

Iran's Role in Opposition to the Partition of Palestine¹

HAMIDREZA DEGHANI²

Abstract: Palestine was separated from Ottoman Empire's territories following World War I with the aim of dividing it. As a member of a special committee set up in 1947 which resulted in the Resolution 181 of the United Nation known as "Resolution of Division", Iran objected to the move. Although the opposition to the partition of Palestine had its ups and downs, the ultimate proposal of the opposition movement was to allow all Palestinians to hold a referendum on Palestine, rather than force a two-state solution as the way to resolve the issue. Although Iran's approaches to the Palestinian issue in its international relations have varied before and after the Islamic Revolution in 1979, its solution to the crisis in Palestine has always emphasized on necessity of Palestine reunification. This article seeks to evaluate the role of Iran in the opposition to a two-state solution, with a particular focus on how the shifts in Iranian policy towards the matter have not affected its principal insistence on preventing Palestine from being partitioned.

¹ . Views expressed in this article are of the author, without any indication or implication for the current policy positions of the Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

² . Director of Center for Persian Gulf and Middle Eastern Studies, IPIS.

Introduction:

The role of Britain in the issue of Palestine has been important since the very outset. The UK was given a mandate over Palestine by the League of Nations in 1922. Just a while ago, on 2 Nov 1917 Lord Balfour, then British foreign minister in a letter (known as the Balfour Declaration) to Lord Rothschild, stated that the British government was sympathetic to the Zionist movement and would use its 'best endeavours' to ensure the creation of a National Home for the Jewish People in Palestine (Anderson, et. al, 1993:71-72). This announcement founded the basis of the current situation in Palestine. In 1936, the British formed the Peel Commission and then took the case to the United Nations.¹ The United Kingdom also withdrew from Palestine the day before the declaration of the regime of Israel and through this move in many ways destroyed the Palestine. Referring the Palestinian case to the United Nations was one of important actions of the Britons, mainly because forming the Peel Commission, as well as taking the case to the UN and withdrawal from the country all led to the occupation of Palestine. (Al-Ouvaisi, 1998: 22)

The UN General Assembly set up a special committee on the 28th of April 1947. Its findings on the 31st of August 1947 ended the British mandate, recognized the Palestine independence, and the role of UN in Palestine was assigned. The committee suggested two proposals to the General Assembly on the 25th of September 1947. The first one, the majority plan, suggested the creation of two states in Palestine, one Arab and one Jewish. It also put Jerusalem under international control. The other proposal was the minority plan, which suggested a federal state consisting of Arabs and Jews with Jerusalem as its capital. In the end, the General assembly accepted the majority

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plan which divided Palestine into 8 regions: 3 Jewish, 3 Palestinian, the seventh was Yaffa which was Arabic but located in the Jewish territory and the eighth - Jerusalem- was supposedly under international control and was scheduled to be under the international supervision for 10 years until a referendum to be held on its status (Karami Kamkar, 2004).

The population figures in suggested Arab and Jewish states, as well as Jerusalem were depicted as following: A Jewish state with a population of 995,000; of which 498,000 Jewish and 497, 000 Arab. The Arab state would then have sovereignty over 735, 000 people; of which 10,000 were Jewish and 725,000 Arabs. Jerusalem had a population of 205,000; of which 100,000 thousand were Jews and 105,000 Arabs. Following detailed discussions on the 26th of November 1947, it became evident that due to strong opposition, the partition plan could not secure enough votes to pass. Hence, voting was delayed, leaving Zionists with the opportunity to boost the number of their supporters in the hours left until the next session. On the 29th of November 1947, following another debate on the issue, a vote was held in the General Assembly. 33 countries voted in favor, 13 against, and 10 abstained. The majority plan was hence approved. Thus, the division of Palestine received the support of more than two-thirds of countries, which meant it met the requirements of article 18 of the UN Charter, which regulates the voting procedure on important issues.

Finally, the General Assembly issued Resolution 181 on the partition of Palestine, resulting in the emergence of a Zionist state on Palestinian lands, in opposition to the wishes of the inhabitants of the region. The resolution was scheduled to be implemented on the 1st of October, 1948, but the Zionists took prior offensive measure and

attacked Palestinian Arabs at Tabariya, Yaffa, Haifa, and many other places, and further annexed 80 percent of the Palestinian territories lands under their occupied lands beyond the UN approved 57 percent (Karami Kamkar, 2004).

Background:

Following the immigration of a group of Iranian businessmen to the Palestine, Iranian government established an office there in the late 19th century. After the UK occupation of Palestine, the British government ordered all political missions to remove the flags of their countries from their consulate offices. This order along with other similar orders, as well as financial problems at the time reduced the activities of Iran's missions in Palestine (Joumhour-i-Eslami, Nov. 22, 2005).

1. Iran's position in the League of Nations on the Palestinian Issue

At the League of Nations General Assembly in October 1935, held in Geneva, Baqer Kazemi, heading then Iranian delegation gave a speech in support of oppressed Muslims of Palestine. Haj Amin Al-Hosseini, Mufti and the speaker of the Islamic Majlis of Palestine, expressed his satisfaction with the Iranian consular presence in Jerusalem and thanked the foreign minister's speech at the UN in support of the right of the Palestinians (Yazdani, 1995:38).² Once more when Iran took the policy of improved relations toward Germany, it supported the Palestinians in the League of Nations (Nureddin Kia, 1998: 148-164).

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2. The King - Crane Commission

Among his viewpoints, Woodrow Wilson the U.S. President proposed paying attention to the people of the divided lands of the Ottoman Empire who were under the mandate of the League or trusteeship of other countries. In this regard, he suggested a fact finding commission to confer with indigenous people of the land. Britain and France did not introduce a representative to the commission; therefore the commission was named after Henry King and Charles Crane, both U.S. representatives. Members of the commission arrived in Damascus and met Arab Nationalist representatives from Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine. They then issued a resolution in which full independence was supported for Syria (including Palestine and Lebanon.) and rejected any external control over this region. This resolution was the first Arab opposition to Zionism in Palestine and its goals of dividing the country. It was mentioned in the resolution as following: "We are opposed to the Zionist aims of creating a Jewish commonwealth in southern Syria, named Palestine. We are also opposed to Zionist immigration to all parts of our country." (Al-Masiri, 2004) This resolution is important because of the mandate resolution approved by the League of Nations General Assembly, which explicitly said any decision about the future of these lands should take into consideration the demands of the people. (Aftab-Magazine Online)

3. The Peel Commission

During August 1929, large-scale violence between Arabs and Jews erupted in Jerusalem, leaving 133 Jews and 116 Arabs dead and many others wounded. The Britons created an inquiry commission

which announced that Arabs led by Mufti Haji Amin Al-Hosseini were responsible for the conflict and the Palestine does not have the capacity to accept such numbers of Jewish immigrants. The conflict continued and on the 25th of April 1936, the Arab Supreme Committee was formed under the supervision of Haji Amin Al-Hoseini. He immediately led people to start a public strike, demanding a ban on Jewish immigration to Palestine, and a ban to land sales to the Jews, as well as calling for an Arab national state in Palestine. Since no agreement was established between the Arab Supreme Committee and the British on the demands of conflicting parties, the Arab-Jewish riots continued. The first riot erupted in October 1936. Then, a commission under the supervision of Lord Robert Peel was formed to consider Arab and Jewish demands. The Peel Commission's report was then presented. The report rejected Arab claims on the Jewish occupation of productive agricultural lands, but banned the land purchases by Jews. It also reduced the number of Jewish immigrants to Palestine to 12,000 a year. But the most important part of the report was the decision to divide Palestine into two parts of Jewish and Arab. According to the plan, Jews should settle in the Galilee, and Arabs in West Bank. Meanwhile, the British would have a presence in Jerusalem and Bethlehem, and a military base in Tiberias and the Gulf of Aqaba. The Arab Supreme Committee and the Jews both rejected the plan and expressed opposition to it. (Jewish Virtual Library Online)

4 - UN General Assembly Resolution 181

After the outbreak of violence between Zionists and Palestinians, on the 2nd of April 1947, the UN secretary General was called to address the matter. The British government presented a

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report and requested the secretary general to put the status of Palestine and the Palestinian issue on the agenda of The General Assembly. The Secretary General was also asked to appoint a special committee to evaluate the issue and present the report in the annual General Assembly. The session was finally held on the 28th of April 1947 and continued until the 15th of May 1947. The purpose of the session was based on the British suggestion to establish a new committee on the issue of Palestine. However, Arab governments such as Syria, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Egypt demanded a plan to put an end to the British mandate in Palestine, and the declaration of Palestine's independence. The plan was rejected by the General Assembly.

By the end of the May 15th session, the General Assembly chose eleven countries, Iran, Australia, Uruguay, Peru, Czechoslovakia, Sweden, Canada, Guatemala, Holland, India and Yugoslavia to join the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine. This committee presented a plan and it was passed by the UN General Assembly as Resolution 181, also known as the Palestine Partition Plan. According to the resolution, historical Palestine was to be divided into an Arab and a Jewish state, while Jerusalem would be under international supervision. This article is seeking to evaluate the resolution, 61 years after its issuance. The committee got the permission to research all subjects related to the Palestinian issue and make suggestions. The duties and the power of the committee was protested by Arab countries, as they thought that the independence of Palestine was not included on the agenda, and that there were no concerns about the residents of Palestine, and the principles of the UN Charter had not been mentioned. The government in Palestine, and the Jewish Agency for Palestine, in response to the Special Committee requests, introduced some officers to the committee. However, the

Arab Supreme Committee decided that the Palestinian Arabs should not cooperate with the committee and not attend its meetings.

During its research, the Committee visited Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and refugee camps in Austria and Germany. The report of the Committee on the 31st of August 1947 was submitted to the UN General Assembly, and included two major proposals. The majority plan was proposed by Uruguay, Peru, Czechoslovakia, Sweden, Canada, Guatemala and the Netherlands which supported dividing the country into two independent Arab and Jewish states. According to this suggestion, Jerusalem was to remain under the supervision of the UN. It added that the three entities in Palestine should unite for economic reasons. In other words, the plan sought the end of the British mandate's government, and envisioned the proposed Arab and Jewish states united economically while the holy city of Jerusalem was to be considered a region under the supervision of an international administration.³

The minority plan was proposed by Iran, India, and Yugoslavia, in which they suggested the formation of a federal government including both Arabs and Jews with Jerusalem as its capital. This plan also sought the end of the UK mandate in Palestine. Australia did not vote in favor either of them as it considered the plans beyond the duties of the special committee. During its second regular session, the General Assembly on the 23rd of September 1947 formed a temporary committee for the Palestinian issue to include all UN members (Joumhour-i-Eslami, Nov. 22, 2005). The temporary committee studied the issue as well as listened to the opinions of the three sides of the issue, i.e. the UK as the trusteeship government, the Arab Supreme Committee and the Jewish Agency for Palestine. Britain believed that there was no guarantee for success of forceful

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and the gun policy in Palestine, and if an answer to the conflict wasn't found, they would inevitably withdraw their forces and officials from Palestine immediately. The representative of the Arab Supreme Committee said that the Arab Palestinians are again determined to oppose with all their might to any plans which divide Palestine and make racial classification or give a specific position to a minority. The representative of the Jewish Agency for Palestine said that if accepting the Special Committee's majority plan ends in the urgent establishment of a Jewish state giving sovereignty to the immigrants, the Jewish Agency in Palestine would support it with the right to further study about the territorial conditions and statute of the plan. Thereupon the Special Committee recommended the majority plan to the General Assembly.

Finally, the UN General Assembly on the 29th of November 1947 passed the Resolution 181 with 33 votes in agreement, 13 votes against⁴ and 10 votes abstained⁵ proposing the partition of Palestine into one Arab and one Jewish state. According to this division, 56.47 percent of Palestinian lands would be under Jewish sovereignty, with 498,000 thousand Jewish residents and 497,000 Arab, while 42.88 percent of Palestinian lands would be under the sovereignty of the Arab state with a population of 720,000, including 10,000 Jews. All Permanent Security Council members, except the UK, voted in favor of Resolution 181. (Barrekat, 2006: 2) According to the resolution, the holy city of Jerusalem was to be under the control of an international administration for ten years under the mandate council. The economy of Jerusalem and the transit and pilgrimage to holy places for Muslims and Christian Arabs and Jews were declared free.

The Soviet Union supported the partition plan. Andrei Gromyko, then Soviet representative at the United Nations, supported

the plan and said: "if there exists no possibility for establishment of one unified state in Palestine, Soviet Union fully understands the rights of the Jewish people and supports the partition of the country." (Fatthi, 1993)

1-4.The Contents of the Resolution

According to the proposed partition plan, 56.4 percent of Palestinian lands would be under the control of the Zionist government while the Jews only constituted 30 percent of the population and lived on 5.67 percent of Palestinian lands. The UN General Assembly on the 29th of November 1947 passed the resolution on partition Palestine into two Arab and Jewish states with 33 votes in favor, 13 votes against and 10 votes abstained (Shoukri & Adib, 1993:16). It was passed by the General Assembly and not the Security Council and was approved by two-third majority. According to Resolution 181, 43 percent of Palestine was to be allocated to the Palestinian state, 56 percent to the Jewish state, while one percent was to be devoted to Jerusalem. In other words, of Palestine's 27, 000 square kilometers, 12,000 square kilometers were dedicated to the Palestinian government. As the peace agreement gave the Palestinians 2,200 of the West Bank's 5500 square kilometers, and 380 square kilometers in Gaza, this left them with partial control over 2,500 square kilometers. The partition plan in the resolution consisted of four major segments. It sought to end the British mandate in Palestine, to determine the boundaries between the two governments, and that of Jerusalem. The plan included the following tenets:

1. Arab and Jewish states should be created before the 2nd of October 1948;

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2. Palestine should be divided into eight parts: three parts to Arab state, three parts to the Jewish state, the seventh part as Yaffa for Arab residents but under the control of the Jewish state;
3. The eighth part as Jerusalem, which was to be under the control of an international administration.

The plan also clarified the steps should be taken during the run up to the declarations of independence in Palestine, and had some parts concerning citizenship, transportation, economic unity and how both governments should handle the proposed measures, and respect the rights of religious minorities. The General Assembly also made the UN Commission for Palestine responsible for the implementation of its plan, and requested that the Security Council contribute all that is needed for the implementation of partition plan.

2-4. Status of Jerusalem

Part of the resolution considered Jerusalem as a separate non-military territory under the supervision of the United Nations. An international administration was to be implemented for 10 years, and remain in force until the time specified by the Trusteeship Council. It would also be evaluated by Palestine's citizens in a referendum. Following the announcement, Israel occupied the western part of Jerusalem while the eastern part including the old city was occupied by Jordan. Jerusalem was thereby de facto divided already. The General Assembly, of course, stressed international plans and rights in Jerusalem in Resolution 194, issued on the 11th of December 1948. Arab countries refused to recognize Israel, and refused to accept the resolution. Israeli regime ignored the resolution and on the 23rd of January 1950 announced Jerusalem as its capital and established

governmental offices in the western part of the city. Jordan also tried to make the eastern part recognized as its territory, albeit temporarily. (Shoukri & Adib, 1993: 16-58)

Reports presented by the Commission for Palestine indicated that the situation in Palestine was deteriorating. The permanent members of the Security Council, hence shortly after the release of the study's proposals for improving the situation in Palestine, suggested holding a special session in the General Assembly. During the special session, which started on the 16th of April and ended on the 14th of May 1948, the General Assembly asked the mandate council about restoration of the security to Jerusalem and its inhabitants. The Assembly also decided to appoint a mediator to solve the Palestinian problem and evict the responsibilities of the Palestinian commission. The United Nations mediator in Palestine was obliged to implement good offices to ensure security of the sacred places of Jerusalem and help solve the issues peacefully. It was also requested to cooperate with the Palestine truce commission. The General Assembly Special Committee introduced Count Folke Bernadotte, Head of the Swedish Red Cross, on May 20, 1948, as mediator. Meanwhile, the Security Council issued a resolution on the 17th of April 17, asking for an end to the conflict between the Arab and Jewish communities in Palestine. On April 23, it formed the peace commission for Palestine. The committee included representatives of the countries that had official consulates in Jerusalem. These countries were the United States, Belgium and France. The Commission was obliged to cooperate with the Security Council in order to monitor the peace which was requested in April 17 Security Council resolution.

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3-4. Putting Pressure

When the Palestine partition plan was presented on November 26 to the General Assembly, it was clear that it wouldn't be accepted; because two-third of votes was necessary according to the charter and regulations of the General Assembly. The close relationship between the U.S. and Israel, particularly after Israel's distancing from the UK, ended in U.S. efforts to put other members of the General Assembly under pressure to vote for the plan. During the vote, the Zionists were all around the hall of the Assembly to pressure delegations to approve the partition plan. Of the Latin American countries, Argentina, Colombia and Mexico abstained from voting, while others like Haiti, El Salvador and Honduras under the leadership of Cuba opposed it. Some of the smaller countries of Western Europe did not want to be actively involved in the issue, but they revised their decision under the pressure of the U.S., Belgium, France, Haiti, Liberia, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Paraguay and the Philippines to vote in the final session.⁶

The representatives of three small countries of Haiti, Liberia and the Philippines were under the pressure of American representatives. The final vote was passed thanks to their three votes that were sufficient for obtaining two-third majority. They were initially opposed to the partition plan. The official report of the assembly also confirmed the existence of pressure on representatives and governments to vote for the plan. The representative of Egypt said that despite pressures in favor of the project to provide the majority vote for the partition plan, we cannot violate the principles of the Charter. The Pakistani government's spokesman announced that the project has no legal validity and that the nations which were forced to revise their votes and support Palestine's partition are the

ones under the torture of their conscience while their governments were under pressure. Large countries were trying to put pressure on small countries, in contradiction with UN principles.⁷ For example, the British representative announced for leaving Palestine and his opposition to the continuation of the situation brought the UN into a decision, while there was no choice except the two minority or majority plans. (Keatan, 1989: 71)

4-4. Arab Countries' Positions

Palestinians and other Arab states opposed the plan since the resolution was violating the standards of the UN Charter on the right of self-determination for all nations. They announced that the General Assembly's plan was adopted in inappropriate conditions and that Palestinian Arabs are opposed to any plans involving separation or division of their country and any special rights or discriminatory status given to a minority. The General Assembly's resolution on Palestine predicted the immediate end of the British mandate and the exit of the UK armed forces until the 1st of August 1948. The mandate council was asked to prepare the details of the management of the city of Jerusalem and get it approved.

According to the same resolution, the General Assembly formed the Commission of the United Nations for Palestine to implement the General Assembly's decisions. The resolution asked the Security Council to take appropriate action to implement the plan, and if necessary, review whether the situation in Palestine is considered a threat to peace or not. It also asked the Security Council to clarify whether efforts to change the solution of the General

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Assembly resolution are threatening to peace according to Article 39 of the United Nations Charter.

The Arab populace and governments' response was street protests in different cities, showing opposition to the resolution and calling for help and support for the Palestinians by sending them weapons, as well as fighting the Zionists. They reacted by calls for the severing off the diplomatic relations with countries that voted for the resolution and threats to leave the United Nations.

The Arab League office in New York accused the Special Committee of Palestine to advocate Zionism and warned that the acceptance of the project will be followed by war in the Middle East, and that it may expand into a World War. The Arab Supreme Council rejected the Special Committee's plan, and stated that not even one immigrant may enter Palestine. Meanwhile, the Zionists began celebrating the majority plan. The General Council of the Jewish Agency rejected the federal project and called it unacceptable, but they expressed satisfaction with the majority plan. (Jomhour-Eslami, Nov. 22, 2005)

Iran's then representative in the UN narrated the collusion of world powers such as the U.S. and the Soviet in their approaches over the issue as following: "During these negotiations, the Soviet representative's decision was unclear. Therefore the Arabs hoped that they could attract the Soviet acquiescence by getting closer to them, but the Soviets went along with the partition plan. Other major powers, such as France and China expressed brief and explicit views on the issue voting for the partition plan. Since the majority of Latin American governments were in favor of the division of Palestine, the Arab situation became worse. The U.S. government, under the pressure of Jews and Zionists in the country, and due to the upcoming

presidential elections around the corner, didn't think much about the consequences of its decisions, and became unified with the Soviet Union in fomenting conflict in Palestine. As a result, U.S. influence, at least for a while, diminished in the Arab world. The State Department itself was opposed to the action; however it was ignored on this matter. Perhaps sooner or later, the U.S. will be regretful, and if they go through with their decision half-way, they will weaken the General Assembly, and that is in line with the Soviet Union's desire to weaken the General Assembly in order to strengthen the Security Council. If they go ahead with the plan with the General Assembly's approval, they would have exerted their power illegitimately." (Nureddin Kia, 1998: 154-155)

On Arabs' policies towards Palestine, he proceeds: "the tough approach of Arab governments and their inattention to anybody's advices in the notion of facts helped the furtherance of Zionists' Cause. They ignored my recommendations on the necessity for their flexible policies and even considered them as opposed to amicable friendly relationship between Iran and Arab governments. The Arab governments' mal-functioning approach even brought together the two antagonist governments of the U.S. and the Soviet Union-which were at odds in any single issue- on their support for the partition of Palestine, and ignited a fire in the East". (Nureddin Kia, 1998: 154)

On the other hand, Jamal Hosseini, spokesman for the Arab Commission in his address before the Security Council on the 16th of April, 1948 acknowledged in waging the war and maintained that: "The representative of the Jewish Agency yesterday claimed that they have not been invaders to the Arab lands, and that the Arabs began attacks. We do not deny that since we had already declared to the whole world that we would enter to war."

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Formal differences had risen between Arab officials. Jordan's King Abdullah sought to dominate the western bank of the Jordan River, and asked the other Arab governments to support Jordan's military domination over Palestine and even asked for financial and political supports of Arab states. His plan was rejected by the Arab countries. However, Iraq, under the Hashemite government didn't oppose it, but Syria, Egypt and Saudi Arabia expressed opposition to the plan. When the discussion about the withdrawal of Britain from Palestine was becoming serious, Abdul Rahman Ezam Pasha, the Secretary General of the Arab League, requested an urgent summit of the Arab League in Cairo. That summit was held on the December 5th 1947 and followed concerns of Arab officials on UK withdrawal from Palestine, as they were unprepared for such an event. The Arab officials' decision was requesting the British mandate over Palestine to be extended for another year. The UK was informed of the decision but rejected it. Thereupon, during 12-18th of December 1947, the Prime Ministers of Arab countries gathered in Cairo. Basic differences on entering the Arab militaries into the matter or how to help the Palestinians did however remain, with Jordan and Iraq on one side, and Egypt and Saudi Arabia on the other. (Shoukri & Adib, 1993: 16)

5-4. Iran's Vision

Fazlullah Nooreddin Kia, Iranian Deputy Director in the Department for the United Nations Affairs, wrote about Iran's position towards the Palestinian issue in his memoirs: "Iran's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Nasrollah Entezam, along with Aligholi Ardalan, counselor of the Iranian embassy in Ankara, traveled to Palestine to participate in the meeting of the commission. Most of the commission's reports were based on their

comments and ideas. Entezam sent out a very detailed report to Iranian foreign ministry about the decisions on the partition of Palestine. In the report, he explained the characteristics of his (the minority group) proposal, and mentioned that if the Arabs accepted it, it would serve their interests. In this regard, Entezam wrote: I didn't want to be accused of supporting the Arabs, but at the same time I wanted the resolution to meet their interests. I therefore proposed the minority plan, and managed to convince the Indian and Yugoslavian representatives to back it. My proposal was to form a federal government consisting of Jews and Arabs that would maintain the unity of Palestine. It can be summarized into a situation where Jews and Arabs are independent when it comes to solving their internal issues, while the central government would govern the country with two Parliaments, one of them with representatives directly elected by the people, while the other should be divided into two equal groups of Arabs and Jews. The head of state should then be elected by the two Houses, who would in return be responsible for the two chambers. All laws must be approved by both Houses, and if differences occur between the two chambers, a special commission should carry out a vote. The commission should include the head of state, one representative from each of the Houses, and two representatives from the Supreme Court. If this proposal was accepted, all Arab interests would be preserved, because the central government would have absolute power, and the issue of immigration which is the basis of the differences, would be resolved by the central government. Therefore, Arabs should not have any concerns about the plan.

Iran's representative then suggested that the case be postponed for a few weeks and during the period, another special committee would be sent to Palestine to evaluate the issue with a new perspective. The suggestion was rejected by the General Assembly. Entezam gave a

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speech in December 1947 after the U.S. representative and said that implementation of the partition plan will turn the Middle East into a battle field. Because of his speech, all the Arab States supported Iran's approach and officially notified their praise to Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Shoukri & Adib, 1993: 159).

6-4.The War, Aftermath of the Resolution

The UN General Assembly's resolution was meant to be carried out as of the 1st of October 1948, but Zionists attacked Palestinian Arabs, and occupied many of their lands in Tiberias, Jaffa, Haifa and other places before. They thereby enlarged their alleged 57 percent share of Palestine to 80 percent (Karami Kamkar, 2004).

Resolution 181 led to the spread of violence in Palestine. In the beginning of 1948, Arab countries held three viewpoints on how to oppose the resolution and occupation of Palestine:

- 1). Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Yemen proposed to aid the Palestinians and Arab volunteer fighters;
- 2) Syria, Lebanon and the Secretary General of the Arab League wanted the formation of a Palestinian government by force.
- 3) Jordan and Iraq accepted the partition of Palestine, but they wanted to incorporate the Arab parts of Palestine into Jordan. They were however fearful of explicitly discussing the idea.

In the first quarter of 1948, the case for helping the Palestinians and Arab volunteers were winning ground, ending discussions on the involvement of Arab armies in Palestine. The debate on the introduction of Arab armies into the conflict was however yet again

brought up, as the Palestinians and volunteers began experiencing losses on the battlefield. On the 12th of April 1948, the political committee of the Arab League accepted King Abdullah's plan, and Egypt and Saudi Arabia dropped their opposition to Jordan's plans for Palestine. The Supreme Arab Committee also unofficially supported the plan. King Farouk of Egypt, however, on the same day announced the move, saying all lands will be returned to the Palestinians once the Zionists are defeated. On the 17th of April, 1948 the Arab League's Secretary-General again urged the British retreat to be delayed, and to refrain from implementing the resolution, saying it is tantamount to a declaration of war. British officials, meanwhile, insisted that their government press ahead with the resolution. Therefore, on the 29th of April 1948, a meeting between Jordanian and Iraqi officials was held in which the decision to enter Palestine was taken.

The Egyptians announced should other Arab militaries enter the Palestine, they would join in from the south. The date to enter Palestine was decided to be on May 8th, 1948, but the British opposed the move. The date was therefore postponed to the 16th of May, but Syria and Lebanon opposed the change, and wanted it to go ahead as originally planned. This was the first difference of opinion among the Arabs. The second difference was about ruling the Arab commanders. Finally on the 15th of May 1948, Arab militaries entered the war, and King Abdullah refused a ceasefire, which was proposed by the U.S. and the UK. The head of the Egyptian delegation announced that his country prefers that Palestinian forces fight for themselves, while Egyptian forces only assume a role as a supporting force, adding that Egypt doesn't want to enter the war. In the coming weeks, Arab countries still didn't want the British to withdraw from Palestine.

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When the situation deteriorated, the Security Council proposed a special session of the General Assembly. The session took place from the 16th of April to the 14th of May 1948. On the 17th of April, the Security Council called for an end to all hostilities in Palestine. On the 23rd of April, the established ceasefire commission was tasked to monitor the situation. The General Assembly's Palestine commission was dissolved, and it was instead decided to promote peace in cooperation with the mediator that was appointed to cooperate with the Ceasefire commission. On May 20th, Earl Folke Bernadotte, a Swedish national and head of the International Committee of Red Cross, was appointed as the UN mediator. On the 14th of May, the British mandate in Palestine ended, and the UK withdrew its forces. On the same day, the Jewish Agency announced the establishment of the state of Israel on the land that had been appropriated for the Jews in Palestine by the UN's partition plan.

The announcement was promptly responded to by intense fighting between Palestinians and Jewish groups in Palestine, leading neighboring Arab states to send in their militaries to support their Palestinian brethren. The hostilities ceased a few weeks later, because of the 4-week ceasefire which the Security Council announced on the 29th of May, 1948. The ceasefire was implemented on the 11th of June, under supervision of the UN mediator, with the help of a group of international military observers, known as the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO). Despite the efforts of the UN mediator, there was no agreement on the extension of ceasefire, and fighting once again resumed on the 8th of July. On July 15th, 1948, a Security Council resolution called the situation in Palestine a threat to peace, and called for an immediate ceasefire. If hostilities would not end in Palestine, the Security Council threatened that they would be

treated as threats to peace, and dealt with in accordance with Chapter VII of the UN Charter.

A second ceasefire was announced following the declaration of the resolution. At that time, a large section of the land granted to Arab governments was occupied by Israeli regime, including the western part of Jerusalem, while Egypt and Jordan controlled Gaza and the West Bank respectively. During October 1948-March 1949 the war intensified, resulting in Israeli occupation of more lands that were granted to the Arabs by the UN partition plan. In 1950, Jordan officially ignored the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, until a solution to the ownership of the lands was to be found. The fighting caused a severe humanitarian crisis. Approximately 750,000 Palestinians were displaced from their homes. At the same time, during the negotiations between the parties, Count Bernadotte was killed in a shooting on the 17th of September 1948 in part of Jerusalem that was occupied by Zionist. Ralph Bunch from the U.S. was appointed as his successor as UN mediator.

With the assistance of the UN and during February-July 1949, ceasefire agreements reached among the belligerent parties (Zionists, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria). The agreements which were similar in content, accepted the establishment of a ceasefire, as an essential step ahead of peace negotiations between the Arabs and Israelis. They, however, announced that the sole purpose of the ceasefire was to stop fighting, without any connection to land claims or the future of Palestine's governance, and other interests and rights. In August 1949, the Security Council asked UNTSO observers to monitor the ceasefire. The UN Security Council then decided that the observers should remain in the Middle East.

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7-4. Considerations on the Resolution

This resolution was more of a political solution than a legal ruling, even though the Zionists later showed that they were satisfied with the land allotted to them according to the Palestine partition plan and demanded more. In addition to violating certain parts of the United Nations charter, the Palestine partition plan violated the right of self-determination of nations. It should be noted, however, that in the view of many western countries that promote freedom, the right to self-determination is - in practice - restricted to civilized countries.

1-7-4. The Disqualification of the United Nations

The first reason why the resolution is invalid is the disqualification of the United Nations General Assembly's call for the partition of Palestine. The UN could not have given away what was not in its possession. According to Article 22 of the Covenant of League of Nations, the League of Nations had mandatory power in administrating trusteeship territories before their dissolution. This was stipulated in the resolution adopted in the final session of the League of Nations on the 18th of April, 1946. The resolution said, "With the dissolution of the League of Nations, its Mandates in trusteeship territories will also be terminated." On the other hand, the charter of the United Nations did not envision any mandates or supervisory rights for it in trusteeship territories. The mandatory administrative system mentioned in Article 77 of the UN charter does not include territories placed under the Trusteeship of the United Nations unless countries themselves accept the supervision according to the Trusteeship Agreement. (Also, the UN has judicial and

legislative authority over Trustee territories placed under UN supervision according to Article 81 of the world body's charter).

It was said in the second sub-committee session of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) on November 11, 1947 that "...it should be pointed out that the United Nations is not the inheritor of the powers and the legal and political responsibilities of the League of Nations, and that it cannot act like the League of Nations in administrating the trust territories. The powers of the UN are limited and defined by its charter. In 1947, Arab nations questioned the qualifications of the General Assembly over its call for partitioning Palestine. The UNSCOP accepted their objection in its second sub-committee session and reflected it in its November 11, 1947 report: "Chapter 12 of the UN charter leaves nothing to doubt that...neither the General Assembly nor any other organs of the United Nations has the authority to make any decisions unless it is about recognizing Palestinian statehood and establishing a future government for the people of that country much less advise, or exert power. Additionally, partitioning Palestine would involve giving up land and destroying its territorial integrity. The United Nations cannot partition Palestine or give away its land, deny the majority of the people of their right to live on that land and instead allow only a minority population to inhabit it. Article 10 maintains, "The General Assembly can discuss any issue as long as it falls within the purview of this charter". Therefore, in Article 10, the charter makes the right to address any given issue conditional on their being within the purview of the charter and deems unnecessary any discussion about issues not outlined in the charter, and it accepts the credibility of the Assembly only if it acts within the confines of that charter. In the end, Article 10 prevents the General Assembly from weighing in on issues not envisaged in Article 12 and says, "The General Assembly can address

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issues within the framework of this charter....and except for what has been envisioned in Article 12, it can advise the Security Council or the United Nations or both of them on such issues. But the mere fact that Article 10 gives powers to the General Assembly to address any issue allowed by the UN charter, does not empower it to violate the territorial integrity of a country and found a whole new one. The Article also cannot give the General Assembly any power to recommend any laws in favor of the Jews or in violation of the Palestinians people's basic rights. According to the UN charter, the General Assembly does not enjoy such authority and the Partition Resolution (Resolution 181) falls outside of its purview and therefore it has no legal validity. Some experts contend the Partition Plan lacks credibility because the United Nations lacks credibility as Pitman Parter maintains, "The United Nations has no right to dictate a solution to the Palestinian question, unless a new source or reference emerges that points to that right, a source that has hitherto not been found and may not ever be. We may as well say that such a reference can be found in the fact the Turkey gave up sovereignty over Palestine according to the Lausanne Protocol and transferred it to the international community and then to the United Nations. It is an issue that is bound to have two dangerous repercussions. We could also say that the sovereignty it still had, and that way of governance, was handed to the United Nations. This is a more realistic contention but it is still legally questionable.

Arab countries deny the binding powers of sovereignty now more than ever before, just like they reject the Balfour Declaration which addresses the issue of sovereignty. Legally, they are absolutely right." Quincy Wright says, "The legality of the General Assembly's recommendations about partitioning Palestine should be doubted and "in fact one can doubt the Arabs verbal opposition". This theory has

also been supported by Lee. He writes, "It is doubtful that the United Nations has the authority to grant sovereignty since the UN cannot interfere with governance of countries. Therefore, the resolution in 1947 that recommended the division of the British Mandate of Palestine may not have been within the domain of UN powers and even if it hadn't been, it would not have been binding for the member states (Keatan, 1989:61). General Assembly resolutions can fall within or outside the purview of the UN's powers. Some have completely denied the legal impact of the Assembly's resolutions. Goodrich and Hamido insist that the General Assembly's resolutions are legally non-binding: albeit the General Assembly can make recommendations to the UN itself or the Security Council. He emphasizes that its recommendations as we saw them on the Israeli Palestinian conflict, are not binding. And although they may be of great political importance, UN members can legally embrace it or simply reject it.

2-7-4. Disregarding the Rights of Palestinians

The resolution was a blatant violation of the popular sovereignty of the Palestinian people and denied them the right to decide their own future. This violation is in direct contradiction with the Chapter VII, article two of the United Nations charter which says the body has no right to interfere in the internal affairs of any country. Since Palestine separated from the Ottoman government and its independence was recognized by article 22 of a pact accepted by the League of Nations, Palestine became an autonomous country. Even though it was still temporarily under a mandate that had legally ended as a result of the dissolution of the League of Nations, it was still considered a country in its own right, and the mandate did not affect the authority of its people. Therefore decisions regarding the

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leadership of the country had to be made exclusively by the Palestinian people, and had nothing to do with the United Nations (Keatan, 1989:64).

3-7-4. Breach of the League of Nations Pact and the United Nations Charter

The UN charter and article 22 of the League of Nations pact have been violated by the resolution. This violation was reflected in a report written on the 11th of November 1947 by the Ad Hoc Committee on the Palestine Question. The report says that issues related to Palestine and the partitioning of Palestine must be based on the Palestinian mandate and League of Nations pact and the UN Charter. Under article 5 of the mandate the mandatory power is responsible for preventing any part of Palestine from being annexed off or handed over to a foreign government. Article 28 of the mandate also stipulates that when the mandate's term comes to an end, Palestine must be passed on to a "Palestinian government". Furthermore, based on article 22 of the pact, the land of Palestine must be handed over to the Palestinian people when the mandate expires.

The findings above cannot be refuted by the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine. The goal of the mandate makers by bringing Jews over to Palestine was not and could not have been to create political, geographical, financial and administrative fragmentation in the country. Any other interpretation contradicts the General Assembly pact and violates one of the aims of the mandate. From this we can conclude that the majority vote given by the Special Committee on Palestine for the division of Palestine, regardless of any serious political or financial gains, was averse to the special condition

of the mandate and the goals of the general Assembly pact. The suggestion also contradicted the UN charter. Article 1 of the UN charter demands the body act in a just fashion to protect human rights while considering equality for all and people's right to independence. Regarding dependent states article 73 says the body must do it's very best to ensure the people's welfare and address their political concerns. Therefore to force the fragmentation of Palestine against the will of the Palestinian people is a violation of the UN Charter. If the people's right to independence and self-determination has been recognized by the international body, the Palestinian people have every right to insist on their national identity and work towards the preservation of their country's sovereignty. Creating a Jewish state and government in a part of Palestine and imposing that Jewish government on the people of Palestine contradicts the charter. In conclusion, one may highlight the fact that the Jewish community in Palestine is the minority. Can a country be found that does not have a racial or religious minority? And do those countries preserve the rights of their minority by splitting their nation apart. (Keatan, 1989:65)

The resolution for the partition of Palestine violates article 10 and 14 of the UN charter which defends the right of nations to be the sole benefactors of their national wealth. UN member states are not obliged to comply with the resolution. On this issue Professor Brewley says the 1947 vote which promotes the division of Palestine was done without the recommendation of the United Nations, and even if it was none of the member states would have been obliged to implement it. Therefore the international community does not have the right to hand over a territory with specific owners to another group of people. As Abba Eban, then Zionist envoy to the UN, said: Israel was the first entity born by the UN. Yes this birth was an illegitimate one and a

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great act of heresy in international justice. There was severe pressure from Zionist lobbies in the United States for it to happen (Shoukri & Adib, 1993: 29).

4-7-4. The Failure to Observe the Principle of Justice

The resolution's failure to observe the principles of justice is another reason for its lack of validity. In the year 1947 the population of Palestine was 1,972,000 which consisted of 1,203,000 Muslims, around 145,000 Christians and 608,000 Jews. Only thirty percent of the population was made up of Jews and those Jews were Palestinian nationals. According to figures given by the Palestinian government the Jews owned only 5 percent of Palestinian land. In comparison, the Palestinian Arabs owned 47.77 percent. The rest was considered public land. Now we must look at what the partition plan did? This plan gave Jews, which made up less than a third of the population and owned only 6% of Palestinian land, the equivalent of 57 percent of Palestine or 14,500 kilometers. This means the Jews were given 10 times the land they already owned. This confirms the gross injustice of the plan (Sheikh Nouri, 2009:258).

5-Attempts for Litigation in the International Court of Justice

In 1947, the Arab countries requested the General Assembly to refer the results of the legal issue of Palestine to the International Court of Justice for further evaluation. But the Great Powers that supported the division [of Palestine] in the General Assembly opposed and prevented the litigation of issue (and other cases

thereafter) in order to refrain from neutralization of their attempts [through rulings of the International Court of Justice].⁸

The resolution of the United Nations Special Commission on Palestine second sub-committee stated: considering that the Palestine Question raises certain legal issues connected, inter alia, with the inherent right of the indigenous population of Palestine to their country and to determine its future, the pledges and assurances given to the Arabs in the World War I regarding the independence of Arab countries, including Palestine; the validity and scope of the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate; the effect on the Mandate of the dissolution of the League of Nations and of the declaration by the mandatory power of its intentions to withdraw from Palestine; considering that the Palestine question also raises other legal issues connected with the competence of the United Nations to recommend any solution contrary to the covenant of the League of Nations or the charter of the United Nations, or to the wishes of the majority of the people of Palestine; considering that doubts have been expressed by several member states concerning the legality under the charter of any action by the United Nations, or by any member state or group of member states, to enforce any proposal which is contrary to the wishes, or is made without the consent, of the majority of the inhabitants of Palestine; considering that these questions involve legal issues which so far have not been pronounced by any impartial or competent tribunal, and it is essential that such questions be authoritatively determined before the United Nations can recommend a solution of the Palestine question in conformity with the principles of justice and international law; the General Assembly of the United Nations resolves to request the International Court of Justice to give an advisory opinion under Article 96 of the Charter and Chapter IV of the Statute of the Court on the following questions:

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- (i) Whether the indigenous population of Palestine does not have an inherent right to Palestine and to determine its future constitution and government;
- (ii) Whether the pledges and assurances given by Britain to the Arabs during the World War I (including the Anglo-French Declaration of 1918) concerning the independent and future of Arab countries at the end of the war did not include Palestine;
- (iii) Whether the Balfour Declaration, which was made without the knowledge or consent of the indigenous population of Palestine, was valid and binding on the people of Palestine, or consistent with the earlier and subsequent pledges and assurances given to the Arabs;
- (iv) Whether the provisions of the Mandate for Palestine regarding the establishment of a Jewish National Home in Palestine are in conformity or consistent with the objectives and provisions of the League of Nations (in particular Article 22), or are compatible with the provisions of the Mandate relating to the development of self-government and the preservation of the rights and position of the Arabs of Palestine;
- (v) Whether the legal basis of the Mandate for Palestine has not disappeared with the dissolution of the League of Nations, and whether it is not the duty of the mandatory power to hand over power and administration to a government of Palestine representing the rightful people of Palestine;
- (vi) Whether a plan to partition Palestine without the consent of the majority of its people is consistent with the objectives of the Covenant of the League of Nations, and with the provisions of the Mandate for Palestine;

(vii) Whether the United Nations is competent to recommend either of the two plans and recommendations of the majority or minority of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine, or any other solution involving partition of the territory of Palestine, without the consent of the majority of the people of Palestine;

(viii) Whether the United Nations, or any of its member states, is competent to enforce or recommend the enforcement of any proposal concerning the constitution and future Government of Palestine, in particular, any plan of partition which is contrary to the wishes, or adopted without the consent of, the inhabitants of Palestine.

Finally, the referral of the issue of Palestine to the International Court of Justice was rejected by a vote margin of 25 against 18 on the 24th November 1947 and the final paragraph regarding the competency of the United Nations regarding the partition proposal was rejected by a vote margin of 21 against 20.

6. Recognition of the Israeli Regime

The British mandate in Palestine expired on the 14th of May and the creation of a Zionist government by the name of Israel was announced. The day after, Arab countries began military operations in Palestine. On the 22nd of May the Security Council asked all nations to refrain from military action in Palestine. A week after the council called for a four month break in hostilities which was implemented on the 11th of June 1948. Israeli regime agreed to renew the ceasefire but Arab countries did not and fighting resumed. On the 15th of June the Security Council held up chapter 7 of the UN charter and called for all parties to order a ceasefire. On the 19th of August, in response to a request from mediator, Count Folke Bernadotte, the UN warned it would hold Israel and Arab countries responsible for their failure to

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end the hostilities. On the 17th of September 1948, Bernadotte and Andre Serot, the head of a group of French observers, was shot dead in the Israeli occupied section of Jerusalem. Rolf J. Buneho was chosen to take his place. A resolution passed by the Security Council on the 11th of August asked the belligerent parties to negotiate a truce in Palestine through direct talks or by way of a commission.

After the resolution was passed, Zionist regime's foreign minister, Moshe Shertok, wrote in a telegram to the Iranian government and asked for its recognition of the Zionist entity: "..... with all due respect we would like to inform your government that the Jewish government of Israel comprised of selected members from the Jewish representative's organization in Palestine, was created on the 14th of May. The decision comes as the British mandate of Palestine expires and is based on a Security Council resolution passed on the 29th of November 1947. We declare the establishment of a Jewish government in Palestine which will be called Israel. The council has decided to take on the governing of this state temporarily until Israel's government institutions can be formed based on the constitution, and Parliament members are appointed which will happen on the 1st of October 1947. The mentioned council will act as a temporary government and will run the country until Israel is formed..... we have not forgotten the two thousand years old historical events in era of Cyrus the Great who restored the Jewish government and nation in Palestine, and we hope that the Iranian government, through this recognition, renews this old tradition and greatness, and supports the return of the Jews to their native land whose creation will help the establishment of friendly ties between the countries of the Middle East. (Nureddin Kia, 1998:160-162)

In reply to the telegraph, the Iranian government appointed a representative for supervising the belongings and real estates of Iranian citizens in Occupied Palestine who had left there in the 1947. (Jomhouri-Eslami, Nov. 22, 2005) Meanwhile Ayatollah Kashani, a well-known religious figure called for popular gatherings in support of the Palestinians. He issued a statement in which he stated "since the U.N. unjustly ruled in favor of the division of Palestine, there has not been a day when the Jews have not spilled the blood of your Muslim brothers. By the support of the great powers, these Jews have forcefully established an entity and settled there and are now naming Palestine their homeland, and in order to achieve this goal they spill the blood of Muslims, day and night. "Considering that the sacred religion of Islam in this situation has made it mandatory for all Muslims to support the oppressed Palestinian Arabs and Muslims", he called for Iranian Muslims to spare no effort in helping them. (Saiedi, 2009).

Approximately two years after the resolution was passed, and a year after the formation of Zionist regime and when the National Assembly was in recess, and several other domestic events and influenced by other factors in the international system brought appropriate ground for the Shah's government to extend some sort of recognition towards Israel. Exiling Ayatollah Kashani to Lebanon, the arrest of opponents of the government after the attempt on the life of the Shah in February 1949, the long trip of the Shah to the United States in November of the same year and being informed of the remarkable influence of the Jewish lobby in the United States, the strained relations of Iran with some radical Arab states and concerns on their perceived threats, the recognition of Israel by the Turkey as the first Islamic country on 28th March 1949 and the bipolar world order and its consequences all were significant factors in this regard.

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Hence, the administration of Mohammad Saed Maraqe'i on the 15th of March 1950 recognized Israel as a de facto state and Subsequently Iran opened its consulate in Jerusalem. At that time, around 50 countries had recognized the Zionist entity. (Fallah-Nejad, 2002:187)⁹

The news of the unexpected recognition of the Israeli government caused severe reactions in Iran from some of representatives of the National Assembly and Senate, as well as religious circles. Ayatollah Kashani announced in a statement: "the Israeli government is supported by American, German and French Jews. Fighting the Jews is compulsory. We Iranians will rebel even when the government recognized Israel, and we have created an organization to fight Israeli Jews." The protests in Iran ended with the revocation of this recognition by Iran's prime minister, Mohammad Mossadegh in July 1951, leading to the abandonment of Iran's Consulate in occupied Palestine (Fallah-Nejad, 2002:188). The shutdown of the consulate, as well as calling back all Iranian officials were considered as terminating the recognition of Israeli regime. The Swiss Embassy in Tel Aviv was then chosen to handle Iran's interests in Palestine (Azghandi, 2005:410).

During the National Parliament's meeting on the 7th July 1951, deputy prime minister Hossein Fatemi said: "Yesterday, the Iranian government decided to shut down its consulate in Jerusalem and asked (our mission in) Amman [Jordan] to do its job. This government is determined not to recognize officially Israeli regime and will not accept any representatives of that regime in Iran." (Azghandi, 2005:213). The Shah later tried to portray Mohammad Saeed's cabinet (in 1949), as the one which recognized the Israeli government.¹⁰

With the fall of Mossadegh's administration by the Anglo-American coup d'état of August 1953, Iranian government felt that it could resume its relations with Israeli regime, and thus sent a new representative to the occupied land of Palestine in 1957. One of the consequences of the Anglo-American coup in Iran was the changes in Tehran's policy towards Israel and their relationship was renewed politically, economically, and culturally (Amiri, 2007). Cooperation in the fields of intelligence and military was also set up. Israeli regime's representatives acted against the backdrop of the Israeli "Periphery Doctrine", which was founded by David Ben-Gurion, the Zionist founder of Israeli regime. He believed that by forging close ties with the so-called non-Arab periphery of Palestine, including Iran, Turkey and Ethiopia, Israeli regime could neutralize the threat of its Arab vicinity and thereby transform the face of the Middle East. In the aftermath of Islamic Revolution in Iran Tehran cut off the ties with Zionist entity. (Iranian Foreign Ministry, 1985:32-33)

7. Proposed Plans in Palestine Issue Prior to the Iranian Islamic Revolution

The following section will discuss peace plans in Palestine and Iran's position towards them. Peace plans which were proposed before the Islamic Revolution could be divided into two separate groups: those which were proposed before the Six-Day Arab-Israeli War, starting on the fifth of June 1967, and the ones which were proposed after that war and UN resolution 242. Some of the plans that were introduced before the 1967 war are: The Paris Peace Conference (1951)¹¹, the Dulles plan (1955)¹², and the Bourguiba's plan (1965)¹³. The plans and conferences were based on the UN General Assembly's

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Resolution 181 and Resolution 194 on Palestinian refugees. There were no plans introduced by Iran based on UN resolution 181.

1-7. Peace Resolutions

After the Six Day War of 1967, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 242 on the 22nd of November 1967. The resolution was seen as the final solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, and a basis for future peace negotiations. According to the resolution, the occupation of lands by war is unacceptable. The resolution also emphasized on efforts to establish permanent peace. The resolution requested that Israeli regime retreat from territories occupied during the Six Day war. Resolution 242 was accepted by the international community, including most Western states. The main parties in the conflict, however, did not accept it.

On the 22nd of October 1973, the Security Council passed resolution 338. In this resolution, all parties involved were requested to implement an immediate cease fire, and immediately stop all military activities in the occupied territories for 12 days at the most. They also were requested to implement all parts of Security Council Resolution 242, and participate in negotiations aimed at the establishment of a fair peace in the Middle East. All of the peace plans are based on the abovementioned two resolutions, and identify the West Bank and the Gaza strip as Palestinian lands. Some of the proposed plans are: the Glassboro Conference (23 to 25 June 1967)¹⁴, Allon Plan (26 July 1967), Tito Plan (1968)¹⁵, Rogers plan (9 December 1969)¹⁶, Shimon Peres plan(1972)¹⁷, Geneva Conference (21 December 1973)¹⁸, Begin plan(1977)¹⁹, Carter plan(April 1977)²⁰.

In all of the abovementioned plans, there was no mention of Palestinians, and if the word Palestine was used it was in reference to the West Bank and the Gaza strip.

2-7. Camp David Accord

The Camp David Accords were signed by then Egyptian President Anwar El Sadat and Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin on the 17th of September, 1978. The accords led to the establishment of the Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty on the 26th of March, 1979. The first agreement was signed prior to the victory of the Islamic Revolution, during which Iran's foreign minister at the time was present as an observer. The second agreement was forged after the 1979 Islamic revolution in Iran.

The Camp David Accord consisted of eight parts. One part provided a framework for negotiations to establish an autonomous self-governing authority in the West Bank and the Gaza strip. The fate of the rest of the occupied Palestinian territories was excluded from the agreement. It stated that negotiations over the issue were to be launched one month after the signing of the accord. The negotiations ended inconclusively. The accords fulfilled Menachem Begin's resolve to assure Zionists' control over the occupied territories. Israeli regime agreed to give limited autonomy to the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

This led to the isolation of Egypt in the Arab world. Arab states expelled Egypt from the Arab League and suspended their relations with the country. The Islamic Republic of Iran severed its ties with Egypt two months after the Islamic Revolution. The decree issued by the late Imam Khomeini to cut off ties with Egypt only

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made reference to the Camp David Accords, even though the Cairo government had already shown enmity toward Tehran on several occasions. One can refer to Sadat's hosting of Iran's former monarch, the Shah and his refusal to hand him over at the onset of the Islamic Revolution. Sadat also adopted hostile attitudes towards the Islamic Revolution and allowed the U.S. to use a military base on its soil for a possible attack on Iran. However, in his decree, the late Imam Khomeini refused to make mention of any such animosities and only highlighted the Camp David Accords which was viewed as a betrayal of the entire Muslim world. Addressing then Iranian foreign minister Ibrahim Yazdi, Imam Khomeini's stated: "In view of the treacherous treaty signed by Egypt and Israel, and the Cairo government's total submission to the U.S. and the Zionist regime, the Islamic Republic's transitional government needs to sever its diplomatic relations with Egypt". The decree was issued five weeks after the signing of the Camp David Accords in 1979. Diplomatic ties between the two countries were cut off accordingly and have not been officially resumed yet.

8. Initiatives after the Islamic Revolution

The 1979 victory of the Islamic Revolution and its anti-Zionist stance was an unexpected and worrisome event for Israeli regime. In Imam Khomeini's words, "One of the issues that has turned us against the Shah has been his assistance to Israel. I have always said the Shah has cooperated with Israel ever since it was created and even when the war between Israel and Muslims reached its climax, the Shah appropriated the oil that belonged to Muslims and gave it away to Israel. This has been one of the main reasons why I opposed the monarch." (Imam Khomeini, 1986, Vol. IV: 30)

The late Imam Khomeini's opposition to the Zionist regime dates back to the outset of its establishment. During a speech in 1963 that led to his detention, Imam Khomeini said, "Today I was informed that a number of clerics have been taken to the intelligence organization where they've been asked to avoid three topics. They've been told to refrain from speaking about the Shah, to avoid mentioning Israel and to refuse to say that religion is in danger". In a speech made in May 1978, Imam Khomeini mentioned that he had been campaigning against Israel since 1958. "I have been advising the Arab countries for almost 20 years to unite and destroy that corrupt entity" (Golbarg, 2007). Only a few days after the triumph of the Islamic Revolution in 1979, the transitional government severed its ties with Israel and for the first time received Yasser Arafat as the leader of a sovereign state in the country, and raised the Palestinian flag over the former Israeli embassy compound (Amiri, 2007)

In post-Islamic Revolution era, there has been numerous initiatives regarding Arab-Israeli peace, most of which have been based on Resolutions 242 and 338. The Islamic Republic has opposed the majority of these projects for violating the rights of the Palestinians and seeking to divide the Palestinian territories. The projects include the Venice Declaration (June 3rd, 1980)²¹, Brezhnev plan (1981)²², King Fahd's plan (17th of August 1981)²³, Reagan's plan (9th of January 1982)²⁴, the Fes Charter (6-9th of September 1982)²⁵, Brezhnev's 2nd plan (15th of September 1982)²⁶, the Amman Declaration (11th of February 1985)²⁷, Schultz' plan (1987)²⁸, the Shamir plan (1989)²⁹ , Yasser Arafat's plan (June 1989)³⁰ , Mubarak's plan (September 1989)³¹ , Baker's plan (29th of September 1989)³² , Peres plan³³ and several other initiatives. The overwhelming majority of the plans were based on the partition of Palestine, something which Iran naturally rejected.

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1-8.Madrid Conference (October 1991)

In 1991, then U.S. Secretary of State James Baker after visiting the Middle East eight times managed to win the two sides' agreement to enter negotiations. The Israelis agreed to hold talks with the Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. On October 30, 1991, a conference was organized by the U.S. and the former Soviet Union in Madrid, Spain. The event later came to be known as the Madrid Peace Conference. The gathering, which was based on Resolutions 242 and 338 and the Land-for-Peace formula, lasted for two days. The U.S.-backed Land-for-Peace initiative was considered a turning point among all peace projects involving Arabs and Israeli regime. The first round of talks was held in Madrid with delegations from Syria, Lebanon, Zionist regime, as well as a joint Jordanian-Palestinian team in attendance. The negotiations were hosted by Washington as of the fourth round.

2-8.Geneva Accord

The Geneva Accord was signed on the 20th of October 2003. It was an unofficial and extra-governmental peace proposal. Furthermore, its signatories knew that many of the agreement's paragraphs were impossible to implement. Of the Geneva Accord's seven articles, the Israelis agreed to most. It was negotiated mostly autonomously between Israeli's former justice minister, Yossi Beilin, and the Palestinian Authority's former minister of culture, Yasser Abdo-Rabbo. Beilin believed that Jews would be outnumbered by Palestinians in Palestine by 2010, hence leading him to argue that

Israel must secure a border agreement with the Palestinians in order to prevent the Zionist dream from vanishing into the pages of history.

3-8. Arab Peace Initiative

During the Arab summit in Beirut on the 28th of March 2002, Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah presented what was to be called the Arab Peace Initiative.³⁴ The Arab leaders at the summit agreed on the plan, and sought to push it forward. The main tenet of the Peace Initiative was to seek Israel's withdrawal from the lands it occupied in 1967. In return for Israel's withdrawal to its pre-1967 borders, the Arab peace initiative would normalize relations with the Israel regime.³⁵

4-8. The Road Map for Peace (June 2002)

U.S. President George W. Bush's view on the solution of the Palestinian issue was brought to international attention after a while, with it being labeled the "Road Map for Peace". Bush announced the plan on the 24th of June, and soon after a committee consisting of the U.S., Russia, the European Union and the United Nations was set up to move the roadmap forward. The Road Map essentially consisted of three steps towards peace, of which the first was the most difficult one. It involved the establishment of basic commitments between Israeli regime and the Palestinians. The first step required the Palestinians to cease the Second Intifada, disarm and dismantle Palestinian resistance groups, and to reform the Palestinian Authority. The only thing required of Israeli regime in return was its dismantling of settlements on occupied Palestinian lands that had been built

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without the approval of the Israeli regime, and the easing of restrictions on the Palestinians. The second phase of the Road Map sought Palestinian-Israeli negotiations aimed at restoring the status of affairs to how they were before the outbreak of the Intifada on the 28th of September 2000. Finally, the third stage of the Road Map involves final status negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority on the borders of the Palestinian state, in an effort to end the Arab-Israeli conflict. The plan envisioned for the aforementioned to occur between 2004 and 2005. In 2004, an international conference was to be held, with the so-called Quartet (U.S., Russia, EU and the UN) and the Palestinians and the Israelis to reach an agreement that would see the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with temporary borders.

The European Union, Russia and the United Nations supported the move on the 16th of July and the 17th of September (Abou-Ghouthi, 2004). The plan was also supported by the heads of Arab states who had gathered in Sharm el Sheikh for a summit. The Palestinians were divided in their response to the Road Map for Peace. While the Chairman of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, Yasser Arafat, and the Palestinian Authority's Prime Minister, Abu Mazen supported the Road Map, other groups such as Hamas, Islamic Jihad and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine opposed the plan (Al-Darassat-al-Falestini Journal, 2003). The cabinet of the Zionist regime reviewed the Road Map, and demanded that 14 changes it deemed appropriate be adopted if it were to accept the plan. (Al-Darassat-al-Falestini Journal, 2003)

5-8. Annapolis Conference

The Annapolis conference was held at the U.S. Naval Academy in the city of Annapolis, in the state of Maryland on the 27th of November 2007. The summit gathered leaders from Israeli regime and the Palestinian Authority, the Quartet (U.S., Russia, EU and the UN), as well as representatives from Arab countries. This was the first serious multilateral negotiations aimed at solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and achieving comprehensive peace in the Middle East since 2000. Apart from the Quartet, the Annapolis conference gathered several countries from the Middle East, including Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Lebanon and Qatar. The President of the Palestinian Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, had hoped that a final peace treaty between Israel and the Palestinians be signed within six months of the conclusion of the conference. Syria's President Bashar al-Assad insisted that his country would only be attending the conference if Syrian concerns were to be included in the agenda.

In early October, Abbas said the Palestinians' demand an independent state that includes the West Bank and the Gaza strip. He added that the conference must address six main challenges, including the division of Jerusalem, Palestinian refugees' right of return, the shape of permanent borders, Israeli settlements, the division of water resources, and security. The Islamic Republic of Iran, along with Palestinian militant groups, opposed the Annapolis conference.

9. The Islamic Republic of Iran's Referendum Plan

To end the 60-year old crisis in Palestine, Iran has consistently proposed a referendum on the issue in which all Palestinians, in Palestine and abroad, including Muslims, Christians and Jews, would

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participate. Based on this proposition, the votes of the Palestinian people would decide how the Israeli-Palestinian conflict should be solved. As well as the referendum, there should be an end to Israeli war, occupation and blockades, so that the solution to the conflict may be fundamentally just. As long as the Israeli occupation continues, the problems the Palestinians are facing will continue. The end of the Israeli occupation is the only route to the solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The trend during the past sixty years has been the complete opposite. According to the plan that divided Palestine in 1947, the Palestinian state would be 12,400 square kilometers, while the Israeli occupation would amount to 14,700 square meters of Palestinian land. In other words, the Palestinians would get 45 percent of their own land, while the Israelis would be allowed to occupy 55 percent of Palestine.

According to UN Resolution 242, all Palestinian lands that were occupied in 1967 must be returned. The occupied area is around 6000 square kilometers. During the Madrid conference in 1991, the U.S. and Israel promised to return all of the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip to the Palestinian Authority under Yasser Arafat in return for concessions from the Palestinians. In the Oslo conference in 1993, the Palestinian share of Gaza and Jericho were reduced to 90 percent. In the Wye River Memorandum, that figure was yet again reduced from 90 percent to 40 percent respectively. In Sharm-el-Sheikh and the Wye River talks in 1998, that 40 percent share was reduced to 18 percent, i.e. 1018 square kilometers. In the Camp David Summit during the summer of 2000, the 18 percent of land was yet again reduced to 13,5 percent. On the basis of the aforementioned, the Islamic Republic of Iran has in recent years promoted democratic solutions, and called for the participation of all Palestinians, inside

Palestine and abroad, including Muslims, Christians and Jews, in a referendum to decide on the solution to the Palestinian issue.

Following the Annapolis conference, the Prime Minister of the Zionist regime said: "If the day comes that the two-state solution fails, and we resolve the conflict in the South African manner so there will be equal rights of voting, even for Palestinians in Palestinian territories, Israel will be destroyed."

Twenty years ago, all South African citizens of all colors got the right to vote, and a referendum was held to decide on the form of government. That poll resulted in the end of the apartheid regime, and the UN's recognition of the country's new leader, Nelson Mandela. Israel's Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, in an interview with the newspaper "Haaretz" said: "If Israel cannot accept the formation of two independent states in Palestine, and doesn't give the right of voting to Palestinians inside Israel, then Jewish organizations in the United States will drop their support for us, because we will no longer be seen as democratic, and our citizens will not have equal rights."

Conclusion

The situation of Jerusalem under the supervision of an international regime, and deciding its future with reference to a referendum is not dealt with by the UN General Assembly and the Security Council. Accepted criterion for Jerusalem mentioned in resolution 181 can be implemented for making decisions about the whole of Palestine. What is accepted for Jerusalem at that time (10 years after UN Resolution 181) can be used for all parts of Palestine.

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Strategic errors as well as selfish and suspicious attitudes, and feelings of competition between themselves (with the resulting preference of their own interests to collective ones), have made some Arab states unable to establish a Palestinian government according to the UN plan. The current situation in Palestine is due to the lack of a plan for dealing with Israel from the beginning and during the last 60 years by Arab countries; particularly important Arab states such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Jordan and Iraq, as well as other Islamic countries such as Turkey and Pakistan.

Lack of confidence of some Arab states in Palestinian people and their own people's abilities in favor of relying on themselves, and constant hopes of getting assistance from the West and the East, coupled with their secret relations with Israel, are other factors behind the current situation.

We should distinguish between the Arab lands of resolution 181 and of the 1967 occupation. In 1967, the Arab section of Palestine only amounted to 22 percent, while UN Resolution 181 awarded 45 percent of Palestine to the Arabs. That's a 23 percent difference. Those lands that were seized in 1948 and 1949 are explicitly occupied, in contradiction with the UN Charter and the global body's resolutions.

We may also conclude that Iran's position toward Israeli regime in pre-revolution era was a variable depending on two factors of the Shah's perception of its weakness or strength, or conditions in which a national government-like Mossadegh- was in power. During the national government and while the Shah was in a weak position the ties with Israel were cut off and years after the 1953 coup when Pahlavi regime felt of having a consolidated power, it resumed relations with Zionist entity. Contrary to this pattern, in post-revolution Iran, Iran's positions towards Israeli regime have been

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principally set based on the teachings of Islam and Quran and the directives of the late Imam Khomeini, looking for a just, fair and humane conduct of the Palestine issue.



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Notes

¹ After the 1936 uprising in Palestine, Britain formed the Peel commission. The commission advised that Palestine be partitioned into Jewish and Arab sections, with Jerusalem and Haifa remaining under the British mandate.

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² In his letter he wrote: "... what caused happiness among Palestinians, was that the eastern Islamic state of Iran has established a consulate in Jerusalem and by this effort the relationship between the two Islamic countries will become closer. Also Iran's representative, Mr. Bagher Kazemi's support of Palestinians against the Jewish invasion and his demand for the implementation and maintenance of just behavior made us happy and thankful..."

³ Adopted at the 128th plenary meeting: in favor: Australia, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Byelorussian S.S.R., Canada, Costa Rica, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, France, Guatemala, Haiti, Iceland, Liberia, Luxemburg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Sweden, Ukrainian S.S.R., Union of South Africa, U.S.A., U.S.S.R., Uruguay, Venezuela.

Against: Afghanistan, Cuba, Egypt, Greece, India, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, and Yemen.

Abstained: Argentina, Chile, China, Colombia, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Honduras, Mexico, United Kingdom, and Yugoslavia.

⁴ The countries against include Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Cuba, Lebanon, Egypt, India, Yemen, Greece and Iraq. These countries believed that the plan violates the UN Charter and the Palestinian people's right to self-determination.

⁵ Argentina, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Britain, China, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Honduras and Yugoslavia abstained from voting.

⁶ Kermit Roosevelt said: "... Our delegation declared itself in favor of the plan for partition . . . After its decision was made, the delegation proceeded on the principle that other countries should be allowed to make up their own minds. This principle was modified, however, when it became apparent that if it were followed the partition plan would be defeated . . . Haiti, Liberia, the Philippines, China, Ethiopia were overnight either won to voting for partition or persuaded to abstain ... The delegates of those six nations and their home governments as well were swamped with telegrams, phone calls, letters and visitations. Many of the telegrams, particularly, were from Congressmen, and others as well invoked the name and prestige of the US Government. An ex-Governor, a prominent Democrat with White House and other connections, personally telephoned Haiti urging that its delegation be

instructed to change its vote. (The same thing happened to Liberia.) Both changed their votes and voted in favor of the plan. (Almoharer.net)

⁷ Of the countries that changed their votes between the 24th to the 29th of November, it can be pointed out that Liberia, the Philippines and Haiti were financially dependent on the U.S., and all three of them shifted to a pro-American position in favor of the Partition Plan.

⁸ For further reading on similar opposition to referring the issue for advisory opinion of international court of justice in 1947 by general assembly, see: (UN document, 1947).

⁹ Iran's government announcement, which was released in March 1950, recognized the state of Israel: "After the independence of Israel and its recognition by the United Nations, Iran sent Mr. Abbas Seyghal as a representative to Palestine to retain the interests of Iranians who have lived in Palestine and suffered a lot during war. After joint negotiations by the UN and the U.S. government with Iran, 3 months ago, Iran's government sent Mr. Safinia to Palestine as a special agent to protect the interests of thousands of Iranians who lived in Palestine. By this act, Iran's government recognized Israel but for official recognition procedures, Mr. Entezam, permanent representative of Iran's Imperial Government, informed the UN representative of Israel that Iran de facto recognizes Israel.

¹⁰ William Shawcross, using Israeli archives, believes that two expense claims show Israel paid substantial bribes Mohammad Saed, Iran's Prime Minister at the time. (Shawcross, 1985:93) Modarress Saeedi's in his article: "Iran's recognition of the declaration of Israel" also deals with the same claims as Showcross, using statements from Abdolsaheb Safaee, Sari's representative in the 16th Iranian Majles. (Bultannews.com)

¹¹ Provisions proposed in this conference included the return of some refugees to their occupied lands, demarcation of frontiers, and payment of compensation. This plan was rejected by the Zionist regime but the Arab parties also were not prepared to enter into direct negotiation and they preferred the indirect talks.

¹² U.S. Secretary of State, Dulles wanted a plan for the return of refugees, and the determination of boundaries. The plan, which enjoyed the support of France and the UK, was opposed by the Arabs. Israel was also opposed to the determination of boundaries.

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¹³ Habib Bourguiba, former President of Tunisia, in accordance with Resolution 181, presented a plan that was opposed by the Arabs and Jamaal Abdel-Nasser [the Egyptian President] in particular. Israel also opposed the proposition of the plan, with its call for the return of [Palestinian] refugees and stopped hostilities.

¹⁴ At this conference, which gathered the U.S. and the Soviet Union between the 23rd to the 25th of June, 1967, the Arab-Israeli conflict was the main point on the agenda.

¹⁵ Tito's plan involved, 1- the establishment of a de-militarized zone between the borders of Israel and the Arabs, 2 - Israeli withdrawal from occupied lands 3, A solution to the Palestinian refugee question, 4 - end of a state of war between the two sides, 5- free shipping for Israel in the Suez Canal and Strait of Tiran. The Egyptian government announced its readiness for the plan, but the Israeli leaders rejected it.

¹⁶ The agreement called for: 1- a 90-day cease-fire agreement, 2- acceptance of the main tenets of UN Resolution 242, 3 - the Arab countries recognition of Israel, 4 - Agreement on the continuation of peace talks through the UN. Israel opposed the plan. However, due to intense U.S. pressure and that the provisions of the plan emphasized recognition of Israel, Israel finally agreed to the delay while the Rogers plan was announced.

¹⁷ Peres announced that a federation between Israel and Palestine be formed west of the Jordan River, and that the two countries have separate parliaments and governments, and have independence when it came to domestic matter. However, when it came to issues related to foreign policy, security and the economy, a federal council should make the decisions.

¹⁸ This conference was based on article 3 of UN resolution 338, and gathered the U.S. Soviet Union, Egypt, Jordan and Israel.

¹⁹ This plan consisted of the following points: 1-the autonomy of the West Bank, 2 - a referendum in the area, 3 - the formation of an autonomous government consisting of the people living west of the Jordan River, 4- no division of Jerusalem.

²⁰ This plan was based on: 1-an Israeli withdrawal from lands occupied in 1967, 2- Israel granting the Palestinians the right to a homeland, if they recognize Israel, 3-to set up sufficient guarantees for regional security, 4- agreement on future discussions on Jerusalem at the next stage, 5- for Gaza to be given as a concession to Israel in exchange for the West Bank. Israel was in favour of the atmosphere in which Carter's plan was presented, but did not under any conditions accept withdrawing from occupied lands. This, as it

opposed SAF's participation in an international conference on the matter, and refused to recognize the declaration of a Palestinian state in the West Bank.

²¹ At the Venice Conference, held on the 13th of June 1980, a declaration was issued which called on all parties involved to end the conflict in accordance with UN Resolutions 242 and 338. It also called on Arabs to recognize Israel's existence, and that the rights of the Palestinian people be respected, and that Israel should withdraw from the territories it occupied in 1967. Israel rejected the tenets of the Venice Declaration.

²² Brezhnev, then Premier of the Soviet Union, called for an International Peace Conference aimed at the formation of a Palestinian state.

²³ Saudi Crown Prince Fahd came up with a plan consisting of eight articles, which provided for the formation of an independent Palestinian state within the 1967 borders.

²⁴ U.S. President Ronald Reagan's plan consisted of the following: 1- Palestinian autonomy in a union with Jordan. 2 - Opposition to Jewish settlements on occupied Palestinian lands, and permanent Israeli sovereignty over those areas. 3 - Arab recognition of Israel 4 - negotiations on the fate of Jerusalem 5 - no formation of an independent Palestinian state in the Gaza strip and the West Bank. On the 2nd of September 1982, the Israeli cabinet said it saw the Reagan plan as deviant from the Camp David accords, adding that settlement expansions meant to provide security and were part of Israel's national rights. Begin then opposed the division of Jerusalem, and said it's the capital of Israel.

²⁵ Arab leaders, meeting in Morocco, have issued an eight-article resolution against Israel. They asked for Israel's withdrawal from the Palestinian lands occupied in West Bank in 1967, demolishing the Jewish settlements in the area as well as forming a Palestinian state with Jerusalem al-Quds as the capital city.

²⁶ Brezhnev, supporting the Arabs' plan, slammed Reagan's proposal. He asked for Israel's withdrawal from the Palestinian lands occupied in West Bank in 1967 as well as forming a Palestinian state.

²⁷ In a declaration issued by Yasser Arafat and King Malik Hussein in Amman, the two sides have asked for Israel's withdrawal from the Palestinian lands occupied in West Bank in 1967. They also urged for Palestinians' right to be self-determined and to be able to form a Palestinian-Jordanian confederation as well as resolving the issue of Palestinian refugees in accordance with the United Nations resolutions.

²⁸ Former Secretary of State, George Shultz, offered a plan in three chapters under the title of "New Arab and Israeli considerations".

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²⁹ Former Israeli Prime Minister, Isaac Shamir, proposed a plan on holding elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The plan was ratified at a cabinet meeting held in May 14, 1989 with 20 pros against 6 cons.

³⁰ Arafat, rejecting Shamir's proposal, offered a plan at an Arab leaders meeting in Casablanca, Morocco. His plan was approved.

³¹ The Egyptian President wanted a ten-point plan which called for free elections in the West Bank and Gaza, as well as East Jerusalem to elect representatives to lead negotiations with Israel. He also demanded an end to Israeli settlement expansions, and urged the Palestinian right to self-determination. He called for a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza in two stages, and a permanent transfer of land based on negotiations founded on UN Resolutions 242 and 338.

³² In a five-point plan, James Baker, then U.S. Secretary of State said that America wants to see negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians in Cairo.

³³ Peres new Middle East plan consisted of seven main articles. In the plan, he called for the de-militarization of the West Bank, and its independence within a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation, in a NATO-like arrangement in the Middle East, with the support of America and pro-Western Arab states.

³⁴ The Israeli daily Yediot Aharonot, published an article on the 26th of February 2002 in which Crown Prince Abdullah laid out three important benefits for Israel: 1- Full recognition of Israel by all 22 Arab states, 2- Considering Saudi Arabia's role within the Arab and Islamic world, the plan could help Israel between those two groups of countries. 3- Crown Prince Abdullah didn't make any mention of the Right of Return of Palestinian refugees in the plan. (Alarabnews. com).

³⁵ The following plan was also discussed: 1. In view of the Arab League's extraordinary summit in Cairo in 1996, the strategy to move towards a just and comprehensive peace was reinforced. 2. Israel's acceptance of its withdrawal from lands occupied in 1967, within the framework of the implementation of UN resolutions 242 and 338, and the reinforcement of the decisions taken at the Madrid conference in 1991, as well as the Land for Peace principle, and the establishment of a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, in return for the Arab countries normalization of ties with Israel, within the framework of comprehensive peace. In return, Israel was required to reconsider its policies, and withdraw from the occupied Golan heights and to the borders of June 4th 1967, and other occupied Lebanese territories, and to reach a fair solution to the Palestinian refugees Right of Return within the framework of the UN Resolution 194, and the

acceptance of the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in territories occupied in 1967, with east Jerusalem as its capital. Under these circumstances, the Arab countries will adopt the following measures: a declaration to end the Arab-Israeli conflict and move towards peace in stages, normalizing relations with Israel, a guarantee for Palestinians to reject any plans that would propose that Palestinians would be transferred to Arab states, Israel is required to accept the initiative to establish peace, and prevent further bloodshed, and peaceful co-existence. The Arab league calls on the international community to support the initiative, and the creation of a special committee comprised of member countries and the Secretary General to set up contacts with other countries.

