

## America's Principled Realism and the Jerusalem Declaration: Implications on Israeli-Palestinian Two-State Solution

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### Abstract

One of the vexed issues between Israel and Palestine in the Middle East region of escalating conflict and tension is claims and counter-claims on the status of Jerusalem between the defenders of Arab nationalism and Zionism. On 6 December 2018, United States President Donald Trump, leveraging on America's "principled realism" in the new world order, made an epochal declaration on Jerusalem as Israel's capital city. The declaration inflamed the war-cloud in the region; threw up protests and re-alignments between peoples, organisations and states based on perception of America's national interest. The broad objective of the study is to examine the realities behind the declaration. The specific objective is to underscore the implication of the status of Jerusalem as Israel's capital on Israeli-Palestinian two-State solution for global security. This study is anchored on realism.

**Keywords:** Principled realism; Nationalism; Zionism; World order; Global security

### Introduction

Since Israel's war of independence in 1948, the country has had to live with antagonistic states in the Middle East Region (consisting of Bahrain, Cyprus, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen) with antagonistic Arab neighbours. One of the vexed issues had been Israel and Palestine claims and counter-claims on the status of Jerusalem which escalated conflict and tension in the region. The status of Jerusalem remained a major sharp edge in Israeli-Palestinian relations, the Middle East peace process and created toxic relationship between the defenders of Arab nationalism and Zionism [1].

On 6 December 2018, United States President Donald Trump, leveraging America's "principled realism", made an epochal declaration of Jerusalem as Israel's capital city. The declaration inflamed the war-cloud in the region; threw up protests and re-alignments between peoples, organisations and states based on perceptions on America's national interest. Prior to the declaration, President Trump made his first post-election foreign visit to Saudi Arabia on May 20 2017. President Trump was guest to King Salman with whom he signed historic partnership agreements including:

- (a) a \$110 billion Saudi-funded defence purchase from American companies;
- (b) opening of Global Centre for Combating Extremist Ideology; and
- (c) Terrorist Finance Targeting Centre (*Foreign Policy*).

In Saudi Arabia, President Trump, announced America's "Principled Realism," as adjusted strategy to conquer extremism and vanquish the forces through shared interests' and 'common security' against the evolving new threats to global security.

The broad objective of the study is to examine the realities behind the declaration. The specific objective is to underscore the implication of the declaration of status of Jerusalem as Israel's capital on Israeli-Palestinian two-State solution in the Middle East for overall global security. The study is anchored on realism' specific theory of balance of power to illustrate empirical evidence of the structure of international political system and how actors, primarily states, drive their interests by "building up their own capabilities (internal balancing) or aggregating

their capabilities with other states in alliance (external balancing)" to achieve favourable balance of power ratio [2].

The paper is sub-divided into six sections: 1) Introduction; 2) Background to the Jerusalem declaration; 3) the U.S. Jerusalem declaration; 4) Reactions to the U.S. Jerusalem declaration; 5) Realities of Great Power Balance of Power on the Jerusalem declaration; 6) Findings; 7) Diplomatic way forward to two-State solution; and 8) Concluding remarks.

### Background to Jerusalem Declaration

The Jerusalem declaration followed spiral of events, including subsisting U.S. Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995, its non-implementation, over 20 years, by previous American presidents, under waiver, Trump campaign promise, etc.

On 20 May 2017, President Trump firmly established America's principled realism and explained that it is rooted in common values and shared interests, and maintained:

*"Our friends will never question our support, and our enemies will never doubt our determination. Our partnerships will advance security through stability, not through radical disruption. We will make decisions based on real-world outcomes – not inflexible ideology. We will be guided by the lessons of experience, not the confines of rigid thinking. And, wherever possible, we will seek gradual reforms – not sudden intervention. We must seek partners, not perfection – and to make allies of all who share our goals. Above all, America seeks peace – not war."*

Trump added: "starving terrorists of their territory, their funding, and the false allure of their craven ideology, will be the basis for defeating

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them.” He also recognised the sanctity of the three holiest places of the Abrahamic Faiths – Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and the Vatican.

On 6 December 2017, President Trump made epochal declaration of Jerusalem, first among the holiest places of Abrahamic Faiths, Israel's capital city. Jerusalem remained the hotspot of internal and external relations in the Middle East after Israel's war of independence in 1948, due largely to claims and counter-claims by Israel and Palestine. The reality of Jerusalem as Israel's capital had been one of the most historical issues in the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts, inflammatory Arab-Israeli threats to security, and contagious America-Arab uneasy relations.

Israel defeated six Arab states in 1947 war, when it was not a state with organised national army. Since the declaration of the State of Israel on 15 May 1948, Israel progressed into a nation with sophisticated leadership history, strong army, strong economy, diplomatic fortitude, intimidating nuclear weapons, and strong alliance with its peer great powers, to stave off attacks, shore staying military power, and annihilate its adversaries. Arab hostility elevated security into an objective fact of Israeli national life.

Although the surrounding confrontational Arab neighbours see Israel as a small state that can be 'wiped' from the face of the Globe, Israel remained emboldened by Shaw's idea that a small republic was no less a sovereign than most powerful kingdom, just as a dwarf was a man as a giant and lashed on to pragmatic Zionism against Arab nationalism or Islamic solidarity “in a region of escalating conflict and tension... of antagonistic Arab neighbours and Arab resistance...the region that produced toxic relationship” laced with misperception and insecurity [1,3].

Despite its limited geopolitical and demographic size compared to the Arabs in the region, Israel's global power-position makes any Arab crude attack on its existential right an invitation to Arab annihilation despite international law's 'trigger clause' that an attack on a member-state of a military alliance (as in this case, Arab League) is attack on all the members. Arab radicalism, terrorism and conspiracy against Israel are not new.

In 1980, the United Nations Security Council, at its 2203rd Meeting, adopted, by 14-1 votes, Resolution 465 (1980) of 1 March 1980, whose draft was sponsored by Malaysia, New Zealand and Venezuela. Specifically, in paragraph 5 of the resolution, the Council:

*...Determines that all measures taken by Israel to change the physical character, demographic composition, institutional structure of the status of the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, or any other part thereof, have no legal validity, and that Israel's policy and practices of settling parts of its population and new immigrants in those territories constitute flagrant violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and also constitute a serious obstruction to achieving a comprehensive just and lasting peace in the Middle East (UNSC).*

The resolution called on Israel to “cease all settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territory, including EAST Jerusalem.”

In the 14-1 vote pattern, America abstained from voting, thus demonstrating non-involvement in an exercise the U.S. government considered detrimental both to Israel's security and peace and security in the Middle East. Little did euphoria of the UNSC resolution allow its captive-supporters to reason that in a state-centric global diplomatic circle where there is no reality of absolute end to national interests, the U.S. display of fortuitous abstention gave America the safety valve to

re-strategise and launch the new attack from a diplomatic chess-game of declaration of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

It is incontrovertible that the U.S. remained world's surviving Superpower with greater effect on world politics; obviously sets the template of global diplomacy in a world-order fashion and a member of the Middle East Quartet (European Union, Russian Federation, United Nations, and the United States) who were assigned right to set the templates for the final status-issues on Jerusalem.

## The U.S. Jerusalem Declaration

On 6 December 2017, U.S. President Trump in a declaration, officially recognised “Jerusalem as the capital of Israel”. He made a strong case that “Israel is a sovereign nation with the right like every other sovereign nation to determine its own capital” thus recognising Jerusalem as Israel's capital as “obvious”, a “reality”, “right thing” and “a long overdue step” to advance the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. The president drew attention to irrefutable facts:

*It was 70 years that the United States, under President Truman, recognised the State of Israel. Ever since then, Israel has made its capital in the city of Jerusalem – the capital of the Jewish people established in ancient times. Today, Jerusalem is the seat of modern Israeli government...the home of the Israeli Parliament, the Knesset, as well as the Israeli Supreme Court. It is the official residence of the Prime Minister and the President. It is the headquarters of many government ministries.*

President Trump regretted that in the past, the policy of the United States along with virtually every other nation in the world failed, because they declined to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel since Israel attained nationhood on 15 May 1948. The president argued that his decision was in consonance with his 2016 presidential campaign promise and U.S. 1995 Jerusalem Embassy Act, to move American embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Trump's campaign promise would have left no one in doubt that as President of America, traditionally, he would avoid appearing as ‘wimp’, ‘ineffectual’ or ‘small’ in the exercise of America's flamboyant presidential powers that stand American presidents “stronger” and ‘taller’ than their peers across the globe. President Trump noted that while previous presidents of America had made Jerusalem issue a major campaign promise, they failed to deliver: “Today, I am delivering”. He added that he would begin preparations to move the U.S. Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The president insisted that the declaration did not serve as a foreclosure of ultimate Israeli-Palestinian two-State final status negotiation on specific boundaries (*The Times of Israel*) which he is committed to midwife [4]. Thus, Trump stated, in clearest terms, that delay in recognising Jerusalem as Israel's capital was injurious to the peace process but the U.S. was not averse to Israeli-Palestinian two-State final status negotiation.

In the past, while U.S. administrations played to the gallery despite subsisting Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995, Israel was on the receiving end and treated by the UNSC, as if it had no stake to be heard and placated in the vexed issue of status of Jerusalem. All previous UNSC resolutions blamed or demanded Israel's eviction from occupied land without assurances of Israel's security in the face of Arabs' terrorism. Below is a timeline of UNSC resolution on Jerusalem (Table 1).

A cursory appraisal of the timeline reveals the fact that Israel was put under intense pressure from the United Nations since Israel's war of 1967, to insert and maintain its existence on the map and to assert global influence. Israel's existential war won territories, including west Bank, Gaza Strip, as well as the Golan Heights, from Arab countries.

S/No.	Date	Resolution	Requirement
1.	22 November 1967	UNSCR 242 (1967)	Unanimously adopted, calling on Israel to withdraw its armed forces from territories occupied in the 1967 conflict.
2.	27 April 1968	UNSCR 250 (1968)	Asked Israel not to hold a military parade in Jerusalem
3.	2 May 1969	UNSCR 251 (1968)	Condemned Israel holding military parade in Jerusalem.
4.	21 May 1968	UNSCR 252 (1968)	Asked Israel to cancel all activities in Jerusalem, and condemned the occupation of any land through armed aggression. It also demanded Israel "desist from taking any further action which tends to change the status" of the city.
5.	3 July 1969	UNSCR 267 (1969)	Confirmed Resolution 152, reaffirming that "acquisition of territory by military conquest is inadmissible."
6.	15 September 1969	UNSCR 271 (1969)	Condemned the extensive damage caused by arson to the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque, a building under the military occupation of Israel. It called on Israel to observe the provisions of the Geneva Conventions and "refrain from causing any hindrance to the discharge of the established functions of the Supreme Muslim Council of Jerusalem, including its plans for the maintenance and repair of the Islamic Holy Places" within the city.
7.	25 September 1971	UNSCR 298 (1971)	Confirmed in "the clearest terms" that all actions taken by Israel to change the status of Jerusalem, such as land confiscation, were illegal.
8.	22 March 1979	UNSCR 446 (1979)	Determined "that the policy and practices of Israel in establishing settlements in the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967 have no legal validity and constitute a serious obstruction to achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East.
9.	1 March 1980	UNSCR 465 (1980)	Demanded Israel to stop the planning and construction of settlements in territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem. It also called on Israel to "dismantle the existing settlements".
10.	30 June 1980	UNSCR 476 (1980)	Reaffirmed the "overriding necessity for ending the prolonged occupation of Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967. And reiterated that all measures which had altered the status of Jerusalem were "null and void" and had to be rescinded.
11.	20 August 1980	UNSCR 478 (1980)	Condemned in "the strongest terms" the enactment of Israeli law proclaiming a change in "status of Jerusalem." The resolution called on all states "that have established diplomatic missions" in Jerusalem to withdraw them from the city.
12.	12 October 1990	UNSCR 672 (1990)	Expressed alarm at the violence which claimed more than twenty Palestinian lives at the Al-Aqsa Mosque on 8 October 1990. The resolution condemned the acts of violence committed by Israeli security forces and referred to Israel as an "occupying power."
13.	28 September 1996	UNSCR 1073 (1996)	Expressed concern about developments in Jerusalem relating to Israel's opening of an entrance to a tunnel near the Al-Aqsa Mosque, which resulted in a number of civilian deaths, and called for "the safety and protection of Palestinian civilians to be ensured."
14.	7 October 2000	UNSCR 1322 (2000)	Denounced the visit made by Israeli opposition leader Ariel Sharon, to the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the "subsequent violence there and at other holy places" which resulted in more than 80 Palestinian deaths.
15.	12 March 2002	UNSCR 1397 (2002)	Called on Palestinian and Israeli leaders to resume the peace process through negotiations regarding a political settlement.
16.	23 December 2016	UNSCR 2334 (2016)	Condemned Israel's construction of settlements in all territory occupied since 1967, including east Jerusalem. The UNSC emphasised it would not recognise any changes to the pre-1967 conflict lines, and stressed that the "cessation of all Israeli settlement activities is essential for salvaging the two-State solution.

Sources: Adapted from *Aljazeera* (6 December 2017). "UN resolutions on occupied East Jerusalem," [https://www.google.com.ng; Wikipedia, "United Nations Security Council resolution 446 – Wikipedia, https://en.m.wikipedia.org](https://www.google.com.ng; Wikipedia, ).

**Table 1:** Timeline of United Nations Security Resolutions on the Status of Jerusalem.

Humiliated Arab neighbours resorted to terrorist tactics rather than suasion through negotiation but the United Nations, regardless of Israel's security and regional peace in the Middle East, skewed and piled pressure on Israel, through UNSC resolutions, to withdraw from occupied territories. The UNSC resolutions which serve as international law precedents turned out nothing but fixated, ideological dogma, parochial, polemical, lame, and lacking reality, validity, and popular appeal to represent 'shared' or 'common' interest of the actors for enforcement in the absence of a world government.

## Reactions to the U.S. Jerusalem Declaration

President Trump's declaration generated swift reactions - protests and re-alignments - within and outside Arab states and the Middle East region. In a telecast by *Aljazeera* on 19.00 hours Nigerian time, the United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres reaffirmed that "there is no alternative to the two-state solution; there is no Plan B" [5]. He urged leaders of the two states - Israel and Palestine - to return to the negotiation table. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reacted immediately:

*"We're profoundly grateful for the President for his courageous and just decision to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and to prepare for the opening of the U.S. embassy here. This decision reflects the President's commitment to an ancient but enduring truth, to fulfilling his*

*promise and to advancing peace. The President's decision is an important step towards peace, for there is no peace that doesn't include Jerusalem as the capital of the State of Israel (Foreign Policy)."*

Netanyahu described President Trump's declaration as "bold" and an "historic landmark" and urged other countries to move their embassies in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

Expectedly, based on what analysts recognised as a major turning point in U.S. foreign Policy, critics including President of the Palestinian Authority Mahmoud Abbas, opined that, just as the Middle East had long given up its credibility and leadership role in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, by support skewed in favour of Palestinians, so the U.S. has, by declaring Jerusalem, Israel's capital, in readiness to moving its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, also given up its mediator-role. The Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) concluded that Trump's declaration was a violation of international law, inflammation of extremism and dangerous to two-state solution to the conflict in the region.

Other countries such as Egypt, Turkey and Qatar took turns and expressed their strong reservations on Trump's declaration: while Egypt rejected U.S. decision to move embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, Turkey blisteringly condemned Trump's declaration as "Irresponsible," while Qatar mourned the declaration as "dangerous

escalation and a death sentence to any peace efforts.” In a show of frustration and shame over, especially America’s glossing over the status of East Jerusalem, expected by Palestine to host yet-to-be-created Palestine State, the Hamas urged Arabs and Muslims to undermine U.S. in the region and shun Israel while Hezbollah supported Intifada terrorist approach against Israel.

A package of Arab-Muslims’ reservation came from the outcome of Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) summit in Beirut, Turkey, under the presidency of Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey. From the OIC Beirut Summit widely reported by *Vanguard*, *Independent*, *The New York Times*, *Aljazeera*, among others, the 57-member OIC, “the collective voice of the Muslim world,” in a unified response, rejected Trump’s Jerusalem declaration as “unilateral”, “dangerous” and partisan in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, argued that the action violates international law based on extant United Nations resolutions. It called on the United Nations to “end the Israeli occupation of Palestine”, called also, on all countries to recognise the State of Palestine and East Jerusalem as its capital, and pledged its commitment to a “just and comprehensive peace based on the two-state solution” [5-8].

However, Trump’s decision was generously supported by Israeli and American officials. Prime Minister Netanyahu, President of Israel Reuven Rivlin, and Israel’s Permanent Representative to the United Nations Danny Danon commended President Trump’s declaration. Names, designations, and comments of American officials in support of the declaration are indicated in Table 2.

Gleaning from comments on Table 2 reveals that although President Trump carefully chose his words in the declaration, other U.S. officials, in sum, grandiloquently expressed America’s readiness to strengthening the position of Israel as a friendly ally, in the two-State negotiation, to realise Jerusalem as undivided capital of the State of Israel, capable of strong security to dispel Palestinians and their Arab-sponsored terror acts, in order to host embassies of nations of the world, including U.S.

America officials praised President Trump bold decision to act in tandem with extant law and facts. Remarkably, Senator David Perdue applauded Trump’s courage to recognise Jerusalem as Israel’s capital as “both an historic and modern reality” adding that “Jerusalem is the centre for Jewish people and all parts of Israel, government reside there today” (*Foreign Policy*).

Howbeit, consistent with the Ostrich game played by Great Powers, President of France Emmanuel Macron stated that he did not back Trump’s Jerusalem decision. European Union Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Chief Federica Maria Mogherini stated that European Union respects international consensus on Jerusalem. Consequently, Israeli Prime Minister met with European Union Foreign Ministers in Brussels and urged them to follow the U.S. in recognising Jerusalem as Israel’s capital *Aljazeera* [5].

Following spiral of events, the UNSC met on 19 December 2017 and voted 14-1 on Egyptian-draft resolution. Although the resolution carefully avoided direct mention of the U.S. in the Jerusalem declaration and expressed “deep regret at recent decisions concerning the status of Jerusalem”, the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley stated that the resolution of the Council was “an insult that would not be forgotten...The United States will not be told by any country where we can put our embassy” (Beaumont). In a quick reaction, Prime Minister Netanyahu happily tweeted: “Thank you, Ambassador Haley. On Hanukkah, you spoke like a Maccabi. You lit a candle of truth. You dispel the darkness. One defeated the many. Truth defeated lies. Thank you, President Trump” [9].

President Trump observed that it took little time since the declaration and the UNSC met in support of Palestine but in similar instances, the UNSC delayed. The president contended that the less-than-usual time of action displayed by the UNSC on the declaration sufficiently betrayed the UN as an organisation of majority Islamic states fighting Muslims’ cause. Trump expressed concern at UN members’ fixation on the status of Jerusalem against Israel.

S/No.	Name	Designation	Comment
1.	Paul Ryan	Speaker of the House	This is a day that is long overdue. Jerusalem has been, and always will be, the eternal, undivided capital of the State of Israel. The city’s status as the religious epicentre of Judaism is an historical fact – not a matter of debate. Today’s announcement is a recognition of <i>reality</i> that in no way inhibits efforts to reach a lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians. I commend President Trump for taking this important action, and for exploring next steps to move the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.
2.	Kevin McCarthy	House Majority Leader	Today the President recognised a <i>reality</i> : Jerusalem is the capital of Israel. The House and Senate have, on three separate occasions, supported recognising Jerusalem as Israel’s capital, including by enacting the Jerusalem Embassy Act in 1995 to move the United States embassy in Israel to Jerusalem. If acknowledging truth inspires violence, it is those who commit violence, not the truth, that are at fault.
3.	Steve Scalise	House Majority Whip	By recognising Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, @POTUS has shown we’re willing to back up our allies.
4.	Steny Hoyer	House Minority Whip	Jerusalem is the capital of the State of Israel, something that the United States Congress has reaffirmed and a fact of history that cannot be denied. Our country must play a constructive role in supporting Israel as it seeks the peace and security its people deserve by continuing to promote a two-state solution through direct bilateral negotiations that will end any question of Jerusalem’s status.
5.	Bob Corker	Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman	Today’s announcement recognises what has been true for almost 70 years, namely that Jerusalem is Israel’s seat of government. On a bipartisan basis, Congress has repeatedly voted overwhelmingly to recognise Jerusalem as Israel’s capital, and I applaud the President’s initiative in making this a reality.
6.	Ed Royce	House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman	I welcome the administration’s decision to recognise Israel’s self-identified capital. Sovereign nations have a right to determine their seat of government, and our close ally Israel should not be treated differently. Relocating the U.S. embassy should be done carefully, and in a way that advances our national security interests in a dangerous and unstable region.
7.	Eliot Engel	House Foreign Affairs Committee Ranking Member	I support the decision to recognise Jerusalem as the eternal capital of Israel and to move the U.S. embassy there. This decision is long overdue and helps correct a decades-long indignity. It recognises where Israel’s government – the parliament and the prime minister – is based, as well as the ancient and unbreakable connection between the Jewish people and Jerusalem. I look forward to a plan to ensure the safety and security of our embassy personnel.

Source: Compiled from Foreign Policy, “Support for President Trump’s Decision to Recognise Jerusalem as Israel’s Capital”, <https://www.whitehouse.gov>: retrieved on 7 December 2017.

Table 2: U.S. Administration’s Support to Trump’s Jerusalem Declaration.

## Realities of Great Power Balance of Power on Jerusalem Declaration

Israel-Palestine peace process on the status Jerusalem derives from great power balance of power. Under the Great Powers' balance of power politics, the potency of America's veto power in the UNSC was neither questionable nor unimaginable. The American veto of UNSC's 14-1 decision on Jerusalem declaration (Beaumont), based on U.S. global influence, is substantive and superior enough to block any state or group of states, in and out of the United Nations, whether small, medium or great powers, which would attempt to act against the American-declared status of Jerusalem [9].

With the relative preponderance of power in favour of the U.S., President Trump's declaration followed America's adjusted strategy, explained in part, to pursue safety and security of its citizens, to:

*Conquer extremism and vanquish the forces of terrorism by denying terrorist organisations territory and population, stripping them of funds, and stopping the crisis of extremist extremism and the Islamist terror groups it inspires... standing together against the murder of innocent Muslims, the oppression of women, the persecution of Jews, and the slaughter of Christians, for the objectives of shared interests and common security through partnership to advance security through stability, not through radical disruption but through decisions based on real-world outcomes which is guided by the lessons, not the confines of rigid thinking (Foreign Policy).*

Although the declaration caused new rupture in U.S.-Palestinian relations in which many Great Powers denied support of U.S. decision, these powers created false sense of support to the Palestinian cause, which was capable of diminish Palestinians faith in two-State diplomatic solution and long-term gains in a possible give-and-take outcome.

Over the years, Israeli-Palestinian conundrum persisted for lack of men of courage, reality-based declarative and enforcement capacity in a world community ruled by men of twisted ideas, facts and reality for narrow political objectives. It would seem that while the common denominator was finding peace, primary actors – the Middle East Quartet – approached the roadmap from different, albeit jaundiced prisms. Thus far, no one could take the bull by the horns; no party could say how things really were.

In the new world order of American influence, courage, and global leadership with might to give freedom to peoples and nations, President Trump's epochal declaration on the status of Jerusalem remained a solid framework in Israel-Palestine two-State solution, based on the following real-world situations:

### Reality of Israel's historic leaders

The State of Israel is blessed with historic leaders. Successive leaders of Israel – from Hawks to Doves – have had to leverage Israelis national character to promote the idea of "Greater Israel," with "any part of the biblical homeland of Israel" which is bordered by Lebanon in the north, Syria and Jordan to the east, and Egypt to the south, including the Sea of Galilee, Jordan River and Dead Sea, which is 1,300 feet without outlet, as its primary sources of water.

Giving a speech at an event recognising the 3,000th year of the existence of the City of Jerusalem, on 25 October 1995, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin stated:

*"We differ in our opinions, left and right. We disagree on the means*

*and the objective. In Israel, we all agree on one issue: the wholeness of Jerusalem, the continuation of its existence as capital of the State of Israel. There are no two Jerusalems. Jerusalem is not subject to compromise, and there is no peace without Jerusalem... Jerusalem is the heart of the Jewish people and a deep source of pride" Bump [10].*

Rabin's statement coincided with the passage of "Jerusalem Embassy Act", by the U.S. Congress (Senate vote: 93 to 5; and House of Representatives: 374 to 37). The Act formerly recognised the city of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and called on the U.S. government to move its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem [10]. However, the Act was not signed by Bill Clinton, who torpedoed its implementation, stating that it "could hinder the peace process. I will not let this happen and will use the legislation's waiver authority to avoid damage to the peace process". The waiver authority provided "critical escape valve for Clinton and his successors who postponed the embassy move" (Bump) such as George W. Bush and Barack H. Obama, who met the Act after it had become law, 10 days of passage, without presidential assent, while Congress was in session [10].

Israeli leaders have sworn not to be forced into any peace-for-land deal which is likely to recreate "exile" or "galut" mentality" on the citizens after its historical *aliyot* (Berg) and even made more eloquent declaration on the status of Jerusalem as the undivided, eternal capital of the State of Israel [11].

*It is unthinkable, from the generations of Israel's historic leadership and experience, that Israel is likely to give up its sworn determination to diminish its "Greater Israel" for Middle East peace.*

### Reality of Israel's alliance formation

Israel has strong historical relationships with Superpower and great powers of the world. Israel has strong and deep relationship with the U.S., the world surviving superpower.

Few years after declaration of the State of Israel in 1948, the U.S. President John F. Kennedy, in 1962, unambiguously assured Israelis through Israel's foreign Minister Golda Meir:

*The U.S. has a special relationship with Israel in the Middle East, really comparably only to that which it has with Britain over a wide range of world affairs ... We are in position to make clear to the Arabs that we will maintain our friendship with Israel and our security guarantees... I think it is quite clear that in the case of an invasion the United States would come to the support of Israel [1].*

The U.S. security guarantees to Israel include but not limited to military and economic towards Israel's "survival and security" at all times (*The Middle East*). The U.S. strives to douse escalating threat to Israel's defence and security through a number of measures such as by ensuring "limited arms sales by super- and great powers to nations of the Middle East region, broaden understanding between Israel, Saudi Arabia and Iraq, and strengthen Israel's deterrent by promoting strategic cooperation between U.S. and Israel, fund Israel's Anti-Theatre Ballistic Missiles (ATBMs), and sustain its warning to Syria and other would-be adversaries against Israel that should they attack Israel, Israel would not be restrained in its right to retaliate (Eke). During the Iraq-Kuwait crisis, when Saddam Hussein, in an Ostrich game, hauled SCUD missiles fitted with chemical poison into Tel Aviv and Haifa, Gerald Steinberg warned: "Saddam must know that while Israel turned the other cheek in 1991, it almost surely would not do so again... Restraint is not an option" [1,12].

Israel's relationship with the U.S. creates multiplier effects of U.S.

allies, such as Britain, Saudi Arabia, among others. Growing support from the U.S., Britain and others, to Israel, and the reclassification of Egypt among the moderate Arab States forced a 450-member Palestine National Movement, at its 19th Session, on 15 November 1988, to declare Palestine State, while tactically accepted the UNSC Resolutions 242 and 338, which recognised the Jewish State of Israel. The Movement also renounced terrorism (Eke) it seemed, to avoid the wrath of Israel Defence Forces (IDF) [1].

As the surviving global superpower, the U.S. retains the right and responsibility to act as a “diplomatic shapers” and “defenders of last resort” by using soft and hard measures to tailor Arab-Israeli relations in ways that protect and promote the American world order [12].

*It is unthinkable that the U.S. as a reliable ally of Israel would abandon Israel's interest in favour of the Arabs' in the Middle East.*

### Reality of convergent interests of two world leaders

Israel and the U.S. are two world powers with common history and special relations. The history and relationship between Israel and the U.S. led to the coincidence of electoral promises of two serving world leaders – United States President Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu – towards the official recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

During Israel's prime ministerial election campaign, Netanyahu, guided by Israeli national character and the deep sense of betrayal that consumed the lives of opposing actors, Egyptian President Anwar el-Saddat and Israeli Prime Minister and Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1981 and 1995, respectively over the unholy exchange of Sinai Peninsula from Israel to Egypt, made campaign promise to the Israeli electorate that Jerusalem will remain “the eternal capital of the Jewish people, the city will never again be divided [1]. To Israeli leaders, Jerusalem and some strategic positions are not subject to mere diplomatic formulae but an issue of life and death [13]. Again, the Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump, during his campaign did not mince words when he promised the American electorate and the world, at large, that the U.S. Embassy would move from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem as Israel's capital city.

Situating Trump's campaign promise, side by side with Netanyahu's, on the status of Jerusalem, would leave no analyst in doubt that the two world leaders were set to confront and remove the status of Jerusalem as the remaining sharp edge in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Trump's declaration, to all intents and purposes, put pressure on Palestinians, weakened their land-grab purist stance, and set them on the trajectory to speedy two-State negotiation platform towards accepting the obvious – Jerusalem as Israel's capital and, more likely face-saving actualisation of the putative Palestine State.

*Trump's American declaration based on convergence of interests between leaders of the two great countries – Israel and U.S. is a global phenomenon that should not be ignored in the two-State solution.*

### Reality of Israel's diplomatic fortitude

Under increased tension and anxiety following U.S. declaration, Palestinians exerted anger, rage and frustration and their sympathisers supported Hamas' call for Intifada against Israel, designated a ‘terrorist’ state by Turkey (*Aljazeera*). Expectedly, Israel pulled the rabbit foot off its caps and engaged in an unparalleled diplomatic contacts and reach to other global and consequential powers, especially those that voiced or could voice opposition to America's declaration on Jerusalem. On 10 December 2017, just four days since the declaration, Prime Minister

Netanyahu visited French President Emmanuel Macron and sued for French support to ‘give peace a chance.’ Again, Netanyahu visited European Foreign Ministers at Brussels and urged them to support America's declaration on Jerusalem [5].

Despite personal diplomatic route, some other moderate Islamic countries relishing their diplomatic ties with the U.S. and Israel, sued for diplomatic solution: Egyptian President invited Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to Cairo and discussed President Trump's declaration; and the Arab League called emergency meeting to chart a way forward. At best, the scenario revealed rage and frustration from Palestinians and their supporters, tongue-in-the-cheek condemnation by moderate Arab States and other sympathiser-States to the Palestinian cause, and finally, silence-acquiescence by States preferring non-committal stance.

*Israel's diplomatic fortitude, despite its ranking as a Great Power, is a special asset over and above a non-State actor which gives Israel an advantage, irrespective of perceived Arab conspiracy at the UNSC.*

### Reality of international law position on Jerusalem

A major source of disagreement on the U.S. declaration stems from international law. Some argued that Trump's declaration violates international law. The conclusion appear sweeping and peripheral to good grasp of the dynamics of international law because the view ignored the fact that many United Nations resolutions which constitute sources and precedents of international law on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict over Jerusalem, had been passed and remained disobeyed and unimplemented. For instance, since the Balfour Declaration, on 2 November 1917, in part, referred to the Palestinians as “Arab non-Jewish communities” (Rolef) and the UNSC Resolution 242 referred to them as refugees, they refused to accept the conditions [14].

Although resolution 242 urged for withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories it occupied in the Six-Day War of 1967, several accords – Camp David Accord (2000), Oslo Accords (1993), and Wye River Memorandum (1998) – initiated by the U.S. and Britain and midwife to open and cement diplomatic channels towards better relations between Israel and Palestine. Camp David Accords, which followed the UNSC Resolution 338 had hardly been faithfully implemented instead it led to the reclassification of Egypt as a moderate Arab State while it left Palestinians' hope for a Palestine State, with its capital in East Jerusalem, an unrealised dream [1].

Arab radicalism, in the face of Global War on Terror (GWOT), provides alternative for mirroring international law vision for Israel and Palestine capitals in the City of Jerusalem. Israelis live under attack from all fronts by antagonistic Arab neighbours, which raised tension to fever-pitch proportion and aptly captured by Yitzhak Rabin, in Eke as a situation nobody knows “where the enemy would strike next [1].” Under America's ‘principled realism’: the age of boldness to say and act in real terms. International law is in transition; if man had tried certain drugs to cure an ailment without success, logic expects he should change the drug; international law is in transition and the global mankind needs sanity and reality in international space of actors more than it romances polemics and confused idealism.

More so, Trump's declaration was consistent with the U.S. congressional enactments and reservations on UNSC's Resolutions, including Resolution 465 (1980) on Israel. The president acted in America's national interest hence his action was consolidated by congressional support. Beyond international law's recognition of abstention, there is also the proviso for veto power among the Five

Permanent (P5) members, which is open to the U.S. to block any UNSC decision that did not promote America's national interest and security, as in the case of Palestinian-Israeli relations. One, therefore, finds America's principled realism in tandem with the view that although precedents are virtues in international law, they are not one-stop event that precludes evolution and change; precedents are evolving with changes in real-world situations where strategies are dictated by interests and might is right.

*Unless, demands of Israel and Palestine are placed and treated evenly on the negotiation table, UNSC resolutions, heretofore refers as international law precedents will remain nothing but mere idealism, ideological dogma, parochial, and ineffectual on the road to peace.*

### Reality of Israel's economic power

Israel has very rich economy, driven and sustained by research and development (R & D) on technological innovation and creativity. Israel is leading in international innovation ranking based on the following factors:

- Quality of universities that provide the economy with human capital, scientific aptitude, and technological abilities;
- Collaboration between the universities and industry;
- Government support for commercial research and development (R & D); and
- Developed venture capital industry.

With relative advantage in technology, Israeli 73 companies are listed on Nasdaq, over 300 international companies established Israeli R & D centres, more than 5,000 start-ups with the world greatest concentration of high tech companies outside Silicon Valley, and leading in cyber security with 430 cyber security companies and start-ups [15]. In 2015, Israel's share of private investment in the field was 20% (second only to the U.S.). Israel is the world leader in desalination, waste water recycling, and drip irrigation (Jerusalem Press Club, 5 February 2017). Its gross domestic product, in 2017, was \$387.367 billion (nominal), with a growth rate of 4.4% and \$103,290 billion foreign reserve. These factors encourage innovation and boost Israel's economic power [16,17]. Israel ranks among the top 20 nations on the UN's Human Development Index. Israeli economic power is a great lever driving the country's military sophistication and staying power in case of any onslaught on it by any Arab neighbour or a group of them and for its domestic and international engagements.

*Israel has technologically-driven robust economy to exhaust its Arab neighbours combined.*

### Reality of Israel's defence and security strategy

The State of Israel has defence and security strategy to intimidate its Arab neighbours and ward off any crude weapon that could be thrown at its territory, population, and cherished values. Since Israel is located in the midst of antagonistic Arab neighbours, hostilities and conflict management have become Israel's pastime. Continuing attacks from Palestinians, developing threat of nuclear bomb attacks from Iran and Pakistan, and support from countries such as Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Libya, Algeria, Tunisia, Sudan, Morocco and Jordan are also serious threat to Israel's security.

In the past, many among Gaza and Lebanon have targeted Israeli civilian population with missile attacks to create insecurity for the State of Israel. Consequently, Israeli had had to tailor its defence and security

system into "anticipatory prevention and coalition crisis management" to be better able to protect its people and the state from Arabs' terrorist threat [18]. Israel, as a fundamental state policy, devised strategic means to protect lives and properties of its citizen. Beyond the strategic or long-range missile defence system, Israel started to develop special short-range missile defence system against Hamas and Hezbollah attacks respectively from Gaza and Lebanon [19]. Hezbollah remains an external courier of Iranian sponsorship to Hamas in their terrorist activities. Part of Israel's security threat is Iran's nuclear ambition in the Middle East, with missiles alleged to have attained sophistication. However, in what was popularly referred to as "Colin Powell email leak", Israel has 200 nuclear weapons "all targeted on Tehran".

IDF is made up of men and women, some of the most highly trained in the world with best weapons [20]. Thus Israel is the most technologically advanced military on Earth, with a culture of innovation and creativity founded on research and development (R&D) forced upon them by perpetual war. Today, having supplied the U.S. the first ever military drone in 1969, Israel has since 1985 become the largest exporter of drones with about 65% of the global market.

The perpetual war-cloud and Arab conspiracy that define Israel's existence in the Middle East provide the ample opportunity for Israel to progress from nuclear weapons of higher lethality to the development of all-weather anti-missile Iron Dome, mobile all-weather launchers (including Arrow 2, Arrow 3, Iron Beam, and David's Sling) multi-layered interceptor-missile defence system, capable of destroying enemy's rockets, artillery shells and mortars from distances of 4 kilometres (2.5 mi) to 70 kilometres (43 mi) away. Iron Dome is believed to be a defence solution to Arabs' short-range rocket threats and as much as 20 Iron Domes deployed would provide adequate defence for Israeli homeland against rocket attacks from its borders with Gaza and Lebanon.

Beyond the Iron Dome system, Israel has five most deadly systems that the IDF currently employ that makes it "a military power no one wants to mess with, including Merkava Tank, F-151 Thunder, Jericho III, Dolphin, and the Israeli soldier [21].

*The development and modernisation of Israel's defence and security strategy which made it a mini superpower, under the IDF, for anticipatory and coalition crisis management is to protect Israel and its people from Arab terrorist threat.*

### Conclusion

The study, from its empirical validation, left a number of findings, which includes, among others, that:

1. The U.S. Jerusalem declaration by President Trump, followed enduring U.S. foreign policy objective and national interest.
2. Though President Trump stated in clearest terms that delay in recognising Jerusalem as Israel's capital was injurious to the peace process, U.S. was not averse to Israeli-Palestinian two-State final status negotiation.
3. Generations of Israel's historic leadership and experience makes it unlikely for Israel to give up its sworn determination to build "Greater Israel" for Middle East peace.
4. It is unthinkable that the U.S. would abandon Israel, a "friendly" and reliable ally, in the face of Arabs' threats against Israel security in the Middle East.
5. Trump's American Jerusalem declaration attests strongly to

convergence of interests between leaders of two great powers – Israel and U.S. – which strengthened Israel's bargaining chips in the Israeli-Palestinians two-State solution.

6. Despite Arabs' conspiracy at the UNSC, Israel's great-power diplomatic fortitude was an asset over Palestine, a non-State observer.
7. Unless, demands of Israel and Palestine are placed side by side and treated evenly on the negotiation table, UNSC resolutions, referred to as international law 'precedents', would remain nothing but idealism, ideological dogma, parochial, lame, and ineffectual towards achievement of a two-State solution.
8. Israel's technologically-driven robust economy, military mini-superpower status, and defence and security strategy based on anticipatory and coalition crisis management constitute critical elements of great-power to exhaust Arab neighbours in the effort to protect the State of Israel, people and cherished values from Arab terrorist threat.

From the findings, one can correctly assert that Israeli-American alliance on the status of Jerusalem when situated with the realities of Israel's national character and cohesion, military-industrial productivity backed by science and technology, quality of leadership and governance, quality of diplomacy which is the active element that binds other sources of power into an integral whole, illuminate great powers' *realpolitik* of "groupism", "egoism", and "power-centrism" in international relations [2].

### Diplomatic Way Forward to Two-State Solution

Parties to the Israeli-Palestinian political and security conundrum should avoid polemics and work with realities on the ground to expedite the two-State solution. Delays in achieving diplomatic solution through justice to both Israelis and Palestinians which culminated into overextension of time for an all-time solution was building into more frustration, likely to result into avoidable Third World War.

The world community is at liberty to alleviate Palestinians' developmental challenges through good will of development partners, which may include Israel. It is high time the global community faced reality, removed narrow interests that fuelled the politics that sustained the Israeli-Palestinian division, hatred and conflagration. Like any other evil machination, terrorism, be it *Intifada* or in any other form, does not pay and cannot be rewarded, if the world must be a safe place for all.

The historical realities of Jerusalem as original home of the Jews, and the State of Israel's historic leaders, alliance formation, convergence of interest with world superpower, diplomatic fortitude, understanding of international law precedents on Jerusalem, economic power, defence and security strategy, in the face of Arabs' conspiracy and terrorism, in a time of GWOT, point to the fact that any real two-State solution between Israel and Palestine, over the status of Jerusalem, places Israel on the path of victory; it negates international law principles of *pacta sunt servanda* for Palestinians and their supporters to cling on to purist

claim to East Jerusalem, as capital of not-yet created State of Palestine, in order to sustain Arab-Muslims' polemics, distraction, and terrorism against the existence of the State of Israel, people and cherished values. The international community should embrace the American pathway and Israeli diplomatic finesse towards quick, real and enduring resolution that will put the Palestinian-Israeli conundrum behind humanity for regional and global security.

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