

CHAPTER III

THE DYNAMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN JORDAN AND ISRAEL

In this chapter, the author will explain about the dynamic relationship between Jordan and Israel. The relation between both countries were filled by tensions and conflicts, yet there was also times when they held on to the agreement they made during the war. This chapter will explain the relations between Jordan and Israel since the first Arab-Israeli War, which is the 1948 War where both of them were involved. This chapter then will explain about 1967 War, and also the condition and policy post 1967 War.

A. The Emergence of Conflict

The relations between Jordan and Israel before the signature of 1994 Jordan-Israel Peace Treaty was not always good. It is already explained that the establishment of Jewish land in Palestine was not welcomed by the other Arab nations. Here, the author will explain about some historical events that can show the relations between Jordan and Israel before 1994.

1. Background

The 1948 war was the first Arab-Israeli war between the State of Israel and the five coalition of Arab nations, they are Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, and Jordan. The 1948 war was acknowledged by Israel as War of Independence. The war occurred in the newly established Israel, or former Palestinian mandate. The root of 1948 War actually began since the Balfour Declaration 1917 which declared about Jewish homeland in Palestine region. But then it was escalated

quickly after the United Nations Partition Plan and the declaration of independence of State of Israel.

In 1947, the United Nations adopted Resolution 181 about Partition Plan for Palestine Mandate. The Partition Plan included:

- a. The creation of the Arab and Jewish States not later than 1 October 1948.
- b. Division of Palestine into eight parts: three were allotted to the Arab State and three to the Jewish State; the seventh, the town of Jaffa, was to form an Arab enclave within Jewish territory.
- c. The international regime for Jerusalem, the eighth division, to be administered by the United Nations Trusteeship Council (United Nations, 2016).

The resolution also stated withdrawal of British armed forces in the region, it also stated partition of the boundaries between Israel-Palestine and Jerusalem. The outcome of the plan which was the partition of both states should happened two months after the withdrawal of British armed forces in the region. It is stated in the part I of the Partition Plan that the British armed forces should leave the region not later than 1 August 1948. The Partition Plan did not only regulate the delineation of the boundaries of Israel-Palestine and Jerusalem, but also suggest for economic union, and protection of religious and minority rights for both states (United Nations, 2016).

Figure 3.1 Map of the United Nations Partition Plan

General Assembly Resolution 181



Source: [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/181\(II\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/181(II))

Unfortunately, the Partition Plan was rejected by the other Arab leaders. The other Arab leaders and governments did not seem to accept the decision of the Partition Plan. Soon after the British withdrew their armed forces from the region on 14 May 1948, Israel announced their independence as the State of Israel with the region of where it had been plotted by the Partition Plan.

2. The 1948 War Break Out

1948 War occurred on 15 May 1948 until 10 March 1949. There were series of battle in 1948 War such as Battle of Tzemach which involved Syrian Army, Battle of Negba which involved Egyptian troops, and also Battle of Latrun which involved Jordanian Legion.

One day after the establishment of the State of Israel, five coalition of Arab nations which consisted of Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, and Jordan marched troops to invade the newly established state. The Lebanese and Syrian troops attacked the northern part of the region. Syrian troops precisely attacked Tzemach in the north-east. The southern part was attacked by Egyptian army precisely along the Gaza strip and Kfar Darom. Iraqi troops attacked Kibbutz Gesher near the Naharayim Bridge. And Jordanian Legion attacked Jerusalem.

It was mentioned before about the desire of King Abdullah in a tacit meeting between King Abdullah I of Jordan and Golda Meir, the Acting Head of the Jewish Agency's Political Department. In the meeting, King Abdullah I of Jordan said that he wanted to annex the whole Palestine. Then, on 28 May 1948, King Abdullah I of Jordan made his word come true by successfully conquered the Old City of Jerusalem which was allotted for Palestine under the United Nations General Assembly resolution 181.

The inhabitants of the Old City was ethnically cleaned. All noncombatants were expelled to West Jerusalem, while 300 defenders of Haganah, Jews' underground defense organization, were imprisoned and sent to Jordan. It was not only the inhabitants that was captured and expelled by Jordanian Legion, they also demolished the buildings in the Old City (Plen, 2012).

The war continued in many different areas and involved different army from the coalition of five Arab countries. In this Arab-Israeli War 1948, there were truces called by the United Nation Security Council. The first truce began on 11 June 1948 and lasted on 8 July 1948. There was no agreement reached throughout the first truce. Meanwhile, during the period of the first truce, newly established Israel managed to organize and train its forces. Israel finally had considerable arms. Then on 8 July 1948, the war resumed, and this phase of 1948 War was known as the Ten Days War, since the war just lasted until 18 July 1948 before the second truce happened in the same exact date, and lasted on 15 October 1948.

The war still going on after the second truce ended until finally, after series of battle and months of war, the coflicting parties, Israel and coalition of five Arab countries, agreed to conduct separate armistice agreement. The armistice agreement was not only for Arab countries that invaded Israel but it also had direct border with Israel. The countries that conducted the armistice agreement were Israel-Egypt, Israel-Syria, Israel-Lebanon, and Israel-Jordan. The other Arab countries who sent troops and invaded Israel that did not have direct border with Israel did not conduct armistice agreement with Israel (Isseroff, 2008).

B. The Establishment of Jordan-Israel Armistice Agreement

The Jordanian-Israeli Armistice Agreement talks began in the early of March 1949. Armistice itself is defined as agreement to stop the fight in certain time. Armistice should be proposed by the opposing side of the war and armistice could also be understood as truce.

The first talk of this armistice agreement occurred in Rhodes Island between Jordanian and Israeli representatives. In this armistice agreement, Israel raised the most important issue regarding on the conquest of Jerusalem by Jordanian Legion on 28 May 1948. The issue was about the free access to Jewish Holy Places in Jerusalem. The armistice agreement then finally signed on 3 April 1949 (American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise, 1998).

The armistice agreement between Jordan and Israel was supposed to bring peace into both of them. But in fact, both Jordan and Israel did several violation towards the armistice agreement. The important issue raised by Israel in term of free access to Jewish Holy Places in Jerusalem did not come into force. The armistice agreement also stated about the free access to use the cemetery on the Mountain of Olives which also violated in the reality. The Hebrew University and Hadassah hospital along with the cemetery on Mount of Olives was not open for Jewish burial.

The peace that hoped by both sides was not reached since Jordan did more violations than Israel did. Both Jordan and Israel violated many things in the agreement. According to Mixed Armistice Commissions' discussion in 1952, Jordan did 19 violations and Israel did 12 violations towards the armistice agreement. Although there are several violations did by both sides, the armistice lines between Israeli forces and Jordanian forces could survive until the 1967 War (United Nations Security Council, 1953).

C. The Rise of Third Arab-Israeli War

1967 Arab-Israeli War was the third Arab-Israeli War which was well known as the Six-Day War. The first Arab-Israeli War was the 1948 War and the second war was 1956 War. Yet, since Jordan was not involved in the second war, the author would like to jump into another conflict that influenced the relations between Jordan and Israel, which was 1967 War. 1967 War was truly a remarkable event both for Israel and Jordan. The difference is, for Israel, the war brought victory and joy, while for Jordan, it was the opposite.

1. Background

Eventhough the war broke out in the middle of 1967, the root of it was actually there since years before. The relations among Israel and other Arab countries were never really settled in peace since 1948 War, eventhough there was a separated armistice agreement among them. It was proven by the occurence of 1956 War and also the other minor conflicts. The tension grew high again when in 1963 Israel announced their intention of the diversion of the Jordan River (Wolf, 2000).

In order to respond to Israel intention of diverting the Jordan River, the other Arab countries decided in Cairo summit 1964, to counter Israel intention by diverting the water of Jordan River from Lake Tiberias to Lebanon and Syria. They understood that the decision might trigger military reaction from Israel. Thus, in this Cairo summit, they also created joint Arab forces. Arab countries who joined this forces were Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan. The forces then were given name as United Arab Command (Dasgupta, 1988).

Besides forming the United Arab Command, Cairo summit also resulted in the establishment of Palestine Liberation Organization. Palestine Liberation Organization was the idea of Arab leaders who thought that Palestine needed this kind of platform to organize and manage the movement and effort of Palestine (Permanent Observer Mission of The State of Palestine, 2017). The only thing that came into mind of King Hussein was that Palestine Liberation Organization should be under control of United Arab Command in order to prevent the PLO from dragging other Arab countries into another war with Israel.

Other than Palestine Liberation Organization, the mids of 1960 was also remarked as the rise of Palestinian *fedayeen*. *Fedayeen* itself is plural Arabic word from singular form *fida'i* which means “one who risks his life voluntarily”. Thus, Palestinian *fedayeen* was defined as Palestinian freedom fighter, or people who fought for the freedom of Palestine. The *fedayeen* was also known as Palestinian guerrilla group which was the symbol of Palestinian movement. The *fedayeen* caused chaos which later led into the 1967 War.

In 1965, Palestinian *fedayeen* installed explosives that destroyed a section of pipeline which once would be used by Israel to divert the water of Jordan River into Israel (Nassar, 2010). This action by *fedayeen* caused reaction from Israel in the end of 1966 when they attacked border village of Samu on the West Bank as the respond to what had been done by the *fedayeen*. In the attack of Israel on Samu, Jordanian army failed to fend the region. Jordan then was blamed for this incident. Radio broadcast from surrounding Arab countries demanded riots in several major cities of Jordan as a protest of the failure of the regime in defending Samu.

2. The 1967 War Break Out

In the beginning of 1967, the tension was already high. The rise of *fedayeen* was increasing the number of terrors toward Israel. Besides the *fedayeen*, Israel also received number of terrors from Syria. Israeli, at usual, did not stay silent with terrors that approached them. Aside from attacking the village of Samu in the end of 1966, Israel also shot down six MiG 21 fighters which belonged to Syria in Golan Height and Damascus in April 1967. The action taken by Israel successfully made Soviet Union believed that Israel was going to invade Syria (Hart, 2015).

Later on May 1967, Soviet Union officially reported to both Syrian and Egyptian government about the intention of Israel in attacking Syria. Syria, on the other side, demanded Egyptian President, Gamal Abdul Nasser, to confront Israel on their behalf. Although the information from Soviet Union was inaccurate, Egyptian government surprisingly demanded United Nations Emergency Force

(UNEF) to withdraw from Israeli's border. Along with the withdrawal of UNEF, the Egyptian government closed the Straits of Tiran which was the only shipping route of Israel to Asia and Iran (Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs United States Department of State, 2009).

After the closure of Straits of Tiran and the deployment of Egyptian troops in Gaza strip and Sinai, Israel launched a surprise attack on 5 June 1967 which ended up with Israel conquered Sinai and remarked as the first day of 1967 War. Before the news spread out that Egypt did not survive the surprise attack from Israel, Egypt sent message to King Hussein of Jordan in order to distort the fact that Egypt lost the battle. Egypt stated that 75 percent of Israel's plane had been shot down and now it was the time for Jordan to attack.

Israel successfully repelled the attack of Jordanian army. And in the third day of war, 7 June 1967, Israeli troops conquered eastern Jerusalem, including the Old City that had been under control of Jordanian government since 1948 War. In the same exact day, Israel also broke the blockade of Straits of Tiran. The strength of Israeli army was really proven when in the next day, Israel Defense Forces (IDF) took over Hebron and other West Bank towns. The fight continued on the fifth day. And on 10 June 1967, precisely on the sixth day of war, Israel conquered Golan Heights and all parties agreed to cease-fire.

There were a lot of losses suffered by Jordan as the result of 1967 War. Compared to the other countries who were involved in the war, Jordan seemed to be the one who lost the most. After 1967 War, Jordan economy decreased significantly because of some factors. First, 1967 War brought so many

Palestinian refugees into Jordan, to be precise more than 300.000 Palestinian Arabs. Second, Jordan relied their agricultural sector on the land which was located in the West Bank and capable of producing 60-65 percent of its fruits and vegetables. Other than agricultural land, West Bank also held half of Jordan industrial establishment. And third, the tourism industry that suffered the effect of the war since Jerusalem fell into the hand of Israel. All of the things that lost worth approximately 38 percent of Jordan's Gross National Product (GNP). Thus, the outcome of 1967 War for Jordan was the devastated economy from the loss of West Bank and the wave of refugees (The Royal Hashemite Court, 1998).

D. Jordan-Israel Reconciliation Process

Right after the end of 1967 War, Israeli government expected to establish a new peace talk with the other Arab countries. But, the condition was different from the other Arab countries. Egypt and Syria did not want to concede anything to Israel. In order to regain their allies back, Egypt and Syria even resupplied their arms massively. And as the result of that, five Arab leaders agreed to be on Egypt and Syria side. With the regained allies, Gamal Abdul Nasser declared on July 23 to continue the battle with Israel. He asserted "We shall never surrender and shall not accept any peace that means surrender. We shall preserve the rights of the Palestinian" (Knopf, 1996).

Responding to the statement of Egypt to continue the struggle against Israel, later on 29 August until 1 September 1967, thirteen Arab states gathered at a summit in Khartoum, Sudan. The summit called for the continuation of Arab state's struggle against Israel. In the summit, there was one famous condition

known as “Three No’s”, which means “no peace with Israel, no negotiations with Israel, no recognition of Israel”. The conditions portrayed the feeling of Egypt and the other Arab countries who did not want to surrender that easy and did not want to admit that they were defeated by Israel. The other Arab countries showed the world that they were victimized by Israel rather than defeated by Israel.

In order to prevent another clash among states in the region and establish peace among them, United Nations Security Council proposed resolution 242 to affirm the territory of every state in the region and regulate about the refugee problem. According to resolution 242, there are two principles that have to be implemented in order to achieve peace. They are:

- a. Withdrawal of Israel armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict; and
- b. Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every state in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force (United Nations).

From all parties involving in the conflict before, Egypt and Jordan accepted the resolution. Israel also accepted the resolution but with one condition that the withdrawal of Israel could only be achieved through direct negotiation with other Arab state. In the other hand, Syria and Palestine rejected and criticized the resolution.

1967 War resulted in the great loss for Jordan. Thus, it was obviously affected Jordanian policy towards Israel at the time. With the change in their policy, Jordan's priority has changed into regaining what had been lost in the war, precisely the West Bank and Jerusalem. But, Jordan faced another problem. The battle of Karame on 1968 had increased the popularity of PLO and Jordan needed to deal with the challenge of managing the PLO's militant factions.

The situation between Jordan and PLO brought Jordan into a situation of chaos and disorder. After several chaotic events between Jordan and PLO, in September 1970, Jordan successfully defeated and expelled PLO from the area. Thus, after some hardship dealing with the PLO, it was finally time for Jordan to focus on Israel and regain the territories occupied by Israel. At the time, King Hussein of Jordan was ready to sign peace treaty with Israel. It was mutual between Israel and Jordan. Israel also considered to make peace with Jordan and was ready to concede the land back to Jordan, although it was easier to said than done.

The mutual sense between Jordan and Israel in the establishment of peace was based on the mutual benefit that could be achieved through peace among them. But peace could not be conducted and Jordan and Israel needed to maintain a security regime since Israel could not meet Jordan's condition to conduct peace. That condition of Israel and Jordan was the one that had dominated Jordan-Israel relations since 1967 War until then in 1994, Jordan and Israel signed a peace treaty which was ending the 46 years war between both countries. The peace

treaty was signed by King Hussein of Jordan and Israel Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin in desert area of Wadi Araba.