

Abstract

This dissertation examines the developments of the European Union (EU) Foreign Policy towards the Palestinian Issue from Madrid Peace Conference in 1991 till the second Palestinian Legislative Elections held in 2006 and the changing of the Palestinian Political Map. By examining this politically important case, I clarify the significant political, economic, and security roles that the EU Foreign Policy played in Palestine and its implications on the Palestinian – Israeli Conflict in specific and the Middle East Peace Process in general.

The time period studied includes the European integration process and the different European structures and bodies, the development of the EU Foreign Policy and the decision making process in the institution, the relations between Europe and the Arab World including Europe's political involvement in the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict. Additionally, it includes the European economic and financial contribution (Economic Diplomacy) to the Palestinian Authority as a Political tool in helping in the establishment of the Palestinian future State.

I use three major research strategies: (1) Descriptive, (2) Analytical, and Comparative. Data have been collected from different sources including books, magazines, published EU reports and documents, and online websites.

This dissertation challenges the argument that the EU Foreign Policy towards the Palestinian Cause is ineffective and unproductive. Some view that Europe's role in the Palestinian – Israeli Conflict as 'weak' and did not help in ending the conflict between both parties, but these opinions are not well informed about the EU structures and the dynamics of the decision making process. The EU Foreign Policy towards the Palestinian cause attempted to use the Economic Diplomacy as a tool to influence the conflict and to help the Palestinian Authority to build the institutions of the future Palestine state.