

APOLOGY DIPLOMACY: THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN EMBROGLIO**Otunko, B. A.**

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ABSTRACT

The Israeli- Palestinian imbroglio has been adjudged the world's longest intractable crisis. The history of Israeli- Palestinian imbroglio dates back to biblical times when they were both Hebrew and Arab Kingdoms in the area. To the Arabs, the Jewish State (1948) was an alien presence injected into the traditionally Arab lands on the basis of a 2000 year old claim and to expiate the Jews' suffering which the Arab people had not caused. To the orthodox Jews, it was a land given to the Jews by God and therefore tantamount to sacrilege to part with any part of it to the Arabs. Wars have been fought with its attendant consequences. The Quartet comprising the European Union, United States of America, Russia and the United Nations-have all tried to evolve peace summits, resolutions and accords towards settling the crisis. All manner of diplomatic overtures had been adopted, apology diplomacy inclusive. It does seem that the conflict has defied every peace and settlement initiative ever known to man. While some proffered the establishment of a state of Palestine as an age long antidote to the crisis, others are of the opinion that the state of Palestine will worsen the fragile peace between the duo and subject Israel to deeper and worse security scenario. Utilizing secondary sources of data, content analysis as well as the realist theory of international relations, the paper examines the myriad of peace initiatives adopted and concluded that justice is the only antidote to the age long imbroglio.

KEYWORDS: Israel, Palestine, Quartet and Imbroglio.

INTRODUCTION

The history of Israeli-Palestinian imbroglio dates back to biblical times when they were both Hebrews and Arab kingdoms in the area. In later centuries, the area was conquered by many others. From 640 to 1917, it was almost continually controlled by Muslim rulers. In 1917, the British conquered the area, Palestine, from Turkey. Concurrently, a Zionist movement for a Jewish homeland arose and the Balfour Declaration in the same year (1917) promised increased Jewish immigration to Palestine. The Jewish population in the region increased dramatically because of refugees from the Holocaust. The Jewish population stood at 650,000 after the World War II, while the Arab population was 1,350,000. Zionists increasingly agitated for an independent Jewish state. An opportunity for the Jews came when in 1947, the British withdrew. The withdrawal of the British saw to the immediate break-out of a war between the Jewish forces and the Arabs. The Jews

won, establishing an independent state of Israel in 1948 (Rourke, 2014).

Most Palestinian-Arabs fled (or were driven) from Israel to refugee camps in Gaza and the West Bank (of the Jordan River), two areas that had been part of Palestine but were captured in the war by Egypt and Jordan respectively. In 1967 as a result of the six day war between Israel and Egypt, Jordan and Syria, the Israelis again expanded their territory by capturing several areas including the Sinai Peninsula, Gaza, the Golan Heights and the West Bank. Also in this period, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) became the major representative of Palestinian-Arabs. True peace was not possible because the PLO and the Arab States would not recognize Israel's legitimacy and because Israel refused to give up some of the captured territory (Rourke, 2014).

It has acquired the notoriety of the world's most "intractable conflict" with Israeli occupation of West Bank and the Gaza Strip spanning over 50 years. The bone of contention had been mutual recognition, borders, security, water rights, control of Jerusalem, Israeli settlements, Palestinian freedom of movement and Palestinian right of return. Fruitless attempts have been made to broker peace between the warring nations both in the past and present. Ever since the independence of Israel in 1948, both parties had in the past favoured the establishment of the independent state of Palestine (Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia).

The two parties engaged in direct negotiation are the Israeli government, and Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) ably represented by their administrative heads respectively and the Quartet: the United Nations, the European Union, the United States of America and Russia. Unfortunately, The Arab league albeit a regional group domiciled in the Middle East is conspicuously not a member of the Quartet. Worse still, since 2006, the Palestinians have been polarized into two opposing camps between the Fatah (the traditional dominant party) and its electoral challenger, Hamas. The Hamas a more radical and anti West group recorded an electoral victory in 2006. Hamas rejected these demands which resulted in the Quartet's suspension of its foreign assistance programme and the imposition of economic sanctions by the Israelis. A year later, following Hamas seizure of power in the Gaza strip in June 2007, the territory officially recognized as the PA was split between Fatah in the West Bank, and Hamas in the Gaza Strip. However, in 2014, a Palestinian unity government, composed of both Fatah and Hamas was formed (Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia).

There have been wars preceding the establishment of the independent state of Israel in 1948 and after. For instance, in 1967, Israel was pitted against Egypt, Jordan and Syria in a six day war. Israel won the war and expanded its territory. There were other wars in 1987, 2000, 2012, and 2014, just to mention but a few.

There has equally been inestimable violations and concomitant apologies. An apology being the act of declaring one's regret, remorse, or sorrow for having insulted, failed, injured, harmed or wronged another. Some apologies are interpersonal (between individuals, between friends, family members, colleagues, lovers, neighbours or strangers). Other apologies are collective (by one group to another group or by a group to an individual). More generally, apologies can be offered "one to one", "one to many", "many to one" or "many to many". While the practice of apologizing is nothing new, the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first witnessed a sharp rise in the number of public. A gesture formally considered a sign of weakness has grown to represent moral strength and a crucial step towards potential reconciliation. In the past, national apologies have been used successfully to move countries' relations forward. The Germans for example apologized repeatedly to the peoples they brutalized in the World War II and the Holocaust. Such gestures eased the process of German unification and have helped repair German's post World War II Image. Even short of an apology, countries have staged commemorative events to show their solidarity. Think of Helmut Kohl and François Mitterrand's solemn hand hold at Verdun Cemetery in 1984, and more recently, Vladimir Putin's visit to Katyn forest with the Polish Prime Minister. Literature suggests that Israel has played a pivotal role in the global practice of apology as the representative of Jewish victims. As such, Israel was an addressee of historical apologies, mainly from European States for their actions during the Holocaust. However, since the initiation of the Oslo Peace process, Israel has been urged to take the role of the apologizer and acknowledge its responsibility for the suffering of the Palestinians (Kampf et al, 2012).

Israel responded to these calls, with an expression of sorrow. In 1999, Israel's Prime Minister Ehud Barak declared; we are sorry for the heavy suffering the conflict caused not only to us, but also to all the Arab nations that fought against us, including the Palestinians (cited in Kampf et al, 2012). This was adjudged the most far reaching declaration ever made by an Israeli official toward the Palestinians. Barak not only acknowledged the existence of the political entity entitled Palestinians, but also recognized their sufferings but without taking any responsibility for its occurrence (Kampf et al, 2012).

APOLOGY DIPLOMACY: AN OVERVIEW

Apology diplomacy whether focusing on domestic apologies or international apologies tend to depict apology as an instrument for avoiding or resolving conflicts or dealing with post conflict situations and analyze the normative and utilitarian aspects of the subject (Tavuchis, and Culpa, 1991). Domestic apologies as well as international apologies from non state actors (churches, companies, universities etc) share many significant attributes with international state apologies. This paper will dwell on international state apologies to conform to the topic being reviewed, as it is an international issue.

It is true that states are sovereign and that there is no overarching authority over states, but public international law can be viewed as a generally accepted normative system setting the minimum standards of behaviour for international actors. Thus, while nongovernmental actors may influence the international normative climate by demanding adherence to higher standards of behaviour or by directing attention to areas that are not adequately covered by international law, public international law remain the ultimate frame of reference in adjudicating international conflicts of interest. Insofar as states continue being the principal lawmakers in the international realm, state apologies form a distinctive and unarguably, the most important category of public apologies (Bagdonas, 2007).

While discussing state apologies, two different types of apologies can be identified and distinguished: diplomatic and historical apologies. Diplomatic apologies refer to apologies issued by a state representative on behalf of the state to another state for breaches of international law. Examples of diplomatic apologies abound viz. China's apology to Japan for seizing a Japanese steamship "Tatsu Maru" in 1908, British apology to Chile for violation of its sovereignty in 1915, U.S apology for arresting an Iranian minister in 1935, China's apology to Great Britain for shooting down a civil[an airliner "Cathay Pacific" in 1954, Israel's apology to the United States for espionage against the U.S in 1985 are just few examples (Edwards and Grey, 1916; Reeves, 1936; Huskisson, 2005). Historical apologies refer to apologies issued by state representatives on behalf of the nation, to individuals or their groups in other states for gross human rights violations in the past that did not necessarily constitute breaches of international law at the time of their commission. Examples of historic apologies include apologies related to the Holocaust, the Second World War, the Colonial Past (Cunningham, 1999).

The practice of diplomatic state apologies reflected a particular understanding of the state and state responsibility and, in this regard, historical apologies indicate a remarkable change in the international normative system. Diplomatic apologies affirmed a state-centered order, within which states were like units, responsibility was collective, and acting responsibly meant respecting the sovereign rights and the property of other unit-like states. In contrast, historical apologies rely on different human rights-based value system, the boundaries of which are marked by the concept of the crimes against humanity in general and genocide in particular. Historical apologies endow the individual with international legal subjectivity at the expense of the state, which parallels the movement from collective to individual responsibility in certain areas of international law (Bagdonas, 2007).

FEATURES OF STATE APOLOGY

It is pertinent to state what constitutes a proper apology. Davis (2002) gave three constitutive elements of “genuine” or “consummate” apology as doxastic (the belief that one has transgressed), effective (one’s feelings of self-reproach), and dispositional (one’s disposition to avoid the transgression in future). The three features are suggestive that the nucleus of an apology premises on clear acceptance of responsibility for a transgression and its negative appraisal. There can be no apology without the doxastic component. In some cases, it is not entirely clear what the normative frame of reference is of an apology issued by a state representative. Consider for example, the statement by the president of Iraq, Saddam Hussein on 2, December 2003, regarding the invasion of Kuwait in 1990, as reported in international media, ‘we are saying what we are saying not out of weakness or as a tactic to an illegitimate end but to clarify facts as we see them. When it is not clear which norm was believed to be violated, or in the absence of such a belief, an apology becomes obscure or invalid.

The admission of responsibility may turn into acceptance of liability if the normative framework within which an apology is issued is law. For example, during the UN world conference in Durban in 2001, the double move by the representatives of the African countries to recognize slavery as a crime against humanity (for which there is no limitation of statutes) and demanded an apology for slavery from the European countries, forced the British, Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese delegations to press hard to replace the suggested use of “apology” with ‘regret’ in order to avoid possible future liability (Ukabiala, 2001). Some of the current public apologies issued by state representatives clearly follow the legally safe path and use the formula “we are sorry that this happened”. It is necessary to note, however, that if apologies expressed only sympathy or regret, they could be consistently issued in the absence of the doxastic element or, indeed by any third party - presumably, almost everyone today feels sorry that there was slavery. Therefore while the choice of words in apology statements may vary, genuine apologies must necessarily involve acknowledgment of responsibility.

Accordingly, Japan has apologized for its polices during the Second World War more than once, while others maintain that Japan’s apology was bereft of sincerity. Japanese apologies tend to lack justification elements because Japanese culture lacks the tradition of “apologia”. The Japanese language reflects this point; among Japanese words that are commonly used as translations of “apology” there is really no equivalent for “apology” which has a connotation of “defend” and “justify” (Suzuki, 1999; Sogimoto, 1995). Apologies must be sincere and the feelings of self-reproach (guilt, shame, sorrow) should be heartfelt to be genuine. The sincerity of apologies may be put in doubt if they are not followed by material compensation to the victims. In the international arena, it is not important whether apologies are accepted or whether they are supported with reparations, these are already quite different issues related to the question of justice. Insofar, as

apologies are duly performed by an official who has the authority to represent the state and insofar as they can be said to contain all the elements discussed above, they will count as state apologies (Govier and Verwoerd, 2002).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The analytical tool for this work is hinged on realism. Political realism has long been an influential and dominant theory in the study and practice of international relations and diplomacy. It postulates mankind as selfish and competitive. The realists described the international system as conflictual and anarchic, lacking an overarching authority. It acknowledges the centrality of the nation-states as the supreme political authority in the world, and placed premium on the role of power and the importance of the most powerful. The international system lacks morality and the theory seeks to describe and explain the world of international politics as it is, rather than how we might like it to be. The progenitors of this theory are EH Carr in his work “the twenty years crisis” published in 1939 and Hans Morgenthau’s “Politics among nations” published in 1948 (Burchill and Linklater, 2001).

Realism is rooted in the Hobbesian state of nature. Thomas Hobbes while writing on the “state of nature” noted that since man is selfishly addicted to his own security or power and since man is roughly equal in strength, none can be secure and this prompted a situation of “war against everyman” that made “the life of man solitary poor, nasty, brutish and short.” Machiavelli, the cerebral political philosopher, tagged man wicked, selfish and egoistic, fundamentally weak, ungrateful, exhibitionist, artificial, anxious to avoid danger and exclusively desirous of gain. For as some men desire to have more others fear to loose what they have, enmities and war are the consequences. First they seek to secure themselves against attack, and then they attack others (Jones, 1967).

The international system and relations, just like the state of nature is conflictual, anarchic, dangerous and destructive. The failure of the League of Nations to prevent Japan’s invasion of Manchuria and Italy’s occupation of Abyssinia had dashed the hopes of many liberals who believed the world could be made peaceful simply by wishing it to be so (Burchill and Linklater, 2001). Self-help in the face of daunting challenges remains the only option for nation states (Kegley and Raymond, 2005).

Nation states compete to advance their national interests. The primary interest of a state borders on its very existence, geography and security and no nation would lackadaisically treat its primary national interests with levity. In other to achieve its national interest, a state must be powerful or at least more powerful than its challenger or opponent. Conflicting national interests among states is

the underpinning factor for a crisis and conflict ridden international system and relations. Power creates inequality. According to Kautiga (cited in Rourke and Boyer, 2002), the possession of power in a greater degree makes a king superior to another; in a lesser degree, inferior, and in an equal degree, equal. In the words of Hobbes, the general inclination of all mankind was a perpetual and restless desire of power after power that ceaseth only in death (cited in Varma, 1999). A state that sincerely intends to achieve its national interest in an ever anarchical and competitive international arena must be a state that has power, capable of self help, increasing military strength and aligning with others to deter and keep predators, aggressors and potential threats at bay (Kegley et al, 2005).

Morgenthau (1978) calibrated six principles of political realism;

1. Politics is governed by objective laws which have their root in human nature.
2. The compass to understanding international politics is the concept of interest defined in terms of power. This idea of interest defined in terms of power reveals the true behaviour of politicians and guards us against two popular misconceptions about the determination of a states foreign policy - the motives of statesmen and ideological preferences. There is no room for moral or ethical concerns in the determination of foreign policies as it is constrained by the relative power of the state.
3. The form and nature of state power will vary in time, place and context but the concept of interest remains consistent. The realists are of the opinion that the political, cultural and strategic environment determines the forms of power a state chooses to deploy. Just as man in his relationship is prone to changes so are nations in international relations.
4. Realism recognized morality but limited it to individuals and not the state. States are not guided by universal moral principles.
5. Realism sees interest as the perennial standard by which political action must be judged and directed. When states clothe their behaviour in ethical terms (human right advocacy), It is designed to confer advantage and legitimacy to advance their national interests.
6. The theory acknowledged the autonomy of the political sphere from every other spheres of human concern, whether they are legal, moral and economic.

The theory is very suitable for the study as interest defined in terms of power had been the underpinning factor that precipitated and sustained the Israeli-Palestinian imbroglio. We have equally witnessed in the past and present coalitions entered into by the two, manifestations of power by the two and outright wars in the furtherance of their respective interests. It has equally been established that morality and ethics has not in any way played out in the conflict. In a nutshell,

Israeli- Palestinian imbroglio has served as a spectacle for optimal realization, manifestation and dramatization of power.

BACKGROUND HISTORY TO THE ISRAELI- PALESTINIAN EMBROGLIO

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has its root in biblical times but escalated in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, with the birth of major nationalist’s movements among the Jews and the Arabs, both geared towards attaining sovereignty for their people in the Middle East. The collision between the two forces in Southern Levant and the emergence of Palestinian nationalism in the 1920s led to the escalation of Israeli-Palestinian conflict in 1947 which expanded into the larger Israeli-Arab conflict. The return of hard line Palestinian nationalists from Damascus under the leadership of Amin al-Hussein added zest to the Palestinian struggle to stop Israeli immigration to Palestine. It organized large-scale riots against the Jews in Jerusalem as early as 1920 and 1921 which led to the establishment of Jewish paramilitary force, Haganah (Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia).

There were anti Jewish riots in 1929 and between 1930 to 1937, Arab nationalist militants from across the Middle East regrouped under Sheik al-Qassam and established the Black Hand militant group that revolted against the British and the Jews. They were however, defeated by the British and a forced expulsion of much of the Arab leadership was done. The revolt led to the establishment of the Peel Commission towards partitioning of Palestine which was accepted by the Jews but was fiercely rejected by the Palestinians. The renewed violence, which had sporadically lasted until the beginning of World War II, ended with about 5000 casualties, mostly from Arab side. With the outbreak of the World War II, the situation in mandatory Palestine calmed down with the establishment of Jewish–Arab Palestine regiment under British command. Immigration quotas were established by the British, while on the other hand, illegal immigration and Zionists insurgency against the British was increasing (Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia).

On November 1947, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted resolution 181 (II) recommending the adoption and implementation of a plan to partition Palestine into an Arab state, a Jewish State and the city of Jerusalem. Unfortunately on the next day, Palestine was over taken by violence, with Arab and Jewish militias executing attacks. The Arab league supported the struggle by forming the volunteer based Arab Liberation Army under the leadership of al- Gadin al-Husayni and Hassan Salama. The Jewish side was strengthened by numerous Jewish veterans of World War II and foreign volunteers. By spring 1948, it was evident that the Arab forces had suffered a devastating defeat and on 14 May, 1948, the state of Israel was established. However, the age long undying Israeli-Palestinian imbroglio still lingers. To them (Arab Palestinians) the Jewish state was an alien presence injected into traditionally Arab lands on the basis of a 2000 year old claim and to expiate the Jews’ suffering which the Arab had not caused (Kissinger, 1994).

ATTEMPTS AT PEACE MAKING/ACCORDS

There has been several attempts at brokering peace between the two sworn enemies (Israel and Palestine). Prominent among them was the Oslo accord of 1993. Israeli officials led by Yitshak Rabin and Palestinian leaders from the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), led by Yasser Arafat strove to find a peaceful solution through what became known as the Oslo peace process. The crux of the Oslo agreement was that Israel would gradually cede control of the Palestinian territories over to Palestinians in exchange for peace. The Oslo accord suffered a major set back with the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin and the emergence of Ehud Barak who was not committed to the accord (Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia).

Another bold attempt at peace making towards the establishment of the state of Palestine was the Camp David summit of 2000, which was at the behest of President Bill Clinton of the United States of America. In July, 2000 US President, Bill Clinton convened a peace summit between Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak. The offer also included that 69% Jewish settlements (which comprise 85% of the West Bank's Jewish settlers) would be ceded to Israel, no sovereignty over the Temple mount or any core East Jerusalem neighborhoods, and continued Israeli control over the Jordan valley. Arafat rejected the offer and refused to make a counter offer (Benny, 2002).

On 23, December, 2000, President Bill Clinton presented a plan that proposed the establishment of a sovereign Palestinian state in the Gaza strip and 94-96% of the West Bank plus the equivalent of 1-3% of the West Bank in Land swap from pre 1967 Israel. On Jerusalem, the plan stated that, the general principle is that Arab areas are Palestinian and the Jewish areas are Israeli. On refugees, the plan suggested a number of proposals including financial compensation, the right of return to the Palestinians and Israeli acknowledgment of sufferings caused to the Palestinians in 1948. Security proposal referred to a "non militarized" Palestinian State, and an international force for border security. Both sides accepted Clinton's plan and it became the basis for the negotiations at the Taba Peace summit, the following January (Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia).

The Taba summit of 2001 was a follow up to the Camp David summit of 2000. This was a basis for further negotiation. With Israeli elections looming, the talks ended without an agreement but the two sides issued a joint statement attesting to the progress they had made. The duo declared that they have never been closer to reaching an agreement and agreed to resume further negotiations after the Israeli elections. The following month the Likud party candidate Ariel Sharon defeated Ehud Barak in the Israeli elections and was elected Israeli Prime Minister on 7 February, 2001. Sharon's government chose not to resume the high level talks and buried the dream (Benny, 2002).

The most recent peace plan (the road map) was drawn up in 2003, by the Quartet (the United Nations, the European Union, the United States of America and Russia). It put aside contentious issues such as the Refugee's right to return, the status of Jerusalem, and the borders of a Palestinian State, and set out a two year time table by which agreement on a final settlement might be reached. During the first phase, the Palestinians would commit to a crackdown on militants, while Israel would cease settlement building and act with military restraint. It was unfortunate that no sooner the roadmap was agreed on, than violence broke out between the two arch enemies which forestalled and nailed the road map. In November, 2007, at a conference hosted by the United States in Annapolis, Maryland, Israeli and Palestinian leaders re-launched the first formal peace talks in seven years. Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian leader Abbas promised to try to reach agreement on the terms of a future Palestinian State but failed. In 2009, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu promised to negotiate with Palestinians and accepted the prospect of a Palestinian State for the first time. He insisted on the natural growth of West Bank settlements to meet the needs of expanding populations, despite pressure from the US administration to curb their expansion. Israel has since frozen the peace talks saying it will not negotiate with a government that includes Hamas (news.trust.org//spotlight/Israeli-palestinian-conflict/?tab--briefing).

ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE CRISIS

The United Nations is a supranational organization with the mandate to make the world a better place to live and a member of the Quartet (USA, Russia, European Union, and the United Nations). The Quartet have tried to proffer solutions to the cancerous Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The United Nations in 1947 attempted to whittle away the remnant of the Jewish National Home with a second partition to create a second Arab State in Palestine. This one west of the Jordan River where most of the Arab population were but recently arrived, with no roots and no history in the land. Had the Arabs accepted that offer, they would have had 83% of the land of Israeli-Jewish National Home. Instead, they went to war to get 100% of it (Berlyn, 2004).

The UN via one of its agencies (UNESCO) granted Palestine full membership of UNESCO in October, 2011 and in 2012, the UN General Assembly overwhelmingly approved de facto recognition of the sovereign state of Palestine by granting it a non-member state status (Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia).

The UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) began operations in 1950, initially as a temporary response to the humanitarian crisis created by the new refugees. Today, the agency is the main body meeting the needs of Palestinian refugees in the West

Bank, Gaza, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria with basic services such as education, health care and social services (news.trust.org//sportlight/Israeli-palestinian-conflict/?tab-briefing).

APPLICATION OF APOLOGY DIPLOMACY TO THE CRISIS

An apology is the act of declaring one's regret, remorse or sorrow for having insulted, injured, harmed or wronged another. It is the act of saying I am sorry. The sorry verb is ideal for this mission as it contains not less than six meanings and functions, thus allowing operators to admit and avoid responsibility at the same time. It means (1) general expression of sorrow (sorry for what happened) (2) apology (3) expression of sympathy (4) disapproval (5) demand for the need to apologize, and (6) expression of regret. A second relevant type of response is an expression of regret for sever long-term transgressions such as past discrimination, exploitation and deportation. The literature suggests that Israel has played a pivotal role in the global practice of apology as the representative of Jewish victims. As such, Israel was an addressee of historical apologies, mainly from European States for their actions during the holocaust. However, since the initiation of the Oslo Peace Process, Israel has been urged to take the role of the apologizer and acknowledge its responsibility for the suffering of the Palestinians. Israel responded to these calls, again, with an expression of sorrow. Ehud Barak In 1999 declared, we are sorry for the heavy suffering the conflict caused, not only to us but also to all Arab nations that fought against us, including the Palestinians. (Kampf, et al 2012).

This was adjudged the most far reaching declaration ever made by an Israeli official toward the Palestinians. Not only Barak acknowledged the existence of the political entity entitled the Palestinians, he also recognized their suffering, but without taking responsibility for its occurrence. What is the reason for using such non responsible expressions of sorrow? Sever transgressions make a necessity to issue a response, thereby posing an avoidance dilemma for Israeli spokesmen. On the one hand, not apologizing for killings would violate international expectations to display appropriate moral stance in view of a grave offence. On the other hand, apologizing would be an admission of violating an international law and may expose Israel to liability in future litigations. The way out is to try to satisfy all involved parties by using equivocal language (Kampf and Blum-Kulka, 2011).

CONCLUSION

There has been a protracted polemic over the issue of establishing a state of Palestine or not. According to Rourke and Boyer (cited in Shinko, 2004) a state is a territorially defined political unit that exercises ultimate internal authority and that recognize no legitimate external authority over them. A state therefore, has a 'legal personality' which includes the capacity to possess and

exercise certain rights and to perform certain specific duties. These rights and duties encompass the attributes of independence, legal equality and peaceful co-existence.

The United Nations General Assembly concluded that without full respect for and the realization of these inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, namely, the right to self determination and the right to national independence and sovereignty, there would be no resolution of the question of Palestine (<http://domino.un.org>). There are many people who are on the same page with the UN.

However, Rourke (2004), argued that there are some 200,000 Israelis living in the West Bank and removing them would be traumatic for Israel. He contended that the issue is also a matter of grave security concern. If an independent Palestine centered in the West Bank is created, Israel will face a defense nightmare, especially if new hostilities with the Palestine occur. From the foregoing there are sharply divided opinions about the establishment of the state of Palestine. Obviously, this is the crux of the matter.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the above findings and observations, the paper recommended the following:

1. The Quartet should impress it on Israel to recognize and accept the sovereign state of Palestine in the light of equity, fair play and justice.
2. The Quartet should impress it on Palestine to recognize the sovereign state of Israel and abide by the tenets of international law against aggression, belligerence and proliferation of arms.
3. The Quartet should establish a military command in the region to checkmate abuses and punish any offender within the arm bit of international law.

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