



## The Influence of United States Foreign Policy During Donald Trump's Leadership on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Aldo Yosia<sup>1</sup>, Gili Argenti<sup>2</sup>, Prilla Marsingga<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Student of Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang

<sup>2,3</sup>Lecturer Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang

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### Abstract

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*This research analyzes the influence and policies issued by Donald Trump that make conflicts appear more and more. The policies issued by Donald Trump have an impact on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. With the superiority and support of the United States towards Israel, Palestine seems to be an 'enemy' and Israel as a 'friend' so this policy only becomes an obstacle to the peace process of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Because the United States is a superpower its foreign policy greatly influences international decisions, therefore various criticisms have not only been made by Palestine, but Donald Trump's actions have also drawn hot criticism from Middle Eastern countries and also countries in the world.*

**Keywords:** Policy, Donald Trump, United States, Israeli-Palestinian

(\*) Corresponding Author:

[2010631260016@student.unsika.ac.id](mailto:2010631260016@student.unsika.ac.id)

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## INTRODUCTION

The conflict between Israel and Palestine has caught the attention of the world community to this day. The conflict began when the Ottoman Turks in Palestine fell into the hands of the British because Turkey lost the war against Britain during World War I. So, the LBB gave the British full rights to manage the Palestinian territories until Palestine could stand alone. However, both of them caused conflict between Palestine and the Jews because Britain issued a Declaration called the Balfour Declaration on November 2, 1917. The declaration stated that Arthur James Balfour rejoiced on behalf of the British Government for the aspirations of the Zionists which had been approved by the British Government Cabinet. Britain agreed to establish a homeland for the Jews in the Palestinian territories. Because for the UK the declaration does not harm the rights of the population and religion of the non-Jewish community in these countries (M. Nahri, 2014: 5). The conflict between Israel and Palestine is not religious, but the territorial conflict and the city of Jerusalem is the area that caused the Cold War between Israel and Palestine. The city is a sacred city for Muslims and Jews, so Palestine and Israel are aggressively fighting over the area. In the city, there is a historic building the Aqsa Mosque which is considered sacred to all Muslims.

Many ways have been done by the United Nations to defuse the cold war between Israel and Palestine, including the most shocking in the world when the United Nations held the Oslo Negotiations (1993) which is better known as the Ghaza–Ariha Negotiations. In 2017, the conflict in the Gaza Strip escalated and caused many victims from both sides. At the end of 2017, surprisingly the President of the United States, Donald Trump stated in his speech that the Palestinian-Israeli

conflict has always used the same formula and he claimed that he had a new approach to realize peace between Israel and Palestine, namely by recognizing the City of Jerusalem as the official capital of Israel and also the relocation of the United States Embassy to the City of Jerusalem, which was originally in the City of Tel Aviv (Nytimes, 2017). Instead of making a decision that defuses the two parties to the conflict, Trump's statement seems heavy on one side so that it triggers anger, especially on the Palestinian side, Trump's decision is detrimental to Palestine and benefits Israel.

Of course, Trump's policy has sparked criticism from the international community. Trump's policy is considered to have violated the 1967 resolution which talks about the status of the Jerusalem area which is in the middle zone without any recognition from both sides. The decision sparked criticism and protests from several countries such as Turkey, Argentina, and other countries (including Indonesia) who felt Trump's actions could trigger a humanitarian crisis (Ruhiat, 2020: 2). No wonder Donald Trump has received various rejections from countries around the world for unilateral decisions, and Trump does not see the humanitarian side in policymaking. In addition, Trump's policy not only has an impact on Israel and Palestine but also has an impact on America's bilateral relations with other countries such as Indonesia (Tim, 2019).

The roles and personal characteristics of individuals, especially national leaders, have a significant impact on foreign decision-making in any country and ultimately on interactions between countries. Individual actions can affect events on the international stage and will have an impact if the political institutions in a country are unstable, still newly formed, in a state of crisis, or collapse under unusual conditions of trouble. If in a country the barriers are non-existent or small, then individuals in that country will increasingly influence foreign decision-making. The personal characteristics of the leader or individual in this international relations actor determine the reaction to the existing situation. Cautious leaders tend to be timid and will respond more slowly than leaders who like to take risks (Ambarwati, 2016: 121).

In this case, the individual actor is Donald Trump, who makes unilateral claims about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict with his practical characteristics and propensity to take risks. His foreign policy was influential, but it caused extreme confusion and chaos over the territorial dispute with Israel. Here it becomes clear that the role of individuals, especially leaders, in foreign decisions is very influential both at the national and international levels.

## **METHODS**

This research is research that uses qualitative research methods in the form of data collection because this method is the most suitable for use. The reason for using this method is because it is by the purpose of this paper, namely to explain the influence of the policies issued by Donald Trump as the President of the United States of America on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This is comparable to the purpose of qualitative research which in its method does not use data as an analytical tool but rather words.

These data are taken from written sources such as journal articles and online news that correlate with the object being discussed. These data were obtained

through the Internet. The data sources are magazine articles that are closely related to the topic of US Government policy between the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the United States, and the Trump leadership. The reason for choosing an article with this theme is because it is very supportive to broaden knowledge about the issues of study being discussed.

## **RESULTS & DISCUSSION**

### ***Results***

#### **Moving The United States Embassy to Jerusalem**

America's decision to make this transfer is believed to have several political implications. One of them is that the decision-making is a direct form of America's official recognition that Jerusalem is the official capital of Israel, in the form of the US government's refusal to justify Palestinian political rights to Jerusalem. The decision was also considered inconsistent with several UN resolutions on the status of Jerusalem. The embassy move is also seen as a "threat" to efforts to find a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and will create a new wave of violence in the Middle East. This is because the international community only recognizes Tel Aviv as the capital of Israel and all foreign embassies are located in this city. This is in contrast to the actions of the Israeli government which declared Jerusalem as the capital city, including East Jerusalem which was designated by the Palestinians as the capital of the future (Kompas, 2017).

The United States is a member of the United Nations Security Council whose job is to maintain world peace. Therefore, the United States should be able to end the conflict between Israel and Palestine. However, the policies made by Donald Trump are considered by many countries as a step backward and only exacerbate the tension between Palestine and Israel.

The Trump administration's policy of declaring Jerusalem the capital of Israel, moving the US embassy to Jerusalem, and recognizing Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights, only slows the peace process (Tim, 2019). Because Jerusalem is a central issue of conflict in the Middle East. Trump's statement regarding the Israel-Palestine issue only makes the impact on the emerging conflicts even more heated. The influence of Trump's policy has triggered various conflicts, including:

1. Make the Arab allies react strongly because the Arab allies consider Jerusalem to be a holy land, not just a contested capital city so that the Arab allies condemn the United States.
2. Iran calls on countries, especially Muslim countries including Saudi Arabia to fight Trump's unilateral claim that Iran is willing to be a bulwark against Israel's power in the region.
3. Trump's policies will only spoil the course of politics in the Middle East.
4. The consequences that will be faced by the United States are being criticized, especially in Muslim countries, and will affect the bilateral relations between the two parties will be disrupted. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), which is a member of 57 countries, strongly opposes the United States' unilateral claim to make Jerusalem the capital of Israel by establishing East Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine.

5. The same thing was followed by the attitude of the European Union which agreed to reject America's recognition. The European Union considers America to be only complicating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and violating peace resolutions.
6. The United States does not receive any support from the international community, including China, which incidentally is a world economic country currently throwing the support given to Palestine.

In addition, the actions taken by the United States in connection with the relocation of the embassy have caused mixed reactions from countries in the world such as Turkey, angered by the relocation of the United States embassy to Jerusalem and the live ammunition used by Israel against Palestinian protesters in Gaza, withdrawing the two Turkish ambassadors. from the United States and Israel (Voaindonesia, 2018). Kuwait also wrote a statement expressing "outrage and sadness" in the killing of dozens of Palestinians by Israeli forces, calling for an independent investigation which the United States rejected. Britain has also expressed its disapproval of the United States' decision to move the embassy to Jerusalem and recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, where the last peace agreement in the Middle East is pending, through Prime Minister Theresa May's spokeswoman (Voa, 2018).

The world community realizes that if they take the wrong attitude, the resulting conflict will be even greater. Therefore, the world community agreed to jointly resolve the conflict because world peace is the responsibility of the world community. Now Trump, America, and Israel are only isolated from the international world.

### **Israel Lobby Against the United States**

The study of the Israeli lobby in the formulation of US foreign policy towards the Middle East has not been widely researched and rarely discussed. Mentioning Mearsheimer's view that the United States' foreign policy towards the Middle East is by no means neutral, especially regarding the existence of Israel. Instead, it becomes a burden and deviates from the main national interest of the United States itself (Mearsheimer, 2008: 4).

One of the biggest causes that influence the executive or legislative policies of the United States in formulating its foreign policy is the strong Israeli lobby group against the United States. This lobby group seeks to protect and safeguard Israel by approaching the United States (Ramadhan, 2017: 145). This lobby group wants the Jews to spread their wings and get the territory they want by using all of the United States presidential candidates to support Israel in the campaign.

The lobby also has a great influence on government agencies. This power is based, among other things, on the influence of Jewish voters in presidential elections. Although the population is small (less than 3%), it makes a massive election contribution to candidates from both parties. The Washington Post once estimated that Democratic presidential candidates "rely on Jewish supporters to provide up to 60 percent of funding." In addition, voters have a high turnout and in large states such as California, Florida, Illinois, New York, and Pennsylvania. Presidential candidates try not to disappoint voters because they matter in a tough election (Mearsheimer, 2006).

The main issue in this issue is the role of pro-Israel lobby groups in lobbying the United States' foreign policy in the Middle East. Its purpose is to explain the process of lobbying in the formulation of foreign policy until it has political consequences in favor of Israel.

In essence, the vision and mission of the pro-Israel lobby organization are to educate the parliament, senate, academics or students, and media professionals that the bilateral relationship between the United States and Israel is very vital. One example is that AIPAC has a program to establish Israel as a strategic and rational asset in the foreign policy of the United States and to serve the interests of both countries in fighting terrorism and preventing Iran's nuclear program. AIPAC has used a shared vision and mission as a legitimate tool to convince America's political elite that Israel is a strategic partner (Mearsheimer, 2008: 111). The goal of the lobby is to protect the interests of Israel, not the United States.

AIPAC (The American Israel Public Affairs Committee) is one of the Israeli lobby groups that has successfully lobbied several times. AIPAC has approximately 60,000-65,000 members spread across several regions in the United States and is expected to continue to increase every year, now its members have reached 100,000 and have 17 offices in the United States (McCormick, 2010: 517-518). With so many members of the Israeli lobby, it is possible that the United States' strong support (especially the head of state who previously led the AIPAC) to help Israel reach the pinnacle of success. Because AIPAC members are entrepreneurs, it is easy for AIPAC to carry out their actions, one of which is that AIPAC succeeded in making George Walker Bush from the Republican Party become President of the United States for the second time in 2004 thanks to the injection of funds given every campaign and political lobbying. between US presidential candidates and AIPAC. In addition, AIPAC also managed to keep Jimmy Carter, the 39th President of the United States, without being impressed by the lobby group. Carter appointed George Ball as Minister of Foreign Affairs because of his critical attitude towards Israel but because of his fear of the Israeli lobby, Carter finally only made Ball as Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs (Mahally, 2003: 378). This is enough to prove that AIPAC is indeed an Israeli lobbying organization that has always been very strong and not kidding, AIPAC has a very big influence on the United States even half of the United States policy is about defending Israel.

By entering one of the AIPAC lobbies, Donald Trump managed to say that Jerusalem is part of the center of the Israeli government because only Donald Trump can keep his promises in the campaign. Because someone who will become a candidate for President of the United States must first make an appointment with AIPAC or other Israeli lobbying organizations. AIPAC members will assist candidates with campaign capital on the condition that the presidential candidate must be pro-Israel when campaigning (Hasan, 2017). From Trump's statement, it is clear that there is a mutually beneficial relationship between the two parties. The United States is trying to help reduce conflicts in Israel and Palestine to maintain its existence as a superpower but does not abandon the main goal of fulfilling the promise to make Jerusalem the capital city. Trump's decision regarding the city of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel on December 6 2017 was bold, because previously no US president had publicly acknowledged this (Fadlia, 2019). Trump's acknowledgment is not approved and condemned by countries in the world, fearing

that this decision will lead to a third world war later. Finally, on December 21, 2017, an emergency session of the United Nations General Assembly was held which expressed its rejection of Trump's unilateral decision.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of the research described above, it can be concluded that the United States is a superpower, and all of its policies, including the Trump administration's policy of declaring Jerusalem the capital of Israel, moving the US embassy to Jerusalem, and recognizing Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights, have only slowed down the process. peace between the two of them. For Palestinians, Trump is only seen as destroying international relations and politics. It was the worst thing he did for Palestine.

The conflict also continued with many conflicts from countries that considered the United States to be unfair and took unilateral steps. The United States siding with Israel is not without reason, the United States, especially Donald Trump, did make such policies to fulfill campaign promises when he became a presidential candidate, but this unilateral policy led to conflicts that occurred even more heated due to the influence of Trump's policy, all countries who did not like his decision condemned him and it was clear that the policies made by Donald Trump only had a bad impact on the United States itself by disrupting bilateral relations between countries or with Islamic countries and the image of the United States itself which was seen falling in the eyes of other countries. Moreover, President Donald Trump will be increasingly hated by the people of the world, including Indonesia itself.

The Israeli lobby can be categorized in terms of advantages as input for foreign policy. The Israel lobby serves as the only source of access to information used as input for US foreign policy regarding this phenomenon. This is inseparable from the financial and political power of the competent Jewish lobby. The lobby, directly and indirectly, uses its capabilities to position the US political elite as pro-Israel during public opinion and elections (Ramadhan, 2017). The United States political elite, dominated by the almost neoconservative Republican Party, has its political interests. Domestically, they want to maintain the status quo of their members while promoting democracy and culture in the United States oppressively and globally. See Hezbollah, Hamas, and Iran as competitors. Meanwhile, the Israeli lobby group needs the United States' power at the United Nations to protect Israel's interests in the Middle East. Therefore, it can be concluded that the interest factor is the most important contributor to the formation of US foreign policy, especially in the Middle East.

During the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the United States was an active participant in the resolution of both conflicts. However, in more than 60 years of conflict and involvement in US conflicts, the conflict has not subsided and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has reached a stalemate under the leadership of Donald Trump (Unairnews, 2020). Palestine's misfortune and Israel's victory have become clear evidence of how influential Donald Trump's policies are not only for Palestine but also for the citizens of the world.

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