Peace or Paralysis? The Impact of the Israeli-Hamas Conflict on the Oslo Accords and the Future of Palestinian Statehood Negotiations

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ABSTRACT

The Oslo Accord of 1993 was a historic move to form a two-state solution that would be used between Israel and the Palestinians. Nevertheless, the emergence of Hamas and the repeated violent disputes with Israel have seriously weakened the application and applicability of the Accords. This paper will look at how the Israeli-Hamas crisis has affected the unity of the Palestinians, the diversion of Israeli security agendas and the frozen peace talks structure at a larger scale. The study based on a qualitative approach of case study will analyze official records, academic literature, and timelines of conflicts in order to trace the dissolution of trust and diplomacy. The results indicate that systemic animosity has broken the Palestinian political representation, undermined the international faith in the Oslo process, and added to an increasing pessimism regarding negotiated statehood. This research arrives at the conclusion that there is no way that future efforts at peace making will not be at a stand still unless the issue of Hamas and intra-Palestinian divisions are solved. The study speaks in favor of amended framework that is accounted by contemporary political realities and players on the two ends.

Introduction

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is among the long-lasting and convoluted geopolitical arguments in the contemporary history. Its history can be traced to the beginning of the 20th century where Jews and Arabs had competing nationalisms in Mandatory Palestine. After the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, to the present day, tensions were raised to several wars and displacement waves, which resulted in the creation of Palestinian refugee crisis and the formation of multiple Palestinian nationalist movements. Another escalation of the conflict was the 1967 Six-Day War that led to the occupation of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem by Israel, which served as the important part of the future Palestinian state (Khalidi, 2020).

The Oslo Accords of 1993 represented a major shift in that a mutual recognition was made between the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel. The framework focused on creating a two-state solution by building trust and concessions on territories in a progressive manner. This process majorly involved the establishment of the Palestinian Authority (PA), which gave Palestinians partial freedom in some areas of the West Bank and Gaza. Nevertheless, the accords did not resolve some of the final-status questions such as the status of Jerusalem, the right of refugees to return, and Israeli settlements (Shlaim, 2014).

This was further complicated by the emergence of Hamas especially after it won the elections in 2006 and after its subsequent takeover of Gaza in 2007. Through its armed struggle, Hamas does not recognize the legitimacy of Israel and unlike the PLO, advocates for armed struggle which makes its association with both Israel and the PA very controversial. The continuous military conflicts between Israel and Hamas, the most notorious ones in 2008-09, 2012, 2014, and 2021 have crippled the environment of the constructive negotiation under the Oslo framework (Berti, 2015).

The protracted situation between Israel and Hamas has raised some basic questions on the relevance, legitimacy and efficacy of the Oslo Accords. The internal split in the leadership of the Palestinians between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority, as well as the recurring acts of violence, have disunited Palestinian representation and ruined the peace process despite the vision of Oslo who imagined the Palestinian people having a unified leadership by the PLO to negotiate with. Furthermore, the changing policy of Israel toward unilateral security arrangements and settling, which have mostly taken place in reaction to the militarism of Hamas, have put both sides even further out of sight of the Oslo vision. These facts make it imperative to critically evaluate the question of whether the Oslo framework is still a working one in the modern geopolitical environment (Milton-Edwards & Farrell, 2010).

The questions answered in this research are as below

i. What has been the impact of Israeli-Hamas conflict on the Oslo Accords implementation?

ii. What does the conflict mean to the negotiations between Palestine and Israel relating to the future statehood of Palestine?

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17

Objectives of the Study

i. To explore how Israeli-Hamas enmity and antagonism has affected the execution of the Oslo Accords and their subversion.

ii. To gauge the greater impact in Israeli-Hamas conflict on future peace structures, aspirations of Palestinian statehood.

Significance of the Study

This paper is a contribution to the existing literature that doubts the sustainability of Oslo peace process considering the changes in the dynamics of conflicts. This narrows the research gap in the field of peace and conflict literature, which tends to revolve mainly around Israeli-PLO relationships by narrowing down to the Israeli-Hamas aspect. The results will be used to guide policymakers, diplomats and peacebuilders on how to deal with the broken terrain of Palestinian politics and find a way to move forward to a sustainable solution.

Scope and Limitations

Most of the study is centered on the time-span since the Oslo Accords of 1993 to the current times with specific consideration of the major developments since then, including the Second Intifada, the Palestinian election of 2006, the Hamas takeover of Gaza in 2007, and the latest upheaval that happened up to 2024. The analysis covers the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem only geographically. The study is a qualitative one, which does not involve any fieldwork or interviews but relies on secondary data in the form of policy papers, scholarly literature, and official documents. The first weakness is the fluid and quickly changing nature of the conflict which can affect the long term applicability of the findings.

Literature Review

The Oslo Accords, which had been signed by 1993 and later by the Oslo II in 1995, were popularly announced as a revolutionary discovery in the Israeli-Palestinian dispute. The accords were founded on the vision of land-peace-land, and were to provide a gradual process of Palestinian self-determination that would eventually reach final-status talks on such matters as borders, Jerusalem, settlements, and refugees (Gordon, 2008). The Palestinian Authority (PA) was regarded as a step to sovereign statehood, and mutual recognition between the Israel and Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was regarded as a historic compromise.

Nonetheless, the Oslo framework was not implemented as well as it was expected. Opponents claim that it formalized an unequal power structure that saw Israel continuing to have control over key areas of the Palestinian life, territory, economy and military and Palestinians as subject to stringent demands without any corresponding benefits (Roy, 2001). In addition, the inability to fix the continuous settlement expansion, increasing settler violence and Israeli security actions undermined the Palestinian trust and led to the Second Intifada in 2000 that many scholars considered as the turning point that signaled the political failure of Oslo (Makdisi, 2010).

Development of Israeli-Hamas War

The emergence of Hamas, which is a militant Islamist movement established in 1987 during the First Intifada has greatly changed the face of the Israeli Palestinian confrontation. Although the Oslo process was based on the centrality of the PLO and the PA, Hamas grew to be formidable ideologically and militarily. Its denial to accept Israel and its aggressive policy of resistance through arms put it directly opposite to the Oslo structure. By winning the 2006 legislative elections in Palestine and fully gaining control of the Gaza Strip in 2007, Hamas in effect divided Palestinian governance into two parallel political systems, those of Gaza and the West Bank.

This disunity has only aggravated the war and made Palestinian negotiations with Israel illegitimate. Since 2008, several conflicts between Hamas and Israel caused huge civilian losses, destruction of infrastructure, and retaliation cycles (Berti, 2015). The military capabilities of Hezbollah and the violent reactions by Israel have become the primary barriers to any other peace process following the Oslo vision. The outcome is the paralyzed peace process, undermined Palestinian institutions and the increasing international exhaustion with mediation work (Lustick, 2019).

Theoretical Frameworks

The paradigm of realism is the main approach to international relations that gives a critical understanding of the dynamics in the security interest between Hamas and Israel. In this perspective, states and actors behave in ways that will guarantee survival and power during an anarchic conditions. It is particularly applicable to the security dilemma, both sides will be seen as threatening the other with their actions to raise its own security (e.g., Israeli blockades, Hamas rockets) which will be taken as response (Mearsheimer, 2001). The mismatch between modernized Israel, who is technologically advanced, and the non-state actor Hamas, with little conventional capabilities, enhances the realist paradox. The fact that Israel has a military advantage does not mean that Hamas should not exploit asymmetric warfare, including tunnel warfare and rockets, in order to induce strategic disorientation.

Conversely, the transformative approach to conflict and peacebuilding theories draw attention to the necessity to deal with structural violence, past animosities, and cleavages based on identities. Other scholars such as Lederach (1997) hold the view that the inclusion of all forms of peace processes should extend beyond the dealings of the elite in the negotiation table to the participation of the grassroots, reconciliation and institutional reforms. In this view, Oslo failed because it was done top-down and technocratic and neglected the lived experiences of occupation, political disunity, and deprivation of socio-economic elements.

The issues of whether or not to include non-state actors such as Hamas in peace processes are debatable scholarly issues. Other researchers believe that the omission of these actors leads to parallel power formation which undermines out-of-the-box negotiations (Mac Ginty, 2012). There are other warnings of the legitimation of armed groups without a strong commitment to peace and democratic standards as emboldening militancy. Contrary to the example of Hamas, its election legitimacy in 2006 was in contrast to its continued employment of violence and its ideological denial to Israel to exist and made its possible contribution in diplomacy difficult.

Also, the industry of peace processes has been put into question. Critics indicate that the international mediation efforts, which are often spearheaded by the U.S. and European Union, have embarked on procedural negotiations instead of substantive justice which continues to advance a peace process only to bolster geopolitical stability but does not offer meaningful resolution (Chomsky & Pappe, 2015). This contradiction between procedural peace and transformational justice is one of the main issues that arise to explain why the Oslo Accords have not achieved what they were supposed to achieve.

Methodology

This paper takes a qualitative case study design in examining how the Israeli-Hamas war has affected the Oslo Accords and the whole Palestinian statehood negotiations. The case study design suits the specified conflict because it is rather complex and context-specific, enabling a detailed analysis of the political processes, discussion, and institutional changes with time. The study concentrates on one case together with its embedded

subunits, which are the Oslo Accords, rise to power of Hamas and events that ensued thereafter that pitted Israel and Hamas together in conflict.

Data Sources

The study was based on both primary and secondary data. Primary sources are; the official Israeli and Palestinian Authority reports about peace negotiations, ceasefire, and reactions to conflicts. In another source, the United Nations records contain Security Council resolutions, General Assembly debates and Human Rights Council reports about Gaza and the peace process. Lastly, the main peace process documents, such as Oslo I and II Accords, Road Map to Peace and Quartet reports. Peer-reviewed journal articles in the international relations, Middle East studies, and conflict resolution fields are some of the secondary sources. The other source is the think-tank publications of such institutions as the Brookings Institution, International Crisis Group, and Carnegie Endowment. Lastly, historical documents and books providing critical and longitudinal insights on the Oslo process, the ideology of Hamas, and the Israeli foreign policy.

Validity and Reliability Implications

The study also triangulates various data sources to increase validity, by cross-examining official documents with analytical work in the scholarly literature and third parties to guarantee extensive and correct interpretations. As the primary and secondary data are utilized, they maximize the construct validity, and analytical transparency with thematic coding maximizes internal consistency.

Nevertheless, the validity of information regarding conflicts, particularly casualties and military evaluation, can be low because of the bias in the reporting or lack of access to ground-based data. Thus, source bias and distortion of facts are reduced using several data points and careful interpretation.

Ethical Considerations

The study will not require research participants, and all data and information used in research are publicly available and second-hand in nature, so there will be no significant direct ethical threats, including harm to the study subjects or loss of confidentiality. Nevertheless, framing analysis is done sensitively on a politically sensitive and humanitarianly important issue. The paper does not resort to inflammatory language and treats the points of view in a balanced way, does not humiliate the dignity of any community which suffered during the conflict. Citing all the materials used is done to ensure that there is academic integrity.

Overview of the History of Oslo Accords

The Oslo Accords, which were signed in 1993 (Oslo I) and 1995 (Oslo II), comprised a turning point in the relations between Israelis and Palestinians. The accords were initiated with secret negotiations in Norway, which enabled the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to recognize each other, something that had never been done previously. A framework of a stagewise peace process was established in the Declaration of Principles (DoP) that was signed on September 13, 1993, and was intended to solve the conflict by bilateral negotiations and by building up the confidence.

The main provisions of Oslo I included:

- The creation of a Palestinian Interim Self Governing Authority (PA) on a five year transitional basis.
- Pullout of Israel in Gaza Strip and Jericho.
- Slow withdrawal of civil authorities to the PA in sectors like education, health, and taxation.
- The beginning of the permanent status negotiation process of core problems, such as the Jerusalem problem, refugees, settlements, security, and borders (Shlaim, 2014).

Oslo II, signed in 1995, expanded on Oslo I by:

- Separating the West Bank into Areas A, B and C each consisting of different levels of Palestinian and Israeli control.
- Allowing Palestinian elections on a president and legislative council.
- Increasing the PA civil and security control to larger urban regions (Gordon, 2008).

Collectively, the Oslo Accords sought to step by step establish an atmosphere of trust, institutional capacity and a structure of eventual Palestinian statehood, on the basis of peaceful coexistence.

First Introductions and Failures.

There were some positive advances in the early phase of the implementation like the establishment of Palestinian Authority, withdrawal of Israel in certain areas of Gaza and the West Bank as well as the Palestinian elections that were held in 1996. But now fatal blows began to fall. Distrust towards each other as well as slowness in withdrawals and further expansion of Israeli settlements eroded Palestinian faith in the process. On the Israeli side, Hamas-led terroristic attacks and Islamic Jihad of the 1990s undermined the popular opinion in the accords and strengthened the security concerns.

In 1995, the assassination of an Israeli extremist group leader Yitzhak Rabin by an Israeli extremist who was on the right wing was a significant blow to the peace process. Benjamin Netanyahu, the replacement of Rabin, became more skeptical regarding Oslo and slowed down the implementation. In the meantime, the Palestinian leadership was accused of corruption and dictatorship, which deteriorated the process further (Roy, 2001).

A cardinal failure of the Oslo structure came with the Second Intifada (2000-2005) a mass Palestinian revolt which was precipitated by frustration by the negotiations which were being stalled and due to continual occupation. Thousands of people were killed, and the conflict made sides even more set in stone, especially as Israeli security policies that were unilateral became popular and Palestinians were disappointed in diplomacy (Lustick, 2019).

Influence on Palestinian Democracy (PA vs. Hamas)

The institution of the Palestinian Authority was one of the longest-term effects of Oslo, which was viewed as a temporary administration unit. The PA, however, with time turned into a quasi-autonomous state with very limited independence, being very tightly bound by Israeli military occupation and economic restrictions. As the PA took control of the urban centers of the West Bank, it continued to rely on the international assistance and to be coordinated with Israel on the matters of security and movement (Khalidi, 2020).

The Oslo framework unintentionally marginalized Hamas, one of the Palestinian opposition movements and militant factions that denied the accords on the basis that they were betrayal of Palestinian rights. This marginalization gave birth to internal Palestinian political disintegration. The situation reached the climax in 2006 when Hamas was elected the majority in the Palestinian Legislative Council. This denial of legitimacy by the international community and violence between the Hamas and the Fatah forces resulted in the loss of Gaza to Hamas in 2007 and this in effect provided Hamas with two competing Palestinian governments; the PA in the West Bank and Hamas in Gaza.

The result of this schism between the PA and Hamas has been disastrous to the unity, the diplomacy and governance across Palestine. It has undermined the Palestinian stand in the international forums and provided Israel with the reason to say that there is no partner to peace. Moreover, the split within the

party has hindered any effective reprise of Oslo roadmap or any other follow-up peace effort (Berti, 2015).

The Israeli-Hamas War: Intensification and Trends
Chronology of Major Conflicts (2006-2024)

Since the election of Hamas in 2006 and its bloody occupation of Gaza in 2007 the Israeli-Hamas conflict has been a recurring scenario of military engagement, political stalemate and humanitarian crisis. Such conflicts have entailed the back and forth exchanges of rocket launches by Gaza and the intensive Israeli military actions with massive civilian casualties and devastation of the infrastructure.

i. **2008-2009: Operation Cast Lead** - Israel was forced to retaliate with a 22-day offensive against a growing number of Hamas rockets. The attack caused the death of more than 1,300 Palestinians and 13 Israelis and was criticized on the international level due to the use of excessive force (B'Tselem, 2009).

ii. **2012: Operation Pillar of Defense** - Set off by the assassination of Hamas military leader Ahmed Jabari, this eight day war featured high-profile airstrikes and more than 160 Palestinian casualties, with Egypt acting to mediate peace (Milton-Edwards, 2013).

iii. **Operation Protective Edge, 2014** - This was one of the deadliest wars, lasting 50 days and resulting in the loss of lives of more than 2,200 Palestinians and 73 Israelis. There was the use of warfare in the tunnels and drone attacks and war crimes on both sides of the war were alleged (UNHRC, 2015).

iv. **2018-2019: Great March of Return and Skirmishes** - Weekly demonstrations on the Gaza border with demands to receive the right of return and terminate the blockade resulted in the deaths of snipers by Israeli troops and occasional rocket fire (Amnesty International, 2019).

v. **2021: May Conflict** - Due to the tensions in East Jerusalem and the police raids to Al-Aqsa Mosque, Hamas launched thousands of rockets to the Israeli cities. Israel replied by airstrikes eliminating residential houses and media offices in Gaza (Beaumont, 2021).

vi. **2023-2024 Escalations** - Characterized by brief yet severe bursts, including enhanced Hamas's rocket abilities and more advanced Israeli anti-missile interceptors, such as Iron Dome. The reactions and mediation were complicated by regional normalization agreements (e.g., with Saudi Arabia) (Friedman, 2024).

These battles are indicative of asymmetric warfare in which Israel has superiority above that of Hamas in terms of military strength. The hostilities are a cycle that is repeated: provocation, retaliation, ceasefire and breakdown, but there is no permanent political solution (Berti, 2015).

Impact on the Gaza Government and Fatah-Hamas rift

The factual political divide between Gaza and West Bank has been entrenched by Hamas running a government in the Gaza Strip since 2007. Although nominal control over the West Bank is exercised by the Palestinian Authority (PA), Hamas has created parallel organizations in Gaza, thus forming two competing governments of Palestine. This internal division of Palestinians has compromised the national unity and made the diplomatic work a complex issue (Brown, 2010).

Since 2007, the economy of Gaza has crumbled, free movement of goods and people has been curtailed and humanitarian dependency has been enhanced by the blockade that has been imposed by Israel (with the cooperation of Egypt) (Roy, 2011). In reaction, Hamas has been creating informal forms

of governance and has resorted to smuggling tunnels, foreign assistance (especially the Qatar and Iran) and local taxation. Nonetheless, the frequent Israeli attacks have seriously destroyed the infrastructure of Gaza, such as water, health, and energy, which has further undermined the ability of the administration (UN OCHA, 2022).

Although reconciliation efforts have been made occasionally, such as the Cairo Agreement of 2011 and unity efforts of 2017, there are profound ideological, political and security enmities which have barred any sustainable reconciliation. The PA considered Hamas to be running a shadow government, whereas Hamas has considered the PA to be illegitimate and too conciliatory to Israel (Milton-Edwards & Farrell, 2010). This division has rendered any form of united Palestinian stand in peace negotiations a complete standstill and invalidated the underlying premise of the Oslo framework that Palestinian are one side of the negotiations.

Israeli Reactions and International/Local Responses

Israel has reacted to Hamas in a mainly military deterring and containing fashion as opposed to engaging in politics. Israeli government perceives Hamas as a terror organization and does not want to negotiate with its leadership. Rather, Israel has followed a strategy of surgical strikes and targeted assassinations and developed surveillance to weaken the military strength of Hamas (Inbar, 2015).

In Israel, this has been endorsed by Israeli constituencies that care about national security, even though it has elicited debate on proportionality, deaths of civilians, and the morality of collective punishment. Since its deployment in 2011, the Iron Dome missile defense system has contributed greatly to the minimization of Israeli casualties caused by the firing of rockets, which bolstered the public and political opinions with regard to continuing the military retaliations (Kober, 2015).

There have been conflicting responses internationally. The US has always been on Israel side on the right to defend herself though it has sometimes shown worry concerning humanitarian impacts. The European Union has denounced the violence of Hamas and urged it to stop the blockade and resume the negotiation process. The role of regional actors (e.g., Egypt and Qatar) has been dual as they have been negotiating ceasefires and are still having strategic alliances with both Hamas and Israel (Hiltermann, 2021).

Recent establishment of relations between Israel and various Arab countries, including the Abraham Accords and the current Saudi-Israel talks- has served to even further push the Palestinian cause to the outer of regional interest. Due to its diplomatic isolation, Hamas has increasingly turned to the support of Iran and non-Arab powers that increased its ideological and geopolitical rift between Hamas and the PA (Guzansky and Marshall, 2023).

Influence on Oslo Accords and Peace Negotiations
Wearing down of Trust and Concerns of security

The loss of mutual trust which was the foundation on which Oslo process was built has been one of the greatest results of the Israeli-Hamas conflict. The security dilemma has been strengthened by repeated incidences of violence like rocket attacks by Hamas and military operations of the Israeli military in Gaza. To Israel, Hamas to power is considered a demonstration that Palestinian self-rule breeds terrorism; to Palestinians, Israeli invasions and occupation continues are killing any hope of a just peace (Shlaim, 2014). Such politics have institutionalized discourses of victimhood and existential threat and reduced the political room to compromise.

The increasing tendency of Israel to adopt unilateral security policies, such as the separation barrier, assassination, and Iron Dome, shows that Israel stops relying on negotiated security policies and instead adopts policies based on deterrence. At the same time, the resistance by Hamas is justified by Israeli actions and the collaboration of the Palestinian Authority in the security affairs is also regarded as betrayal by the parts of the Palestinian population (Roy, 2011).

Conflict of Palestinian Representation

The division within The Palestinian government between Hamas (in control of Gaza) and the Palestinian Authority (which is located in the West Bank) has caused a serious undermining of the unity of the Palestinian national movement. Such disintegration breaks one of the major assumptions of the Oslo framework, which assumed that the PLO, and subsequently the PA, was to be the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Instead, the lack of a single Palestinian voice has become the factor that harms negotiations.

This rift has been exploited by Israel and most of the western actors to doubt the possibility of any peace agreement. The split has also halted legislative renewal and democratic rule among Palestinians, which undermines institutions and makes it almost impossible to take any agreements and enforce them in the future (Brown, 2010). The unrelenting divide has resulted in diplomatic stalemate in which neither group has the authority or authority to represent all Palestinians.

Both Sides De-legitimization of Oslo

The Oslo process has over time disillusioned both the Israelis and the Palestinians. In the Palestinian side, Oslo is actually seen as a structure that systematized occupation instead of abolishing it. The settlements, military blockades and the economic block about the Palestinian lands are perceived as failures of Oslo rather than its departures. The process is seen now by many Palestinians as a structural framework that is one-sided and insular to the dominance of Israel (Khalidi, 2020).

On the other hand, Oslo is mostly related to the heightened insecurity in Israel. The Second Intifada eruption, the ascendancy of the Hamas party, and the suicide bombings and rocket attacks have caused the population to be left with doubt over any peace agreement founded on territorial compromising. The idea of Oslo is often mentioned by the right-wing Israeli politicians who discuss it as a historic error but promote such policies as conflict management or annexationist (Lustick, 2019). Consequently, Oslo is no longer seen as a legitimate normative and political place and it can hardly be brought back without major overhaul.

Weaknesses to Two-State Negotiation Platforms

The breakdown of trust and institutional disintegration, reduced credibility of Oslo and so on have all factored the loss in the two state solution as a viable political system. The ongoing increase in Israeli settlements especially in the West Bank Area C, has made the geographical continuity of a prospective Palestinian state even more impossible. At the same time, the isolation of Gaza and regular wars, as well as an absence of Palestinian nationwide elections since 2006 have ensured that internal sovereignty has become virtually unattainable.

Furthermore, the recurring failure of negotiation platforms, Camp David 2000, Annapolis Conference and the Trump administration and its plan of Peace to Prosperity have created a strong cynicism around politics. The current trends point at the end of the negotiation and to status quo management, in which the emphasis is placed on stability rather than the changes by the international and regional actors (Inbar, 2015). These processes are existential challenges to the two-state model of Oslo.

Power of International (U.S., UN, EU, Arab States)

The international players have been instrumental in the following roles of facilitating and undermining the Oslo process. Although it has been traditionally considered to mediate, the United States has been accused of being pro-Israeli, particularly when Donald Trump was in power, which acknowledged Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and marginalized the Palestinian Authority. The two-state solution has still been supported by the United Nations and European Union, which have not had the enforcement tools or political influence to make both sides adhere to the solution (Guzansky and Marshall, 2023).

The Arab states have changed their priorities as well. The fact that the Abraham Accords have led to the normalization of relations between Israel and the countries such as the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Morocco is a sign of regional shift in favor of the Palestinian issue. Even though Egypt and Qatar are still playing the mediation role of ceasefires between Israel and Hamas, more Arab involvement in the peace process has decreased, further sidelining and undermining the Palestinian leadership and lessening outside pressure on Israel to negotiate.

Future of Palestinian Statehood Negotiations

Based on the failures and the distorted realities that have occurred since 1993, it is more probable that the original Oslo framework will only be revived with significant reform. Other suggestions are the re-working of Oslo II, which entails Hamas, asymmetries of power, and the guarantees of international enforcement. Some say that instead of replacing Oslo, a new peace architecture should be created, which can reflect geopolitical and domestic realities of the 21st century (Friedman, 2024).

Nonetheless, any feasible resurgence should deal with fundamental grievances: termination of occupation, territorial continuity and internal Palestinian political cohesion. Unless these underlying problems are addressed, a rebranded Oslo process could continue to fail just as did its predecessor.

The Hamas place in a Peace Framework in the Future

The possibility of including Hamas in subsequent negotiations is a controversial issue that is still required. Hamas being the de facto ruler of Gaza and a significant player in Palestinian politics cannot be locked out permanently should there be any agreement to be sustainable. Some models have been introduced such as conditional inclusion, whereby Hamas would be permitted as a part of a peace arrangement as long as a ceasefire, Israel recognition, or democratic reforms (Berti, 2015).

Such inclusion however would stand stiff opposition by Israel and the western allies unless Hamas drastically changes its political and military stance. The continuing existence of a dual Palestinian polity will remain an impediment to the existence of any serious peace agreement without the involvement of Hamas, or its political neutralization.

Alternatives: One-State Debate, Regional Diplomacy, Confederation Models

Due to the decline of faith in the two-state solution, other models are becoming more popular. The one-state solution suggests that there should be equal rights of both Israelis and Palestinians and that they should be given a common state but this solution has been opposed based on identity and demographic factors. An alternative suggestion is a confederation system, in which two independent states would have unrestricted borders and shared institutions, however, this as well would presuppose never before seen co-operation and reconciliation.

There is also the transformation in regional diplomacy. Other scholars suggest that a multilateral peace brokering between the Arab League countries, Turkey and international guarantors can rebrand the conflict as a wider stabilization operation in the

Middle East. These models can provide a new point of leverage but have to cope with the mistrust of the history and incompatibility of national interests (Guzansky and Marshall, 2023).

The political stagnation notwithstanding, there is some light at the end of the tunnel in the form of grassroots movements and activism of youths. Young activists are becoming less and less attached to factional politics in Palestine and insist on accountability, civil rights, and the international advocacy. Social media-based movements, such as the Great March of Return, and others have recaptured the interest of the masses, especially Palestinians in the diaspora and Israel (Amnesty International, 2019).

Israel has a multifaceted political environment, where right-wing continues to prevail, yet the trend towards progressive young people and civil societies, including Breaking the Silence and Standing Together, confronting occupation and propagating coexistence is gaining ground. Although these emerging voices are marginalized in the process of policymaking, they can be critical in the reshaping of narratives and creating future constituencies of peace.

Major Research Findings and Conclusion Discussion

This paper has discussed how Israeli-Hamas crisis and the feasibility of Oslo Accords as a peace process are closely intertwined. The results show that although Oslo was previously seen to offer a viable two state solution roadmap, armed conflicts between Hamas and Israel have compromised its validity, derailed the implementation process and divided the Palestinian political arena. Key findings include:

- Violence and securitization have replenished the dialogue with erosion of mutual trust.
- The disintegration of the Palestinian representation between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority (PA) has weakened the principle of one entity in the Oslo Accords of the negotiation process.
- The original vision of Oslo has become a farce, and is increasingly unbelieved with disillusionment on both sides, particularly because of continued occupation and expansion of settlements and militarization of Gaza by Hamas.
- The regional and international players are increasingly tinting the peace process, and their interests do not necessarily coincide with the desire of the Palestinian state to exist.
- There is a rising demand of an updated peace structure or a new paradigm since the existing strategies have not produced a permanent solution.

Recommendations

In case of Mediators and International Actors.

- Reform peace plans to capture the new political reality, such as the Hamas place in Palestinian politics and resistance.
- Promote even-handed diplomacy by attaching conditions of respect of international law and human rights by all sides, including Israel.
- Encourage peacebuilding activities at the grassroots and civil society levels and support official peacebuilding initiatives, and therefore, peace is not only top-down, but also bottom-up.
- Increase the authority and legitimacy of international mediation through the creation of accountability systems in breaches of ceasefires, human rights and negotiated conditions.

In the case of Internal Palestinian Reconciliation

- Enhance the need to unite the country with elections, power balance schemes and comprehensive political dialogue between Fatah, Hamas and other groups.
- Promote institutional change in the Palestinian Authority to rebuild both popular trust and legitimacy.
- Encourage peaceful opposition and political pluralism to restore internal integrity and global credibility.
- Have regional partners (e.g. Egypt, Qatar, Turkey) mediate intra-Palestinian dialogue with long-term reconciliation in perspective.

In the case of Israeli-Palestinian Dialogue

- Develop confidence building initiatives such as prisoner exchanges, blockade relaxations, and stopping settlement expansions in order to build goodwill.
- Introduce new forms of negotiations involving more political players, particularly the Palestinian civil society and youth movements.
- Understand that no security can be achieved without justice-peace activities need to be about occupation, displacement and equal rights.
- Move beyond binary solutions (e.g., two-state vs. one-state) and explore hybrid models such as confederation or shared sovereignty that accommodate national and civic aspirations.

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