a particular discourse that accentuates historical injustices and power differentials. This terminology not only portrays Israeli settlements project as a form of colonial establishment, development, and expansion but also invokes historical connotations of imperialism and subjugation (Wafa News, 2023b). Consequently, the discourse surrounding colonization serves to underscore a narrative that highlights the enduring struggle of the Palestinian people against external dominance and dispossession (Al Sharq Academia, 2022). The language employed in official statements and resolutions by the Arab League manifests as a potent tool for shaping perceptions and constructing a narrative that aligns with the organization's policy objectives.

Guided by constructivist lenses, it is clear that over the years, the League has witnessed profound shifts in its identity, behavior, and responses to regional conflicts. This is because, the social constructions and discourses that shape any interactions or even negotiations are constantly evolving as new events and experiences shape people's understanding of the world. For instance, the Arab Spring uprisings in 2011 prompted a departure from the League's traditional non-interference stance towards a more proactive approach in addressing regional conflicts (Hanna, 2012). This shift was evident in joint Arab-European initiatives aimed at bolstering the Arab League's peace plan for Syria and the League's involvement as a mediator in internal conflicts of member states.

The League's evolving identity has also influenced its role in the Israel-Palestine conflict. Increased diplomatic involvement and a proactive stance in seeking conflict resolutions have been observed. Despite individual normalization efforts by some member states, the League collectively maintains a strong emphasis on finding a just and comprehensive solution.

The reinstatement of the Assad regime in Syria at the Arab League's 2023 summit further highlights the transformation in the regional order (Sultan, 2023). In addition, the adoption of the Jeddah Declaration reaffirmed the central importance of the Palestinian cause and support for a two-state solution as the member states also emphasized the importance of activating the API (Amani, 2023).

Amidst the conflict in Sudan, the Arab League has rejected outside interference and advocated for dialogue and unity among the conflicting parties. The League has emphasized the need for a peaceful resolution and cooperative engagement to address the situation (Ibid, 2023). As per the Jeddah Declaration, the League has also highlighted the need for Lebanon to elect a new president and implement essential reforms to address the country's challenges (SPA, 2023). Additionally, the League has expressed its support for efforts promoting security and stability in Yemen (Ibid, 2023). These developments indicate the League's evolving perspectives and its ongoing role in shaping regional dynamics.

The Jeddah Declaration, issued at the Arab League summit in 2023, demonstrates the League's willingness to adapt and embrace new norms and reforms aimed at addressing regional challenges. The inclusion of conflict resolution as a core framework within the League signals a shift from the traditional emphasis solely on independence. However, while conflict resolution has been

incorporated, the League's member states consider it to be of secondary significance, with independence remaining the unwavering priority that was built on by the “common foundations, values, interests”, and principles (SPA, 2023).

2.2.3. Theoretical Conclusion

The Arab League's steadfast stance on the Israel-Palestine conflict as a unifying Arab cause is deeply rooted in the historical, cultural, and political significance of the issue within the Arab world. For decades, the Palestinian cause has served as a symbol of Arab unity and resistance against external intervention and occupation. However, in recent years, some Arab states have chosen to normalize their relations with Israel, not as a sign of abandoning the Arab cause, but rather as a recognition that the conflict with Israel has persisted for too long without yielding tangible results. When analyzing the League's approach to addressing the Israel-Palestine conflict, the lens of regional security complex theory becomes particularly relevant. This theory highlights the interconnectedness of security interests within a region, where states are compelled to consider the actions and reactions of their neighbors. In the Middle East, the US's increased involvement, coupled with its influence on regional power dynamics, has created a complex security environment.

This environment necessitates a nuanced approach from the Arab League, as individual Arab states navigate their own national interests while remaining sensitive to the broader regional security complex. The US's involvement, often perceived as favoring Israel, creates a dynamic where Arab states must balance their desire to uphold the Palestinian cause with the need to maintain their own security and economic interests. This tension within the RSC explains the recent normalization efforts between some Arab states and Israel, a move seen as a way to secure individual state interests while not necessarily abandoning the broader Arab cause.

This analysis demonstrates how the RSCT helps explain the complexities of the Arab League's approach to the Israel-Palestine conflict. It highlights the intricate interplay of national interests, regional dynamics, and external actors, shaping the Arab League's policies and actions within a context of evolving security concerns.

CHAPTER THREE

Arab League's Diplomatic Efforts in the Israel-Palestine Conflict: A Review of Key Developments (2017-2023)

Amidst the shifting sands of the Middle East's geopolitical landscape, the years spanning from 2017 to 2023 bore witness to a series of consequential events and pivotal strides in the enduring saga of the Israel-Palestine conflict. These years marked a crucial juncture filled with key developments that reshaped the dynamics of this protracted conflict, sending ripples through regional geopolitics and diplomatic relations. In parallel, the Arab League embarked on a multifaceted journey towards conflict resolution, navigating intricate challenges and deploying varied strategies to foster peace and stability in a landscape marked by complexity and historical grievances. This chapter embarks on a nuanced exploration of the period's defining moments in the Israel-Palestine conflict and the Arab League's dedicated efforts to navigate the path towards resolution during these transformative years.

3.1. Key Events and Developments in the Israel-Palestine Conflict (2017-2023) and the Role of the Arab League in Conflict Resolution

The Israel-Palestine conflict is shaped by a multitude of global actors and their often conflicting interests. While acknowledging the broader international landscape, the United States actions under Trump and Biden have dominated the landscape due to their magnitude and disruptive impact. These actions, in the context of the conflict have eclipsed other global developments in their influence, further challenging the Arab League's efforts to achieve a peaceful resolution.

3.1.1. Events under Trump's Administration and Arab League's Role

In December 2017, the United States' controversial decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital and its plan to relocate its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem sent shockwaves throughout the region, igniting a wave of protests and condemnation from Palestinian people (Westfall *et al.*, 2023). This move was seen as a significant departure from the longstanding international

consensus that the status of Jerusalem should be determined through negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians (Heinrich, 2017; Muna and Turner, 2018). The Arab League swiftly condemned the US decision, viewing it as a threat to the prospects of a two-state solution and the stability of the region (BBC, 2017; Voice of America, 2017). The Arab League's stance on the issue was clear: Jerusalem is a central and sensitive issue that holds deep religious and historical significance for both Palestinians and Israelis, and any unilateral actions that undermine its status as a shared city risk further inflaming tensions (Chulov, 2017).

In response to the US decision on Jerusalem, the Arab League convened an emergency meeting to discuss the implications of this move and to coordinate a unified response (DW, 2017). Arab League Secretary-General Ahmed Aboul Gheit emphasized the need for international support for the Palestinian cause and reiterated the Arab League's commitment to a just and lasting solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict (Voice of America, 2017). The League further articulated that the expeditious decision places the US in a stance that appears to endorse occupation and contravene international legal norms and resolutions, thereby eroding its credibility as a facilitator in the Middle East peace process (France 24, 2017; Voice of America, 2017). The Arab League's action at this time reflected a united front among member states in opposing any measures that could jeopardize the prospects for peace and stability in the region. The League's diplomatic efforts aimed to rally support from the international community to uphold the rights of Palestinians and preserve the status of Jerusalem as a key issue in any future negotiations (France 24, 2017).

The US veto of the “resolution on Trump's Jerusalem decision” in late December that year, was another significant moment in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and highlighted the challenges faced by the Arab states in influencing the resolution process (Al Jazeera, 2017). Despite the veto, the Arab world remained firm in defending the status of Jerusalem and continued to advocate for the rights of the Palestinian people based on international law and relevant UN resolutions underscored its commitment to promoting a just and comprehensive resolution to the Israel-Palestine conflict (Xinhua, 2017; Reuters, 2018). Despite the challenges posed by unilateral actions and shifting geopolitical dynamics, the Arab League remained steadfast in its efforts to advance peace and security in the region through diplomatic engagement and multilateral cooperation. The events of 2017 marked a critical juncture in the Israel-Palestine conflict, highlighting the importance of

international solidarity and collective action in addressing one of the most enduring conflicts in the Middle East.

In March 2018, Palestinian protests erupted at Gaza's fenced border with Israel⁵, leading to a tragic escalation of violence (The World, 2023; Westfall *et al.*, 2023). Israeli troops responded by opening fire on protestors, resulting in the deaths of over 170 Palestinians over several months (Bubola, 2023; Westfall *et al.*, 2023). The protests not only highlighted the long-standing tensions in the region but also reignited clashes between Hamas and Israeli forces, further exacerbating the volatile situation (Anti-Defamation League, 2018; Reuters, 2023a). Against this backdrop of heightened conflict, on May 14, 2018, the US controversially relocated its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem⁶ (Abeer, Gaouette and Masters, 2018).

This move was met with widespread condemnation from the Arab League and the international community, which viewed it as a provocative and unjust decision that disregarded Palestinian rights and international law (Al Jazeera, 2018a). The Arab League's stance was unequivocal in opposing the embassy relocation, emphasizing the city's significance to Arabs and Muslims and denouncing the ongoing Israeli occupation of Jerusalem. In response to these developments, the Arab League took decisive action by calling on the international community to reject the embassy move and stand against what they perceived as a violation of Arab sovereignty. The urgency of the situation prompted Palestinians to convene at the Arab League to discuss the implications of the relocation and strategize on a collective response (Ibid, 2018a). Al-Azhar, an Egyptian religious institution also joined in condemning countries supporting Israel and urged peaceful means to counter such actions that threatened Arab and Muslim interests (Ibid, 2018a; The New Indian Express, 2018).

Not only that, the US had also substantially reduced bilateral aid for the Palestinians, ended contributions for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and mandated the shutdown of the PLO office in Washington (Al Jazeera, 2018b; Husam, 2018; Zanotti, 2020a). In response, the League once again strongly criticized the US

⁵ That particular event was widely known as the “Great March of Return” (TRT World, 2018).

⁶ As per “the 1995 Jerusalem Embassy Act” (Muna and Turner, 2018).

decision to cut funding for UNRWA, highlighting concerns about the exclusion of key Jerusalem and Palestinian refugee issues from Palestinian-Israeli negotiations. Secretary-General Ahmed Aboul Gheit voiced disapproval, warning of the adverse impact on millions of Palestinian refugees and host countries (Hussein, 2018). The sudden funding withdrawal threatens essential aid delivery to over five million refugees across various regions, intensifying humanitarian challenges in Gaza, the West Bank, and neighboring countries (Ibid, 2018; UNRWA, 2022). The Arab League also condemned the closure of the PLO diplomatic mission in Washington, interpreting these actions as undermining Palestinian interests and peace-building efforts (Ali, 2018). They refuted claims of Palestinian opposition to peace initiatives, asserting that no feasible solutions had been formally proposed to them (Sada Al-I'ielam, 2018). The League rejects US bias towards Israel, citing Jerusalem recognition and embassy relocation, underscoring the unresolved status of Jerusalem in the conflict (Al Arabiya, 2018). The Arab League's united front underscored the gravity of the situation and the need for concerted efforts to address the escalating tensions in the region.

On March 25, 2019, the Trump administration made a controversial move by officially recognizing Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights, a territory that Israel had annexed from Syria in 1981⁷ (Zanotti and Humud, 2019). This decision marked a departure from international norms and long-standing US policy, as the United States became the first nation, other than Israel itself, to recognize Israel's control over the strategic region (Lee and Riechmann, 2019). The move was met with applause from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other supporters of the Israeli government, who viewed it as a validation of Israel's security concerns and territorial claims (Mohammed, 2023). The recognition of Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights further complicated the already contentious Arab-Israeli conflict and broader regional dynamics in the Middle East. The Golan Heights holds strategic importance due to its location overlooking northern Israel and its water resources, making it a point of contention between Israel and Syria for decades (Zanotti and Humud, 2019). By siding with Israel on this issue, the Trump administration signaled its alignment with Israeli interests and its willingness to challenge traditional diplomatic boundaries in the region.

⁷ Israel's annexation of the Golan Heights that it captured in the six-days-war became a de jure annexation in 1981, meaning that it became a formal and legal annexation, despite being widely condemned by the international community as a violation of international law.

In response to the US recognition of Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights, the Arab League issued a statement condemning the decision and reaffirming its support for Syria's territorial integrity (France 24, 2019; Xinhua, 2019). The League also announced its intention to submit a resolution to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) condemning the US action and seek legal counsel from the International Court of Justice on the matter (DW, 2019). Although tensions were rising among certain member states, the Arab League's position aligned with the overall Arab consensus, demonstrating solidarity with Syria and rejecting any unilateral attempts to alter the status quo in the region (France 24, 2019). The Arab League's condemnation of the US move underscored the deep-rooted divisions and tensions surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and highlighted the complex web of alliances and rivalries that define the Middle East's geopolitical landscape.

On January 28, 2020, the Trump Administration introduced its proposed Israeli-Palestinian peace plan, known as the "Peace to Prosperity" plan⁸. This plan, developed by US and Israeli diplomats without Palestinian input, outlined a vision for a two-state solution while also offering significant economic aid to the Palestinians (Trump Administration, 2020). However, critics quickly pointed out that the plan appeared one-sided, setting unrealistic requirements for Palestinian statehood and potentially enabling Israeli annexation of parts of the West Bank (Thrall, 2020; The Guardian, 2020). The lack of Palestinian involvement in crafting the plan further fueled skepticism about its viability and fairness. In response to the proposed peace plan, Palestinian authorities led by President Mahmoud Abbas swiftly rejected it, citing concerns over its perceived bias and failure to address core Palestinian demands (Mohammed and Fares, 2020). He then added by asserting that it would be inconceivable "for any Palestinian, Arab, Muslim, or Christian child" to endorse a Palestinian state that does not have "Jerusalem as its capital" (BBC, 2020a). Similarly, the militant Palestinian Islamist group Hamas, governing the Gaza Strip, also dismissed the deal as an attempt to undermine the Palestinian national aspirations (Ibid, 2020a; The Times of Israel, 2020a).

⁸ The Trump Administration's Middle East Peace plan dubbed by supporters as the "deal of the century" (The Times of Israel, 2020b), faced swift criticism from opponents who derided it as the "slap of the century" according to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas (Ali and Nidal, 2020) and the "fraud of the century" as tweeted by Saeb Erekat, the secretary general of the PLO (Jihan, 2020).

The unilateral nature of the plan's development and its potential implications for Palestinian sovereignty and territorial integrity prompted immediate dismissal by Palestinian leaders. Concurrently, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced Israel's intention to proceed with the annexation of certain areas in the West Bank following July 1 2020, as outlined in the Trump administration's proposal, further heightening uncertainties and tensions in the region (Zanotti, 2020a; Zanotti, 2020b; Mohammed, 2023).

Amidst these developments, the Arab League also weighed in on the proposed peace plan, expressing solidarity with the Palestinian people and emphasizing the importance of adhering to international resolutions and agreements in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. They had also committed to not collaborating with the US government in carrying out the proposal, emphasizing that Israel should not enforce the plan through the use of force (Al Jazeera, 2020c; TRT World, 2020). Arab leaders within the league underscored the need for a comprehensive and inclusive approach that considers the legitimate aspirations of both Israelis and Palestinians, while rejecting any unilateral actions that could undermine Palestinian rights (Al Jazeera, 2020c). The Arab League's stance highlighted broader regional concerns about the potential consequences of the peace plan on stability and peace in the Middle East, reflecting a collective commitment to upholding the principles of justice and equity in addressing the longstanding conflict.

In a surprising turn of events in September 2020, Bahrain and the UAE broke with decades of Arab consensus by agreeing to normalize diplomatic relations with Israel⁹. This move marked the first time in over twenty-five years that Arab countries had taken such a step, raising eyebrows and sparking debate within the region (Al Jazeera, 2020b; WION, 2020). In exchange for normalization, Israel announced the suspension of its plans to annex territory in the West Bank, a key concession that helped pave the way for these agreements (Holland, 2020). However, just a week after the normalization, feeling betrayed the PA protested symbolically by renouncing its chairmanship of the League's meetings (Hekking, 2020; The New Arab, 2020).

⁹ The Trump administration dubbed these agreements as the Abraham Accords, while the Biden administration refers to them as the Normalization Agreements (Institute for Curriculum Services, 2023).

Subsequently, Morocco and Sudan¹⁰ also joined the normalization trend, further reshaping the geopolitical landscape in the Middle East (Cuevas, 2022). This made Palestinians more anxious as these new deals and partnerships may result in them being overlooked, as Arab countries put their own interests and relations with Israel ahead of the Palestinian issue. The Arab League responded to these developments with a somewhat muted stance. While some member states expressed support for the normalization agreements, others voiced concerns about their potential implications for the Palestinian cause and regional stability (Al Jazeera, 2020b). The varying reactions within the Arab League reflected the complex dynamics at play in the region, where longstanding conflicts and shifting alliances continue to shape diplomatic relations.

Despite normalizing their relations with Israel, these states reiterated their commitment to the Palestinian cause and support for a two-state solution (Said, 2022; Basma, 2022). They emphasized that their decision to normalize ties with Israel would not detract from their longstanding support for Palestinian rights and sovereignty (BBC, 2020b; Judd, 2020). This nuanced approach by Arab states underscored their efforts to balance geopolitical interests with their commitment to addressing the enduring Israeli-Palestinian conflict and advocating for a peaceful resolution based on a two-state solution.

3.1.2. Events under Biden's Administration and Arab League's Role

In May 2021, a conflict erupted between Israel and Hamas, the militant group controlling the Gaza Strip. The root cause of the conflict stemmed from tensions in Jerusalem, particularly surrounding the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the forced eviction dispute in the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah (Sands and Adela, 2023). The situation actually worsened after Israeli police “raided Al Aqsa Mosque” (Bubola, 2023) and used force against Palestinian demonstrators protesting the court ruling favoring the eviction (Farrell and Rami, 2021; Kingsley and Kershner, 2021; Center for Preventive Action, 2024). These issues served as a pretext for Hamas to launch rockets at Israeli civilian areas, escalating the situation into a full-scale war (American Jewish Committee, n.d.;

¹⁰ Morocco's decision to normalize relations with Israel was influenced by the US recognizing their claim over Western Sahara, while Sudan's normalization was part of an agreement in exchange to be removed from a US terrorism list and obtain economic benefits (Institute for Curriculum Services, 2023).

Kingsley and Kershner, 2021). The conflict saw intense rocket fire from Gaza towards Israeli cities and towns, prompting retaliatory airstrikes from Israel targeting Hamas infrastructure and leaders (DW, 2021). The violence led to significant civilian casualties on both sides, with many innocent lives lost and widespread destruction in Gaza (Reuters, 2023a). Despite the escalating violence, efforts were made to broker a ceasefire, with Egypt playing a crucial role in mediating between Israel and Hamas (France 24, 2021a). After 11 days of intense fighting, a ceasefire agreement was reached on May 21, 2021, bringing an end to the hostilities and providing some relief to the affected populations (American Jewish Committee, n.d.). Both Israel and Hamas claimed victory in the conflict, further complicating the delicate situation in the region (BBC, 2021).

During this crisis, the Arab League played a significant role by condemning the Israeli actions and calling for an immediate ceasefire. The Arab League's stance was clear: it condemned the evictions in East Jerusalem as a grave violation, urging the international community to intervene to stop the ongoing infringements on the fundamental rights of Palestinians and the establishment of apartheid-like conditions in the occupied territories governed by an occupying authority engaged in the systematic practice of genocide (Ahram Online, 2021; Diana, 2021). The Arabs and the Muslim world also criticized the violence at the Al-Aqsa Mosque and assault on worshippers by Israeli forces as provocative acts that threatened stability in the region (Daoud, 2021; Xinhua, 2021).

Arab League Secretary-General also criticized Israeli air strikes in Gaza as “indiscriminate and irresponsible”, calling it a tragic display of force at the expense of innocent lives (Al Jazeera, 2021). The League called for international intervention to halt the bloodshed and restore peace, emphasizing the need to respect Palestinian rights and sovereignty (France 24, 2021b; Reuters, 2021). In response to the crisis, the Arab League took proactive measures to engage with key stakeholders, including the US. The League sought to leverage diplomatic channels to mediate a truce between Israel and Hamas, working in coordination with the US under Biden administration to facilitate dialogue and de-escalation efforts. The Arab League's actions underscored its commitment to promoting peace and stability in the region, advocating for a just resolution to the conflict and the restoration of aid and diplomatic contact with the Palestinians.

In 2022, tensions escalated in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict when Israel conducted air strikes on Gaza on August 5, resulting in the death of a senior member of the Islamic Jihad group (Li and

Mounier, 2023). This incident prompted retaliatory rocket attacks from Gaza, fueling further violence in the region. The conflict intensified as Israel initiated a pre-emptive operation in the West Bank following Palestinian assaults on Jewish Israelis (Reuters, 2023a). These events culminated in 2022 being marked as a deadly year for both Palestinians and Israelis, representing the most lethal period since 2005 (Mohammed, 2023). The violence and unrest persisted throughout the year, setting the stage for continued hostilities in the following years.

In light of the escalating violence in 2022, the Arab League maintained its longstanding stance of condemning Israel's military actions in the Palestinian territories (KUNA, 2022). During the 31st Arab summit, held in Algiers, the League reiterated its support for the legitimate Palestinian cause and emphasized their commitment to the API in the Algiers Declaration (AfricaNews, 2022; Egypt Today, 2022). The declaration strongly criticized Israel for its persistent violations of international humanitarian laws, including the blockade of Gaza and aggression towards sites in Jerusalem (Peoples Dispatch, 2022). Emphasizing their unwavering support for the Palestinian people, the League endorsed their rights to freedom, self-determination, and the right of return, in alignment with United Nations General Assembly resolution 194 of 1948 on Palestinian refugee rights (MapNews, 2022; Peoples Dispatch, 2022). Furthermore, the declaration called for the recognition of Palestine as an independent state and urged international solidarity to hold Israel accountable for its actions in the occupied territories (Peoples Dispatch, 2022). The organization condemned the use of excessive force by Israeli security forces and urged a peaceful resolution to the conflict through diplomatic means and dialogue.

In the tumultuous events of 2023, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict reached a boiling point with a series of violent incidents that escalated tensions in the region. The chain of hostilities was set in motion in January when Israeli security forces conducted a military operation in the Palestinian city of Jenin, prompting a retaliatory attack by a Palestinian assailant on a holy place in East Jerusalem during a sacred prayer gathering (BBC, 2023). These incidents set the stage for further clashes, including Israeli airstrikes on Gaza in May and renewed raids on Jenin in June, utilizing attack helicopters in a manner not seen since the second intifada (The World, 2023). The violence continued to escalate with Hamas gunmen targeting a restaurant in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, further exacerbating the volatile situation (Gritten, 2023).

Amidst this backdrop of escalating violence, the Arab League found itself grappling with the ongoing crisis in the region. The League, historically supportive of the Palestinian cause, faced the challenge of responding to the heightened tensions and bloodshed between Israel and Palestine. As the conflict intensified in October 7, 2023, with Hamas launching a major assault on Israel from the Gaza Strip, combining gunmen crossing the border with a barrage of rockets, the Arab League was compelled to take a decisive stance (Reuters, 2023a; Williams, 2023). The League condemned the violence on both sides and called for an immediate cessation of hostilities to prevent further loss of life and damage to infrastructure.

The situation was further complicated by the taking of hostages by Hamas, adding to the chaos and urgency of the conflict (Mohammed, 2023). In retaliation, Israel launched a comprehensive operation that encompassed air and ground attacks on Gaza, imposing a “complete siege on the enclave” (Nada *et al.*, 2023), disrupting essential supplies like electricity, food, water, and fuel (Al Jazeera, 2023a; CGTN Africa, 2023). Israel vowed to dismantle Hamas, preparing troops to advance into a devastated Gaza (Nidal and Rose, 2023). As the conflict persisted, the humanitarian situation deteriorated drastically. By November 8, 2023, more than 10,000 people perished in Palestine, while over 1,400 lost their lives in Israel, with hundreds of Israelis held captive by Hamas (Jobain, Jeffery and Keath, 2023). The impact on civilians was severe, with more than a million and half Palestinians displaced within the first month of the conflict, raising grave concerns (Anera, 2023).

Despite mounting regional and international calls for a humanitarian pause in the hostilities, the US exercised its veto power at the UNSC on October 17, citing Israel's right to defend itself (Al Jazeera, 2023b; Mohammed, 2023; Nichols, 2023; Wintour, 2023). This war in October 2023 between Israel and Hamas represented a critical escalation in the long-standing Israeli-Palestinian conflict, marking a profound and tragic chapter in the region's history.

In response to the escalating conflict, Arab nations have expressed disapproval of Israel's actions in Gaza, denouncing them as clear breaches of international norms (Arab News, 2023). Recognizing Israel's entitlement to self-defense, they underscored the importance of not overshadowing the fundamental rights of Palestinians (CNN Arabic, 2023). The Arab states censured the expulsion of Palestinians from their homes and the imposition of collective penalties in Gaza (Arab News, 2023; Banassa, 2023; CNN Arabic, 2023; Reuters, 2023b). They underscored

the immediate necessity for a diplomatic resolution to the Palestinian-Israeli discord, emphasizing that the prolonged absence of such a settlement has only prolonged turmoil and adversity for Palestinians, Israelis, and the broader region alike (CNN Arabic, 2023; Reuters, 2023b). Few months later, on December 8 the US once again as usual exercised its veto power in opposition to a resolution advocating for an immediate cessation of hostilities. This time, according to what is reported by both Al Jazeera (2023c) and Sankar (2023), criticism extended beyond the Arab Nations, with global leaders, international human rights organizations, and UN representatives condemning the US for vetoing a UN resolution that called for an urgent humanitarian truce in Gaza.

All this while, the League member states has consistently reaffirmed their support for the establishment of a legitimate Palestinian state based on the UNSC Resolution 242 of 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital (Robinson, 2018). In parallel, they have condemned Israeli settlement expansion and annexation plans, viewing them as obstacles to the peace process and violations of international law (Reuters, 2023b). Recognizing the urgent need for de-escalation and dialogue, the Arab League engaged with regional and international partners to advocate for a peaceful resolution to the crisis.

As the conflict persisted and casualties mounted, the League continued to press for a sustainable ceasefire and a return to negotiations aimed at addressing the root causes of the conflict and achieving a just and lasting peace in the region. Throughout these efforts, the Arab League reaffirmed its unwavering support for the Palestinian cause, emphasizing that the Question of Palestine is an Arab cause that transcends individual interests and unites all Arab nations in solidarity with the Palestinian people (Egypt State Information Service, 2018; Hussein, 2023). However, challenges have arisen in influencing the resolution process due to influential actors with veto capabilities in global arenas. Consequently, the League has been compelled to denounce actions that sustain conflict and hinder progress towards a resolution. With traditional diplomatic channels limited by veto powers, the League's influence may be diminished, highlighting the complexities and challenges it faces in navigating diplomatic landscapes influenced by power differentials.

CHAPTER FOUR

Factors that Impacted the Arab League's Policy on Israel-Palestine Conflict

This chapter presents an analysis of the empirical findings derived from the research on the Arab League's policy concerning the Israel-Palestine conflict. Through the examination of data collected from interviews, documents, news reports, and historical events, this study aims to offer a comprehensive understanding of how the Arab League formulates its position on this intricate and enduring issue. By scrutinizing the empirical evidence, this analysis seeks to elucidate the underlying factors and dynamics that influence the Arab League's stance on the Israel-Palestine conflict.

4.1. Navigating Arab League's Policy on Israel-Palestine Conflict

4.1.1. The Impact of US Veto Power on the Arab League's Role in Resolving the Israel-Palestine Conflict

Numerous crucial factors have emerged in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, acting as triggers for the conflict and subsequent progressions. These factors have played a major role in influencing the course of the conflict and efforts towards peace, bringing about a need for agreement and understanding. The Arab League for instance, has long been at the forefront of advocating for Palestinian rights and supporting resistance against Israeli occupation in the Israel-Palestine or better say the Arab-Israeli conflict. Ahmad¹¹ (Interview, 2024) emphasized that the League serves as a reminder that the Palestinian people have allies in their pursuit of justice and self-determination. Nevertheless, the League's pursuit of autonomy in navigating this complex and enduring conflict is beset with challenges. Persistent external interference, from western countries particularly from influential nations such as the US, has impeded the League's capacity to effectively address the underlying complexities and forge a sustainable resolution. This

¹¹ Interview with Ahmad Du'aeqi, Palestinian Diplomat—Embassy of the State of Palestine in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia was conducted on 8th May, 2024.

interference has posed obstacles to the League's efforts to navigate the conflict independently and advance towards a lasting peace settlement.

According to Ahmad¹² (Interview, 2024), the US shift from actively pursuing a resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to merely managing it has had profound implications for the region. This shift, which has been influenced by the US's biased domestic political regime in favor of Israel, has prioritized short-term conflict management over long-term diplomatic solutions, thereby exacerbating tensions and hindering progress towards a sustainable peace agreement. This change in approach has led to a decline in Israeli-Palestinian cooperation and allowed simmering tensions to persist. The diminished US involvement in seeking a resolution has also presented challenges for the Arab League in advancing its own peace initiatives. The absence of robust US engagement in promoting a comprehensive and just solution according to Interviewee 1¹³ (Interview, 2024), has created a void in international efforts to address the conflict, placing greater responsibility on regional actors like the Arab League to play a more prominent role in finding a resolution.

Additionally, the use of the US veto power in Security Council to protect Israel has further exacerbated the situation, leading to increased animosity and mistrust among the parties involved. As a result, the Arab League's position on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is often at odds with the US stance, as the League seeks to uphold international law and promote peace and stability in the region.

The use of veto power by external powers, particularly the US, in the context of the Arab League's efforts to address and resolve the Israel-Palestine conflict has had a significant impact on the organization's ability to effectively address the issue. The veto power wielded by certain members of the UNSC, including the US, has often prevented the Arab League from achieving consensus and taking decisive action on key resolutions related to the conflict. Here are some recent specific

¹² Interview with Ahmad Du'aeqi, Palestinian Diplomat—Embassy of the State of Palestine in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia was conducted on 8th May, 2024.

¹³ A telephone interview with Interviewee 1, Professor of Political Science and Public Administration at Sana'a University (Yemen) was conducted on 25th March, 2024.

examples of how the US veto has impacted the Arab League's effectiveness in addressing and resolving the conflict:

- a) In 2017, the US recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital. Subsequently, a draft UNSC resolution affirmed that actions altering Jerusalem's character, status, or demographics were “null and void”¹⁴ (UN Press, 2017). It called for Jerusalem's status to be determined according to UN regulations. Out of 15 UNSC members 14 voted in favor, except the US, which vetoed the resolution. This move angered Palestinians and Arab countries, who strongly protested the US action.

- b) In 2018, following the Great March of Return, the UNSC drafted a resolution condemning Israel's excessive use of force against Palestinian civilians and calling for a two-state solution¹⁵. The US vetoed the resolution, with then-US Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley saying it was one-sided and did not take into account Israel's security concerns (Shakeeb and Mohammed, 2023). The veto was particularly infuriating for Palestinians and Arab countries, who saw it as a green light for Israel to continue its violent crackdown on protesters in Gaza. It also raised concerns about the US's commitment to a two-state solution and its ability to be an impartial mediator in the conflict.

- c) In 2023, the US had royally used its veto right 3 times. On October 16, 2023, two amendments actions were proposed by Russia: one calling for an immediate, durable, and full ceasefire, and the other to stop attacks against civilians. However, both amendments were rejected by the Security Council with US vetoing (UN Press, 2023). On October 18, 2023, a UNSC resolution calling for humanitarian ceasefire and for Israel to rescind its evacuation order for northern Gaza was blocked¹⁶. The US ambassador to the UN, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, said that the draft resolution on the humanitarian situation in Gaza was not based on a realistic

¹⁴ A draft resolution was submitted to the UN Security Council by Egypt on behalf of the Arab countries.

¹⁵ A draft resolution was submitted to the UN Security Council by Kuwait on behalf of the Arab countries.

¹⁶ A draft resolution was submitted to the UN Security Council by Brazil

assessment of the situation on the ground and that it would not have been effective in saving lives (Nichols, 2023). On December 8, 2023, US vetoed another resolution on Gaza that called for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire. The US deputy ambassador argued that an immediate ceasefire in Gaza would only lead to future conflicts.

The constant use of the veto by the US from 2017-2023 in the context of the Arab League's efforts to address the Israel-Palestine conflict demonstrates a continuation of the historical trend of American support for Israel and the use of its veto power to shield Israel from international criticism. During this period, the US under two different administrations continued to block resolutions critical of Israel or supportive of Palestinian rights in the UN Security Council, thereby impeding the Arab League's ability to advance its agenda on this issue.

Also US veto during this time frame reflects a broader policy stance that prioritizes Israeli interests over Palestinian concerns and undermines efforts towards a just and sustainable resolution to the conflict. This approach has perpetuated a status quo that favors Israel's occupation and settlement activities, while limiting the ability of the Arab League and other international actors to hold Israel accountable for violations of international law.

According to an article written by Shakeeb and Mohammed (2023), the US has consistently exercised its veto power within the UNSC to prevent the passage of 46 resolutions concerning Israel, including those addressing Israel's military operations in Southern Lebanon and its ongoing occupation of the Golan Heights. The majority of these vetoed resolutions aimed to establish a pathway towards a peaceful resolution of the long-standing Israel-Palestine conflict. These resolutions sought to address key issues such as Israel's compliance with international law, the right of Palestinian self-determination and statehood, and condemnation of Israeli actions that resulted in the displacement of Palestinians and the establishment of settlements within occupied Palestinian territories (Shakeeb and Mohammed, 2023).

The US vetoing resolutions aimed at promoting peace in the Israel-Palestine conflict, particularly those supporting Palestinian rights and condemning Israeli actions, not only undermines Palestinian aspirations and Arab League efforts but also silences the international community

advocating for peace. This biased stance in favor of Israel not only perpetuates the status quo but also challenges the credibility of multilateral efforts to address the long-standing conflict.

The US justified its veto decisions by asserting that these resolutions exhibited bias against Israel and were deemed counterproductive to fostering peace in the region.

Consequently, such actions by the US have contributed to a growing sentiment of frustration, bitterness, and disillusionment among Arab League member states and other Pro-Palestinian supporters (sympathetic to the Palestinian cause) who advocate for a more impartial and fair approach to addressing the conflict. The persistent lack of advancement and transparency resulting from the US's exercise of veto power has exacerbated tensions in the region and impeded progress toward achieving a sustainable peace agreement.

Interviewee 2¹⁷ (Interview, 2024), shared that:

For decades, America has stood between humanity and peace and security in the Middle East. The US veto is basically a concerning trend and an unjust power that has significantly undermined the Arab League's ability to address and resolve the Question of Palestine [.....]. By blocking resolutions that condemn Israel's inhuman actions, call for an end to the occupation, and support the rights of the Palestinian people, the US who loves to toot its own horn as the ultimate champion of universal human rights has shielded Israel from accountability, this hindered the Arab League's efforts to promote peace and justice in the region. Trust me the current genocidal situation in the beleaguered Gaza with no exaggeration proves all this.

While the data presented above may not be surprising given the historical context and geopolitical dynamics at play, it serves as a powerful reminder of the challenges facing the Arab League in addressing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and promoting peace in the region.

Time and again, Palestine has witnessed the crushing blow of a veto, derailing diplomatic initiatives, thwarting justice, and undermining the rights of an oppressed people yearning for freedom. The veto power, when misused or abused, not only impedes progress but also perpetuates injustice and perpetuates the suffering of those who seek a brighter future.

¹⁷ A telephone interview with interviewee 2, Public Diplomacy Officer—Department of Foreign Affairs at the MoFA (Yemen), was conducted on 14th April, 2024.

Ahmad¹⁸ (Interview, 2024), remarked that the American administration's approach to the Israel-Palestine conflict is often perceived as biased, with discrepancies between their public statements and actual policies. Despite changes in leadership and rhetoric, Israel remains a central focus for the US confirming a deep-rooted connection that transcends administrations. Ahmad¹⁹ then added that, the veto power wielded by the US is seen not only as a tool to oppose Palestine but also as a manifestation of the strong bond between the US and Israel. His words illustrate how the US's right to veto is akin to a silent symphony, harmonizing with the desires of Israel while muting the voices of Palestine, creating an unequal and unjust diplomatic composition.

Interviewee 3²⁰ (Interview, 2024), added that:

The use of the veto as a means of perpetuating aggression and conflict is truly unbelievable. It's a flagrant abuse of power. The devastating impact of the ongoing conflict in Gaza is laid bare in the Ministry of Health's report. It's heartbreaking to see the staggering numbers of innocent people killed and injured..... To veto a humanitarian pause under the guise of the so-called self-defense is just unfair, unacceptable and very much humiliating in this day and age. Aren't the people in Gaza humans, aren't the people of Palestine humans? Then why? [.....]See any reports or dialogues by the extreme-right Israeli party advocators, calling for freedom, security and right to life. But excuse me... freedom from what? Isn't it the People of Palestine who live under occupation with least humanistic right, suffering physical, emotional and mental abuse thanks to the occupying regime that practices apartheid?The failure of governments to hold Israel accountable for its transgressions of international law, and the support provided to Israel by certain external actors, has created an environment of impunity that allows these illegal actions to continue unchecked. It's unfortunate.

The veto should never had served as a weapon that promotes favoritism at the expense of innocent lives, loathing, injustices and war however the reality on ground shows otherwise. Interviewee 3²¹ (Interview, 2024), words clearly highlight the devastating consequences for the Palestinian people,

¹⁸ Interview with Ahmad Du'aqi, Palestinian Diplomat—Embassy of the State of Palestine in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia was conducted on 8th May, 2024.

¹⁹ Ibid, 2024.

²⁰ Interview with Interviewee 3, Palestinian Representative Speaker—Embassy of the State of Palestine in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia was conducted on 8th May, 2024.

²¹ Ibid, 2024.

undermining the rule of law, the principles of international justice, and any attempts that could lead towards peace in the near future.

Ahmad²² (Interview, 2024), reassured that Palestinians have never seen the US veto as a pressure tool, but rather as a symbol of the unjust power dynamics in the international arena. He emphasized that regardless of age or gender, the Palestinian people will always fight for freedom and truth. Ahmad²³ (Interview, 2024), declared, "Our determination is unwavering, and we will continue our quest for justice and liberation, undeterred by any efforts to undermine our cause."

The Arab League's struggles to form a coherent and effective strategy on the Israel-Palestine conflict stem from a complex interplay of internal challenges and external constraints. While internal factors, such as the geopolitical interests of member states, growing sectarian divisions, domestic political considerations, increasing economic ties with Israel, changing regional power dynamics, and internal Palestinian divisions, have long been recognized as contributing to the League's limitations, the impact of external forces, particularly the US's veto power within the UN Security Council, has further exacerbated these challenges.

1. Internal Challenges

- a) **Geopolitical Interests of Member States:** The Arab League's ability to act decisively and independently on the Israel-Palestine conflict is significantly hampered by the geopolitical interests of its member states, which are often at odds with each other and subject to external pressures from powerful nations (Miraz, 2023). According to Interviewee 1²⁴ (Interview, 2024), these nations, driven by their strategic interests, exert relentless pressure on the League, forcing it into a precarious balancing act. A notable example is the League's relationship with the United States, a key player in the Middle East with a strong alliance with Israel. The US, leveraging its influence, often shapes the League's stance on the conflict

²² Interview with Ahmad Du'aeqi, Palestinian Diplomat—Embassy of the State of Palestine in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia was conducted on 8th May, 2024.

²³ Ibid, 2024.

²⁴ A telephone interview with Interviewee 1, Professor of Political Science and Public Administration at Sana'a University (Yemen) was conducted on 25th March, 2024.

to align with its own geopolitical priorities. This pressure can lead to instances of self-censorship and compromise in the League's advocacy for Palestine, ultimately limiting its ability to translate commitment into effective action. Consequently, the League faces significant challenges in advancing a just and enduring peace in the region.

- b) **Growing Sectarian Divisions:** Sectarian divisions, particularly between Sunni-majority and Shia-majority countries, further fragment the Arab League (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.). These divisions influence the member states' priorities and alliances, impacting their collective approach to the Israel-Palestine conflict. For instance: The rivalry between Sunni-majority Saudi Arabia and Shia-majority Iran often translates into conflicting positions within the Arab League (Ibid, n.d.). Saudi Arabia's focus on countering Iranian influence in Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen often diverts attention and resources away from addressing the Palestinian issue, leading to less cohesive policies within the League.
- c) **Domestic Political Considerations:** According to Interviewee 2²⁵ (Interview, 2024), domestic pressures in the Arab world often shape cautious foreign policies aimed at avoiding antagonizing powerful allies or provoking internal unrest. Jordan, which hosts a large Palestinian population and has significant stakes in the Palestinian cause, for instance; is heavily reliant on US financial aid and security cooperation (Bauer, 2022). This dependency constrains Jordan's ability to advocate forcefully within the Arab League. The country must balance its support for Palestinian rights with maintaining good relations with the US, illustrating how domestic political dynamics influence its diplomatic approach.
- d) **Increasing Economic Ties with Israel:** Interviewee 1²⁶ (Interview, 2024) shared that economic pragmatism has led some Arab states to pursue closer economic ties

²⁵ A telephone interview with interviewee 2, Public Diplomacy Officer—Department of Foreign Affairs at the MoFA (Yemen), was conducted on 14th April, 2024.

²⁶ A telephone interview with Interviewee 1, Professor of Political Science and Public Administration at Sana'a University (Yemen) was conducted on 25th March, 2024.

with Israel, influencing their positions within the Arab League. These economic relationships create incentives to downplay conflicts with Israel in favor of cooperation. A notable instance is the UAE's decision to normalize relations with Israel in 2020 under the Abraham Accords, which included significant economic agreements such as technology and trade partnerships (Barantschik, 2023). This normalization has shifted the UAE's stance within the Arab League, demonstrating an attempt to balance economic benefits with continued support for the Palestinian cause.

- e) **Changing Regional Power Dynamics:** The roles of influential states like Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE within the Arab League have evolved, significantly shaping the League's stance on the Israel-Palestine conflict (Miraz, 2023). These countries harbor different priorities and strategies that sometimes conflict, complicating efforts to achieve a unified position and tangible resolutions. Egypt, historically pivotal in mediating the Israel-Palestine conflict, for instance, has shifted its focus towards internal stability and economic recovery post-Arab Spring. This shift has reduced its active involvement, leaving a leadership void now occupied by Saudi Arabia and the UAE, each with distinct priorities. This diversity in leadership dynamics within the League poses challenges in formulating a cohesive strategy towards resolving the conflict.

- f) **Internal Palestinian Divisions:** The rift between the Palestinian Authority (PA) in West Bank and Hamas in Gaza has led to fragmented Palestinian representation and weakened their negotiating position (Nabil, 2024). The 2017 reconciliation efforts, facilitated by Egypt, have not yet fully resolved the split (Middle East Monitor, 2017). This division is further exacerbated by differing external support for each faction adding another layer of complexity to the Arab League's efforts to foster unity. This fractured landscape creates a power vacuum that Israel has effectively exploited, expanding its settlement and occupation in the absence of a

unified Palestinian front says Interviewee 1²⁷ (Interview, 2024). As long as the Palestinians remain divided, achieving a two-state solution or ending the Israeli occupation becomes increasingly difficult.

2. External Constraints

a) US Veto Power and its Impact

Interviewee 1²⁸ (Interview, 2024), aptly highlights the detrimental impact of the US veto power. It not only constrains the autonomy and decision-making capabilities of the Arab League but also shapes its internal dynamics and undermines its external credibility. The US veto power has further limited the Arab League's ability to promote its own peace initiatives, thereby narrowing the range of available policy options and complicating efforts to build consensus both within the League and the broader international community. Example: The US's consistent use of its veto power to block UN resolutions critical of Israel, such as the 2017 veto against a resolution rejecting US recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital, demonstrates the significant external constraints the Arab League faces²⁹. This veto undermines the League's efforts to take a strong stance and limits the policy options available to it.

The combination of these internal and external factors significantly hampers the Arab League's effectiveness. Internal divisions are compounded by external pressures, leading to a fragmented and inconsistent approach to the Israel-Palestine conflict. This dynamic challenges the traditional view that the League's ineffectiveness is solely due to internal factors. The US veto power adds a significant external constraint that hinders the League's ability to act decisively and independently on critical issues like the Israel-Palestine conflict. This external pressure contributes to the internal

²⁷ A telephone interview with Interviewee 1, Professor of Political Science and Public Administration at Sana'a University (Yemen) was conducted on 25th March, 2024.

²⁸ Ibid, 2024.

²⁹ See Chapter 3 for examples.

divisions and struggles within the League, making it difficult to formulate a practical and effective approach to the conflict.

Arab and Islamic nations have consistently criticized and openly condemned the use of the US veto in matters concerning the Israel-Palestine conflict³⁰. However, they face challenges in implementing effective strategies to counter such actions. While they advocate for a two-state solution, they lack the necessary mechanisms for its implementation. The interviewees³¹ (Interview, 2024), unanimously agreed that this represents a common obstacle for any regional or international organizations including the UN, which frequently lack the authority to enforce their resolutions.

³⁰ See Chapter 3 for examples.

³¹ See the reference section, list of key informants.

4.1.2. The Impact of Recent Developments on the Arab League's Approach to Conflict Resolution in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

The MENA region has witnessed a series of unexpected twists and turns in recent years, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been no exception. Recent developments under the administrations of US Presidents Trump and Biden have had a profound impact on the Arab League's approach to addressing the conflict. These changes have not only tested the League's unity and coherence but also reshaped the path towards peace negotiations, requiring the organization to adapt its strategies and tactics to effectively advocate for a just and lasting solution to the conflict.

A. Trump Administration Era and the Arab League (2017-2021)

Reflecting on the four-year tenure of the Trump administration and its approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a discernible deviation from established international legal norms and frameworks becomes apparent. The administration's actions, including recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, in contravention of UN Security Council resolutions, and the subsequent relocation of the US embassy to Jerusalem signaled a departure from international standards, complicating the prospects for peace negotiations between Israel and Palestine. This unilateral action not only ignited protests in the Palestinian territories but also eroded the perception of the US as an impartial mediator in the peace process. Furthermore, the cessation of USAID funding to Palestine and the withdrawal of contributions to UNRWA, a vital UN agency supporting Palestinian refugees, created a significant financial gap and directly impacted essential services for Palestinians. These funding cuts underscored the administration's disregard for humanitarian concerns in the region.

Also the decision to close the PLO Mission Office in the US by Trump was cherry on top a direct disregard to diplomatic engagement with the Palestinian leadership. According to Husam Zomlot³², the office closure decision, along with other actions like vetoing Palestinian initiatives at the UN was another move by the US administration to align with the wishes of the Israeli government (The Washington Post, 2018). Basically, the combinations of all these actions further complicated the already challenging path to peace negotiations between Israel and Palestine and contributed to heightened tensions in the region.

³² Husam Zomlot previously served as the Head of the PLO General Delegation to the US.

The introduction of the controversial ‘Deal of the Century’ peace plan on January 2020, formulated without meaningful Palestinian input or consultation, raised serious human rights and legal concerns. While purporting to offer a Palestinian state in parts of the West Bank and Gaza, the plan essentially endorsed Israel's annexation of substantial territories, diminishing the prospects for a viable Palestinian state with genuine sovereignty.

Interviewee 2³³ (Interview, 2024), emphasized that one particularly problematic provision of the Trump peace plan was its proposal for a demilitarized Palestinian state in the remaining chunks of the West Bank, Gaza, and a few neighborhoods on the outskirts of Jerusalem. These disparate territories would have been connected by a network of roads, bridges, and tunnels. The envisioned Palestine state, however, would have been devoid of real sovereignty and control over its own territory³⁴, offering the illusion of statehood without the substance. The Palestinian people would have remained under Israeli occupation and control, with no meaningful ability to exercise their minimum right to self-determination. Interviewee 1³⁵ (Interview, 2024), criticized the vision as fundamentally flawed from the start. He pointed out that it was developed without any real input from Palestinians, raising serious concerns about its legitimacy. The vision failed to acknowledge the Palestinians' basic right to statehood and self-determination, which are essential for any lasting peace. Instead, it heavily favored Israel, granting them everything they desired while offering nothing meaningful to the Palestinians. This blatant imbalance was seen as a recipe for continued conflict, not peace, and understandably met with strong resistance. Interviewee 1³⁶ (Interview, 2024), emphasized that true peace in the region can only be achieved through fair and inclusive negotiations that take into account the needs and concerns of all parties involved.

The rejection of the US peace plan by the PA, the Arab League, the OIC, and the Arab people in general was based on the belief that it did not adequately address the fundamental rights and aspirations of the Palestinian people. This sentiment was echoed by the UN Special Coordinator

³³ A telephone interview with interviewee 2, Public Diplomacy Officer—Department of Foreign Affairs at the MoFA (Yemen), was conducted on 14th April, 2024.

³⁴ Because Israel would have retained control over the state's borders and airspace, as well as maintained overall security authority.

³⁵ A telephone interview with Interviewee 1, Professor of Political Science and Public Administration at Sana'a University (Yemen) was conducted on 25th March, 2024.

³⁶ Ibid, 2024.

for the Middle East Peace Process, Nickolay Mladenov, during a briefing to the Security Council. Mladenov highlighted that not only did the PA and key regional organizations reject the peace plan, but the European Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy also criticized it for deviating from internationally agreed parameters (UN Press, 2020). Furthermore, several African Union member States expressed their disapproval of the plan.

Citing US officials, the Axios website stated that the White House has requested several Arab nations to thwart an Arab League resolution against the proposal (The Times of Israel, 2020c). However, the Arabs proved that the Palestinian cause remains a central issue for Arab nations, just as Israel is for the US.

Arab states have agreed to refrain from cooperating with the US administration in implementing a plan that would grant restricted sovereignty to Palestinians in Gaza and parts of the West Bank, while allowing Israel to annex settlements and retain much of East Jerusalem. During the summit of Arab foreign ministers in the Egyptian capital, Cairo, Abbas displayed a placard map illustrating the gradual reduction of Palestine from pre-1948 to Trump's recent Middle East proposal, challenging observers to locate Palestine on it (Ibid, 2020c). He criticized the plan, saying that even a first-grade child would struggle to draw Trump's map. Abbas firmly rejected the proposed Swiss cheese solution, stating that he refuses to be remembered as the one who betrayed Jerusalem (Ibid, 2020c). He reiterated the Palestinian commitment to ending Israeli control in the West Bank and establishing a state with East Jerusalem as its capital.

The Secretary-General of the Arab League delivered a scathing critique of the US-proposed peace plan, highlighting its inherent flaws and departure from established peace-building principles. He argued that the plan, rather than representing a negotiated settlement, was unilaterally imposed and disproportionately favored Israel (UN Press, 2020). The exclusion of Palestinian participation during the plan's development further underscored this power imbalance, suggesting a predetermined outcome rather than a genuine commitment to dialogue.

The Secretary-General posited that the plan's content appeared designed to elicit rejection, effectively precluding its acceptance by Palestinians and the international community (Ibid, 2020). This was evident in the proposed concessions offered to Israel – including land, settlements, and

control over Jerusalem – without a realistic pathway toward a viable two-state solution. This raised concerns that the plan aimed to legitimize a single state with unequal citizenship rights, a system reminiscent of apartheid.

Contrasting the US plan with the API of 2002, which he characterized as a viable and negotiable framework, the Secretary-General lamented the erosion of negotiation as a core principle of conflict resolution. He argued that the US plan seemed to imply that peace could only be achieved through submission rather than mutual agreement. Finally, he condemned attempts to exclude President Abbas from the peace process, stressing that such personalized attacks were counterproductive and that the pursuit of peace transcended individual personalities (UN Press, 2020).

According to Interviewee 3³⁷ (Interview, 2024) President Abbas is the democratically elected leader of the Palestinian people, and any effort to sideline him will only serve to undermine the prospects for a negotiated settlement. Likewise, Ahmad³⁸ (Interview, 2024) also shared that, despite the PA's readiness to engage in meaningful negotiations, successive Israeli governments, particularly those dominated by the far right, have repeatedly evaded such efforts, opting instead for unilateral actions that have further entrenched the occupation and undermined the prospects for peace. According to Ahmad³⁹ (Interview, 2024), the US, as a self-proclaimed mediator in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, has often engaged in mere lip service, failing to exert meaningful pressure on Israel to comply with international law and UN resolutions. The Trump administration's recent peace plan is a glaring example of this duplicity, as it blatantly disregards Palestinian rights and desires in favor of appeasing the Israeli government.

Interviewee 1⁴⁰ (Interview, 2024) then added that Arab nations under the auspices of the Arab League will always be committed to negotiations based on international law and UN resolutions.

³⁷ Interview with Interviewee 3, Palestinian Representative Speaker—Embassy of the State of Palestine in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia was conducted on 8th May, 2024.

³⁸ Interview with Ahmad Du'aeqi, Palestinian Diplomat—Embassy of the State of Palestine in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia was conducted on 8th May, 2024.

³⁹ Ibid, 2024.

⁴⁰ A telephone interview with Interviewee 1, Professor of Political Science and Public Administration at Sana'a University (Yemen) was conducted on 25th March, 2024.

In line with that, both Ahmad⁴¹ and Interviewee 3⁴² (Interview, 2024) however, expressed that Palestine and the Palestinians will not accept any plan that undermines Palestinian legitimate rights, advocates apartheid regime or perpetuates the occupation.

The Trump administration also facilitated a series of normalization agreements between Israel and some Arab states, including Bahrain, the UAE, Sudan, and the Kingdom of Morocco. These agreements, known as the Abraham Accords, differ from previous peace plans as they have been actualized. While the long-term outcomes of these accords remain uncertain, their implementation has led to the suspension of Israel's annexation plans for parts of the West Bank. However, the exclusion of Palestinian participation in these accords presents challenges for future comprehensive peace initiatives that aim to fulfill the goals of all stakeholders.

The four Arab countries involved in the Abraham Accords argue that these agreements provide them with leverage over the Israeli government, enabling them to encourage a resolution with the Palestinians. They also maintain that the accords demonstrate to the Israeli public the benefits of greater flexibility regarding the withdrawal from occupied territories and the establishment of a Palestinian state.

Despite these arguments, the Abraham Accords have elicited mixed reactions from Arab nations and the wider Muslim world. Some viewed these agreements as a positive step towards regional peace and cooperation, some decided to mind their own business, while others saw them as a betrayal of the Palestinian cause and a reward for Israeli violations of international law. It remains to be seen how these deals will ultimately impact the broader peace process and the long-term stability of the Middle East.

Ahmad⁴³ (Interview, 2024), expressed deep disappointment with the Abraham Accords, stating they have been a source of great sadness for the Palestinian people. He acknowledged the difficult

⁴¹ Interview with Ahmad Du'aeqi, Palestinian Diplomat—Embassy of the State of Palestine in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia was conducted on 8th May, 2024.

⁴² Interview with Interviewee 3, Palestinian Representative Speaker—Embassy of the State of Palestine in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia was conducted on 8th May, 2024.

⁴³ Interview with Ahmad Du'aeqi, Palestinian Diplomat—Embassy of the State of Palestine in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia was conducted on 8th May, 2024.

reality of seeing fellow Arab nations normalize relations with Israel, a country that continues to occupy Palestinian land. While understanding that each nation has its own priorities, he expressed the deep hurt felt by Palestinians at this development.

Immediately following the normalization agreements, many pro-Israel leaders and advocates expressed optimism that the Palestinian issue would fade into obscurity and eventually be forgotten. They argued that the Abraham Accords had divided and fragmented the Arab world, weakening their collective support for the Palestinian cause.

However, Interviewee 2⁴⁴ (Interview, 2024), countered these criticisms by acknowledging the challenges of achieving unity within any regional organization, but emphasized the Arab League's long history of advocating for the Palestinian cause. He pointed out that the Palestinian issue has been a central focus of the organization for over 70 years. Despite recent normalization agreements between Israel and some Arab states, the Arab League's strong support for the Palestinian people and their right to self-determination remains steadfast. He drew a parallel to the European Union, highlighting that internal divisions among member states are not uncommon. Each Arab state has its own national interests and priorities, but the Palestinian cause has consistently united Arab nations, bridging political and ideological differences.

Ahmad⁴⁵ (Interview, 2024), further emphasized the Arab League's role as a united voice for the Palestinian people, giving them a platform on the global stage. He stressed that the League's consistent efforts to find a fair and lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict demonstrate the strong unity and solidarity that exists among Arab nations.

Ahmad⁴⁶ (Interview, 2024) then acknowledged that the Palestinian issue is not simply a regional concern but a matter of international law and human rights. The Palestinian people have the right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent state, and the Arab League remains

⁴⁴ A telephone interview with interviewee 2, Public Diplomacy Officer—Department of Foreign Affairs at the MoFA (Yemen), was conducted on 14th April, 2024.

⁴⁵ Interview with Ahmad Du'aeqi, Palestinian Diplomat—Embassy of the State of Palestine in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia was conducted on 8th May, 2024.

⁴⁶ Interview with Ahmad Du'aeqi, Palestinian Diplomat—Embassy of the State of Palestine in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia was conducted on 8th May, 2024.

committed to supporting their just cause until it is achieved. However, translating these principles into tangible progress on the ground has proven difficult.

The lack of effective enforcement mechanisms within the international system hinders the application of international law and the protection of human rights in the Palestinian territories. All the interviewees⁴⁷ (Interview, 2024) agreed that this weakness is not unique to the Arab League, but rather a systemic challenge faced by many international organizations in a world that is ruled and dictated by powerful countries⁴⁸. This is because, unity within individual countries, regions and regional organizations can be impacted not only by internal divisions arising from different perspectives, ideologies, political polarization, and social cleavages but also by external factors and situations that can influence or undermine their cohesion and effectiveness.

At the first Arab League summit since the signing of the Abraham Accords between Israel and some Arab states in 2020, Arab leaders reaffirmed their unwavering support for the Palestinian cause and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital (AfricaNews, 2022; Egypt Today, 2022). The summit's final declaration emphasized the importance of resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on the basis of the "land for peace" principle. Interviewee 2⁴⁹ (Interview, 2024) remarked that, the 2022 Algiers summit's reaffirmation of support for the Palestinian people and their right to self-determination sends a clear message that the Palestinian cause has not been forgotten and that Arab nations, including those who normalized their relations with Israel unilaterally in 2020, remain committed to a just and lasting resolution of the conflict.

On 20th January 2021, Trump's tenure came to an end as Joe Biden was elected as the 46th President of the United States.

⁴⁷ See the reference section, list of key informants.

⁴⁸ UNSC Resolution 2334 of 2016 is one example.

⁴⁹ A telephone interview with interviewee 2, Public Diplomacy Officer—Department of Foreign Affairs at the MoFA (Yemen), was conducted on 14th April, 2024.

B. Biden Administration Era and the Arab League (2021-2023)

The aftermath of the 2020 US presidential election had a profound impact on the sentiments of Arab states and Palestinian factions regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. While initial reactions were subdued, there was a palpable sense of relief at the departure of Trump. Nabil Shaath, a senior Palestinian official, captured the prevailing mood by denouncing Trump's era as a nadir and expressing optimism for a more positive trajectory with his exit (Ahmed, 2020). The Arab League Secretary-General hinted at expectations for the new American administration to rectify unhelpful policies, fostering hope for renewed international support for the Palestinian cause (Saudi Gazette, 2021).

Despite the Biden administration's initial focus on other regions, recent events in Jerusalem, and the 2023 Israel-Gaza conflict, thrust the Israeli-Palestinian conflict back into global attention. The administration's approach, while largely consistent with past policies, displayed some notable shifts. Notably, it reinstated aid to Palestinians, including support for UNRWA and economic assistance, signaling a departure from the previous administration's funding cuts. However, challenges persist due to Israel's internal turmoil and Palestinian divisions, exacerbated by the 2021 conflict with Hamas, which drew unexpected US involvement.

In the first half of Biden's term, diplomatic and economic engagements between Arab states and the administration took precedence, with a focus on facilitating Israeli-Palestinian peace talks under the two-state solution framework. Despite endorsing this solution, the administration reiterated its steadfast commitment to Israel's security, underscoring that it would not pressure Israel into concessions deemed detrimental to its security interests. This delicate balance underscores the complexities of navigating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict amidst regional dynamics and internal challenges on both sides.

In the second half of Biden's presidency, the administration has sought to build on the success of the Trump administration in brokering normalization agreements between Israel and Arab states. In particular, the Biden administration has focused on attempting to normalize relations between KSA and Israel (Mohammed, 2024). The administration believes these agreements can lay the

foundation for a broader regional security architecture to counter Iranian influence⁵⁰ (Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, 2023). But, Saudi Arabia's position on Israel remains unchanged, based on its commitment to the Islamic faith and support for Palestinian rights. The kingdom has made it clear that it will not normalize relations with Israel until a Palestinian state is established (The Times of Israel, 2023). This position is consistent with Saudi Arabia's long-standing support for the Palestinian cause. Nidaa⁵¹ (Interview, 2024), a Saudi diplomat, emphasizes that any normalization of relations with Israel must be contingent upon progress towards a comprehensive peace agreement that addresses the legitimate grievances of the Palestinian people.

Critics of these normalization agreements argue that they could isolate the Palestinians and force them to accept unfavorable terms imposed by Israel.

Before October 7, 2023, Biden was known for publicly opposing Netanyahu's proposed changes to the judiciary system. However, following the attacks on October 7, Biden showed unwavering support for Israel, emphasizing Israel's right to defend itself against Hamas's atrocities. This shift led to criticism regarding the handling of Palestinian civilian casualties. Interviewee 1⁵² (Interview, 2024), believes that Biden's exceptional level of support to Israel, both in terms of physical presence and political backing, distinguishes him from his predecessors during Israeli conflicts. This was evident as Biden provided military aid and even went as far as joining Netanyahu's war cabinet during the war period marked by Israel's genocidal assault on the sieged Gaza Strip instead of mediating it. According to Hussein Ibish, as mentioned in Mohammed (2024), Biden's sudden change in stance can be attributed to several factors, one reason is his traditional American liberal views that align with Israel, considering it an ideological ally. Another factor is his leadership of the Democratic Party, which remains largely pro-Israel, aside from the progressive left. Biden aims to prevent any attacks from Republicans accusing him of not being pro-Israel enough. The decision made by Biden caused both national and international backlash, raising concerns about the

⁵⁰ The US has historically used Iran as a tool to intimidate the Arab world. By promoting Iran as a common enemy of numerous Arab states, the US has been able to leverage this to its advantage.

⁵¹ A telephone interview with Nidaa, Saudi Diplomat—MoFA, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, was conducted on 20th April, 2024.

⁵² A telephone interview with Interviewee 1, Professor of Political Science and Public Administration at Sana'a University (Yemen) was conducted on 25th March, 2024.

administration's approach to the Israel-Palestine conflict, especially regarding the humanitarian impact of airstrikes on the innocent Palestinian civilians.

A leaked State Department memo revealed that the Biden administration instructed its staff to avoid using terms like de-escalation, ceasefire or restoring tranquil in their communications. Instead, the administration prioritized Israel's goal of eliminating Hamas (Akbar, 2023 as referenced in Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, 2023). This suggested that the Biden administration is not taking a constructive approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Initially, the Biden administration downplayed the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, even as Israel cut off essential supplies like water, food, fuel, and medicine. Only after pressure from Arab world, pro-Palestinian states and humanitarian organizations did the administration begin to coordinate with Egypt and Israel to open the Rafah crossing for limited aid deliveries.

The Biden administration claims that the truth about what is happening in the Gaza Strip cannot be accurately determined due to the confusion and uncertainty of war (Nazzaro, 2023). However, this common excuse is not compelling in the eyes of the Arabs and the international community because, in the case of Israel's attacks on Gaza, there is overwhelming evidence of war crimes, including the indiscriminate killing of civilians, the use of disproportionate force, and the destruction of civilian infrastructure.

All the interviewees⁵³ (Interview, 2024), criticized the Biden Administration's policy on the Israel-Palestine conflict as being unbelievably blind and accused the administration of being biased, like its predecessors.

However, US under the current administration is openly indifferent to the fact that Israel is carrying out a deliberate genocide, indifferent to the fact that younger Americans aborted the old-school thought are no longer willing to tolerate Israel's apartheid regime and the ongoing abuses of Palestinian human rights and have shown a demonstrable increase in knowledge about this problem, thus, leaving Washington politically vulnerable and ethically dubious in the eyes of many. Indifferent to the idea that the world is watching, and the world is disgusted by Israel's actions. While the US and Israel have a long history of close relations, Biden has taken an

⁵³ See the reference section, list of key informants.

unprecedented step of shielding Israel, a true definition of ‘silence echoes screams unheard’ where humanity's conscience is willfully silenced. According to Ahmad⁵⁴ (Interview, 2024), Biden administration's deafening apathy towards Israel's atrocities and heinous crimes is a moral failing of the highest order.

In contrast to the position taken by Washington, the Arab League demonstrated a resolute stance in denouncing the violence perpetrated by both Hamas and Israel, and advocated for an expeditious ceasefire in order to mitigate the loss of life and prevent further damage to critical infrastructure. On 13th October, 2023, following Israel's demand for the evacuation of Gaza's population, the Arab League has urged the UN Secretary-General António Guterres to intervene. The League condemned the action as a war crime and a violation of the Geneva Convention.

By actively working to undermine international efforts calling for a "humanitarian pause" to allow aid to reach the besieged population, the US has exercised its veto power in the UN Security Council against two draft resolutions: one proposed by Russia and the other by Brazil. The administration's justification for its October stance, namely that the draft resolutions do not explicitly acknowledge Israel's right to self-defense, is both disingenuous and legally dubious. Arab League member states condemned the US veto and expressed their disapproval of Israel's actions, calling them a clear breach of international law (Arab News, 2023). International law permits the use of force in self-defense only when it is necessary and proportionate to the threat faced. In the case of the Gaza Strip, there is no evidence to suggest that Israel is facing an imminent threat that would justify the continued collective punishment of the Palestinian population.

In early December, the US once again cast its veto on a UN Security Council resolution demanding an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and condemning Israel's devastating onslaught. The resolution was led by the UAE and backed by over 90 UN member states (Sankar, 2023). This was the third time that the US had vetoed a resolution on Gaza in a matter of months. Arab world, global political figures, aid agencies and many others criticized the US unethical actions (Al Jazeera, 2023c). Critics of the US veto argue that it has emboldened Israel to continue its attacks on Gaza.

⁵⁴ Interview with Ahmad Du’aeqi, Palestinian Diplomat—Embassy of the State of Palestine in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia was conducted on 8th May, 2024.

The Arab League rejected the US's excuse framing what was happening in Gaza as a terrorism issue, stating that it was a genocide against the entire population of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip.

Interviewee 2⁵⁵ (Interview, 2024), supported the Arab League's stance by adding that:

No country should be above the law and that includes Israel, but by repetitively preventing the Security Council from taking actions, and by being complicit of the war crimes and genocide, the US is sending a clear message that it will tolerate Israel's violations of international law, no matter how egregious..... The Biden administration's actions in the Gaza Strip are a betrayal of the values that Washington claims to uphold.

The above understanding presents the reality before or even after October 7, in a theatre of self-righteousness, the US plays the starring role as democracy's fervent advocate. Yet, in the shadow of the Israel-Palestine conflict, this facade crumbles, revealing a stark irony.

Under the guise of upholding justice, the US stands complicit in Israel's oppressive grip on Palestine. Each act of support for Israel's actions becomes a hollow echo of its own hollow promises. This selective justice creates a twisted tapestry where the rule of law weaves a web of impunity for some and despair for others.

The Biden administration's clear favoritism towards Israel and its lack of concern for the plight of the Palestinians has led to resignations and widespread discontent within the State Department, among members of Congress, and in American society more broadly (Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, 2023).

Global outrage and solidarity with Palestinians extended far beyond religious lines, uniting people of diverse faiths and backgrounds in condemnation of the violence. Protests erupted from San Francisco to Toronto, India, Germany, Australia, Malaysia, Sweden, United Kingdom, France, Italy, etc. and throughout the Arab and Muslim world (Lawless, 2023). Demonstrators demanded an end to civilian casualties, chanted slogans against Israeli aggression, and called for

⁵⁵ A telephone interview with interviewee 2, Public Diplomacy Officer—Department of Foreign Affairs at the MoFA (Yemen), was conducted on 14th April, 2024.

accountability and justice for the Palestinian people. Ahmad⁵⁶ (Interview, 2024) shared that the current protests, involving people from all backgrounds, demonstrate a growing awareness of the injustice and suffering Palestinians face under Israel's apartheid system. He sees the increasing education about the Palestinian situation, even among young Americans, as a testament to the power of information and empathy. This growing awareness, he believes, signals a break through the barriers of silence and misinformation, allowing the truth about Israel's systematic oppression of Palestinians to come to light.

The international consensus that the Israeli attacks on Gaza have crossed a moral and humanitarian line is a resounding affirmation of global solidarity with the Palestinian people, underscoring the urgent need to end the violence and hold those responsible for the loss of innocent lives accountable.

Interviewee 1⁵⁷ and Interviewee 3⁵⁸ (Interview, 2024), expressed the same idea that while Trump's era was worse the Biden administration in its last phase proved to be no different. According to Interviewee 3⁵⁹ (Interview, 2024), the situation in Gaza would always be remembered as not only Israel's but also Biden's war on Gaza, as US proved to be a loyal ally in the war crimes.

The Arab League had tried its best to tackle the Israel-Palestine conflict, promote an honest dialogue and negotiation platforms, and fight for the plight of the Palestinian people, but the recent events made it more difficult for the League to play a constructive role in the peace process.

C. Potential Implications of Recent Events on the Arab League's approach

In light of the recent developments mentioned earlier, the potential implications for the Arab League's approach to conflict resolution in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can include the following:

⁵⁶ Interview with Ahmad Du'aeqi, Palestinian Diplomat—Embassy of the State of Palestine in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia was conducted on 8th May, 2024.

⁵⁷ A telephone interview with Interviewee 1, Professor of Political Science and Public Administration at Sana'a University (Yemen) was conducted on 25th March, 2024.

⁵⁸ Interview with Interviewee 3, Palestinian Representative Speaker—Embassy of the State of Palestine in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia was conducted on 8th May, 2024.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 2024.

- a) **Reduced Dependence on US Mediation:** Arab states have become less reliant on US mediation after the Trump administration's perceived pro-Israel stance, and this trend is likely to continue under the Biden administration. As a result, Arab states are exploring alternative mechanisms for conflict resolution, such as regional organizations and international forums. They are also seeking to strengthen their ties with other international actors, such as China, Russia, the European Union and the UN, to counterbalance the influence of the US. This shift in Arab states' approach to conflict resolution has implications for the Arab League's role as a mediator.

- b) **Continued Commitment to the Two-State Solution:** The Arab League continues to recognize the two-state solution as the internationally recognized framework for resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. However, recent developments have made it more difficult to achieve this goal. Nonetheless, the growing international sympathy for the Palestinian rights could embolden the League to take a more proactive role in advocating for Palestinian rights and pushing for a just and lasting resolution to the conflict.

- c) **Strengthening Internal Cohesion and Solidarity:** The Arab League may prioritize strengthening its internal cohesion and solidarity to counter the impact of regional normalization with Israel and to maintain its support for the Palestinian cause. This support has been a cornerstone of the Arab League's mission since its inception, and it is likely to become even more pronounced in the face of recent developments. In recent years, the League has also been vocal in its criticism of Israeli policies and actions that are seen as undermining the Palestinian cause, such as settlement expansion and the blockade of Gaza. This trend is likely to continue until the League achieves justice for the Palestinians and the establishment of their statehood.

Overall, the full implications of these events remain unclear, the League's approach to the conflict will likely become more nuanced and pragmatic, reflecting the evolving regional dynamics and the imperative to address the underlying causes of the conflict.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

The Arab League's quest to resolve the Israel-Palestine conflict has been a tortuous odyssey, a journey fraught with both noble aspirations and insurmountable obstacles. From its inception in 1945, the league has navigated perilous waters, embodying both the flickering flame of hope and the formidable barriers that have plagued this enduring saga.

As a beacon of solidarity for the Palestinian people, the league has championed their inalienable right to self-determination and sovereignty. This unwavering commitment has ignited a common light among its members, uniting them around a shared aspiration to resolve this protracted dispute. Guided by the North Star of a two-state solution, with East Jerusalem as the radiant heart of an independent Palestine, the league has relentlessly pursued diplomatic breakthroughs.

The Palestine question has been etched into the fabric of the league's very existence, becoming an indomitable pillar of its strategic endeavors. Through a symphony of resolutions, declarations, and diplomatic maneuvers, the organization has relentlessly advocated for Palestinian rights, tirelessly striving for an equitable and lasting solution to this enduring conflict.

However, the League's effectiveness in recent years has been severely hampered by a labyrinthine web of geopolitical challenges. Shifting regional dynamics, the treacherous currents of international relations, and the enduring internal divisions within the Arab world have conspired to impede its progress. The insidious use of the US veto in the UN Security Council, coupled with its inherent bias, has erected an insurmountable diplomatic roadblock, preventing the League from adopting resolutions that align with its unwavering support for the Palestinian cause. This diplomatic impasse not only obstructs peace initiatives but also erodes the League's credibility and undermines its ability to champion Palestinian rights on the global stage.

The complex web of external influences further complicates the League's navigation of the conflict. Powerful nations, driven by their own strategic interests, exert relentless pressure on the League, often forcing it into a precarious balancing act. The League must tread carefully to maintain diplomatic ties with these key players, sometimes resulting in self-censorship and compromise in its advocacy for Palestine

The absence of effective enforcement mechanisms within the international system, including the Arab League, creates a Sisyphean challenge for conflict resolution. Like Sisyphus, who was condemned to endlessly roll a boulder up a hill only to watch it roll back down, these organizations face an uphill battle in translating their resolutions into meaningful actions. The weight of geopolitical realities, like a relentless force of gravity, perpetually thwarts their efforts, leaving them in a state of perpetual striving but ultimately falling short.

Despite these formidable barriers, the Arab League's commitment to the Palestinian cause burns with an unyielding flame. Like a lone voice crying out in the wilderness, the League issued statements condemning unilateral actions, calling for a return to negotiations, and supporting the establishment of an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel within borders that existed before the 1967 Six-Day War. These actions, while seemingly small, served as a beacon of hope, reminding the world of the unresolved conflict and the urgent need for progress.

Moreover, as a regional organization, the Arab League has played an important role in fostering dialogue and cooperation among its member states on issues related to the conflict. Through various initiatives and meetings, the League has facilitated discussions, promoted understanding, and built bridges between parties with diverse perspectives. In a region often characterized by division and discord, the League's unwavering commitment to dialogue serves as a vital lifeline, paving the way for a future where peace prevails. The League recognizes that a just and lasting peace can only be achieved through negotiations and a commitment to international law.

Lastly, the study concluded that the League's perceived lack of effectiveness is not a reflection of indifference or apathy, but rather a testament to the labyrinthine geopolitical landscape that ensnares its every move. The League finds itself suspended in a precarious equilibrium, its unwavering support for Palestine perpetually at odds with the treacherous diplomatic terrain it must traverse.

The study's revelations underscore the imperative for the Arab League to navigate the ever-shifting geopolitical landscape, confront its limited enforcement capabilities, and devise strategies to counter external influences that impede its efficacy in resolving the Israel-Palestine conflict. Embracing this multifaceted approach necessitates a harmonious blend of diplomatic initiatives, international collaborations, and a profound comprehension of the historical and structural

constraints that shape the League's endeavors. This understanding can inform the League's future strategies and actions, ultimately contributing to more effective and meaningful peace efforts.

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G. List of Key Informants

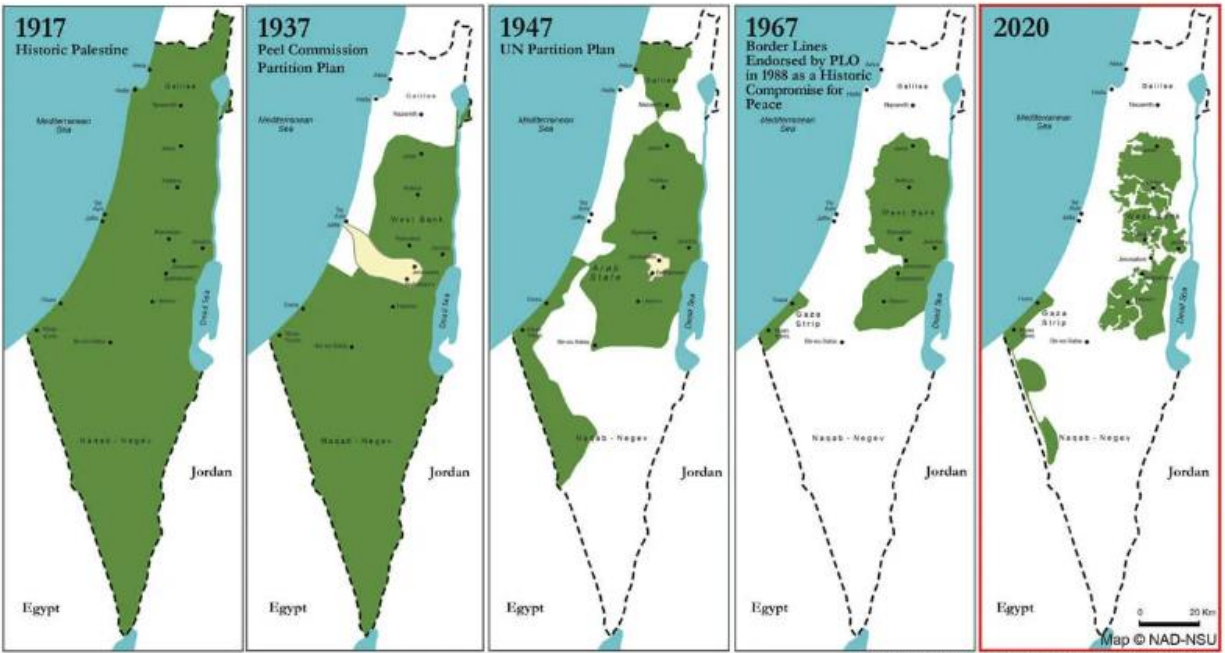
S.No.	Name	Specialization	Position	Organization	Date and Place of Interview
1	Ahmad Du'aeqi	<i>Conflict Resolution</i>	Diplomat	Embassy of the State of Palestine in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia	8 th May, 2024 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
2	Interviewee 1	<i>Political Science and Public Administration</i>	Professor	Sana'a University	25 th March, 2024 Telephone Interview, Yemen—Ethiopia
3	Interviewee 2	<i>International Affairs</i>	Public Diplomacy Officer— Department of Foreign Affairs	Ministry of Foreign Affairs— The Republic of Yemen	14 th April, 2024 Telephone Interview, Yemen—Ethiopia
4	Interviewee 3	<i>Conflict Resolution</i>	Representative Speaker	Embassy of the State of Palestine in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia	8 th May, 2024 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
5	Mohammed Salah	<i>Political Science</i>	Ambassador	Embassy of the Republic of Yemen in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia	23 rd April, 2024 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
6	Nidaa A.	<i>Strategic Studies</i>	Diplomat/ Counselor Rank	Ministry of Foreign Affairs—	20 th April, 2024

	KSA	Telephone Interview, KSA— Ethiopia
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Appendixes

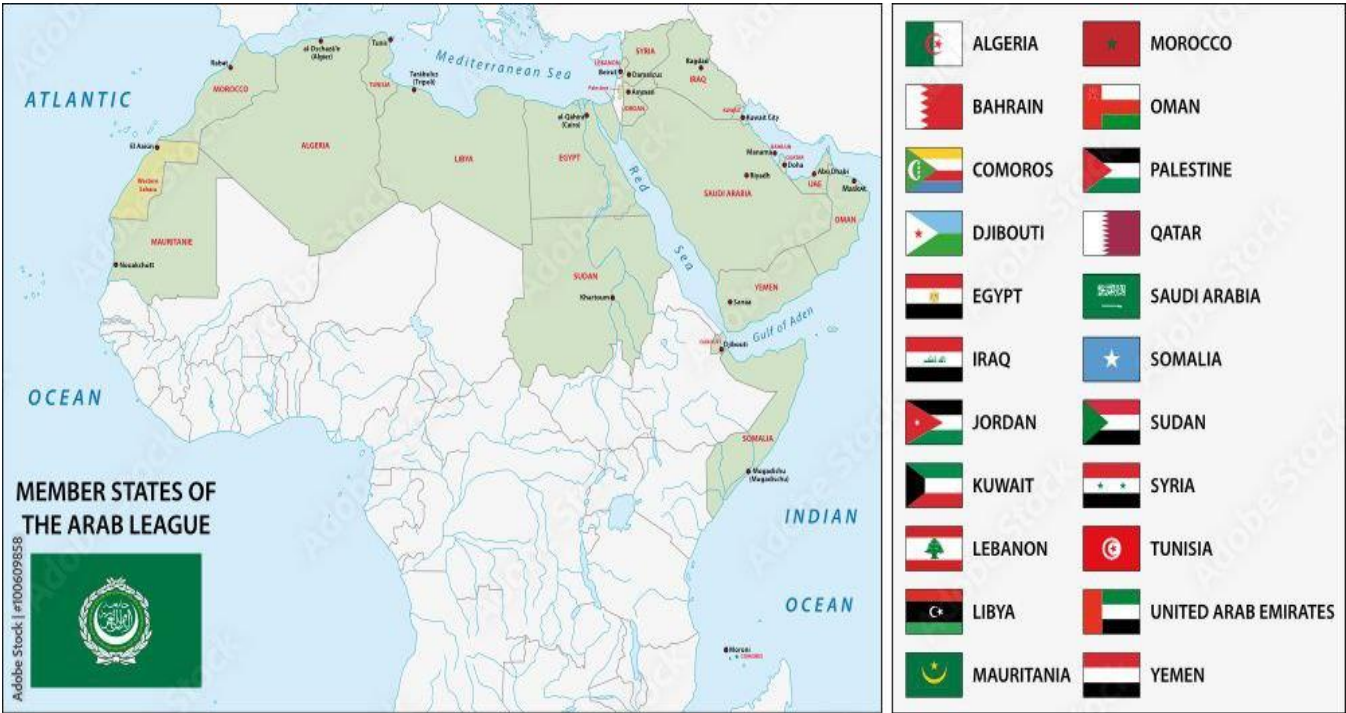
APPENDIX 1: The Shrinking Palestinian Territories from 1917-2020: Trump's Vision and the Loss of Palestinian Land.

The Palestinians Historic Compromise Trump's Plan



Map accessed at: <file:///C:/Users/hp/Downloads/020120.pdf> [Accessed 11 Jun. 2024].

APPENDIX 2: Map of LAS Member States



Map accessed at: <https://stock.adobe.com/images/arab-league-map-with-flags/100609858>
 [Accessed 11 Jun. 2024].

APPENDIX 3: Interview Guideline

Note: Timeframe of the study **2017-2023**.

✓ **Theme One:** The Evolution of the Arab League's Policy towards the Israel-Palestine Conflict

1. How has the Arab League's approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict evolved over the years in response to changing regional dynamics, international relations, and internal Arab politics?
2. Can you elaborate on the specific factors within the region that have influenced the Arab League's stance on the Israel-Palestine conflict, and how these dynamics have shaped the League's policy decisions?
3. In your view, how do international relations play a role in shaping the Arab League's strategy towards resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and what are the key considerations taken into account when navigating these relationships?
4. Could you provide insights into how internal Arab politics and dynamics impact the Arab League's position on the Israel-Palestine conflict, and how the League balances these internal factors with its external engagements?
5. How does the Arab League navigate the complex interplay between regional dynamics, international relations, and internal Arab politics when formulating and implementing policies related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and what challenges does this present for conflict resolution efforts?

✓ **Theme Two:** The Impact of US Veto Power on the Arab League's Role in Resolving the Israel-Palestine Conflict

1. How has the Arab League historically experienced external interference from veto powers in its efforts to address the Israel-Palestine conflict, and what specific challenges has this posed to the League's autonomy in decision-making?

2. Can you provide examples of instances where external veto powers have influenced the Arab League's approach to resolving the Israel-Palestine conflict, and how these interventions have impacted the League's ability to achieve a sustainable resolution?
3. In your opinion, how does external interference from veto powers affect the Arab League's credibility and effectiveness in addressing the Israel-Palestine conflict, and what strategies has the League employed to navigate these challenges?
4. How do external veto powers influence the Arab League's decision-making process when it comes to formulating policies and initiatives related to the Israel-Palestine conflict, and what considerations does the League take into account when balancing external pressures with its autonomy?
5. What steps can the Arab League take to mitigate the impact of external interference from veto powers on its efforts to address the Israel-Palestine conflict, and how can the League assert its autonomy in pursuing a sustainable resolution despite these challenges?

✓ **Theme three:** The Impact of Recent Developments on the Arab League's Approach to Conflict Resolution in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

1. How has the Arab League adapted its approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in light of recent geopolitical shifts and regional realignment?
2. Can you provide insights into the external pressures that have influenced the Arab League's strategy for conflict resolution in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
3. What specific initiatives or actions has the Arab League undertaken to address the changing dynamics of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and promote a peaceful resolution?
4. In your opinion, what are the potential implications of recent developments on regional stability and the rights of Palestinians, and how is the Arab League responding to these challenges?
5. How does the Arab League view the role of international actors in mediating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and how does this factor into the League's overall strategy for resolution?

Additional Comprehensive Questions

- How vital do you consider the role of regional cooperation and diplomacy in strengthening the Arab League's capacity to address complex conflicts like the Israel-Palestine issue?
- What innovative methods or strategies do you believe the League can employ to overcome external pressures and internal differences for a more effective and unified approach to conflict resolution?
- As a diplomat representing [specific Arab state], how do you perceive the overall effectiveness of the Arab League in the recent years thus far in addressing the Israel-Palestine conflict, and what improvements would you suggest moving forward?