



UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT UNDER PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP ADMINISTRATION AND THE MANAGEMENT OF ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT

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ABSTRACT: *The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of the world's longest-running and most controversial conflicts. At its heart, it is a conflict between two self-determination movements, the Jewish Zionist project and the Palestinian nationalist project. This paper examined United States' (US) role in the resolution of Israel-Palestine conflict with a specific focus on President Trump's administration. It investigated if US government reversal of major agreements reached through peace process account for the resurgence of violent confrontations between Israel and Palestine. The findings indicate that US government reversal of major agreements reached through peace process account for the resurgence of violent confrontations between Israel and Palestine. Data showing major demands by Israel during peace negotiations rejected by past United States governments but granted by President Trump, death casualties and injuries in the Israel-Palestine conflict since President Trump's controversial declarations began and humanitarian condition in Palestine since President Trump's strategy of defunding began were presented to support these findings. Thus, the paper recommended that there is need for all mediatory efforts to push for a two-state solution and involve more multilateral actors in the negotiation process. This will address the fear of the Palestinians who often see US government as bias in favour of Israel.*

Keywords: United States Government, Israel-Palestinian conflict, Occupied Palestine Territory, Peace Process and Humanitarian Condition

INTRODUCTION

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a conflict that arose from disagreement over territory. It also dates back to the end of the nineteenth century. It is one of the world's oldest and most divisive conflicts. Both Israel and Palestine lay claim to the same territory (Dershowitz, 2005). Although there have been international efforts at peace involving actors like the Arab League, European Union (EU) and Russia, the United States (US) government has been acting as the main mediator in the peace process between Israel and the Palestine Liberation

Organization (PLO) since the Oslo Accord of September 1993 and has maintained this status over the years and throughout various administrations, as exemplified by its leading role in the Wye River Summit (1998) and Camp David Summit (2000) under President Bill Clinton, the Annapolis process (2008) under President George W Bush, and the Kerry initiative (2013-14) under President Barack Obama.

Although there is a widespread perception in Arab nations and Palestine that the US government is not neutral and takes side with Israel, the US is still accepted

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by the conflicting parties and every relevant stakeholder in the conflict as the most respected mediator since it is the only international actor that could pressure Israel. From time to time, the United States' government has been critical of Israeli policies and has threatened to punish Israel for violating international law. Several US Presidents followed through on threats, including Republicans George H.W. Bush, who opposed loan guarantees and new Israeli settlements. President Ronald Reagan also suspended a strategic cooperation agreement after Israel illegally annexed the Golan Heights in 1981 (Awad, 2019). In some instances, it was the Palestinians who pushed for American involvement, with the hope that it would reduce the power asymmetry between them and Israel.

US government's core demands in the numerous peace negotiations it has supervised can be summarized into four items. First, that Israel should give up some of the land that it conquered in the 1967 war in order to achieve peace. Secondly, that the Palestine must actively prevent acts of terrorism by her citizens against Israel; thirdly, that Palestine must respect Israel's right to existence and finally, that the best approach to achieving lasting peace is through a two-state solution. These conditions have been reiterated by successive US governments since the Oslo Accord of 1993. The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) also affirms the two-state solution and endorses the parameters for an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement proposed by the United States and other mediatory parties like Russia, the EU, and the United Nations (UN). The parameters contained in a "Performance-Based Roadmap to a Permanent Two-State Solution to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict" calls for an end to the occupation that began in 1967.

Following the electoral victory of Donald Trump in 2016 and inauguration as the 45th President of the United States in January 2017, a period of uncertainty regarding Israel-Palestine peace process began. Some media speculations in early 2018 suggested that the Trump administration

was preparing a new peace initiative for an Israeli-Palestinian deal. Subsequent actions particularly in 2019 soon confirmed this to be true as US foreign policy on Israel-Palestine conflict under President Trump significantly changed from a perceived mediatory role by all stakeholders to the role of a perceived aggressor. Thus, the central focus of this paper is to examine the role of the United States in the resolution of the Israeli-Palestine conflict with a focus on President Trump administration.

SCHOLARLY ARGUMENTS ON THE PERSISTENCE OF THE ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT

Prior to the most recent wave of clashes between Israelis and Palestinians that followed the announcement by President Trump to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital and relocate the US embassy there, there had been many outbreaks of violence and instability. Scholarly writings that try to explain why the Israeli-Palestine conflict has defied all peace initiatives aimed resolving it can be classified in to three dominant arguments. First, scholars who blame it on the intractable nature of the conflict; secondly, scholars who blame it on partisan nature of US government's mediatory role and finally, scholars who blame it on the absence of punitive or coercive measures to force agreements during peace talks.

Scholars like Kuriansky (2007), Caplan (2009), Hadelman (2011) and Salomon (2011) fall within the first group. They blame the persistent nature of Israel-Palestine conflict on the intractable nature of the conflict. To these scholars, the identity-driven rift between Israelis and Palestinians is the result of an underlying fear of extinction that often grows within the conflicting ethnic groups who live with the memories or fear of persecution and massacre. However, this argument suffers from the same fundamental weakness of the intractable theory of political analysis. It is often a defeatist argument that accepts a conflict as inevitable or divine without proper understanding of the social context that gave rise to the conflict, how the conflict has transformed over time or



the material conditions that have necessitated the historical transformation of these conflicts. Israel-Palestine conflict is first and foremost a social conflict and resolving this age long conflict requires a proper understanding of the material conditions that necessitated the conflict. There is nothing intractable about the conflict; rather, it is resolution process that has prolonged it.

Scholars who blame the persistence of the conflict on the partisan nature of United States government involvement include Beauchamp (2018), Hassan (2018) and Verbit (2014). For these scholars, the United States has repeatedly demonstrate bias support for Israel since the Oslo Accords of 1993 making acceptance or workability of almost all the peace deals agreed upon impossible. The problem with this argument is that it fails to explain the cordial aspect of US-Palestine relations in which the United States government has also offered humanitarian and developmental aids to Palestine. It also failed to explain why the Palestinians continued to rely on the United States to play a key role in all other peace negotiations after the Oslo Accords of 1993. Finally, the argument also failed to explain why the US government in the past has used threat of sanction to enforce compliance from Israel on issues that borders on Israel-Palestine conflict.

Literature that have blamed the persistence Israel-Palestine conflict on the absence of punitive or coercive measures to force agreements during peace talks include Amnesty International (2009), Human Rights Watch (2006), Erlanger (2006) among others. The dominant argument from this group of scholars is that almost all peace deals have failed to prescribe punitive measures for any party that backs out of the deal arbitrarily. This they believed would deter both Israel and Palestine from arbitrarily abandoning peace agreements. However, the argument of this third group of scholars is flawed on the ground it fails to recognize that third-party mediatory process usually require a subtle approach in order to win

the trust of the conflicting parties who ordinarily would not agree to a meet one another without a third party interference. Also, ability to maintain neutrality is one of the hallmarks of this third-party mediatory process and any attempt to use sanction or threat of it to coerce either or both parties to any agreement can easily be translated to partial intervention and undermine international support for such peace process.

In the course of our review, we observed that the US administration under President Trump took unprecedented steps different from past administrations in managing Israel-Palestine conflict. That changed the rules of the game. On the average, the Israel-Palestine conflict has witnessed more clashes between citizens of Israel and the people of Palestine as well as hard line rhetoric between leaders of both sides since Donald Trump became the President of the United States (POTUS). This suggests a possible connection between the US government role and renewed violence in the Israeli-Palestine conflict during the Trump era that most existing literature seem to gloss over. This was the gap addressed in this paper. Thus, while the broad objective of this paper was to examine the role of the United States in the resolution of the Israeli-Palestine conflict with a focus on President Trump administration, its specific objective is to investigate whether US government reversal of major agreements reached through peace process accounted for the resurgence of violent confrontations between Israel and Palestine.

MAJOR UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY ON ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT UNDER PRESIDENT TRUMP ADMINISTRATION AND RESURGENCE OF VIOLENCE

Although there have been waves of clashes between Israel and Palestine since the Oslo Accords of 1993, with the height being in 2014. The 2014 conflict led to deaths of 73 Israelis and 2,251 Palestinians before a ceasefire deal was brokered. The ceasefire however led to the resumption of US government supervised peace talks



between Israel and Palestine. The US government peace negotiation also paved way for direct talks between the warring parties and violent confrontations significantly reduced as the death toll registered in President Barack Obama’s last full year in office was 108 Palestinians and 12 Israelis (UN OCHA, 2018).

Following the inauguration of US President Donald Trump in January 2017, there was uncertainty over what US government Middle East policy would be, particularly as it concerns Israel-Palestine conflict. Before the release

of his administration’s official plan, President Trump made many official pronouncements that suggested he was not committed to the same fundamental principles past US administrations have abide by during peace negotiations. Some core agreements that all parties involved in peace negotiations have respected since the Oslo Accords of 1993 were reversed by the administration of President Trump. This created dissatisfaction in Palestine and resulted in resurgence of hostility.

Table 1: Major Demands by Israel during Peace Negotiation Rejected by Past United States Governments but Granted by President Trump

1	Recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel
2	Move the US Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem
3	Declare that the future of Jerusalem is off the negotiating table
4	Call for the dismantlement of United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and an end to all US contributions to the U.N. agency (The US was paying more than a quarter of the agency’s \$1.2 billion annual budget)
5	Call for removal of the refugee issue (the right of return of Palestinian refugees) from future negotiations
6	Support the redefinition of the term “Palestinian refugee” so that children of Palestinian refugees do not retain refugee status (which is contrary to UNHCR guidelines that refugee dependents “are normally granted refugee status according to the principle of family unity”)
7	Reduce significantly US government annual support to the Palestinian Authority
8	Cut \$25 million in US government aid to Palestinian hospitals, including those in East Jerusalem
9	Consistently withhold criticism of Israel’s human rights violations and brutality against Palestinians, especially in international forums like the UNSC (unlike President Obama’s administration that publicly criticized human rights abuses by Israel)
10	Close the Palestine Liberation Organization’s mission in Washington, DC, leaving the Palestinians



	without a formal presence in the U.S. capital
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Source: Author's compilation from Official White House statements as reported by Various Media Organizations

It is clear from the table above that President Trump administration is making a fundamental shift from established US principles as it relate to the Israel-Palestine conflict. As noted by Lehrs (2019), President Trump administration have been moving the goal posts and reversing basic principles of US government mediation since Oslo. They have returned to the type of American diplomacy on the Palestinian issue that prevailed in the early years of the conflict. At the time, the future of the Palestinians was discussed with another Arab state (Egypt) rather than with the Palestinians resulting in an unpopular proposed solution that advocated Palestinian autonomy rather than an independent state. According to Lehrs (2019), the current US Middle East peace team is in a similar vein, currently negotiating the fate of the Palestinians with Arab states, primarily Saudi Arabia, and not with the Palestinians. President Trump's plan also offers Palestinians autonomy rather than a state. Making reference to Jake Waller, a former US diplomat, Lehrs (2019) argued that the Trump administration's peace plan is not actually aimed at advancing negotiations, but rather at altering the basic parameters of the international consensus on the two-state model as the desired solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. If this is actually what the plan entails, it is likely to spark widespread international criticism. Indeed, such criticism has already been voiced by Arabs, Europeans, and Russians, including in a declaration from eight EU member states in December 2018 and another following the February 2019 meeting of European and Arab foreign ministers in Dublin.

The actions of the US administration under President Trump has no doubt emboldened the Israelis and also provoked the Palestinians that peace talks directly

involving the two parties broke down with President Trump's decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. Since then, there has been resurgence in violent clashes between Israel and Palestine, creating a humanitarian situation.

With hard line US government backing, the Israeli government intensified its severe and discriminatory restrictions on Palestinians' human rights; restrict the movement of people and goods into and out of the Gaza Strip; and facilitate the unlawful transfer of Israeli citizens to settlements in the occupied West Bank (HRW, 2018). With public backing from President Trump, the Knesset (Israel's parliament) in February 2018 passed the Regularization Law which allows Israel to retroactively expropriate private Palestinian land on which settlements have been built. Although the High Court of Justice in Israel issued an injunction that froze its implementation in August of the same year, it should be noted that between July 2016 and June 2017, Israeli authorities had already authorized and completed construction work on more than 2,000 new housing units for settlers in the West Bank, excluding East Jerusalem (HRW, 2018).

Feeling emboldened by President Trump's support, UN OCHA report on the humanitarian situation in Palestine for 2017 and 2018 noted that Israel, without fear of international backlash, operates a two-tiered system in the West Bank that provides preferential treatment to Israeli settlers while imposing harsh conditions on Palestinians. Also, while settlements expanded in 2017, Israeli authorities destroyed 381 homes and other property, forcibly displacing 588 people as of November 6, in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. This is part of discriminatory practices of the Israeli government that reject almost all building permit applications submitted by Palestinians.

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In fact, Israel continues to maintain its decade-long effective closure of Gaza and impose restrictions that limit supply of electricity and water, restrict access to medical care and educational and economic opportunity for Palestinians. This has worsened the poverty profile of Palestine as approximately 70 percent of Gaza's 1.9 million people rely on humanitarian assistance. The periodic shutdowns of Gaza's only power plant which is as a result of a dispute between Fatah and Hamas over who should pay for fuel needed to operate the plant, and the decision by the Israeli government to accede to a request by the Palestinian Authorities to cut the electricity it sells to them for use in Gaza significantly reduced electricity supply in Gaza. It leaves with four hours or less of electricity a day. Power outages jeopardize water supply, interfere with sewage treatment, and cripple hospital operations (UN OCHA, 2018).

The discriminatory policies of the Israeli government led to demonstrations that eventually descended into violent conflict mid-2017. Tensions around the Al-Aqsa/Temple Mount compound in July-August 2017 triggered an escalation in violence. Israeli security forces used lethal force against demonstrators and against suspected attackers in the West Bank and at the Gaza border. Palestinian assailants, most of them apparently acting without the formal sponsorship of any armed group, carried out stabbings and occasional shootings against Israelis. In fact, ICRC and UN OCHA noted in their respective reports that summarized the events of 2017 that between January 1 and November 6, 2017, Israeli security forces killed 62 Palestinians, including 14 children, and injured at least 3,494 Palestinians in the West Bank, Gaza and Israel, including protesters, suspected assailants or members of armed groups, and bystanders. Palestinians killed at least 15 Israelis during this same time, including 10 security officers, and injured 129 in conflict-related incidents in the West Bank and Israel.

Table 2: Palestine and Israel's Death Casualties since 2016

Year	Palestine	Israel
2016	108	12
2017	77	15
2018	299	13
2019*	135	10

Source: UN OCHA (2019) Available at <https://www.ochaopt.org/data/casualties>

* Correct as at December 10, 2019

Death toll in President Obama's last full year as POTUS was 108 Palestinians and 12 Israelis. This was a significant reduction from 2014 statistics when violence broke out. It was 2,327 Palestinian deaths and 88 Israeli deaths that were recorded that year. With a US government supervised ceasefire agreement and further peace talks, the statistics reduced in 2016, but as President Trump's peace plan began to unfold in mid-2017, tensions rose again 77 Palestinian deaths were recorded from mid-2017 to end of the year. Also, 15 Israeli deaths were recorded within the same period. The implication of President Trump's policy reversals on resurgence of violence is clearer when we look at statistics on injuries sustained as a result of violent confrontations between Israelis and Palestinians.

Table 3: Statistics on Injuries Sustained in Israel-Palestine Conflict since 2016

Year	Palestine	Israel
2016	3,500	218
2017	8,447	157
2018	31,259	117
2019*	15,274	120

Source: UN OCHA (2019) Available at <https://www.ochaopt.org/data/casualties>

*Correct as at December 10, 2019

Apart from showing that there has been resurgence of violence since President Trump began his major reversal of long-standing US government positions on the Israel-



Palestine conflict, tables 2 and 3 above also proves that there has been a power imbalance in the conflict with Israel inflicting more harm on Palestine. As a result, Israel continues to bargain from a position of power and the collapse of any peace deal would be to Israel's advantage. This advantage also manifest in the administration of the disputed territories with Israel having a greater share of administrative control.

For instance, Israel's near-total closure of the Gaza Strip, particularly restrictions on movement of people and on outgoing goods, together with Egypt keeping its border with Gaza mostly closed, continued to have severe consequences for the civilian population. Travel through the Erez Crossing, Gaza's passenger crossing to Israel, the West Bank, and the outside world, is limited to what the Israeli military calls exceptional humanitarian cases like medical patients, their companions, and prominent businesspersons.

In the first 10 months of 2017, an average of about 230 Palestinians exited Erez each day. This is a far cry from an average of more than 24,000 Palestinians who crossed each day in September 2000 before the Palestinian uprising of that year began. Outgoing goods in the first 10 months of 2017 averaged 207 truckloads per month (mostly produce to be sold in the West Bank and Israel). This was just 19 percent of the average 1,064 truckloads per month that exited prior to the June 2007 tightening of the closure. Israeli restrictions on the delivery of construction materials to Gaza and a lack of funding have impeded reconstruction of the 17,800 housing units severely damaged or destroyed during Israel's 2014 military operation in Gaza. About 29,000 people who lost their homes remain displaced. The Israeli government sought to justify the restrictions by saying that construction materials can be used for military purposes, including fortifying tunnels; it allowed only limited quantities to enter, under the supervision of international organizations (HRW, 2018 and 2019).

Patients in Gaza seeking treatment outside Gaza faced lengthening delays in obtaining approvals. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), Israel authorities denied or delayed permits with no response by the time of the appointment to 45 percent of patients seeking treatment outside Gaza. As of August 2017, 40 percent of medications on the 'essential drug list' were at zero stock in Gaza (WHO, 2018).

As of November 6, 2017, military offensives by Israeli forces resulted in the killing of 17 and injuring of at least 215 Palestinians in Gaza, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported. The Israeli authorities declared an area inside Gaza near the border with Israel to be a 'no-go' zone, justifying it as a means to prevent cross-border attacks. Israeli soldiers fired at people who enter that zone and at fishermen who venture beyond six nautical miles from the shore—the area to which Israel restricts Gaza fishing boats. Israel temporarily expanded the fishing zone to nine miles between May and June and again between October and December. Israel says it restricts access to the sea to prevent the smuggling of weapons into Gaza.

Israel continued to provide security, administrative services, housing, education, and medical care for about 607,000 settlers residing in unlawful settlements in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Israel's building of 2,000 new settlement housing units in the period between July 2016 and June 2017 marked an 18 percent decrease over the same period in 2015-2016, but Israeli authorities approved plans for 85 percent more housing units in the first half of 2017 than all of 2016. According to Hassan (2018), this is another example of Israel violating peace agreements and instigating unrest since international humanitarian law outlaws the transfer of civilians from an occupying power to an occupied territory.

Building permits are difficult, if not impossible, for Palestinians to obtain in East Jerusalem or in the 60 percent of the West Bank under exclusive Israeli control (Area C). This has driven Palestinians to construct



housing and business structures that are at constant risk of demolition or confiscation by Israel on the grounds of being unauthorized. Palestinians in these areas have access to water, electricity, schools, and other state services that are either far more limited or costlier than the same services that the state makes available to Jewish settlers there. 381 Palestinian homes and other properties were demolished in the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) in 2017 as of November 6. This led to

displacement of 588 people. Israeli authorities justified their actions based on the claim that most of the demolished structures failed to have a building permit. However, reports by independent media sources suggest that Israel also destroyed the homes of families in retaliation for attacks on Israelis allegedly carried out by a family member (HRW, 2018). This is a violation of the international humanitarian law that prohibits collective punishment.

Table 4: Selected Violent Clashes in the Israel-Palestine Conflict since 2017

October 31, 2017	Palestine armed groups misfired 10 rockets from Gaza into Israel. These rockets cannot be accurately aimed at military objectives and amount to indiscriminate or deliberate attacks on civilians when directed at Israeli population centers
November 6, 2017	Israeli security forces fatally shot 42 Palestinians and wounded at least 3,279, including passersby, demonstrators, and those suspected of attacking Israelis. Further investigation by the UN later revealed that Israeli soldiers used excessive force
March-May, 2018	Palestinians in the Gaza Strip conducted weekly demonstrations between March 30 and May 15, 2018, at the border between the Gaza Strip and Israel over US government planned relocation of her embassy to Jerusalem. 183 demonstrators were killed and over 6,000 wounded by live ammunition
May 3, 2019	Two Israeli soldiers were killed by snipers during a weekly protest. Israeli government retaliated swiftly with an airstrike that killed two Palestinians. For the next 3 days, hundreds of rockets were indiscriminately launched by Palestinians into Israel with the Israeli Air force carrying out retaliatory strikes

Source: Global Conflict Tracker (2019) and HRW (2018)

In the report of the commission set up by the UN Human rights Council to investigate the violent clash that followed President Trump's announcement of US government intention to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel as well relocate US Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, it was noted that Israeli army launched intermittent air and artillery strikes in the Gaza Strip, killing 37 Palestinians between March 30 and November

19, 2017. This figure included at least five civilians. The commission's report also noted that Palestinian armed groups fired 1138 rockets and mortars indiscriminately toward Israel within the same period. However, the commission's report accused Israel of carrying out indiscriminate arrest, detention and violation of prisoner's rights.



Israeli military authorities detained Palestinian protesters, including nonviolent protesters. Israeli authorities also tried the majority of Palestinians incarcerated in the occupied territory in military courts, which have a near-100 percent conviction rate. Many of these prisoners were children. Israeli security forces arrested Palestinian children suspected of criminal offenses, usually stone-throwing. It used unnecessary force for most of these arrests and questioned them without a family member present. The children were forced to sign confessions in Hebrew, which most did not understand. The Israeli military detained Palestinian children separately from adults during remand hearings and military court trials, but often detained children with adults immediately after arrest. As of June 30, 2017, Israeli authorities held 315 Palestinian children in military detention. As of October 2017, Israel held 453 Palestinian administrative detainees without charge or trial, based on secret evidence, many for prolonged periods. Israel also jailed many Palestinian detainees and prisoners inside Israel, violating international humanitarian law requiring that they not be transferred outside the occupied territory and restricting the ability of family members to visit them (Commissioned Report of UN Human Rights Council, 2018).

The violent tension caused by President Trump’s reversal of long-standing US government’s principles as it relates to resolving the Israel-Palestine conflict also have implications on the dynamics of the conflict resolution. Palestinian President, Mahmoud Abbas, cut ties with the

Trump administration after United States recognition of Jerusalem as capital of Israel. The Trump administration does not appear to support Israeli withdrawal from any part of the occupied territories, making a negotiated solution impossible. Although Hassan (2018) claims that President Trump’s pro-Israel peace plan is partly influenced by domestic politics of re-election since Evangelicals voters (mostly Americans of Jewish descent) constitute a core political base for his party, his decisions to reverse long standing US government principles on Israel-Palestine conflict has cost the US government its leadership role in resolving the conflict.

As noted by Lehrs (2019), the goal in presenting peace plans during a mediation process is to suggest a possible basis for an agreement and to push the various sides of the conflict toward it. In the case of the US government under President Trump, it has relied on compulsion exerted through withdrawal of economic aids in order to compel Palestine to accept its peace deal that did not reaffirm its commitment to the two-state solution. The withdrawal of economic aid has created humanitarian condition in the conflict. Although the US government under President Trump assumes that such aid withdrawal will pressure Palestine to come to the negotiating table and be bound by US pro-Israel peace deal, so far, it has only emboldened the Palestinians to fight back and seek intervention from other international actors, notably the European Union and Arab League that have condemned President Trump’s actions.

Table 5: Estimated Population in Need of Humanitarian Assistance (Estimates calculated based on the Humanitarian Response Plan 2019)

	Total	Male	Female
Total Population in Need	2,500,000	1,272,500	1,227,500
Children (Under 18)	1,100,000	559,900	540,100
Total people to be reached	657,900	334,871	323,029



Total children to be reached	429,000	218,361	210,639
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Source: UNICEF Humanitarian Report for Palestine as at September, 2019

Table 6: Funding Requirement and Shortfall for Humanitarian Response in Palestine, 2019

Appeal Sector	Funding Requirement for 2019	Funds Received for 2019	Carry Over Funds from Previous Year Utilized in 2019	Funding Gap	% of Funding Gap
Wash	11,278,451	2,566,853	5,029,539	3,682,058	33%
Education	3,402,803	1,327,496	668,204	1,407,102	41%
Child Protection	2,857,931	1,251,112	1,060,332	546,487	19%
Health and Nutrition	2,810,736	1,856,853	944,569	9,314	0%
Cluster Coordination	707,301	437,107	0	270,194	38%
Sub-total	21,057,222	7,439,422	7,702,645	5,915,155	28%

Source: UNICEF Humanitarian Report for Palestine as at September, 2019

No doubt, the US government strategy of defunding humanitarian programmes in Palestine as a way of forcing through a pro-Israel peace deal is creating adverse humanitarian condition but rather than pressure Palestinian Authorities, it has only fuelled the violence in the occupied territories of Palestine (OPT) resulting in rising casualty rate in the conflict.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the link between the United States and the resolution of Israel-Palestine conflict and contended that US government reversal of major agreements reached through peace process account for the resurgence of violent confrontations between Israel and Palestine. The study found out that President Trump’s reversal of long standing US government principles in its mediatory role in the Israel-Palestine conflict that include non-commitment to a two-state solution, recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital and the subsequent relocation of US Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem has led to the resurgence frequent violent clashes between

Israelis and Palestinians with hope of resolution any time soon almost fading off. The study showed that President Trump’s reversal of long standing principles in US mediatory role in the Israel-Palestine has undermined US government influence in the peace process with the Palestinian Authorities cutting off ties with the US government and now relying on regional blocs like EU and Arab League to lead the peace process. We therefore recommend that is need for all mediatory efforts to push for a two-state solution and involve more multilateral actors in the negotiation process. This will address the fear of the Palestinians who often see US government as bias in favour of Israel. This multilateral involvement of actors will also help put moral pressure on both Israel and Palestine to adhere to agreements reached.

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