



RESEARCH PAPER

**The Interplay of the United States and the Muslim World in the Israel-Palestine Conflict: A Complex Web of Interests and Tensions**

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**ABSTRACT**

The main aim of this paper is examining the Israel Palestine conflict while focusing on the conflict of interests between the US and the Muslim World. This research delves into the complex interplay between these actors, analyzing the historical, political, and ideological factors that have shaped their relationships. The Israel-Palestine conflict represents a deeply entangled geopolitical web, with the United States and the Muslim world occupying pivotal positions. By employing qualitative case study approach, this research explores the intricacies of the US-Muslim world relationship in the context of the Israel-Palestine conflict, examining the impact of US foreign policy on regional stability, the role of religion and identity in shaping perceptions, and the potential avenues for conflict resolution. This study suggests that the US, as a staunch ally of Israel, has consistently supported its security and territorial claims, often at the expense of Palestinian interests. This stance has fostered resentment within the Muslim world, fueling anti-American sentiment and fueling support for Palestinian resistance movements. Moreover, the US has sought to maintain its regional influence and secure access to crucial energy resources, further complicating its role in the conflict. Moving forward, the US needs to adopt a more balanced approach that takes into account the concerns of both Israelis and Palestinians, as well as the Muslim world. This necessitates fostering a dialogue based on mutual respect and understanding, promoting a two-state solution, and ensuring equal rights and opportunities for both Palestinians and Israelis.

**Keywords:** Complicating, Conflict Resolution, Foreign Policy, Israel, Palestine, Muslim World, Regional Stability, US

**Introduction**

The Israel-Palestine conflict is a complex and enduring issue rooted in deep-seated historical, religious, and political tensions. The United States, a staunch ally of Israel, has long played a significant role in the conflict, shaping its trajectory through political, economic, and military support. This close partnership has been criticized by many in the Muslim world, as they perceive American policy as biased and detrimental to Palestinian aspirations for self-determination. The perception of American favoritism has fueled resentment and alienation, creating a complex web of interests and tensions that further complicate the conflict.

The United States' unwavering support for Israel, including substantial financial aid and veto power in the UN Security Council, has been met with both gratitude from Israel and frustration from many in the Muslim world. This dynamic has fostered mistrust and animosity, impacting diplomatic efforts towards a peaceful resolution. Understanding this intricate interplay is crucial for navigating the conflict's complexities and fostering a more equitable and just future for both Israelis and Palestinians.

## **Literature Review**

The Israel-Palestine conflict is a deeply entrenched and multifaceted issue with global ramifications, particularly for the Muslim world and the United States. The interplay between these three actors is characterized by a complex web of interests, tensions, and historical baggage. Literature reviews on this topic illuminate the intricate dynamics at play, highlighting diverse perspectives and highlighting the challenges in achieving a peaceful resolution.

Scholars like (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007) and (Said, 2000) argue that the United States' unwavering support for Israel, driven by domestic political considerations and the powerful Israel lobby, has significantly undermined peace efforts and fueled anti-American sentiment in the Muslim world. Conversely, (Pipes, 1992) emphasizes the deep-rooted cultural and ideological clash between the West and Islamic civilization, contributing to the conflict's intractability. Meanwhile, (Khalidi, 1997) and (Abu-Lughod, 2013) underscore the historical injustices inflicted upon Palestinians, including displacement and dispossession, as central to the conflict's roots and its continued impact on the Muslim world's perception of the conflict.

Further complicating this complex web is the evolving political landscape within the Muslim world. While certain governments maintain strong pro-Palestinian stances, there is growing diversity in perspectives and reactions to the conflict. (Zunes, 2010) highlights the emergence of moderate Muslim voices advocating for a two-state solution, while (Barth, 2013) explores the influence of the Arab Spring on the conflict. Understanding these diverse views within the Muslim world is crucial to navigating the intricate dynamics of the conflict and seeking a lasting solution that addresses the needs and concerns of all parties involved (Muzaffar, et. al. 2018).

## **Material and Methods**

The Israel-Palestine conflict presents a multifaceted challenge for understanding the interplay between the United States and the Muslim world. This research study required a qualitative approach to analyze historical narratives, political discourse, and public opinion. By employing a qualitative case study framework that acknowledges the complexity of the issue, this research can contribute to a deeper understanding of this enduring conflict and its impact on global relations.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **U.S. and Muslim World Interests in the Israel-Palestine Conflict**

The United States and the Muslim world have complex and often contradictory interests in the Israel-Palestine conflict. The United States maintains close ties to Israel, viewing it as a strategic partner in the Middle East and a democracy in a region marked by authoritarianism. The Muslim world, on the other hand, generally sympathizes with the Palestinian cause, seeing Israel as an occupying force and a violator of human rights (Lustick, 1988).

Despite these differences, there are some areas of alignment between U.S. and Muslim world interests. Both sides recognize the importance of a two-state solution to the conflict, with Israel and Palestine coexisting peacefully within secure borders. Both sides also support efforts to promote economic development and improve the lives of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. However, achieving these goals has proven challenging due to ongoing violence, mistrust, and political obstacles.

One area of potential convergence between U.S. and Muslim world interests is in countering terrorism. Both sides have been affected by terrorism emanating from the Middle East, and both have an interest in preventing future attacks. Collaboration between the United States and the Muslim world could be crucial in understanding and addressing the root causes of terrorism and preventing its spread.

### **The Israel-Palestine Conflict: A Source of Deep-Rooted Tension Between the U.S. and the Muslim World**

The Israel-Palestine conflict has been a source of tension between the U.S. and the Muslim world for decades. This complex issue, characterized by competing narratives and historical grievances, has fueled anti-American sentiment and undermined diplomatic relations across the region (Bar-Tal, 2008). One key point of tension is the perceived U.S. bias towards Israel. The U.S. has consistently provided Israel with significant military and financial support, leading many in the Muslim world to view the U.S. as an enabler of Israeli policies deemed oppressive towards Palestinians (Pipes, 2003). This perception is further amplified by the U.S.'s failure to consistently condemn Israeli actions perceived as disproportionate or illegal, such as the construction of settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Furthermore, the U.S.'s unwavering support for Israel is often seen as undermining Palestinian aspirations for self-determination and statehood. This stance is perceived as unjust and counterproductive by many in the Muslim world, who see the U.S. as hindering the possibility of a peaceful resolution based on a two-state solution (Said, 2000). The U.S.'s close alliance with Israel is often framed as prioritizing Israeli security over Palestinian rights, contributing to a sense of alienation and frustration within the Muslim world.

Beyond the perceived bias, the U.S. has faced criticism for its handling of the conflict. Some argue that the U.S. has not been sufficiently proactive in pushing for a negotiated settlement, preferring instead a 'status quo' approach that perpetuates the conflict (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007). The U.S. has also been criticized for its support of certain Israeli governments that have pursued policies deemed detrimental to the peace process, such as the expansion of settlements and the use of disproportionate force against Palestinian civilians. These perceived failures have led to accusations of hypocrisy and double standards, further exacerbating tensions between the U.S. and the Muslim world.

The Israel-Palestine conflict continues to be a major source of friction between the U.S. and the Muslim world. Resolving this conflict requires a nuanced approach that addresses both Israeli and Palestinian concerns, ensuring the security of both parties while also upholding the principles of justice and self-determination. Failing to achieve a just and lasting peace will continue to undermine U.S. interests and relations within the region, perpetuating a cycle of conflict and mistrust (Yaseen, et. al., 2023).

### **The Complexities of Muslim Involvement in the Palestinian Cause: Beyond Rhetoric and Sentiment**

Israel-Iran conflict is an attempt to diffuse the attention of the whole world from the main issue "the genocide of Palestinians". Israel brutally destroyed the whole Gaza strip, dislocated the 2.2 million people including children, women and toddlers (Said, 2000). The whole infrastructure has been damaged in seven months. People of Gaza are eagerly seeking for a divine help which can protect them from the brutality of Israel and its allies. Gaza Strip is surrounded by Israel, Egypt and Mediterranean Sea (Haddad, 2018). Mediterranean Sea is on the Eastern side, Egypt is on the southwest and Israel is on its east and north. Since the humanity crisis emerged in Palestine more than 34 thousand men, women, children and toddlers have been killed by Israeli forces. The entire communication system of Gaza and 34 of their main hospitals have been completely deteriorated. They attacked UN officials,

Journalists, social activists and representatives of INGO's. Israel banned Rafah crossing and even locked air space. Recently, Turkey requested Israeli officials to allow them to drop aid by using aircrafts but Israel refused to accept this request (Al-Qudwa, 2018).

The Hamas Leader Ismail Hania claimed that if only Pakistan announced unanimous support to the Palestinian people, Israel will back out. But unfortunately, Pakistan along with the whole Islamic world has not yet dared to even take a verbal stance against Israel (Lynch, 2010). Shameful role of Muslim world has been observed by the people of whole world particularly the Palestinians (Al-Awlaki, 2009).

The whole world has been protesting against Israel and America frequently in the last seven months. Huge demonstrations were observed even in America, Britain, France, and Canada and in Israel in the favor of Palestinian people (El-Badawi, 2017). The people of USA mainly criticizing the Biden administration on their role in pushing Israel against Palestinians. Donald Trump (the candidate for US presidential elections) raised his voice against the policies of Biden administration but not against Israel's brutality. US has been long standing relationship with Israel in support of Zionist Ideology since its inception and now particularly Biden administration firmly and unequivocally stand with Israel (Abu-Amr, 2016).

The Biden administration played pivotal role in escalating the tensions between Israel and Palestine. USA has given enormous military Aid, financial aid and diplomatic assistance to Israel. Every possible action has been taken in favor of Israel at all forums including United Nations. The Biden Administration immediately passed more than 15-billion-dollar US aid for Israel to curb Palestinians (Ghareeb, 2008).

### **The Unbreakable Bond: Why the USA Remains a Dedicated Ally to Israel**

This article mainly covers the reasons behind the unequivocal US support to Israel. Why is the US so concerned about Israel? What role have the Jews played in supporting the US economy? Is there only an economic reason or some other political or geostrategic reason is at play here to support Jews in America and Israel? Why Israel has been receiving humongous financial and military aids from US since its inception and is it because Israel is in need or are there other factors involved? How Israel is securing American Interests in the region? How many Jews live in the US? What is the exact amount, the US has been spending on defense and why? Why Israel did not settle its issues with Palestine? And lastly it focuses on the weaknesses of the Muslim world (Heller, 2015).

After the World War II, the Americans got confidence after their success against Germany and Japan. The postwar world also presented Americans with a number of problems and issues. Most Americans initially boasted about their influential position in the postwar world. Within two years of the end of the war, new challenges and perceived threats arose and it bashed their confidence. By 1948, a new form of international tension emerged--Cold War--between the United States and its allies and the Soviet Union and its allies. In the next 20 years, the Cold War spawned many tensions between the two superpowers abroad and fears of Communist subversion gripped domestic politics at home (Kissinger, 2007).

The US observed a rapid change in the world order and was eager to maintain its hegemony among the world. Israel declared itself a state in 1948 on land that had previously been Palestine under British control. Around 7 hundred thousand people fled out or were forced to leave the land. The US president Harry Truman accepted Israel within 11 minutes of its announcement, as a first independent Jew country. This country was mainly created at the soil of Palestine. Great Britain controlled that area and they were determined to surrender the mandate. Zionists sought to create a Jewish homeland, even though the population was largely Arab. The Zionists subjected Washington to increase pressure on behalf of a plan to divide Palestine into Jewish and Arab states. That's why on May 14,

1948, David Ben-Gurion, the head of the Jewish Agency, proclaimed the establishment of the State of Israel and the U.S. President Harry S. Truman recognized the new nation on the same day. He believed that Israel would be the safe haven for Jews to live and prosper independently. Israel would be their permanent homeland and it would help them to wipe out the negative effects of the Holocaust. It will also protect the American interest in the region, mainly to deal with the growing American dependence on imported oil and secondly to make an ally on the hub of the three continents would be beneficial to create and manage the hegemony of US in the region. Israel would be considered the center point to curb the interest of other growing powers. Thirdly, the US wanted to keep an eye on the minerals of Middle East and this was the main reason America gave value to Israel since its inception (Walt, 2007).

The contribution of Jews in the American Economy is very significant. They are much more successful educationally and economically than other ethnic, racial, and religious groups in the United States. Jews have long gotten more education than non-Jews. The US state agency's official statistics indicates that over 7 million Jews reside in the country and significantly contribute to its economy. Jews are wealthier than other Americans. They are multibillionaire and reside in America. Most of them are associated with tech corporations and that are closely associated with Israeli tech companies. Forbes claims that one only needs to look at the list of Jewish billionaires worldwide to see how closely related the United States and Israel are. Mark Zuckerberg, the owner of Facebook, Larry Ellison, Michael Dell, and the founders of Google all had a considerable increase in wealth according to the list of Jewish billionaires in the globe. As per Forbes, Jewish families comprised the whole group of 267 billionaires, who had a collective net worth of 1.7 trillion dollars. The USA Facts Survey organization states that 71% of the nation's wealth is held by the top 20% of earners in the country. Interestingly, every billionaire family is Jewish by religion, which is why Jews are important to the American establishment and government. The US has been providing Israel with military and financial support since 1948, and over time, that assistance has grown on a daily basis. According to Bernie Sanders US senator, the United States of America provide 3.8 billion US dollar every year to Israel in terms of financial or military aid (Ayalon, 2014).

The United States of America has consistently raised its defense budget by 9% each year. Based on data from the International Institute of Strategic Studies, the United States allocated a staggering \$877 billion towards defense spending in 2022. This amount is projected to rise by 9% in 2024, reaching a total of \$905.5 billion. Year after year, the US federal government continues to prioritize national defense spending. The US government has made it clear that it prioritizes increased spending on defense. Regrettably, the rest of the world has also joined the ranks in increasing its defense spending. In 2024, Moscow's official defense budget saw a significant increase of over 60%. According to Gingrich, a Moscow official, military spending now accounts for one third of the national budget and is projected to reach 7.5% of GDP. Based on alliance data, Britain holds the fifth position globally, while Germany and France are ranked seventh and eighth, respectively. Since 2014, defense spending among NATO members in Europe has increased by 32%. However, it is worth noting that only 10 of these countries allocate more than 2% of their GDP towards defense. The Americans have shared the concept of a robust defense with the rest of the world. According to their officials, a robust national defense is crucial for ensuring a peaceful, prosperous, and democratic America (Friedman, 2018).

American President Ronald Reagan emphasized the importance of a strong defense with his concept of "peace through strength." He held the belief that a robust military can achieve its objectives without engaging in hostile actions. The rest of the world has embraced a deterrence policy, allowing them to possess advanced military equipment. Many Muslim countries possess a diverse range of natural resources, including oil, gas, and agricultural products. Undoubtedly, oil is a crucial and valuable natural resource. Based on

data collected by a researcher, it has been found that the Muslim World possesses approximately 75% of the world's total oil reserves. In the Muslim World, Saudi Arabia holds the highest global reserve at approximately 18%. It is followed by Iran at 9%, Iraq at 8.5%, Kuwait at 6%, UAE at 5.9%, Libya at 2.8%, and Nigeria at 2.2%. Just a reminder: the United States' oil reserve stands at approximately 2%.

The Israel-Palestine conflict is a complex and deeply rooted issue. Efforts to reach a lasting resolution have been hindered by a complex web of historical grievances, competing national narratives, territorial disputes, security concerns, and divergent political agendas. Both Israelis and Palestinians have valid arguments regarding the land, and finding a solution that takes into account issues like borders, settlements, refugees, and the status of Jerusalem is a difficult task. Efforts to achieve peace through negotiations, like the Oslo Accords in the 1990s, have encountered obstacles caused by a lack of trust, violations, and a failure to address fundamental grievances. In addition, the complex dynamics within Israeli and Palestinian societies, as well as the involvement of regional and global powers, pose significant challenges to the pursuit of a comprehensive settlement. Without a true dedication to political cooperation, acknowledgement of each other's perspectives, and a willingness to find common ground, the chances of achieving a lasting peace will continue to be uncertain.

The Muslim world comprises a significant portion of the global population and possesses abundant reserves of oil and gas. Additionally, they have access to fertile land, strategic waterways, a formidable military, vast territories, and even possess nuclear weapons. However, it is unfortunate that they are unable to provide assistance to the Palestinians. The Muslim world is a complex tapestry, with a multitude of nations each with their own unique political systems, interests, and priorities. The absence of a cohesive approach has frequently hindered the ability to come together and show solidarity in tackling shared obstacles, such as the situation in Palestine. The lack of unity among Muslim-majority countries has significantly undermined their ability to collectively support the Palestinian cause.

Several Muslim-majority countries consider various geopolitical factors that shape their stance on the Palestine issue. Certain nations place a high importance on their strategic alliances with influential countries such as the United States or Israel. As a result, they tend to avoid openly questioning Israeli actions or providing significant assistance to Palestinians. Many individuals prioritize concerns about potential consequences, such as reprisals, economic impacts, or regional instability, over their support for Palestine.

Several countries with Muslim-majority populations are currently facing internal challenges such as political instability, economic crises, and social unrest. Leaders often place a higher emphasis on domestic matters, such as maintaining power and stability, rather than focusing on external issues like the Palestine-Israel conflict. In addition, governments dealing with internal disagreement or opposition may be less willing to allocate resources or political influence to global issues. While certain countries with a Muslim-majority population have considerable diplomatic influence worldwide, there are others that have limited capacity to shape global conversations or sway important decision-makers. The diplomatic challenges faced by certain nations, along with the imbalanced power dynamics within international institutions such as the United Nations, can often result in the marginalization of Muslim nations' efforts to advocate for Palestinian rights and seek resolutions to the conflict.

Many Muslim-majority countries face challenges in achieving economic development, reducing poverty, and overcoming underdevelopment, despite their abundant natural resources. Due to limited financial resources and competing domestic priorities, their ability to provide substantial aid or support to Palestinians is constrained, particularly during humanitarian crises or conflict escalation. Within Muslim-majority

countries, the ability to effectively address external crises such as the Palestine issue has been undermined by ineffective leadership, corruption, and authoritarian governance in certain cases. The absence of a strong commitment, responsibility, and openness erodes the faith and assurance that the public has in the actions of the government, which in turn hampers the ability to effectively engage with global affairs.

The United States' steadfast support for Israel serves as a reminder of the complex dynamics at play in international relations, while the difficulties faced by the Muslim world in addressing the Palestinian cause shed light on the challenges of unity, diplomacy, and limited resources. In order to overcome these limitations and strive for a just and lasting resolution to the Israel-Palestine conflict, it is crucial for Muslim-majority nations to place utmost importance on unity, cooperation, and diplomatic involvement. Through utilizing their combined resources, influence, and advocacy efforts on a global scale, they have the potential to make a significant difference in supporting the rights and aspirations of the Palestinian people. In addition, it is crucial to tackle internal obstacles and cultivate robust partnerships in order to effectively handle external emergencies and promote peace and justice in the region. In order to achieve a just and lasting resolution to the Israel-Palestine conflict, it is crucial for the Muslim world to work together with other stakeholders.

### **Conclusion**

The Israel-Palestine conflict is a multifaceted issue with deep historical roots, and the United States' role within it has been highly influential. While the US has been a staunch ally of Israel, maintaining a close strategic partnership and providing substantial military and financial support, it also seeks to maintain positive relations with Muslim-majority countries in the region. This complex web of interests and tensions has shaped US policy, leading to a balancing act between promoting peace and upholding its commitments to both Israel and the Muslim world.

Despite continuous efforts for peace, the conflict has remained unresolved, with significant divisions between Israelis and Palestinians. The US position, perceived as heavily favoring Israel, has drawn criticism from many Muslim-majority nations. This has led to strained relationships and a negative perception of US foreign policy within the Muslim world. In turn, the US has faced challenges in engaging with Muslim-majority countries on broader regional and global issues, hindering potential cooperation on issues like counterterrorism and economic development.

Moving forward, the US needs to adopt a more balanced approach that takes into account the concerns of both Israelis and Palestinians, as well as the Muslim world. This necessitates fostering a dialogue based on mutual respect and understanding, promoting a two-state solution, and ensuring equal rights and opportunities for both Palestinians and Israelis. By prioritizing a more equitable approach, the US can navigate the complexities of the conflict and build more sustainable and collaborative relationships with all stakeholders in the region.

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