

Topic: The Future of Palestine: a perennially intractable conundrum

OUTLINE

1. Introduction

Thesis statement: The future of Palestine remains a deeply complex and unresolved issue, shaped by various factors. Despite multiple peace initiatives, the conflict continues due to entrenched positions and global interventions. A comprehensive resolution requires ^{addressing} ~~Key~~ issues in order to bring stability in the region.

2. The future of Palestine as a perennially intractable conundrum

a) The enduring nature of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict

b) The failure of past peace negotiations and treaties

c) Political fragmentation among Palestine factions

d) Global power dynamics and their influence on the peace process

e) The role of competing narratives - Jewish and Palestinian claims

f) The role of Israeli policies in exacerbating the intractable conundrum

3. Causes of the prolonging conflict in Palestine

a) Palestinian nationalism and

the quest for self-determination

b) The continuous involvement of regional powers in the conflict

c) The legacy of the 1948 Nakba and the refugee crisis

4. Ramifications of the unending Israeli-Palestinian conflict

a) The humanitarian crisis and economic consequences of occupation and blockade

b) The social and political toll of prolonged conflict

c) The refugee crisis and regional instability

5. Way forward for a peaceful Palestinian future

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cooperation and fostering
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6. Conclusion

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In 1948, the creation of the state of Israel led to the displacement of over 700,000 Palestinians, a tragedy known as the Nakba. Their homes, villages, and livelihoods were destroyed, while the international community stood largely silent. This moment in history marked the beginning of a deep-rooted conflict, one that has persisted for over seven decades. The events of 1948 set the stage for a struggle that has been defined by violence, failed peace efforts, and a deep divide. Today, the legacy of that day continues to influence the fate of Palestine and its people. The history of struggles continues to shape the future of Palestine, standing as a perennially and intractable conun-

drum in the quest for peace and justice. Similarly there are several factors which make future of Palestine as a distant dream that is driven by various causes. These causes and factors have undeniable impacts on Palestine. A comprehensive approach is needed to adopt that will properly address the causes of conflict and pave the way for a lasting solution. In essence, the future of Palestine remains a deeply complex and unresolved issues, ^{shaped} by various factors. Despite multiple peace initiatives, the conflict continues due to entrenched positions and global interventions. A comprehensive resolution requires addressing key issues in order to bring stability in the region.

To begin with, the future of Palestine is viewed as perennially intractable conundrum mainly due to the enduring nature of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. This conflict remains deeply entrenched and unresolved issue, marked by persistent hostilities and peace efforts.

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict is an unending issue that seems to intensify after passage of time rather than to be resolved. As an accord which aimed to create a framework for peace, violence, territorial disputes between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), but the status of Jerusalem continue to fuel the conflict (**Oslo Accord, 1993**). Thus, any effort to solve the dispute, ultimately

it triggered the conflict which continues till today.

Moving on the enduring nature of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the failure of past peace negotiations and treaties had also exacerbated the already existing conflict. In past, multiple negotiations and treaties have been signed to solve the dispute between Israel and Palestinians but every time they failed to achieve their objectives. Efforts such as Oslo Accord in 1993, Wye River Memorandum in 1998, and Camp David Summit in 2000 failed due to deep mistrust and political instability on both sides. According to a report ^{by UN,} these failures are reflected

in the ongoing settler-colonial activities in the West Bank (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), December 2022).

Therefore, failure of negotiations in past overlaps the future of Palestine making it a conundrum.

Following the failure of past peace negotiations, political fragmentation among Palestinian factions also become the primary reason to complicate the peace process. Division among groups like Fatah and Hamas have resulted in a lack of unified leadership, weakening the Palestinian position at global scale. The internal fragmentation among groups prevents them to come on one page and do collectively efforts to response

Israeli policies. For instance, an article highlights that Palestinian Authority (PA) has made significant progress in establishing institutions and creating a state bureaucracy but it still faces challenges from various factions and opposition groups ('The Future of Palestinian Politics: Factions, Friction, and Functions', Barry Rubin, Sep 2020). Hence, this fragmentation continues to obstruct efforts toward resolution.

In addition to political fragmentation among Palestinian faction, the regional and global power dynamics play a crucial role to make Palestine, as a distant dream. There are various actors global and regional which intervened

in Palestinian sovereignty, making peace process as a failure one. The global powers are US; European Union, and regional powers like Iran, have often aligned their interests with one side or the other, complicating the negotiations. As the writer states that "The United States has provided massive military and financial aid to Israel for decades, creating an imbalance of power that has exacerbated the conflict." (Noam Chomsky). As a result, the influence of global powers escalates the conflict and makes peace elusive.

Besides global power dynamics, the role of competitive narratives of Jewish and

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Palestinian claims add fuel to the fire, make the future of Palestine a conundrum.

Their competing narratives form the core of the Israel-Palestine conflict. For the Jewish people, the narrative is largely centered on the historical connection to the land, Holocaust, which led to the establishment of Israel in 1948, while Palestinians frame their story around the Nakba of 1948, when more than 700,000 Palestinians were displaced as a result of Israeli creation. As the writer states that the Camp David (1978) process ignored the Palestinian narrative, reinforcing a perception among Palestinians that their history and suffering were sidelined. (Khalidi, *The Iron Cage*, 2006). Thus narrative of

both continue to obstruct a fair and lasting peace.

Other than the role of competing narratives, Israeli policies are exacerbating the intractable conundrum of Palestine. Over ^{the} decades, policies such as settlement expansion and military control have continuously undermined peace efforts and escalated Palestinian displacement. These actions have reinforced Palestinian perception of Israeli's disregard for their right and have made the conflict even more difficult to resolve. As a historian says, "Israeli settlement policy in the West Bank and Gaza strip has been the single most important factor in deepening the conflict."

and making it intractable (Avi Shlaim, *The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World*, 2000). However, Israeli policies have fueled a cycle of violence, diminishing hopes for a peaceful solution.

Next to the factors that make Palestinian's future perennially intractable conundrum, there are several causes behind the prolonging conflict in Palestine in which primary cause is Palestinian nationalism and their quest for self-determination. The main reason of such never-ending conflict is Palestinian's resistance against Israeli attacks which shows their self-determination. The 'First Intifada' (1987-1993) serves a critical view how Palestinian nationalism

and resistance to Israeli occupation have shaped the trajectory of the conflict. As writer points out, "The Palestinian nationalism, in its quest for self-determination, has collided with the Zionist project, creating a zero-sum struggle for control over the same land (Ilan Pappé, 'The Ethnic Dimension of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, 2006)

Thus, Palestinian's nationalism has become a sole cause to prolong the conflict.

Moving forward to Palestinian's nationalism, the continuous involvement of regional powers in the conflict has made it more complex and complicated. Regional powers with their certain interests make the

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Palestinian conflict a difficult sum which can never be solved. Countries like Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Egypt have continuously shaping the conflict by supporting different factions. As highlighted in a report, Iran has been a key supporter of Hamas, enabling the group to maintain a strong position in Gaza and resist Israeli efforts at peace (International Crisis Group, Iran's Role in the Israel-Palestine Conflict, Dec 2019). Thus, the external influence is contributing in playing its part in prolonging the conflict.

Other than continuous involvement of regional powers, the legacy of 1948 Nakba and the refugee crisis perform

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their role in prolonging and escalating the Palestinian conflict. The 1948 Nakba (catastrophe) continues to have a profound impact on the ongoing Israel-Palestine conflict. It refers to mass displacement of around 750,000, that scattered across the Middle East becoming a stark reality, exacerbating the Palestinian crisis. As the writer highlights "The 1948 war was a war of ethnic cleansing, and the creation of Palestinian refugee problem was a direct result of this war." (Ilan Pappé, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*, 2006).

Ultimately this refugee crisis perpetuated the frustration in Palestinian even today, becoming an obstacle in way of peace process between Israel and

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Palestine.

Building on the causes of the prolonged conflict, the humanitarian crisis and economic backlash is one of the potential impact is the humanitarian crisis and economic consequences of occupation and blockade. Israeli Occupation and Gaza blockade have resulted into severe crisis that are economic and humanitarian. In Gaza, people are starving, basic necessities are not available and economy has completely destroyed. According to a report, from October 7, 2023 to December 29, 2024, around 45,484 people have been martyred in Palestine 108,090 are injured (Al-Jazeera, Palestinian Ministry of Health).

December 29, 2024). Therefore, the combination of humanitarian and economic suffering carry on the prevention of establishment of lasting peace in Palestine.

Moreover, the prolonged conflict has also had a devastating social and political toll on Palestinian society. The continuous occupation and blockade not only exacerbate the humanitarian crisis, but also foster deep political divisions and social unrest. A report by Gaza's Government Media office states that 902 entire families have been erased from the civil registry (Al-Jazeera, October 2024). In Gaza, around 2.2 million Palestinians have been deprived of basic necessities.

(Human Rights Watch, Jan 2024)

Thus, besides social problems, the faction between Fatah and Hamas are obstructing the peace process.

In addition to social and political toll, the refugee crisis has also created regional instability. As in 1948 Nakba, 5.7 million were displaced and took refuge in neighbouring countries such as Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria, creating a refugee crisis for these states. Since Israel declaration as a state, Palestine has been passing through refugee crisis. For example, more than 100,000 flee Rafah as Israel steps up strikes. In October 2023 stated by UN

and according to the report a staggering 1.9 million Palestinians in Gaza - more than 80 percent of the population has been displaced (Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Dec 2023).

As a result, refugee crisis not only ^{creates problem} for the state itself but also puts pressure on another countries with weakened economy.

To lessen the effects of longstanding conflict on Palestine, revival of two-state solution is of paramount importance in effective way forward for the state. Two-state solution means that there are two states in Palestine that are Palestinians and Jews (Palestine and Israel). The two-state solution envisions an independent

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Palestinian state alongside Israel, a proposal that has been central to international peace efforts for decades.

Among the various proposals, the two-state solution remains a cornerstone of many international peace efforts, aiming to establish an independent Palestine alongside Israel. As Secretary General underscores, two-state solution is the only way to end Israeli-Palestinian conflict, One-state formula is inconceivable (Antonio Guterres Meeting Security Council, 23 January 2024). Thus, the two-state solution remains, therefore, the most viable path forward towards a lasting peace in Palestine.

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Furthermore, alongside reviving the two-state solution, international diplomacy plays a crucial role in bringing together global powers to support peace efforts. Effective diplomacy has the potential to bridge gap between conflicting parties and garner international support for sustainable peace initiatives. For this purpose, UN, US, EU and regional power can create a framework for dialogue and compromise. As, the international community must take active, irreversible steps to end Israel's unlawful occupation and realise the Palestinian people's right to self-determination rather than taking failed approaches in the past' (The Elders, A

Pathway towards sustainable
Peace in Palestine and Israel,
18 September 2024). Hence, strong
and unified international diplo-
macy could be the key to
overcoming obstacles and moving
towards a peaceful resolution.

In line with the need for
international diplomacy, strength-
ening regional cooperation
and fostering Palestinian unity
are necessary in achieving
lasting peace. Regional powers
such as Egypt, Jordan, Syria,
Lebanon, and other Arab countries
have significant influence in
supporting Palestinian efforts.
Likewise, Palestinian unity is
also crucial for presenting
a cohesive position, for
that there is necessary to:

foster unity and harmony between different factions like 'Fatch' and 'Hamas' to bring them on single page. For instance, "The Quartet emphasizes the importance of strengthening regional cooperation and fostering Palestinian unity as essential elements for achieving a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace" (**The Road Map for Peace, 2023**). Hence, strengthening regional cooperation and fostering Palestinian unity can bring stability with Palestine and as well as across the whole region.

In a nutshell, the future of Palestine remains a deeply entrenched and complex problem with various external and internal

factors contributing to its intractability. Despite numerous attempts - the conflict persists, with far reaching consequences for Palestinians and the region. Practical solutions are needed to address the root cause of the conflict, aiming to bring stability in the region. The future of Palestine is seeming to a dream due to various pushing factors which along with causes affect Palestine and the whole region. A concrete path way is needed to adopt for a better future of Palestine. Peace in Palestine signifies peace in whole region Middle East in particular and world in general. As Nelson Mandela said, "We know too well that our freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians."