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## Strategies for Peaceful Resolution of the Israel-Palestinian Conflict: Political and Historical Perspectives

**Grace Malachi Brown, PhD**

Department of History and Diplomatic Studies, Faculty of Humanities, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, P.M.B. 5047, Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria, E-mail: [nyetubrown@yahoo.com](mailto:nyetubrown@yahoo.com) | Tel: 234-803-315-226

**Abstract** – *The study traced and investigated the historical background of the Israel-Palestinian conflict from 1800 to the present. The study observed that the conflict degenerated to an uncontrollable state, in spite of the various Resolutions by the UN and other international non-governmental organizations' attempts to resolve the conflict. The conflict has also attracted the attention of the international community, world leaders and the academia. The findings revealed that some world leaders, international organizations and those in authority that would have resolve it, took side with each party. Also, the conflicting parties have refused to shift their grounds in the conflict, thereby escalating the conflict. The case study approach was adopted to cement the analysis of this study and enumerated various strategies that could peacefully resolve the conflict. The study concludes that if any of these strategies are agreed and adopted, it will bring international peace and security in the region.*

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**Author** – E-mail: [nyetubrown@yahoo.com](mailto:nyetubrown@yahoo.com) | Tel: 234-803-315-226

## 1. Introduction

From biblical account, the Israel-Palestine conflict can be regarded as the oldest in man's history; dating from the time Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt. The kingdom was divided into Judea and Israel, until the Jewish revolt in 133 AD. Till today, the conflict had not abated (The Holy Bible – from the books of Exodus to Leviticus).

The United Nations (UN) arranged series of ceasefires between the Arabs and the Jews in 1948. The UN General Assembly Resolution 194 called for cessation of hostilities and return of refugees who wish to live in peace. Security Council Resolution 62 called for implementation of armistice agreements that would lead to a permanent peace. The borders of Israel were established along the "green line" of the armistice agreements in 1949. These borders were not recognized by the Arab states, which continued to refuse to recognize Israel.

From 1948 till date, there are about 225 Resolutions by the UN and its agencies to resolve the conflict (UN Resolutions concerning Israel, 10/17/2010). After tracing the historical account of the conflict, the study will examine the strategies for the peaceful resolution of the conflict.

## 2. Historical Background of the Conflict

This study examined the historical account of the conflict as follows:

- (a) From 1800s to World War II;
- (b) From Post World War II to 2000;
- (c) From 2000 to present.

The basis or justification for this division is to periodize the chain of events and for clarity.

**(a) 1800s to World War II**

Towards the end of the 1800s, questions arose as to how the Jewish people could overcome increasing persecution and anti-Semitism in Europe. The biblical Promised Land led to a political movement known as “Zionism” in order to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine, in the Middle East. From 1920 to 1947, the British Empire had a mandate over Palestine. At that time, Palestine included all of Israel and today’s Occupied Territories, of Gaza, West Bank and so on. The increasing number of Jewish people immigrating to the “Holy Land” increased the tensions in the region (Tessler, 1994). European geopolitics in the earlier half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the wider Middle East region contributed to a lot of instability. The British Empire played a major role in the region.

During World War I, in 1916 to be specific, it convinced Arab leaders to revolt against the Ottoman Empire (which was allied with Germany). In return, the British government would support the establishment of an independent Arab state in the region, including Palestine. Yet, in contradiction to this and to also get support of Jewish people, in 1917, Lord Arthur Balfour, then British Foreign Minister issued a declaration (the Balfour Declaration). This announced the British Empire’s support for the establishment of “a Jewish national home in Palestine. As a further complication, there was a deal between Imperial Britain and France to carve up the Arab.

**(b) Post World War II to 2000**

After World War II, the newly formed United Nations (which then had fewer developing countries as members) recommended the partition of Palestine into two states and the internationalization of Jerusalem. The minority Jewish people received the majority of the land. The United States’ support for the Israel state was driven by internal politics. The CATO Institute, Sheldon (1991) and Anup (2006) quoted at length thus:

In November 1947, the UN General Assembly voted overwhelmingly to recommend partition of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states. The two states were to be joined in an economic union, and Jerusalem would be administered by the United Nations. The Arabs would get 43 percent of the land, the Jews 57 percent. The proposed apportionment should be assessed in light of the following facts: The Jewish portion was better land; by the end of 1947, the percentage of Palestine purchased by Jews was less than 7 percent; Jewish land purchases accounted for only 10 percent of the proposed Jewish state; and Jews made up less than one-third of the population of Palestine. Moreover, the Jewish state was to include 497,000 Arabs, who would constitute just fewer than 50 percent of the new state’s population.

The United States not only accepted the UN plan, it aggressively promoted it among the other members of the United Nations. (US President, Harry) Truman had been personally moved by the tragedy of the Jews and by the condition of the refugees.

Truman's decision to support establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine was made against the advice of most of the State Department and other foreign policy experts, who were concerned about U.S. relations with the Arabs and possible Soviet penetration of the region. Secretary JAMES Forrestal of the Defense Department and Loy Henderson, at that time the State Department's chief of Near Eastern affairs, pressed those points most vigorously. Henderson warned that partition would not only create anti-Americanism but would also require U.S. troops to enforce it, and he stated his belief that partition violated both U.S. and UN principles of self-determination.

But Truman was concerned about the domestic political implications as well as the foreign policy implications of the partition issue. As he himself put it during a meeting with U.S. ambassadors of the Middle East, according to William A. Eddy, the ambassador to Saudi Arabia, "I'm sorry gentlemen, but I have to answer to hundreds of thousands who are anxious for the success of Zionism: I do not have hundreds of thousands of Arabs among my constituents". Later, in a 1953 article in the American Zionist, Emmanuel Neumann, president of the Zionist Organization of America, conceded that Truman would not have worked so hard for the creation of Israel but for "the prospect of wholesale defections from the Democratic Party". Truman's decision to support the Zionist cause was also influenced by Samuel I. Rosenman, David K. Niles, and Clark Clifford, all members of his staff, and Eddie Jacobson, his close friend and former business partner<sup>4</sup> (Anup Shah, 2006).

By mid-November 1947 the Truman administration was firmly in the Zionist camp. When the State Department and the U.S. mission to the United Nations agreed that the partition resolution should be changed to shift the Negev from the Jewish to the Palestinian state, Truman sided with the Jewish Agency, the main Zionist organization, against them. The United States also voted against a UN resolution calling on member states to accept Jewish refugees who could not be repatriated.

The State of Israel was proclaimed on May 14, 1948, but the Arab states rejected the partition of Palestine and the existence of Israel. The armies of Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Trans-Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and Egypt attacked but were defeated by the Israeli army.

While the Jewish people were successful in creating their homeland, there was no Palestine and no internationalization of Jerusalem, either. In 1948 for example, Palestinians

were driven out of the new Israel into refugee camps in Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon and other regions. At least 750,000 people are said to have been driven out (or ethnically cleansed, as some have described it). It should be noted that many Jews were also expelled from surrounding Arab countries. Zionist organizations and even some Arab nations also encouraged many Jews to immigrate to Israel. As with Palestinians, expelled Jews often had their land and/or bank accounts and other property seized (Anup Shah, 2006).

In 1956, Britain, France and Israel invaded the Sinai Peninsula after Egypt nationalized the Suez Canal because these empires feared further loss of power, this time of a major economic trading route entry point for the West to the rest of the Middle East. While Egypt was defeated, the international community under the auspices of the United States put pressure to force their withdrawal.

In 1967, Israel simultaneously attacked Egypt, Syria and Jordan in a “pre-emptive strike” against the Arab troops along its borders. Israel captured key pieces of land, such as the strategic Golan Heights to the north on the border with Syria, to the West Bank from Jordan and the Gaza strip from Egypt. In fact, Israel more than doubled its size in the six days that this war took place. Since then negotiations have been around returning land to pre-1967 states, as required by international law and UN resolutions.

In 1973, Egypt and Syria attacked Israel on the Jewish holy day of Yom Kippur in an attempt to regain their lost land, but failed.

In 1978, the Camp David accords were signed between Israel, Egypt and the US, and Israel returned Sinai back to Egypt in return for peace between them. To many in the Arab world, Egypt had sold out to US pressure. To the US and Israel, this was a great achievement; Egypt was obviously not to be underestimated in its capabilities, so the best thing would be to ensure it is an ally, not an adversary.

In 1979, due to rising Hezbollah attacks from South Lebanon, where many Palestinian refugees encamped, Israel attacked and invaded Lebanon. In 1982, Israel went as far up Lebanon as Beirut, as bloody exchanges followed between Israeli attempts to bomb Yasser Arafat’s PLO locations, and Hezbollah retaliations. In 1985, Israel declared a strip of South Lebanon to be a Security Zone (never recognized by the UN, and hence Israel was always occupying this other nation). Many civilians were killed on both sides. Israeli forces were accused of massacres on many occasions. After 22 years, Israel withdrew in May 2000. One of the leading Israeli military personnel, Ariel Sharon, later became the Israel Prime Minister.

In the late 1980s came the Palestinian uprising—the Intifada. While there was much of a non-violence movement initially, the mainstream media concentrated on the violence. Young Palestinians confronted Israeli troops with nothing more than sling shots and stones. Thousands were killed by the Israeli military. Many suicide activists killed Israeli soldiers and caused other damage. Many innocent civilians were killed on both sides (Sheldon, 1991).

1993 saw the Oslo Peace Accord, whereby Israel recognized the PLO and gave them limited autonomy in return for the peace and an end to Palestinian claims on Israeli territory. This has been largely criticized as a one-sided accord that benefits only Israel and not the Palestinian people (Norman Finkelstein, 2010). It resulted in Israeli control of land, water, roads and other resources within the occupied territories that has given rise to the Israel-Palestine

conflict.

In 1994, Israel withdrew from the Gaza Strip and Jericho, ending twenty seven years of occupation. A Palestinian police force replaced them. In 1995, then Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin, who had been involved in the latest peace processes; was assassinated by a Jewish extremist.

In April 1996, Israeli forces bombed Lebanon for 17 days, with Hezbollah retaliating by firing upon populated areas of Northern Israel. Israel also shelled a UN shelter killing about 100 out of 800 civilians sheltering there. The UN claimed it was intentional.

October 1998, saw the Wye River Memorandum outlining some Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank but Israel suspended it in January 1999 due to internal disagreements on its implementation.

**(c) 2000 to present**

Further attempts through to the beginning of 2000 were made at continuing the Wye River accord, but kept breaking down due to Palestinian protests of continued new Israeli settlements. The Camp David summit in 2000 also failed to come up with solutions on Jerusalem. In late 2000, Ariel Sharon's visit to the Mount Temple sparked the current round of protests and violence.

Towards the end of September, 2000, former Israeli military general, and then Israel's Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, accompanied by 1000 soldiers, visited a holy Muslim site, called the Temple Mount by the Israelis, and Haran al Sharif (Noble Sanctuary) by the Muslims and proclaimed it as eternal Israeli territory. Sharon was accused of massacres in his military days was seen as generally being against the peace process at that time. This proclamation infuriated Palestinians, and led to a series of protests and violence and another major "uprising", or intifada.

The Palestinian National Authority, which Arafat headed with a police force armed by the Israelis was itself criticized for not serving the full interests of the Palestinian people. The police force's harsh crack down on some Palestinians (in an attempt to address internal differences and extremism) drew criticisms from the likes of Amnesty International and others.

In all this time then, the Palestinian people have been without any nation, and have been limited rights, while suffering from poverty. Israel continued to increase and expand their settlements into occupied territories, giving up less and less land compared to what was promised. Many Palestinians (that are not Israeli Arabs since 1948) living in Israel do have the right to vote, or have limited rights, while paying full taxes. For over 3 decades, the Palestinian people have been living under a military occupation.

The frustration and injustice of the treatment of Palestinians has angered many citizens in the Arab world against US/Israeli policies. Palestinian frustration has spilled into extremism in some cases as well. Many militant groups from Palestine and other areas of the Middle East have therefore sprung up in recent years as well as past decades, performing acts of what the West and Israel describe as terrorism and what the groups themselves justify as freedom fighting (though achieving freedom through terrorist actions could arguably still be called terrorist organizations, despite claimed motives). Suicide bombings, and past acts of terrorism

have terrorized Israeli civilians, making peace harder and harder to imagine, yet it has been easy to influence and recruit the young, impressionable and angry into extremist causes. As violence continues, it seems that it will remain easy to find recruits to violent causes (Philip Locker, 2002). In 2002, Israel started construction of a large defensive security fence in the West Bank supposedly to stop terrorists from making their way into Israeli cities and settlements. While it mostly seems to have worked, those large fences have drawn international criticism for going quite far into Palestinian land not Israeli land. Israel also continued controversial settlement programs in disputed areas.

Bush and Israel's displeasure with Arafat is reflected in public. In June, US President George Bush stated in a speech, "I call upon the Palestinian people to elect new leaders" and for Israel, "I challenge Israel to take concrete steps to support the emergence of a viable, credible Palestinian state". This was widely criticized for amounting to an open call for regime change.

In 2003, Israel stepped up its campaign against Hamas, the chief organization behind the suicide attacks of recent years. Arafat himself and his ruling fatah party are also being seen increasingly as corrupt and ineffective by Palestinians themselves. In the same year, the US (who, together with Israel refused to negotiate directly with the President, Yasser Arafat, backed Arafat's selection for Palestinian prime Minister, Mahmoud Abbas, and they all pushed for a road map peace plan towards a two-states solution. While Palestinian militants announced a ceasefire, Israel continued to assassinate militant leaders.

Relative calm only lasted a few weeks, after more targeted assassination and suicide bombings. Abbas resigned soon after, seemingly frustrated by the internal politics. Ahmed Qurei replaced him, seen as more friendly to Arafat. In 2004, Sharon announced a withdrawal of troops and settlements from the Gaza Strip, but a commitment to the largest settlements in the West Bank. Suicide bombings and Israeli air strikes continued and Israel achieved the assassination of Hamas's spiritual leader Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, and a senior leader shortly after, Abdel-Aziz al-Rantissi.

On the West Bank, the security fence construction continued, despite continuing protests. Israel's high court demanded route changes. The International Criminal Court said the barrier was illegal, but Israel is not bound to it, and so ignored it.

Turmoil within Palestine increased as Hamas, Fatah, Islamic Jihad and others turned on each other, amid disputes on how to reform the security forces.

In November Arafat died of a mysterious blood disorder and Abbas became chairman of the PLO. Despite growing criticism of his leadership in recent years, the outpouring of sorrow and people coming to mourn his death was enormous.

At the beginning of 2005, Abbas was elected as the President of Palestinian Authority. He managed to get Hamas and Islamic Jihad to agree to a temporary ceasefire. Sharon, meanwhile survived attempts to recall him as his withdrawal from Gaza was not popular amongst Israel's right wing. By September, withdrawal from the Gaza Strip was complete, despite passionate resistance and protest from settlers. Towards the end of 2005, Israel's Prime Minister, Sharon, resigned from the right wing Likud party, forming a more centrist Kadima party, that quickly gained popularity. Former Prime Minister Shimon Peres, who recently lost leadership of the left

wing Labour Party also joined Kadima, lending credence to the view that Sharon was distancing himself from the right wing ideology of a greater Israel, and more in favor of negotiated peace with the Palestinians (the Labour Party has long called for a two-party solution, but has been critical of the Jewish settlements in occupied territories).

Throughout the recent years, anger and frustration has mounted as the larger, but poorer Palestinian population also find themselves with the less prestine land. Rafael Reuveny (2009) observed thus:

The Zionists practiced colonization without colonialism, as they immigrated to Palestine as private individuals, not in the name of any state, and purchased land from Palestinians instead of forcefully seizing it. Within a few years, they began clashing with the Palestinians, but even then the conflict was not colonial; rather it was a clash between two communities claiming the same land. In 1918, the British took over, but the Zionist-Palestinian conflict continued.....The Zionists control over 75 percent of Palestine and formed the state of Israel. Jordan and Egypt won control over the remaining 22 percent and essentially ignored the Palestine aspiration for independence...The Palestinians also own much of the land in the Territories, despite the Israeli land seizures.

The Palestinian revolted violently against the Israelis and also committed acts of terrorism. According to the Israelis Ministry of Foreign Affairs website<sup>7</sup> (Victims of Terrorism in Israel, 14/17/2011) shows that as at June 14, 2010, over 1,473 Israelis have been killed and thousands more injured in Palestinian terrorist attacks since the signing of the Declaration of Principles in Oslo in 1993.

This has been further fuelled by Israeli bulldozing of many homes and attempts to kill extremist leaders which often end in death or capture of innocent civilians (including women and children). In addition, while Israel demanded that the Palestinian National Authority do something to crack down on suicide bombers and other terrorist elements within its territories, it continued bombing official buildings and compounds (making any attempts to crack down on such elements futile). This also increased the power, authority, and influence of more extreme groups such as Hamas that did not like the idea of peace with Israel-it wanted the destruction of the Jewish homeland.

In early 2006 extreme Hamas organization gained power, which some analyst described as a paradox of democracy. Hamas has been listed by many countries as a terrorist organization, though others see it as an independence movement. However, a careful examination of its *modus operandi* (or method of operations), will reveal a combination of both terrorism and suicidal suicide attacks on Israeli civilians.

Probably less well known than its militant tendencies have been the other reasons for its popularity. The US-based Council on Foreign Relation notes that:

In addition to its military wing, the so-called Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigade, Hamas devotes much of its estimated \$70-million annual budget to an extensive social services network. It funds schools, orphanages, mosques,



healthcare clinics, soup kitchens and sports leagues. “Approximately 90 percent of its work is in social, welfare, cultural, and educational activities”, writes the Israeli scholar Reuven Paz. The Palestinian Authority often fails to provide such services; Hamas’ efforts in this area—as well as a reputation for honesty, in contrast to the many Fatah officials accused of corruption—help to explain the broad popularity it summoned to defeat Fatah in the PA’s recent elections.

(Hamas, Council on Foreign Relations, June 14, 2006)

Ehud Olmert became Israel’s new Prime Minister in April 2006, after serious illness befelled Sharon, and the Israeli Cabinet declared him incapacitated.

U.S. involvement in the Middle East has also been seen as a critical issue. The U.S. and West’s interests in the wider region has generally been due to oil. Israel and Palestinian territories do not have oil themselves, but are surrounded by states that do. Strong military and financial support of Israel lends well to having a powerful ally in the region. For that reason as well, other Arab dictators and corrupt rulers have also been supported and even helped into power. Saddam Hussain was one of them. Dictators that can be bought provide a useful check against possible popular uprising in the region and therefore, for the US, help ensure their “security”—that is, their “national interests” are safeguarded and local puppets profits, while the people of the region end up suffering and losing out (Middle East Web, 2010).

While the UN Security Council has attempted to pass numerous resolutions critical of Israel the United States has vetoed almost all of them. Nevertheless, there have been some resolutions demanding that Israel return land that was captured in the 1967 war etc (such as UN Resolution 242). The 1948 UN Resolution 181 allowed for both Jews and Arabs to live in Israel, which goes counter to claims of some groups that Israel should not exist. Often the international community is critical of Israeli inaction, but the US veto prevents anything coming of it. Instead, Israeli land expansion and settlements have continued. The US has also provided Israel with enormous military aid, to the extent that in the Middle East, Israel has the most advanced and superior military. Their high tech/military industries are also very advanced. Israel also has nuclear weapons capabilities (Burchill, 2000).

A series of targeted assassinations by Israel against Hamas and Hezbollah, and resulting violent retaliations escalated in mid-2006 with the capture of Israel soldiers. That led to an escalation of conflict, with air strikers by Israel against Lebanon and Hezbollah, destroying much of the main infrastructure. Hezbollah retaliated with many rockets being fired into cities and towns in Israel. Both sides witnessed massive internal displacement of people and terror. Both Hezbollah and Israel have targeted civilians, and most deaths have been amongst Lebanese civilians.

### **3. Strategies for a Peaceful Resolution of the Conflict**

In the light of 225 Resolutions by the UN and other efforts to resolve the Israel-Palestine conflict without success, the study suggest the following strategies that will peacefully resolve the conflict:-

- (1) An option for a loose form of association of Israel, Palestine and Jordan, sometimes referred to as a confederation but falling well short of the European Union model. This could involve freedoms for easier travel (not amounting to freedom of movement in EU law meaning a right to settle), or right to establish business in each other's territory, joint development projects and possibly a co-ordination of foreign policies etc. Such a solution could provide opportunities for the expansion of Israeli business and industry in the Palestinian territory and Jordan and offer employment to the local people. It could open up the possibilities of further collaboration among the parties and enhance the prospects of economic development and ecological/environmental projects being undertaken. It has the potential for benefits provided (a) that there is sufficient political goodwill among the parties and (b) that the outstanding issues such as the US reduction of support or aid to Israel, decolonization, Palestinian's refrain from acts of terrorism and independent Palestinian, are satisfactorily resolved. These outstanding issues can be resolved if the US government change its policy to reduce aid and support to Israel and compelling Israeli decolonization. There are ample examples of Israeli compliance with US wishes in each cases. Former US President, Nixon, forced Israel to stop attacking the besieged Third Egyptian Army in the 1973 war. Nixon and Ford pushed Israel to leave parts of the Sinai peninsular and Syria. Also, former US President (Carter) prevailed upon Israel to withdraw from the Sinai and admit that the Palestinians deserved political rights. Also, former US President (Reagan) convinced Israel to let PLO forces retreat from Beirut. Consequently, George H.W. Bush, a former US President, prompted Israel to open talks with the Palestinians. Clinton compelled Prime Minister Netanyahu to sign agreements with the Palestinian Authority. George H.W. Bush compelled Prime Minister Sharon to accept a Palestinian state inauguration. Should the US through President Barack Obama pressure Israel to decolonize, Israel would most likely comply.
- (2) A federal option comprising of both Israelis and the Palestinians and which both federating states will have jurisdiction. Under the federal option this problem will simply disappear. The federating units will not be armed. It is only the federal state that will be armed for defensive purposes. The ideal of a federal state is to confer on its citizens the right:
  - a) To move freely throughout its territory,
  - b) To reside and settle in any part of the territory,
  - c) To acquire, hold and dispose of property and;
  - d) To practice any profession or to carry on any occupation, trade or business (cf. Article 19 of the Constitution of India). This will further reduce racial discrimination and to enforce or implement the UN Bill or Declaration on Human Rights. It will also bring about the tenets of conflict resolution such as reintegration, transformation and with time, healing the wounds or injuries of colonialism.

It is hoped that this principle could be eventually realized in the Federal State of Israel and Palestine. It might be necessary to proceed by stages in order to establish freedom of movement within the territory of the federal state, as was the case with the European Union.

Under the federal option, this being one country, the parties, it is hoped, will have a relaxed attitude on this issue, provided the security considerations are met. Under the federal option the federal capital can be located in Jerusalem while the capitals of the federating units can be located elsewhere (Fazal, 2001).

(3) A possible choice between the two-state solution (i.e. one sovereign independent Israeli state and another sovereign independent Palestinian state). The two-states' solution presents awkward problems some of which might be presented as follows:

- a) The question will arise as to which state shall have jurisdiction over the holy sites of Jerusalem.
- b) The question of demilitarization of the Palestinian State which will necessarily arise might be a tricky one and could be difficult to achieve in practice. The Palestinian State might demand similar limitations on the armament of Israel which the latter would be unable to concede so long as the threat to Israeli security from her Arab neighbours remains.

Under the two-states' solution the question of Jewish settlements and their locations across the boundaries and the corresponding rights of the Palestinians to settle will present an enormous hurdle to overcome.

Under the two-states' solution the capitals of both will be located in Jerusalem. If the relationship between these two states is tense that is likely to be reflected in the situation of Jerusalem itself involving clashes between the armed troops of the both sides.

The two-states' solution might not be realizable owing to the difference of perception as to the concept between the parties. Those Palestinians who are prepared to accept the two-states' solution conceive of the proposed Palestinian state as a fully sovereign independent state equal to the powers and status of Israel. On the other hand Israel might have very different ideals about the Palestinian state far removed from the concept of equality between these two states. According to Israel, the relation between the two would be that between a dominant state and a vassal state corresponding to that between a colonial power and a colony in many respects. Firstly, while Israel would remain fully militarized and a nuclear power, the Palestinian state would have to be completely demilitarized and disarmed. Secondly, Israel would want to be in a position to control the powers of the Palestinian state over foreign affairs including its treaty-making power. Thus, a treaty of alliance between the Palestinian state and Iran would be subject to veto by Israel. Thirdly, while Israel would be rich and environmentally green, Palestine would be a poorer state comprising of semi-desert and arid zones. Fourthly, Israel would accept no responsibility for the rehabilitation of the Palestinian refugees who will continue to live in the refugee camps where life is without hope providing breeding grounds for the suicide bombers.

- (4) A resolution by the UN requiring Israel and Palestinians to come together for a Round Table Conference for peace and to adopt any of the above options.

#### 4. Conclusion

The conflict between Israel and the Palestinians is assuming a new dimension. Of all the international conflicts, this is potentially the most dangerous one which could pose a grave threat to international peace and security, not only to the countries of the Middle East, but also to the rest of the world involving us all in a nuclear holocaust. This calls for urgent consideration and peaceful resolution of this conflict on the basis of justice and fairness. It is hoped that once any of the above strategies are agreed and adopted, resources for building the necessary infrastructures could flow from within and outside.

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