

From Sinai to the Golan Heights

A comparative analysis of Israeli peace negotiations

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IV

Abstract

This thesis is a comparative analysis of the peace negotiations between Israel and Egypt, and Israel and Syria. The objective of the study is to explain why Israel managed to obtain a peace agreement with Egypt, but not with Syria. The two cases are seemingly similar in content and the parties' positions towards each. The major difference lies in the negotiation outcome; while Egypt achieved a peace agreement and regained the control over the Sinai Peninsula, Syria is without a peace agreement and still claims sovereignty over the Israeli occupied Golan Heights.

The examination focuses on the time periods 1977-1979, when the Israeli-Egyptian negotiations were undertaken, and 1991-2000, when Israel and Syria conducted their long period of peace talks. Relying on negotiation theory in order to explain the negotiation outcomes, I have structured the thesis around three explanatory factors. The first is bargaining strength which constitutes five sub-categories that is directed towards negotiation tactics. These are; degree of impatience, risk of breakdown, inside option, asymmetrical information, and issue delinkage. All of the five categories represent tactical behaviours that determine the party's bargaining strength and may be employed to take advantage of the opponent. These behaviours are directed to influence the opponent in an attempt to achieve the best possible agreement. In addition to the bargaining strength, I explore the role of the mediator. In both negotiations the US worked as a mediator between Israel and the Arab states. As a powerful third party with close connections to Israel, the US may have affected the negotiation outcome. The final explanatory factor is concentrated towards the Israeli public opinion. This factor is further divided into two subcategories; commitment tactics and domestic politics. The former constitutes a behaviour tactic in order to create credibility behind a party's negotiation position, and the latter is a simplified form of Putnam's two-level game.

The findings from this examination indicate that Israel, to a certain degree, employed the same negotiation tactics in both peace negotiations. However, the major difference seems to be that while Egypt was affected by the negotiation tactics, Syria occurred indifferent towards the Israeli behaviour. Another difference that seemed to be crucial for the Israeli position was the public's attitude towards the Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights. While Israeli public supported the territorial concession of the Sinai Peninsula, they opposed the concessions of the Golan Heights.

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All remaining errors remain my sole responsibility

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1 Introduction

The Middle East conflict represents one of the longest and most comprehensive conflicts in the modern world today. A central actor in this everlasting conflict is Israel, which was born, as Eisenberg and Caplan explains, a “pariah” in the region (Eisenberg and Caplan, 1998: 91). As with most countries in the world, Israel’s underlying interest has been to normalise its relations to the neighbouring countries. However, the inherited bitterness and territorial disputes from the establishment of Israel, and the numerous wars that have occurred between the parties have created obstacles for a peaceful and friendly relationship among the neighbours. After the victory in the first Arab-Israeli war in 1948-49, Israel has been the leading power in the region, and attempts of peace negotiation have therefore been asymmetrical when it comes to power in the negotiations. With a strong military and financial support from the West, Israel managed to defeat its neighbours, and for a while deter them from future attacks. Compared to its Arab neighbours, both military supremacy and economic advantage has followed the Israeli state ever since.

Today, there are few Arab countries that in reality see the destruction of Israel as an alternative outcome of the conflict in the region. Despite the unfriendly atmosphere between Israel and the Arab countries there have been several attempts in solving the conflict peacefully. In 1979, one of these attempts ended in a peace agreement between Israel and Egypt. The countries exchanged ambassadors and Israel completed a phased withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula. In 1993, Israel signed an interim with the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO), and the year after a peace treaty with Jordan was completed. During these last two peace treaties, Israel also negotiated with Syria in order to solve their territorial dispute. However, despite almost ten years of negotiations the countries did not manage to agree on the conflicting issues. Compared to the other peace agreements that Israel has signed an obvious question would be; why not? All the neighbouring countries have had territorial claims towards Israel which constituted a central factor in the negotiations, and most of these territories were conquered by Israel in the Six Day War in 1967.

This thesis will focus on Israel’s role and behaviour in the peace negotiations with the Arab countries. Considering the similarities between the parties and the negotiation issues, I will concentrate the examination towards the Israeli bargaining strength and how the country’s behaviour may have affected the negotiations.

1.1 Research question

The reason for emphasising Israel in this thesis is based on the fact that it is the only country occupying territories in conflict with the UN Resolution 242. The Resolution was adopted by the UN in November 1967 as a framework for peace and security in the region. As a working concept, negotiators developed the “land-for-peace” formula, which was based on Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories in exchange for peace and recognition (Eisenberg and Caplan, 1998: 15). After signing the peace agreement with Egypt, Israel has fulfilled some of the Resolution, however, Syria, and to a certain degree the Palestinian Authority (PA) are still left with their territorial claims. By examining negotiations in the Middle East with Israel as a central actor in the region, my research question will be;

Why did Israel achieve a peace agreement with Egypt, but not Syria?

As is apparent from the research question, Israel and its negotiations with Egypt and Syria will be the focus of this thesis. The motivation behind the research question is grounded in the fact that the two negotiations are seemingly similar in actors and content, but with a very different outcome. An additional factor is that the negotiation issue; the “land-for-peace” formula, apply to both cases. Israel possessed territories that the Arab states claimed sovereignty over; the Sinai Peninsula in the Egyptian negotiations, and the Golan Heights in the Syrian negotiations. Based on the peace treaty that Israel achieved with Egypt, I will examine if there is something in the Israeli negotiation behaviour that may explain why the negotiations with Syria failed. Three factors will be central for the examination; Israel’s bargaining strength and in what way tactical behaviour was employed towards the opponents; the role of the mediator and how this may have affected the negotiation outcome; and the Israeli public’s perception of the peace negotiations.

1.2 Analytical perspective

In order to analyse the Israeli bargaining strength and the outcome of the two negotiations I will apply an analytical perspective that focuses on three explanatory factors. The first factor is based on a theoretical contribution by Abhinav Muthoo which discusses the role of key factors that determine the negotiation outcome. Central is the parties bargaining strength and how it may influence the opponent through five sub-factors. These concerns degree of impatience, risk of breakdown, inside options, asymmetrical information, and issue delinkage.

The common feature for all is that they concern the parties' bargaining power in the negotiations. In addition, a party may employ the tactical effect of these factors in order to further strengthen its position relative to the opponent, and/or further weakening the opponent's bargaining position.

The second explanatory factor is directed towards the mediator in both negotiations. The US was the central character that inhabited the role as mediator. Considering that the country was biased based on the close relationship to Israel, I will examine in what way the Americans have contributed to the specific negotiation outcome in each of the cases.

The final explanatory factor will be two-fold. First, it examines how Israel has used its own public's attitude towards the negotiations in order to strengthen its credibility behind the negotiation position. This is done by making commitments that are connected to a certain position, and may limit a country from making concessions in the negotiations. Second, the factor is concentrated towards the Israeli public's approach to the peace negotiations. Considering that the possible peace treaties will include territorial concessions made by Israel, the people may support or oppose such a concession. Since Israel is a democracy, the people might demand a change of government if it is not satisfied by the Israeli leader's negotiation positions.

1.3 Limitation

The multitude and complexity of the Middle East conflict requires a limitation of the research of the thesis. With the "Land-for-Peace" principle as a central part of this thesis, the research prospect will be limited to the two aforementioned negotiations. Simply put, I will exclude three cases that could have been considered in the analysis. Firstly, one of the underlying sources of the Middle East conflict would imply the inclusion of the Palestinians in this thesis; however, there are several reasons for not emphasising the Oslo Accords (DoP). First of all, this agreement is often referred to as a "peace treaty" when it in fact constitutes an interim which has yet to be concluded in a final settlement. Second, in the interim the PLO recognises Israel as a country and their right to exist, while Israel recognises PLO as the representative for the Palestinian people (Shlaim, 1994: 25). This makes an analysis more complicated, and the fact that the negotiation was between a country and a people represents another factor which excludes it from this analysis. Even though the Oslo Accords will not be

examined, the status of the Palestinians makes up a central part of almost every peace negotiation in the Middle East. The Palestinian question will thereby constitute an important issue in both the Egyptian- and the Syrian negotiations.

Secondly, the “Land-for-Peace” principle also excludes Lebanon and their 17th of May agreement from 1983. Lebanon was not directly affected by the Six Day War, and the Resolution 242 did not apply to Lebanon (Eisenberg and Caplan, 1998: 45). In the historical context in which Lebanon is situated, the relationship with Syria plays an important part. The Syrians see Lebanon as a part of Greater Syria and exercise strong influence on the country (Eisenberg and Caplan, 1998: 43). Thus, there are good reasons to believe that an Israeli-Syrian peace treaty, will probably also produce an Israeli-Lebanese peace treaty, or at least peace negotiations (Cobban, 1999: 3). Lebanon, together with the Palestinians, have a central part in some of the examination of the Syrian negotiations, but I will not emphasise too much of the country’s conflict with Israel.

The final limitation involves the peace treaty between Israel and Jordan. The main reason for not including the Jordanian treaty derives from the fact that the signing of the Oslo Accords with PLO, eventually determined the status of the West Bank (Eisenberg and Caplan, 1998: 92). It became a disputed territory between the Palestinians and Israel, not Jordan and Israel. Even though the final peace treaty between Israel and Jordan also involved territorial clarifications, these resulted in land swapping and the border was finally agreed upon. Thus, the agreement will be referred to, but I will not discuss the negotiations.

1.4 Literature review and implications for theoretical perspective

The negotiation theory consists of a wide range of contributions that cover different aspects of the negotiation process, thus, the negotiation theory is not consistent. There are several theoretical perspectives that may explain a certain outcome in international peace negotiations. This is certainly also the case in the negotiations between Israel and the Arab countries. The analytical perspective of this thesis is intended to represent one explanation of the negative outcome of the Israeli-Syrian negotiations. The chosen perspective is adopted in order to present sufficient breadth and depth in the analysis of the empirical data. This has

contributed to the structuring and organisation of the empirical evidence and completion of the analysis.

The theoretical perspective explains much of the outcome in the negotiations. I found evidence supporting the domestic factor of the two-level game. However, there are certain areas that present a lesser sufficient explanation. Questions that would be interesting to answer are why Syria would not agree to compromise on the border dispute? Israel did offer the Syrians land-swapping at one stage in the negotiations, but the Syrians refused. If it had accepted, this might have improved Syria's relationship with the US and the West, and not least in the Middle East region. Another area that is not explained is why the US refused to put pressure on Israel in the Syrian negotiations? In addition, why did not the relationship with Syria improve when the country initiated serious negotiations with Israel? Other analytical perspectives might present another explanation of the different outcomes by, for example, by employing Putnam's model (Putnam, 1988). However, the model of a two-level game does not present explanations about the opponent's relation to the bargaining tactics that may affect the negotiation outcome. Thus, I doubt that this presents a more comprehensive explanation considering the importance of the bargaining factors that ultimately effected the Egyptian position.

By supplying Muthoo's factors connected with other elements in the negotiations theory I increase the theoretical validity and the explanation of the negotiation outcome. This is especially evident in the by the employment of a simplified factor of Putnam's two-level game. This demonstrates that the combination of negotiation tactics at the international level and the domestic position towards territorial concessions all played a crucial part in the effect on the negotiation outcome.

1.5 Methodology

Based on the complexity of my research question I apply a qualitative research strategy. The case study method seeks in-depth analysis of such complex issues. The method's advantage is that; "Questions such as "what is this event a case of?" and "is this event a designated phenomenon?" are integral to selecting cases for study and designing and implementing research of these cases" (George and Bennett, 2005: 18). Considering the behaviours, strategies, and external events that may intervene and influence the outcome in the

negotiations a case study will provide me with detailed knowledge of the two negotiations. According to Bercovitch; “A detailed examination of a single case or episode can reveal interesting and often ignored dimensions, reveal the relationship between independent and dependent variables, and in many theoretical ways be more rewarding than the more experimental analysis of numerous cases” (Bercovitch, 1997: 219). Thus, this thesis will employ an in-depth analysis of the communication and strategic behaviour by Israel during the two negotiation processes.

In the light of this explanation an interpretive approach will be central. According to Lijphart; “Interpretative case studies (...) are selected for analysis because of an interest in the case rather than an interest in the formulation of general theory. (...) they make explicit use of established theoretical propositions” (Lijphart, 1971: 692). With the theoretical perspective as the basis of the thesis, I employ this in order to structure and interpret the analysis.

It is the complexity of peace negotiations themselves that give case study research a distinct advantage as a methodology. The methodology of this study will therefore be a comparative case study of the Israeli peace negotiations. In a most similar case design one choose the cases that are most similar on most of the independent variables, but different on the dependent variable (Frendreis, 1983: 142, George and Bennett, 2005: 50). According to Gerring; “In its purest form, the chosen pair of cases is similar in all respect except the variable(s) of interest” (Gerring, 2007: 131). The choice of this method derives from the fact that the two negotiations are seemingly similar in its contents and very different in outcome. “The decision to analyze only a few cases is strongly influenced by the types of political phenomena under study and how they are conceptualized” (Collier, 1993: 105). The negotiations involved essentially the same issues; “land-for-peace”, the actors were more or less the same; Israel and countries that had lost territories to Israel in the same war and the mediator was the same in both negotiations, that is, the US.

Interviews with the central figures in the two processes would have undoubtedly strengthened the explanatory factor of this thesis. However, there are several reasons for not employing interview as a method, and by the final choice of theoretical perspective I claim that the result that I presented was thorough and comprehensive. One of the reasons for not conducting interviews is the fact that the Egyptian negotiations appeared in the end of the 1970s. Many of the participants are not present today, and this would have provided me with biased sources. The fact that the language-barrier would create an obstacle is also a reason for deciding

against interviews after careful consideration. In addition, the situation in Syria today would have ruled out interviews of representatives from the Syrian delegation, which would have presented a rather biased foundation of the resources.

1.6 Validity and reliability

The case study research is usually characterised by a small N, and this creates some of the problems by employing this method. According to Gerring; “Case study research suffers problems of representativeness because it includes, by definition, only a small number of cases of some more general phenomenon” (Gerring, 2007: 43). This will have an effect on the validity of the research. The validity refers to the measuring of what we think we are measuring (King et al. 1994: 25). Usually one distinguishes between two types of validity; external and internal. External validity refers to what degree the results can be generalised to other social settings (Hellevik, 2002: 191). This usually represents the major weakness of the case study, because one single case is not representative of a universe (Gerring, 2007: 43). However, the aim of this study is not to generalise to a broader population, it is rather to identify the strategies used by Israel in peace negotiations and how these have an effect on the outcome. Although the external validity of my study may be questionable, the internal validity is much stronger. Gerring explains that: “The corresponding virtue of case study research is its internal validity” (Gerring, 2007: 43). The internal validity focuses on whether there is a good match between researchers’ observations and the theoretical ideas they develop (Bryman, 2004: 273). Given the fact that the peace negotiations is both individual and collective activities conducted in a certain period of time, the methodology of case studies provides me with the advantage in analysing how these event effect the outcome. Thus, I find this method best fitted to increase the internal validity.

Reliability concerns whether the research can be verified, in other words; the data’s accuracy (Hellevik 2002: 52, King et al. 1994: 25). In qualitative research one emphasises the reliability of the sources or data; “Reliability means that applying the same procedure in the same way will always produce the same measures” (King et al. 1994: 25). High reliability implies that the results are trustworthy. This may be difficult to fulfil since the research will be based on subjective interpretations. One of the problems by employing written sources is that the material is characterised by the researcher’s or author’s own subjective assumptions and interpretations of the information (Hellevik, 2002: 101). Another researcher may interpret

this or that piece of evidence in a different way. However, by carefully describing how the data has been collected and how the analysis has been conducted I hope to meet the criteria of replicability.

I have tried to collect a wide range of data from different sources concerning the same peace negotiations, and all these sources are freely available. As I explain below, I have chosen to rely on much of the Israeli literature on the field. This is in order to describe the negotiations from the Israeli point of view, and explain how they see the two processes. However, the data has been supplied by other academically literature. By the employment of citations and documentation, I argue that the reliability is good, and that another researcher would arrive at more or less the same conclusions by using the same data.

1.7 Data and resources

One of the major advantages with case study research lies in the fact that it usually implies the collection of data from a wide range of sources (Bercovitch, 1997: 218-219). This contributes to a deeper and more accurate understanding of the problem that is analysed. A study of this kind demands careful and critical reflections of the empirical data used in the analysis (Hellevik, 2002: 101-102). The main data of this study stems primarily from secondary sources. Hence, I collected data from several different sources, including peace agreements, official documents and reports, books, speeches, and research articles. However, there are primary sources from negotiators that have participated on the different sides, and there are also written contributions from mediators that have been present during the different negotiations. There exist vast literature, analysis, and research articles of the Middle East conflict. The literature covers almost every possible corner in different scientist fields. The Camp David Accords is probably one of the most over-analysed peace agreements in the history, which presents the readers with a wide range of answers about the winners and losers in the negotiations. I will therefore draw on much of the well-known research done from this case.

The sources have provided me with a good foundation of the empirical data. This is certainly true for the literature surrounding the Israeli-Egyptian negotiations, which is written by witnesses, negotiators, and academics. Some of these contributions are employed in the thesis; however, I have attempted to be critical and limited the American side of the story.

This is based on the fact that together with Egypt, the US has often been pictured as one of the losers in the negotiations and, thereby, have been pointing fingers towards who to blame for the outcome. For that reason I chose to emphasize many Israeli sources in order to represent their point of view, which often has been criticised in the conflict. Contributions from the Israeli historian Avi Shlaim will thereby have a central part in this thesis. The fact that many of the sources in the thesis are not primary-sources is a weakness I am aware of. Nevertheless, by the use of a wide range of data and a critical reflection of my findings, I argue that this has provided a strong foundation for the analysis and the final conclusion.

1.8 Thesis outline

Chapter one has presented an introduction to the thesis' focus and explored the methodological principles and reasons for choosing the comparative case study method. The second chapter will present the theoretical perspective which this thesis will employ in the analysis of the two peace negotiations.

The third chapter presents an overview of the historical background of the major countries in the region, and is intended to create a better understanding of the conflict and the further analysis that will be conducted.

Chapter four is the first analytical chapter and focuses on the parties bargaining strength. The Israeli tactical employment will be central for the chapter. It starts with the Egyptian negotiations before it analyses the Syrian negotiations. Chapter five focus on the US' role as a mediator in both negotiations and examines in what way the country may have affected the outcome. Chapter six starts with the examination of Israel's tactical use of commitments in the negotiations before it examines the public's approach towards territorial concessions. The final chapter concludes this thesis by summing up and comparing the major findings.

2 Analytical Perspective

This chapter lays the theoretical foundation for the analytical perspective employed in this thesis. The object is to explain why two seemingly similar negotiations produced different outcomes. To be able to accomplish such an analysis, it is necessary to address several explanatory factors directed at the Israeli bargaining strength, together with external and domestic factors which may have an impact on the negotiation outcome. It will be important to determine the Israeli bargaining strength prior to, and during the negotiations in order to examine the explanations of the outcomes. There exists a wide range of explanatory models in the negotiation theory; however, I will argue that the presentation of a systematic analysis and the employment of three major explanatory factors may produce a comprehensive result. In addition, by focusing on these factors I will be able to introduce a more perspicuous picture that will explain the different outcomes of the negotiations.

Negotiation theory is not a consistent theory; rather it is based on a wide range of contributions that cover many different aspects of the negotiation process. The most central contribution that I base the theoretical perspective on is taken from Abhinav Muthoo's "A Non-Technical Introduction to Bargaining Theory" (2000). In the article Muthoo elaborates on the role of various key factors, or variables, that determine the bargaining outcome, and it attempts to establish the sources of each party's bargaining power. The bargaining power describes the strength between the parties before and during the negotiations, and there are several tactical behaviours that might be employed in order to strengthen a party's bargaining position.

In this analysis there are three factors that represent the explanation of the two different negotiation outcomes; 1) the parties' relative bargaining strength, 2) the role of mediator, and 3) domestic politics. All the factors are more or less linked together and may to a certain degree have an impact on the negotiation outcome. Even though most of this analysis is based on Muthoo's article, I will also employ other theoretical approaches from different parts of the negotiation theory in order to create a comprehensive explanation of the outcomes. This is evident in the second explanatory factor that will be employed. The factor consists of the role of a mediator and how the mediator may have an effect on the final negotiation outcome. The last factor will draw on different theoretical contributions in order to explain how the

domestic situation in Israel may have affected the two outcomes, and how the domestic relations can be used to extract concessions from the opponent.

In the following I will briefly present the fundamental elements in the negotiation theory, before I turn to the explanatory factors. Through this examination I will hopefully achieve a better understanding of the total process and to explain why the outcome of the Israel-Syrian negotiations was negative while the outcome of the Israeli-Egyptian negotiations was positive.

2.1 Negotiation

Negotiation theory seeks to address questions concerning negotiation situations. This thesis is a study of peace negotiations, and therefore negotiation will be defined as per Fred Charles Iklé; "...negotiation is a process in which explicit proposals are put forward ostensibly for the purpose of reaching agreement on an exchange or on the realisation of a common interest where conflicting interests are present" (Iklé, 1964/87: 3-4). In other words; a negotiation process consists of two important elements; common and conflicting interests. A negotiation situation is thereby, a situation in which the countries have a common interest to cooperate, but have conflicting interests over precisely how to cooperate (Muthoo, 2000: 146). All negotiations contain a combination of common and conflicting interests, which of the two dominates depends primarily on the negotiation issue and the parties. Sebenius allege that; "People negotiate in order to satisfy the totality of their interests better through some jointly decided action than they could otherwise" (Sebenius, 1983: 235). Countries in a conflicting dispute over territories negotiate in order to settle that dispute in a peaceful manner. The alternative might be war, which in most cases is not a preferable solution for any of the parties, as can be argued was one of the reasons for Israel and the Arab countries to negotiate. The overwhelming Israeli military power was also another argument, at least for the Arab countries, to negotiate a solution to the territorial dispute.

Another important feature of the negotiation situation is that it involves a situation of interdependent decision making; "...where two or more parties must each make decisions and where the outcome for the parties is not exclusively under their own control, but is a result of their joint decisions" (Hopmann, 1996: 26). Habeeb explains that; "Interdependence defines a relationship characterized by mutual dependence. That is, each actor is dependent upon the

other for achievement of preferred outcomes” (Habeeb, 1988: 19). Further Thomas Schelling explains that; “They are situations in which the ability of one participant to gain his ends is dependent to an important degree on the choices or decisions that the other participant will make” (Schelling, 1960: 5). It requires the parties to negotiate with each other in order to achieve the outcome they prefer.

All countries in a negotiation strive to achieve a beneficial outcome in terms of their own national goals. The outcome of an agreement must, for this reason, benefit both parties in the negotiation. This principle simply implies that each party has to achieve more than if there were no agreement at all (Muthoo, 2000: 147). An agreement has to serve the future interests of all parties to be worth preserving (Hopmann, 1996: 27). The principle follows that no party will start a negotiation if the party prefers status quo. On the other hand, it is possible to start negotiations because strategically it will be beneficial. For instance, it is reasonable to say that Israel would prefer living in peace with its neighbours rather than live as enemies. This gives the country an incentive to start negotiations.

In order to achieve the best possible outcome the parties each develop a strategy to follow. A strategy is a plan of action that dictates how to reach the specific goals. This plan is not necessary observable or articulated by the negotiating parties before or during the negotiation process. The negotiation goals are usually kept secret from the other participants in order to have an advantage by not exposing the party’s true intentions. However, there exists a connection between a party’s goals and its behaviour in the negotiation. All negotiation behaviours have their own identifiable set of instrumental acts or tactics (Dupont and Faure: 2002: 45, Walton and McKersie, 1965: 2). The tactics might be seen as tools that a negotiator can use in order to achieve its goal. Thomas Schelling explains the purpose through the use of tactics as; “Much of the process of negotiation consists in trying to change the beliefs of the other party” (Schelling, 1960: 49). The systems of activities comprise competitive behaviours that are intended to influence the division of limited sources. Tactics may be used to communicate a party’s preferences on a negotiating issue. However, “they are also used to persuade and pressure the other side to fulfil these preferences” (Habeeb, 1988: 23-24).

2.2 The Explanatory Factors

So far I have explained the fundament in negotiation theory and how a negotiator's behaviour is intended to achieve a certain negotiation outcome. Identifying the goal-oriented behaviour will be important to stipulate the reasons for negotiation outcomes. Tactics also determine the sources of the negotiators bargaining power (Muthoo, 2000: 148). The role of tactics in the negotiations does not necessarily imply that one single tactic decides the outcome of the negotiations; rather it is the combination of these mechanisms that create the final outcome. Depending on the situation and the adversary, each tactic might have a different effect. However, it is important to identify what effect these tactics has, and how it can explain a certain outcome. In addition, it is significant to considering other factors that may have an impact on the negotiation outcome. These factors are not necessarily in directly control of the negotiating parties. I will now turn to the three explanatory factors that will be employed in the analysis in order to achieve an answer to the research question.

2.2.1 Bargaining Strength

The bargaining power determines the strength between the negotiating parties prior and during the negotiations. Muthoo describes different forms of bargaining, or negotiation, situations in the sense of the parties' power-balance in their relationship towards each other. A frictionless relationship in the negotiation process implies that neither party incur any expenses from the process of negotiating. The power-balance between the parties is equal, and the result in such an occasion will usually end with no agreement. This is because neither party will lose anything by carrying out the bargaining nor they have any incentives to compromise in order to reach an agreement (Muthoo, 2000: 148). In reality the idea of frictionless negotiations is not really realistic. In most negotiation situations there exists an asymmetrical relationship in connection to the parties' bargaining power. This is certainly relevant in connection to the Israeli negotiation strength. Given the Israeli control over the territories that the Arab states claim sovereignty over, Israel was already in a stronger position than the opponents. However, there are tactics that a party may employ in order to further strengthen its own bargaining power, or further weaken the opponent's position. In the following I will turn to five factors that determine the parties' bargaining strength.

2.2.1.1 Degree of impatience

A negotiation process is a time consuming activity. For each party the process produces a certain amount of cost in resources and these costs determine if the parties are able to continue the bargaining process. This implies that parties to a negotiation process value time differently (Muthoo, 2000: 148). For some the cost of negotiating is lesser than the other, and the party can afford to be more patient while they are haggling over the solution to the dispute. Muthoo explains that a key principle is that a party's bargaining power is higher the less impatient the party is relative to the other negotiator (Muthoo, 2000: 148). When negotiating, each party favours to reach an agreement at their demands as soon as possible. By continuously haggling over demands and counter-demands, the parties spend resources which again will lower the benefits of a certain agreement. If one party has lesser resources than the other, it will probably be more eager to reach an agreement, meaning, the party demonstrates that it is impatient to achieve an outcome (Muthoo, 2000:148). If both parties are equally impatient, it is more likely that they will reach a compromise in a short time. However, as in the frictionless situation, most real-life bargaining situations inhabit an asymmetrical balance in power, thereby, one of the parties will typically be more eager to reach an agreement more quickly than the other.

Various factors such as resources, negotiating skills, and the negotiation issue determine the party's value of time (Muthoo, 2000: 150). The party that is most eager to reach an agreement, the most impatient, might accept almost any agreement, which is slightly better than no agreement, offered by the other party. From this principle it follows that the patient party has a higher bargaining power than the impatient party. If the patient party is aware about this asymmetrical relationship, it might exploit the situation to its advantage (Muthoo, 2000: 151). A way to accomplish this is by stalling the negotiations, or haggling over details that will further delay the negotiations. It is also possible to deliberately delay the negotiations through postponement or giving unreasonable exaggerated demands. The essence in such a tactic is that the patient party tries to outwait the other in order to obtain a preferable agreement.

I will focus on the time spent in the two negotiations which will be especially present in form of parties deliberately stalling the negotiations. It is important to considering possible explanations of slow going negotiations. Given that Israel is a democracy and Egypt and Syria may be described as dictatorships, there are obvious reasons for the Israeli state to slow down

a negotiations process, even though the opposite might occur. A democratic state consists of more national factors and institutions that have to be taken into consideration before the country agree to or sign a peace treaty. Nevertheless, the examination will hopefully identify unnecessary time spending if it is carried through with the intention to strengthen a party's bargaining position towards the opponent. The parties' cost of negotiating will be a central feature to the examination.

2.2.1.2 Risk of breakdown

When two or more parties are negotiating there always exists a risk that the talks will break down. The risk of breakdown implies that the negotiations will not continue and the parties will end up with no agreement. Several different factors may bring the negotiations to a breakdown. Muthoo explains that some of these factors might be exogenous and uncontrollable (Muthoo, 2000: 149). These factors, even though the possibility is relative small, may provide the parties with incentives to compromise in order to achieve an agreement. If the parties fear a breakdown, they view an agreement as more beneficial than no agreement and thereby will lower their demands. Another reason for the risk of breakdown might be that one or both parties actually gets fed up with the bargaining, and thus walks away from the negotiation table (Muthoo, 2000: 153). Such an incidence is in close connection to the cost of the continuation of bargaining. A party might predict that the cost will exceed the possible benefits of an agreement, and thus decides that there are no more reasons for negotiating. The generic term of this type of behaviours are, according to Muthoo; random; "...in the sense that the exact time at which a player walks away for such reasons is difficult to determine in any definite way (Muthoo, 2000: 153).

An additional factor that may produce the risk of breakdown is when a third party intervene in the negotiation. This may lead to, depending on the issue of negotiation; the disappearance of the benefits of cooperation for one or both parties (Muthoo, 2000: 153). If the third party makes a better offer or introduces additional unforeseen consequences of no agreement between the parties, it might alter the risk of breakdown in the negotiations. Muthoo explains that; "A key principle is that risk aversion adversely affects bargaining power; a player's bargaining power is higher the less averse she is to risk relative to the other negotiator" (Muthoo, 2000: 149). Although both parties will benefit from a negotiated agreement, the party that has the most to lose from no agreement; that is; most vulnerable to the risk of

breakdown, will be more eager to minimise this risk. Conversely the party that is less vulnerable to the risk of breakdown may than exploit the situation, and demand more of the negotiation outcome (Muthoo, 2000: 154). The complexity in connection to the risk of breakdown derives from the fact that it is not a direct consequence of a deliberate act by one of the parties. It is rather uncontrollable factors that determine the risk of breakdown.

In order to discover the source in this factor it will be important to identify which party that most needs some sort of solution and will be worse off with a breakdown. The less risk averse party may use this reality to its advantage, and such use of tactic will strengthen a party's bargaining power in relation to the opponent.

2.2.1.3 Inside options

Muthoo introduces two other close connected factors that may have a decisive impact on the parties' power in the negotiations. He calls these "inside and outside options". The outside options represent another offer; if two parties negotiate about selling oil, the party that sells the oil suddenly gets a better price from a third party. For the oil-selling party it is possible to demand a higher offer than that of the third party. However, because of the essence of this analysis, I will ignore the outside options in the examination. This derives from the fact that the territories that Israel and the Arabs are negotiating about do not include third parties that claim sovereignty over the same areas. The inside options, on the other hand, will constitute a central factor in the thesis.

The inside options represents what a party gains everyday while it temporarily disagree with the other party during the negotiations (Muthoo, 2000: 157). In other words; while the parties are negotiating, one party might obtain a payoff; benefit from the negotiation process itself. This implies that, depending on this payoff, the party having these inside options, might prefer to keep on negotiating for a longer time than actually necessary. Muthoo explains that a party's bargaining power is greater when it has large inside option (Muthoo, 2000: 157). If the party has much benefit from status quo, then it is not desperate to negotiate about the issue; and this works to its advantage during the negotiations. In the relationship between Israel and the Arab states, Israel was in control of the territories that the parties were negotiating about. Meaning that if Israel benefits from the status quo, it has the incentive to continue the bargaining process longer than necessary.

If one party suffers less than the other from the negotiation process, the party's inside options are bigger than that of the other. The party with lesser inside options will then probably be more eager to agree on an unequal beneficial agreement. Following this assumption, the party with greater inside options will be able to negotiate a better deal (Muthoo, 2000: 159). Another implication of the inside option is that during the negotiation process, the party may also increase its inside option and thereby further strengthening its bargaining position (Muthoo, 2000: 159). This is especially present when the negotiation issue contains financial resources. While the talks are continuing the party may escalate the extraction of these resources before an eventual agreement is reached.

The main reason for the inside options' relevance is the issue of negotiation. Israel controls the territories that the Arab states want back, thereby Israel has the options to continue the occupation of the territories or strike a deal. Nevertheless, this factor is dependent on that Israel actually benefits from the negotiation. If not, the inside options will not be greater than that of the Arab states. I will examine if Israel, or elements in the Israeli society, view the status quo as beneficial for the Israeli state. Additionally, it will be important to identify behaviours that might have increased the inside options of Israel.

2.2.1.4 Asymmetrical information

In international diplomacy the use of ambiguity is common in order to make an agreement possible. It may help to bridge the gap between parties, but if not specified later it may have devastating consequences. The absence of clarity helps to avoid difficult questions and draws the parties closer to an agreement. On the other hand, it becomes problematic when the implementation comes nearer. If a party feels deceived, the absence of clarity can destroy the entire negotiation process. Muthoo describes the absence of complete information, which implies that at least one party possesses information about relevant factors that the other party do not have (Muthoo, 2000: 162). The purpose of such behaviour might be for a party to protect itself from certain concessions by the deliberate use of vague formulations. Through the use of unclear language it is possible to achieve different interpretations from the same formulations. In turn, such an act may leave the parties not knowing exactly what they have agreed upon. The technique may also be employed by a party in order to mislead the opponent. As Muthoo puts it; "An important determinant of the outcome of bargaining is the extent to which information about various variables (factors) are known to all the parties in

the bargaining situation” (Muthoo, 2000: 150). In order to achieve a negotiation outcome parties often need to be clear and honest in exchange of information and preferences (Pruitt, 2002: 85).

Information sharing is an important factor in building trust between the negotiating parties. The use of ambiguity may work as an advantage when it comes to making concessions. In order to persuade the opponent, the tactic may improve a party’s position when not clarifying what is meant by certain formulations. Keeping important information from the other parties reveals an actor’s intention to prevent the opponent achieving an advantage in the negotiations. When a party is keeping information to itself the consequences might be distrust and a negative outcome (Muthoo, 2000: 162). Telhami explains that; “Projecting uncertainty also entails that bargainers must avoid being overly predictable. The point of this strategy is to avoid giving the opponent any certainty, even about one's own rationality, although some consistency must be maintained to prevent a breakdown in bargaining” (Telhami, 1992/93: 634). The absence of complete information can lead to inefficient bargaining outcome (Muthoo, 2000: 162).

The asymmetrical information can be used by one party to take advantage of the other. I argue that the presence of clarity in the negotiation process is important in order to achieve a positive outcome. An examination may also provide evidence that a party in the process have deliberately used this factor in order to achieve alter the bargaining strength. A central issue will be to identify moments in the process where a party demonstrates that it is not negotiating in good faith; which will often result in a deadlock. Obviously, Israel and the Arab states have not had the best relationship prior to the peace negotiations. However, if any of the parties have kept important information from each other in order to obtain an advantage in the process, this may have led to further worsening the relationship; which again may explain a negative outcome.

2.2.1.5 Issue delinkage

Muthoo does not describe the following tactic; however, given the conflict between Israel and the Arab countries I believe the issue delinkage represent an important tactic to alter relative bargaining strength. Faced with a difficult negotiation problem where the parties are in opposite positions, an effective tactic might be to divide up the problem into several components. In general; “Dividing up a problem makes it possible for countries to agree on

issues on which they have common interests, limiting disagreement to those issues on which they truly disagree” (Hopmann, 1996: 81). In some negotiation not all problems are ready for a solution. By decomposing the negotiation issue, the parties may agree on issues that are ready for a solution and leave the difficult questions for later. One of the parties may demand that in order to negotiate a certain issue there has to be a linkage to another that does not necessarily have anything to do with the first issue, or decouple the issue as a whole. This demand is often supported by a threat that there will be no negotiation, and therefore no agreement, if the demand is not respected. The tactic of issue delinkage is not necessarily always negative for the opponent; sometimes it will be beneficial. The tactic may help the parties to agree, but it is also possible to miss the opportunity for a solution to the real problem. In what way this tactic will be exercised depends on the type of conflict and the negotiation problem. A consequence of this tactic is that there will be several partial agreements. The tactic may be used consensual, or forcefully by the party that is in the strongest bargaining position. A reason to employ such behaviour might be to strengthen its own bargaining positions. By decoupling the opponent’s demands it is possible to weaken the adversary’s bargaining position by refusing to negotiate on the whole issue.

A central factor to this tactic is the fact that there are several parties present in the conflict between Israel and the Arab states. A multilateral negotiation might have been able to reach a solution to the entire conflict. It will be important to identify the employment of tactical behaviours that might have decoupled the prospect of the negotiation.

2.2.1.6 Summing up

The five factors mentioned above are all tactical behaviours that may determine the party’s bargaining power. As already mentioned, there usually exists an asymmetrical power-balance between the parties in international negotiations, which was the case with Israel when negotiating with the Arab countries. This power-balance is possible to strengthen, or weaken that of the opponent by each of the parties. The effect of the tactical behaviour depends on the opponent’s position towards each of the factors, and it is the combination of these behaviours that determine the bargaining strength.

2.2.2 Mediator

When negotiations reach a certain level where the party's positions are close to a stalemate and a solution appears far from closure, an option might be to bring in a mediator. A mediator is a third party that is not a direct participant in the conflict, and the mediator's role is simply to assist the parties and help them to reach an agreement or a solution to the conflicting issue (Hopmann, 1996: 221). A reason for using a mediator is that the parties; "may feel that making concessions through a mediator is less harmful to its reputation and future bargaining position than conceding to the adversary in direct negotiations" (Hopmann, 1996: 223). The negotiation theory offers of a wide range of different roles and situations where a mediator may be useful. For the purpose of the Israeli-Arab negotiations I have chosen to limit the literature used in this theoretical perspective, and focus on one particular mediator role. This is the role of a powerful impartial or biased mediator.

2.2.2.1 Biased Mediator

Even though the mediator is not directly a participant in the negotiation process, its role may have a crucial effect on the negotiation outcome. In connection to the Arab-Israeli conflict, the US has played an important part in mediating between the parties since the beginning of the 1970s (Hopmann, 1996: 221). According to Hopmann, the intention of the US to mediate in the Middle East derives from the fact that it seeks a better relationship to the Arab world, and thereby secures its supply of oil (Hopmann, 1996: 225). This coincides with William Smith's assertion that; "In most cases, the mediating nation's interest in resolving the conflict stems from considerable interest in its own relationship with one or both of the adversaries" (Smith, 1985: 365).

A mediator inhabits different types of roles depending on the conflicting issue and on the mediator itself. In the Israeli-Arab conflicts the choice of the US as mediator derives from the fact that the US is a powerful country and may introduce a large value of resources into the negotiation to compensate for concessions made by the parties. Smith claims that; "...a powerful mediator may be able to hold out the promise of benefits independent of the adversary's concessions" (Smith 1985: 367). Another positive factor with a powerful mediator is that it may be able to take advantage of its resources to promote agreement by making threats, promises, or put pressure on the parties (Hopmann, 1996: 226-227).

The choice of the US as a mediator implies that in relation to the Israeli-Arab negotiations the Americans was neither neutral nor impartial. This fact is evident in the close relationship that has existed between the US and Israel. Kydd, Zartman and Touval holds that neutrality is not a necessary attribute of a successful mediator (Kydd, 2003: 608). Carnevale and Arad allege that; “A biased mediator has something at stake and is closer to one side than the other – politically, economically, and culturally” (Carnevale and Arad, 1996: 40). The relationship between the Americans and Israel was well known by the Arab states. The reason for choosing a biased mediator comes from the fact that the Arabs wanted to achieve a closer relationship to the Americans, and they believed that the US could influence and put pressure on Israel. In addition, the US had rich access to resources that would be able to help the parties to agree. This might be an advantage for the conflicting parties, since a negotiation process usually implies resources and expenses. Another positive factor with a biased mediator is that it often is the one with the greatest influence over the party that most need to change (Carnevale and Arad, 1996: 41, see also Zartman and Touval, 1985). In the case of the Israeli-Syrian negotiations, the US was also the only super-power left after the fall of the Soviet Union. The choice of the Americans as mediators might, thereby, be seen as reasonable in connection to power.

In the case of this analysis it will be important to investigate in what way the US has assisted, or not reacted, to the Israeli choice of negotiation tactics and behaviour. It is important to remember that through the role as a mediator the US has spent a great amount of resources in order to achieve agreements between the parties. This fact implies that the Americans had incentives to achieve agreements in order to justify their expenditures. Because of the close relationship with Israel, the US may have used its power to influence Israel or supported the country’s demands. However, it remains to find out if the country has been able to use its influence to the full extent, or if the US has approved the Israeli use of negotiation tactics. This may reveal what influence has the mediator had on the negotiation outcome.

2.2.3 Domestic Politics

The final explanatory factor that will be examined is domestic politics. I will divide this factor into two subcategories in order to conduct a more comprehensive and thorough analysis. Both mechanisms operate in the sphere of Israeli domestic politics. The first category will be *commitment tactic*. The tactic describes how Israel might use the domestic political situation

as a negotiation tactic in order to strengthen its own negotiation position by adding credibility to its commitments. This tactic has a central position in the negotiation literature, and might work as an effective tactic in order to communicate a party's position, and even strengthen it, in negotiations. The second subcategory will examine the domestic politics as more general explanatory factor of the negotiation outcome. This factor represents the Israeli people and the political opposition's attitude towards the peace negotiations, and thereby also their position towards an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories. The factor may expand or limit the spectrum of possible agreements. In this case, I will emphasise the Israeli public opinion towards the peace process. I will first describe the fundamental purpose behind the commitment tactic before I turn to the domestic politics.

2.2.3.1 Commitment tactic

The commitment tactic is a well known tactic used to communicate a party's position in the negotiations. Fred Iklé explains that; "A commitment is a move to convince one's opponent that one will maintain one's current position or implement one's prediction by making it more difficult for oneself not to do so" (Iklé, 1964/87: 66). In other words, making commitments consists of changing your own incentives in a way that the opponent alters his expectations about your future conduct. By making a commitment a party may signal to the opponent that it is not possible to concede more than it already has. The commitment will demonstrate how far the party can go if there is to be an agreement.

In many negotiations the parties chose to commit themselves to a certain position prior to the negotiations. According to Muthoo, these tactics are most efficient when a negotiator is bargaining on behalf of a constituency (Muthoo, 2000: 161). A government may then make a public commitment to a certain bargaining position which in turn leaves it possible for few concessions. These statements may be used to create public opinion that makes it impossible for the party to concede because this will break the commitment made to the people (Schelling, 1966: 28). A concession will, then, be met by strong resistance from important domestic actors, and the government is in no position to overcome these actors. Muthoo concludes that;

"The principle described (...) may be illustrated in a fairly transparent manner by considering the case in which one government's cost of backing down is close to zero, while the other government's cost of backing down is significantly large; this might be because the former

government is not democratically elected, while the latter government is a minority government in a strong democracy. In this case, the democratically elected government is likely to deploy this commitment tactic, and, expect to strike a relatively favourable deal for itself” (Muthoo, 2000: 162).

For Israel, as a democratic country, the commitment tactic might be used to strengthen its bargaining position relative to the opponents. This is done by arguing that it is impossible for the country to concede because of the public opinion. Another way is to submit a proposed agreement to a referendum, leaving it up to the people to accept the treaty. Such commitment tactics might jeopardise the possibility of a peace agreement, since it leaves little room for given-and-take negotiations.

2.2.3.2 The domestic approach towards the peace negotiations

The second subcategory will examine the domestic politics in Israel in accordance to the possibility of a peace agreement with the Arab countries. The political and the public’s approach towards negotiations may put limitations on the country’s negotiators. Domestic politics constitutes an important factor to examine in order to understand the specific outcome of a peace negotiation. Domestic and foreign politics are usually linked together in the sense that it may be treated as conditions in a strategy to bring about conflict resolution. Domestic politics is defined as; “...the basic political structures and processes that involve such political actors as leaders, political elites, interest groups, and even the public, as well as political interaction between and among them” (Bar-Siman-Tov, 2001: 27). The impact of such groups in a negotiation is explained by Putnam as follows; “...domestic groups pursue their interests by pressuring the government to adapt favourable policies, and politicians seek power by constructing coalitions among those groups” (Putnam, 1988: 434). This means that both the structure of the ruling government, the parliamentary composition, and the public’s interests have an effect on the negotiating behaviour of the country’s representatives. Given the concession of territories, the impact of public opinion, civil and political, may reflect the negotiators use of tactics. Domestic factors may encourage or even pressure the leaders to initiate conflict reduction or they may also inhibit leaders from doing so. In democratic states, like Israel, external factors are not sufficient to produce an agreement without domestic acceptance (Bar-Siman-Tov, 2001: 27-28). Domestic opposition to peace talks may be

reflected in the party's negotiation behaviour in the proposed demands, the unwillingness in conceding, and even to break off the negotiations.

Putnam demonstrates this point by the logic of a two-level game, where the negotiations are conducted at the international level and the national level. Here he explains that at the international level, as a duty to the national interest, the negotiator has to maximise his chances to reach the best possible agreement. This includes actions to pacify the domestic opposition and reduce negative domestic reactions to the result (Putnam, 1988: 434). If the negotiator does not satisfy the domestic opposition, the government might be evicted from its seats and a new government installed. The effort to resolve the negotiating problem may lead to; "...domestic conflict when the concessions that are made are not acceptable to parts of the political elites, interest groups, or even the general public. Particularly in democracies, domestic legitimacy may be necessary for conflict reduction or resolution" (Bar-Siman-Tov, 2001: 28). As a democracy, this factor is especially present in the case of Israeli peace negotiations. The process in which explains the power-balance in the Knesset and the Israeli public will, in this case, be central in the examination of the negotiation outcome.

2.2.3.3 Summing Up

I will search for the use of commitments by the different Israeli leaders, and in what way these tactics has been used to limit the country from future concessions. This will reveal eventually the attitude in the Israeli population towards a peace treaty with the Arab neighbours. Consequently, the Israeli public, through public opinion and pressure groups, may cause a remarkable impact on the government's politics. If the people reject the idea of territorial concessions, there is less likely that the Israeli government will agree to such a concession. The public opinion will be reflected in the government's negotiation behaviour.

2.3 Conclusion

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, I have chosen eclectic from the wide range of contributions that constitute the negotiation theory. The ultimate goal is to explain why Israel achieved a peace agreement with Egypt in 1979 and not with Syria during the ten years of negotiations in the 1990s. Both cases are seemingly similar and the basic negotiation issue is the same; Israeli withdrawal from land occupied in the Six Day War. To be able to do such a comprehensive analysis, I employ Muthoo's key factors for a better understanding of the

tactics that Israel used in the negotiations. A central part of the analysis will focus on the bargaining power-balance and in what way Israel used this in order to influence the negotiation outcome. The mechanisms of the explanatory factors will present an answer to the research question.

3 The Historical Background – An Overview

The following chapter will present an overview of the historical background of the conflict between Israel and the Arab states. The complexity of the conflicts between the states in the Middle East region requires an introduction to the major historical events. However, the limitation of this thesis requires me to restrict the length and details of this chapter. Thus, I have chosen to start the overview with the Six Day War, and follow the historical development until the breakdown of the peace talks between Israel and Syria in 2000. My intention is not to present a thorough and detailed account of the historical events that happened during this time period. It is rather to provide a better understanding of which of these events have made an important impact on the parties and the conflicting issues.

After presenting the Six Day War I will further focus on the Israeli and Arab interpretations of the UN Resolution 242. The Resolution became the foundation of all peace negotiations in which Israel has participated ever since, and both parties present their own interpretation, which makes the peace negotiations difficult to conduct.

In regards to the politics in Israel, I will continue the historical account with the election of Prime Minister Menachem Begin in 1977, and the Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat's decision to go to Jerusalem the same year. These two characters are remembered for their achievements at the Camp David negotiations in 1978, and will forever be recognised for the accomplishment of the peace treaty between their respective countries. Further, I will present background to the Madrid conference in 1991. The conference became the first summit where all the Arab countries were present at the same time at the negotiating table with Israel. In the following explanation of the conference I will give a short presentation on the five Israeli prime ministers that followed, and their contributions to the peace negotiations.

The theme for this thesis requires me to pay attention to Israel and its main actors; however, the Arab leaders and their goals for the negotiation must have their place in order to present a broader picture. I recognise the impact and importance of Lebanon in the conflict between Israel and the Arab countries, though, because of the country's complex history and the multitude of actors involved, I will not elaborate on the historical events in the country. This does not imply that Lebanon will be absent in the thesis; on the contrary in several areas it is

important to present its influence on the negotiations. Hopefully this presentation will create an understandable groundwork for the later analysis.

3.1 The Six Day War

Following the establishment of the state of Israel and the first Arab-Israeli war in 1948-1949, the Israeli people feared a potential military attack from the surrounding Arab nations (Cleveland, 2000: 328). As a consequence of this, the Israeli politicians developed a strong defence policy. The image of the aggressive and hostile Arab countries has remained the essence of Israeli foreign policy which demands ensuring national security (Jones, 2002: 122). At the opposite side of the Israeli borders the Arab countries faced major refugee problems that derived from the establishment of the Jewish state. The countries perceived Israel as an expansionist continuation of Western imperialism, and feared the Israelis would sooner or later attack the Arabs in order to gain more territory (Cleveland, 2000: 328).

After the first Arab-Israeli war, UN forces formed a shield between Israel and Egypt on the border at Sinai. Egypt became the most verbally aggressive country amongst the Arabs states towards Israel. The Egyptian president, Gamal Abd al-Nasser, was a strong political figure in the Arab world. He preached about pan-Arabism and freeing the Palestinian land from the Jewish occupants (Cleveland, 2000: 306-316). In the months before the war in 1967, the verbal assault towards Israel became more harsh and aggressive. Early in 1967, Nasser requested the UN forces to withdraw from Egyptian territory, and exercised an Egyptian blockade on Israeli shipping passing through the Strait of Tiran (Cleveland, 2000: 329). Adding to the hostile acts, Nasser started to send large number of military troops into Sinai (Shlaim, 2000: 237). Even though historians are quite certain that Nasser neither wanted nor planned to start a war with Israel in 1967, there is little doubt that these acts were crucial for the Israeli decision to go to war (Shlaim, 2000: 237).

As a consequence of the blockade, the Israeli public felt the threat of isolation and what they interpreted as Arab provocation and aggressive military build up encircling their country. The situation resulted in long debates in the Israeli Knesset in how the country should handle the conditions. Finally, the cabinet decided that the country had to respond by military action (Shlaim, 2000: 241). Early in the morning on 5 June 1967, Israel launched a surprise attack from the air on the enemy airfields, destroying almost the entire Egyptian air force before a

single plane had the chance to takeoff. Syria and Jordan entered the conflict later the same day; however, Israel destroyed their forces as well. With Israel in control of the air, the Israeli forces advanced rapidly on all fronts and in six days Israel ceased control over the entire Sinai Peninsula, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights. One by one the Arab countries had to sign cease-fire agreements with the Israeli state (Cleveland, 2000: 329). In a mere six days, Israel defeated its mightiest enemy; Egypt, and its Arab allies Jordan and Syria.

For the Israeli people the war is usually described as a defensive war. The primary goal had been to open the Strait of Tiran and to remove the threat of Egyptian troops in Sinai (Shlaim, 2000: 242). The Arab countries, on the other hand, claimed that Israel deliberately provoked the Six Day War in order to expand its territories, which implies that they saw Israel as the reason for the war.

3.2 UN Resolution 242

The Arab states experienced an enormous territorial defeat in the Six Day War. Egypt suffered major financial loss through the Sinai oilfields and the Suez Canal, which was not opened again for shipping until 1975. Syria was not financially dependent on the Golan Heights, but Israel's occupation of the area placed Israeli forces within easy striking distance of Damascus (Cleveland, 2000: 331). The war humiliated the Arab countries and made them reluctant to negotiate from their newly weakened position. On the contrary, the Israeli state was preoccupied with discussion in how to handle the new situation. The country was in a position of strength, and many Israelis viewed the option of making territorial concessions as unnecessary (Cleveland, 2000: 332). This placed the parties in a diplomatic stalemate, and their respective allies started to reinforce each of the parties. The Egyptian and Syrian armies were equipped by the Soviet Union, and Israel was supported financially and militarily by the United States (Rabinovich, 2004: 11).

In the meantime in the international arena, a framework for a peace solution was adopted by the UN Security Council on November 22, 1967. The framework was put forward through the famous Resolution 242 (Cleveland, 2000: 333). This Resolution has ever since served as the basis for efforts to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict (Rabinovich, 2004: 11). The document is deliberately ambiguous and opened-ended, which in turn has resulted in the parties interpretations being quite different.

Figure 3-1: The Middle East Region



Adapted from: Dennis Ross *The Missing Peace* (2004)

There are two major issues in the resolution; the issue of territories and the issue of peace. These support both the Arab and the Israeli claim; the former's claim for territories and the latter's claim for peace (Shlaim, 2000: 260). For the Arab states, the most important part of the resolution is the call for Israeli withdrawal from territories occupied in recent war (UN

Resolution 242). Arab countries interpret this in the way that Israel is required to withdraw, or at least agree to withdraw, from the occupied territories before a peace agreement will be negotiated. Israel, in turn, emphasise the part of “just and lasting peace”, something that imply that the Arabs have to recognise Israel’s right to peace and security. Israelis also underlines the fact that the resolution’s wording reads withdrawal from “territories” and not from “the territories”, something that opens for territorial compromises, and may imply partial withdrawal (Rabinovich, 1998: 24).

3.3 The occupied territories

In Israeli political circles there was an ambivalent approach towards the occupied territories. Following the armistice agreements signed by the parties, the future of the areas became an issue of political debate. Some politicians viewed the occupation as unjustifiable and felt that the country should negotiate in order to return the areas in exchange for peace (Cleveland, 2000: 336). On the other side, there were the more religious figures that saw the territories as an essential part of ancient Israel; this was mainly in relation to the West Bank. Despite the different approaches, there was an overall agreement that East Jerusalem should remain Israeli, and on 18 June 1967, Israel annexed East Jerusalem and the surrounding area (Shlaim, 2000: 251).

The conflicting interpretation of the UN Resolution 242, coupled with the hostile atmosphere between the parties made peace negotiations difficult in the immediate aftermath of the Six Day War. Thus, the Israeli policies towards the occupied territories remained unresolved in the following years. The official policy in the years 1967 to 1977 was that the occupied territories would eventually be returned. This made the Israeli settlement policy modest and mainly established in strategically important border areas (Cleveland, 2000: 354).

3.4 Diplomatic buildup

In 1973 the Egyptians, led by President Anwar al-Sadat, and the Syrians, led by Hafez al-Assad, launched a surprise attack on Israel. The war occurred on the holiest day in the Jewish calendar and was given the title; the Yom Kippur War (Shlaim, 2000: 319). After the Egyptians crossed the Suez Canal, they stopped the offensive and consolidated their positions (Cleveland, 2000: 365). The aim of the Arab states was to break the political deadlock and

provoke international pressure on Israel (Shlaim, 2000: 319). Despite of the Arab advance in the surprise attacks, the Israeli army managed to push back on both fronts. Only forceful intervention from the US saved the two countries from a total collapse (Rabinovich, 2004: 17). In the aftermath of the Yom Kippur War, the US had a difficult task in mediating between Israel, Syria, and Egypt. President Sadat achieved what he had intended; the Arab countries had demonstrated for Israel that they were capable of making surprise attacks on the Jewish state, and the Americans started to engage in the conflict.

3.5 Sadat's visit to Jerusalem

The Israeli election in 1977 saw, for the first time in Israeli history, the victory of the right-wing Likud party. Unlike the Labour party, Likud was ideological committed to "Greater Israel" which included Judea and Samaria (the Biblical terms for the West Bank) (Shindler, 1995: 89). Such a position strongly contradicted the Jordanian claim of sovereignty over the same area. This made the Arab countries and the international community sceptical towards the new Israeli leader. However, the Likud leader, Menachem Begin, announced when entering office that his party would strive to achieve peace with its neighbours in the region (Shlaim, 2000: 355). This signal was received with great appreciation in Washington where Jimmy Carter had entered office as the American President. Carter held a different view of the Middle East conflict than that of his predecessors. He emphasised human rights and endorsed the idea of a Palestinian state, which was something that had not been a prioritised as an issue by earlier American presidents (Shindler, 1995: 91).

The Egyptian president Anwar al-Sadat appreciated the new signals from the Prime Minister; however, he did not want a separate peace with Israel (Shlaim, 2000: 361). The initial Egyptian goal prior to the peace negotiations was a coalition of the Arab states negotiating with Israel (Rabinovich, 2004: 25). Even though there had been bilateral attempts to solve the conflict, most of the Arab countries emphasised that the best way to recover the occupied territories was through a coordinated negotiation team. In this way they would be able to stand stronger towards Israel (Shlaim, 2000: 340). The initiative taken by the newly elected Prime Minister Begin initiated a series of intense negotiations between Egypt, Israel, and the US (Shlaim, 2000: 355).

President Sadat demonstrated willingness to negotiate, provided that Israel gave a prior commitment to full withdrawal from Arab land occupied in the Six Day War (Shlaim, 2000: 358). The other Arab countries were reluctant to negotiate directly with the Israelis, and when Sadat realised that he was on his own he preferred a package deal that included a linkage to the Palestinian question (Quandt, 1986: 110). The Egyptian relationship to the Syrians had become unpleasant during 1977, and Sadat felt that he needed to act alone if a peace treaty was to be achieved (Shlaim, 2000: 359). On 9 November Sadat announced that he was prepared to go to Jerusalem and to the Knesset in order to save the peace process (Shlaim, 2000: 359). The statement surprised the Israelis; however, it did not take many days before Prime Minister Begin, in order to accommodate Sadat, sent an official invitation to the President (Shlaim, 2000: 360).

The Egyptian President's speech in the Knesset, 20 November 1977, demonstrated a break in the psychological barrier that made up a large part of the Arab-Israeli conflict (Shalim, 2000: 360). The man responsible for the Yom Kippur War four years earlier was received in the Israeli parliament and allowed to make a speech to its politicians. Through his visit to Jerusalem, Sadat deviated from the attempt of a coordinated Arab negotiation, and he overcame the psychological barrier that had constrained Egypt and Israel (Shindler, 1995: 88).

3.6 The Camp David Accords

The Egyptian President's Jerusalem visit represented a major step forward in the peace negotiations. However, in order to narrow the gap between Israel and Egypt, the Americans conducted several trips to the respective countries. Delegations from Egypt and Israel were also welcomed in Washington on separate occasions, where each of the parties sought to influence the Americans in order to achieve their support on the conflicting issues (Shlaim, 2000: 363-364). In August 1978, an American delegation went to both Israel and Egypt with an invitation to peace talks at Camp David without any precondition of Israeli withdrawal (Shlaim, 2000: 371).

The Camp David negotiations started on September 5 and ended with the signing ceremony in at White House on September 19, 1978 (Quandt, 1986: 219). During the thirteen days the negotiations were intense, and on several occasions both parties were ready to leave.

However, through forceful work by the American delegation they managed to convince both the Israelis and the Egyptian to stay until a treaty was established (Shlaim, 2000: 373).

The Camp David accords refer to three agreements, two of them signed on the last day at Camp David and the third in March 1979. The first document entitled “A Framework for the Conclusion of a Peace Treaty between Israel and Egypt”, envisaged that the peace treaty would be concluded within three months after the signing (Shlaim, 2000: 375). The document set forth the conditions and principles of the final treaty. The second document, entitled “A Framework for Peace in the Middle East”, dealt with the future status of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. However, the document was vaguely worded and subject to different interpretations (Cleveland, 2000: 369). The third document represents the final peace agreement between Israel and Egypt.

After Menachem Begin’s return to Israel, the Prime Minister needed to secure a ratification of the Camp David Accords in the Knesset. Not surprisingly, the major criticism set forth in the Israeli parliament, came from Begin’s own Likud-bloc. The opposition leader, Shimon Peres, congratulated the Prime Minister on the treaty, and appealed his followers to support the agreement (Shlaim, 2000: 376). Even though Begin faced hard accusations from his own party, he received majority support in the Knesset. On October 26 1978, he announced the cabinet’s acceptance of the Camp David Accords (Quandt, 1986: 277, Shindler, 1995: 97).

3.7 The Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty

As aforementioned, the Camp David Accords stipulated that a final peace agreement between the parties was to be accomplished within three months. However, in the end it took almost six months before the world witnessed a final peace treaty between Israel and Egypt. Despite the optimism that occurred immediately after the Camp David, both leaders were faced with hard accusations in their respective countries. President Sadat was also struck by attacks from the Arab countries, accused of abandoning the Arab claims and not at least the Palestinians (Shlaim, 2000: 378). In the end Sadat paid a high price for the agreement, and Egypt was eventually expelled from the Arab League (Cleveland, 2000: 370).

In March 1979, the Americans decided to intensify their effort to break the deadlock between Egypt and Israel, and President Carter travelled to the two countries (Quandt, 1986: 302). In this last effort, Carter found himself shuttling between Jerusalem and Cairo in order to obtain

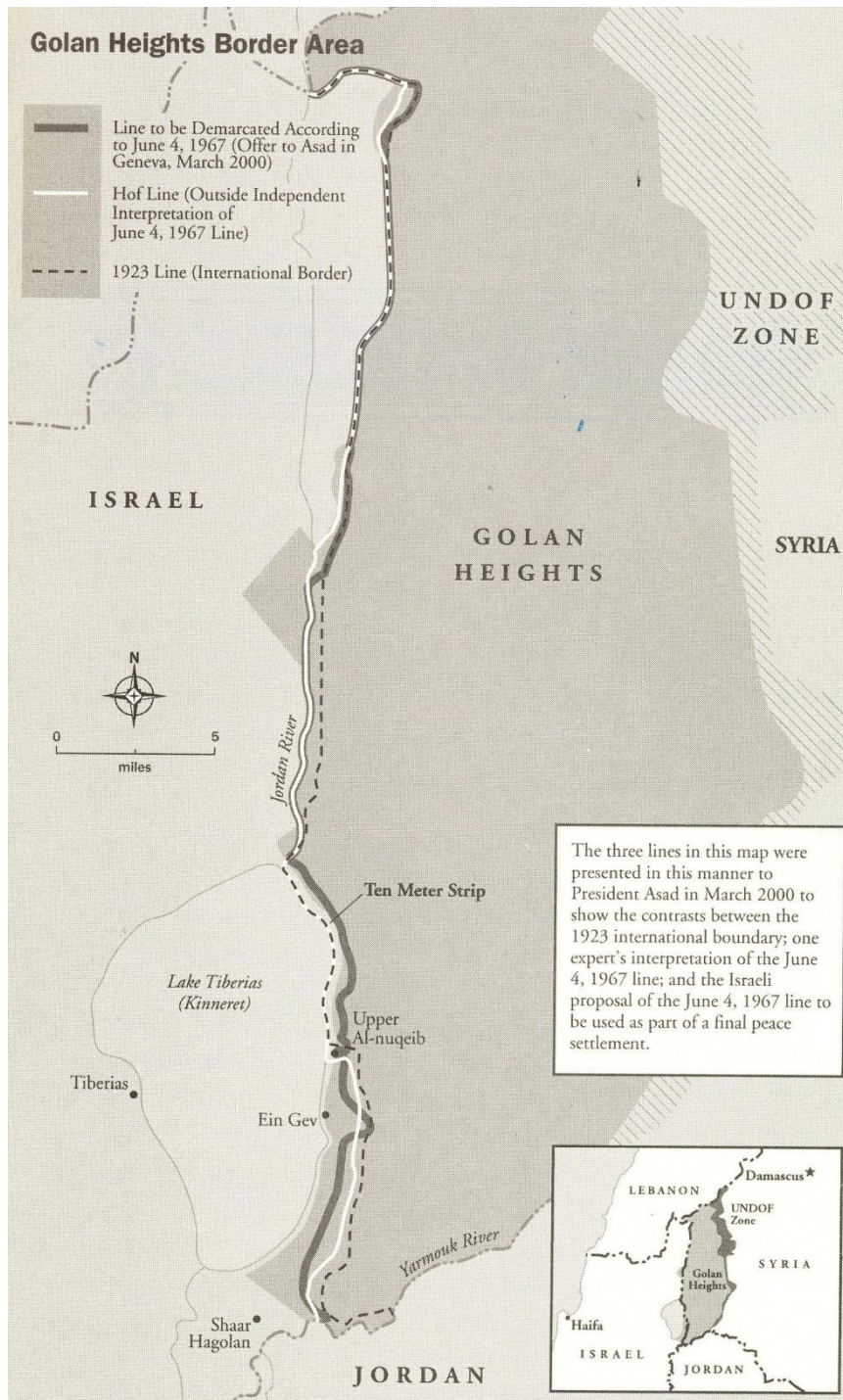
concessions from each of the parties. The final peace agreement was reached on March 13. After Sadat's acceptance, Begin presented the agreement for the Knesset and received their approval on March 22. The official signing of the peace agreement was conducted in Washington on March 26, 1979 (Shlaim, 2000: 380-381). In the following years the countries exchanged ambassadors and Israel started their phased withdrawal from Sinai, which was completed in 1982 (Cleveland, 2000: 369).

Despite the completion of peace by the strongest and most populated Arab country and Israel, the peace agreement did not achieve what the Egyptians and the Americans initially hoped for. Both Sadat and Carter wanted, for different reasons, a solution to the Palestinian question, and tried to pressure the Israelis for a linkage to the issue without success (Shlaim, 2000: 355). In the following years, Begin managed to downscale the terms of the Accords that involved the Palestinians. In the end, Prime Minister Begin managed to eliminate the most powerful Arab country as an adversary, and later stalled the autonomy talks of the West Bank (Shindler, 1995: 99).

3.8 The Golan Heights and the Israeli-Syrian border dispute

The strategic location of the Golan Heights made this territory a more difficult task to negotiate over. Both Israel and Syria emphasised the beneficial security importance in controlling the area. In the later peace negotiations between Israel and Syria, there are two different perceptions of the countries' border that occur; the 1923 international border, and the 4 June 1967 lines. The difference between these two lines is small in terms of territory, and it basically involves the Syrian presence at the Sea of Galilee (Shlaim, 2000: 531). The 1923 international border is the line that Britain and France drew up after World War I between Syria and then-Palestine (Cobban, 1999: 29). In the first Arab-Israeli war, the Syrians refused to recognise the Israeli state and sized the territory west of the 1923 line. When the Syrians demanded that Israel withdraws from the Golan Heights, they mean the 4 June 1967 line that consists of the area the country was in possession of before the Six Day War (Cobban, 1999: 30-31). This territory is a little more than 18 square kilometres more than the 1923 line. However, more importantly it gives Syria the access to the north-eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee (Shlaim, 2000: 531). Contrary, Israel emphasises the international border of 1923 when talking about the withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

Figure 3-2: The Golan Heights



Adapted from: Dennis Ross *The Missing Peace* (2004).

3.9 The Madrid peace conference

The Madrid peace conference on October 30, 1991, was an initiative taken by the US and the former Soviet Union. The conference managed for the first time to bring representatives from Syria and Israel together to negotiate a resolution to the conflict between the countries (Cobban, 1999: 15). Thus, the Madrid conference was groundbreaking in itself, laying the framework for future peace talks between Israel and the Arab countries. The foundation of the negotiations was the UN Security Council Resolution 242 and the principle of exchanging land for peace (Shlaim, 1994: 27).

The Syrian foreign minister Farouk al-Shara confirmed that Syria's stand was based on the principles of international legitimacy and the UN Resolution 242. He also requested Israel's total withdrawal from the occupied Golan Heights, the West Bank, Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, and southern Lebanon (Rabil, 2003: 200). The Israeli delegation was represented by Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir from the Likud party. His negotiating team held the traditionally Likud interpretation of the UN Resolution 242; committing the party to the West Bank (Shlaim, 2000: 461). The Shamir government adopted the position of a "peace-for-peace" policy, and insisted that Syria give Israel full recognition and end the state of war before they would offer any commitment at all on withdrawal from the Golan Heights (Cobban, 1999: 41).

The atmosphere at the conference was characterised by hostility and accusations from both sides, and produced little of substance (Rabinovich, 1998: 41). The gap between the negotiating parties was large, and they demonstrated little willingness to make compromises. In Israel, the political parties were preparing for the upcoming election in the summer of 1992, which seemed to be what Yitzhak Shamir was concentrating on (Shlaim, 2000: 497-498). Despite the fact that the Madrid negotiations did not lead to any agreement between Israel and the Arab nations, this event is often referred to as the starting point for the later peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, the Jordanians, and the Syrians (Shlaim, 1994: 27).

3.10 Prime Minister Rabin, 1992-1995

The Israeli national election in June 1992 was won by the Labour leader, Yitzhak Rabin. He appointed Shimon Peres as foreign minister, and Itamar Rabinovich as ambassador to the US

and chief of the Israeli negotiating team with Syria (Rabil, 2003: 201). The election of the Labour leader marked a change in the Israeli position towards its Arab neighbours, and it appeared as a signal to Syria that Israel was interested in negotiating peace. Yitzhak Rabin publicly announced a shift in government priorities away from Likud's stress on continuing settlement construction in the occupied territories and towards more active engagement in the peace process (Cobban, 1999: 43). As a reinforcement of this new policy, Itamar Rabinovich emphasised to the Syrian negotiators that; "Israel accepts the UN Security Council Resolution 242 in all its parts and provisions as a basis for the current peace talks and views it as applicable also to the peace negotiations with Syria" (Rabinovich, 1998: 57). The announcement was meant to indicate the new governments shift from Likud's "peace-for-peace" policy towards a settlement that included elements of withdrawal (Cobban, 1999: 43, Shlaim, 2000: 507).

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was originally suspicious of the Arab countries (Shlaim, 2000: 504). For Rabin, Israel's security was essential, and the Israeli control over the Golan Heights was necessary for security reasons (Shlaim, 2000: 507). Thus, the Israeli negotiators concentrated the talks on normalisation and security issues when negotiating with Syria (Rabil, 2003: 202). The Syrians, on the other hand, wanted to hear an Israeli commitment to full withdrawal from the Golan Heights to the line of 4 June 1967, before they would engage in serious negotiations (Shlaim, 2000: 531). While little of value was accomplished in the face-to-face negotiations in Washington, shuttle diplomacy was undertaken by US Secretary of State Warren Christopher (Cobban, 1997: 1).

Despite the slow progress in the Syrian talks, in September 1993 the world was stunned by the signing of the Oslo Accords between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO). President Assad had long advocated close coordination among the Arab countries to the peace talks with Israel (Cobban, 1997: 7). The Syrian president perceived the agreement as a betrayal by the Palestinians, and he was displeased that Israel negotiated with PLO behind his back (Rabinovich, 2004: 56). The Oslo Accords delayed the Syrian negotiations for several months, and it was not resumed before the beginning of 1994. At this time US President Bill Clinton and Assad met in Geneva where they focused on moving the peace process forward. Assad committed Syria to establishing normal relations within the context of peace (Shlaim, 2000: 533). Even though Rabin was pleased by Assad's initiative, he appeared cautious about how to respond. When not seeing any progress in public diplomacy, he chose

to move on with the Jordanians in the peace talks (Rabinovich, 1998: 130). In addition, another setback to the negotiations occurred when the Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated on 4 November 1995.

3.11 Prime Minister Peres, November 4, 1995 - May 26, 1996.

Shimon Peres replaced Yitzhak Rabin as Israeli Prime Minister, and he was quick to ascertain his ambition for an Israeli-Syrian peace agreement. Shimon Peres had for a long time been critical to Yitzhak Rabin's approach to the Syrian talks, which he saw as extremely slow in progress (Shlaim, 2000: 553). In his view Israel would have an advantage in dealing with several issues at the same time, and not solely focusing on security arrangements (Rabil, 2003: 211-212). Shimon Peres saw the possibilities of a new Middle East with open economic and financial cooperation across the borders (Rabil, 2003: 211). Thereby Israel, Syria, and the US agreed on resuming the talks at the Wye Plantation in Maryland in late December 1995.

The second Wye Plantation round of talks opened on January 24, 1996. However, the talks failed to produce a positive result. The initial goal of the Israeli delegation was to implement a fast settlement before the Israeli election in October 1996 (Shlaim, 2000: 554). Shimon Peres, pressured by his own party, needed to decide if he wanted to call for early elections in Israel, or if he would wait until the autumn. Eventually, the Prime Minister decided to move up the elections to May 29, an act that irritated the Syrians (Rabil, 2003: 213). The final round of talks resumed in late February, but was terminated after a week because of several suicide bombings in Israel (Rabil, 2003: 213). Shimon Peres eventually lost the Israeli election to the Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu. By the end of 1996, the relationship between Israel and Syria looked very similar to what had existed under the previous Likud government and the Israelis once again announced the construction of new settlement in the Golan Heights (Cobban, 1999: 31).

3.12 The Barak-government, May 17, 1999 – February 6, 2001

Benjamin Netanyahu adopted a hard-line strategy towards the Arab countries, and reintroduced the former Likud slogan; "peace-for-peace" (Shlaim, 2000: 575). In the years of

Netanyahu as the Prime Minister, the Israeli relationship towards most of the Arab countries worsened and even the relationship with the US was deteriorated under his policies. Together with disappointing domestic political decisions, this contributed to the major loss of the Likud party in the elections of 1999 (Shlaim, 2000: 607-608).

On May 17 1999, Ehud Barak, representing the Labour party, was elected as Prime Minister in Israel (Rabinovich, 2004: 123). Barak formed his government in a broad-based coalition in order to unite the country, and to obtain a broad support for restarting the Israeli negotiations with all the Arab countries (Rabil, 2003: 216). The Barak-plan set a timetable of fifteen months, until October 2000, to reach a breakthrough on all tracks: a final-status Israeli-Palestinian agreement, peace agreement with Syria and Lebanon, and regional agreements for the refugee and water problems (Rabinovich, 2004: 124). On December 15 1999, after almost four years without contact the talks with Syria resumed in Washington. The purpose of the talks was to find a framework that would lay the ground for later negotiations (Rabil, 2003: 218). The parties agreed to meet on January 3, 2000, at Potomac River, Shepherdstown. The negotiations were structured in different groups discussing issues of bilateral relations, security, access to water, and drawing borders. However, the old pattern in the negotiations soon surfaced again with Syria insisting on the 1967 border, and Israel insisting on discussing the security issues before territorial concessions. Finally, the Syrians left feeling that Barak kept avoiding discussion where the border would be (Rabil, 2003: 220).

The peace talks were eventually postponed, and in the meantime there were new escalations of violence in southern Lebanon (Rabil, 2003: 222). Despite the Israeli attack on Lebanon, Barak insisted on the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the country. When Israel finally withdrew its forces from southern Lebanon it ended a nine-year link in the Israeli-Syrian negotiations, and almost twenty years of Israeli occupation (Rabinovich, 2004: 141). Later in 2000, the Barak government started to crumble and eventually he called for new elections. In 2001, Ehud Barak lost to the Likud leader Ariel Sharon and together with this the Syrian negotiations disappeared (Rabinovich, 2004: 182).

This concludes the brief historical overview of the Israeli-Arab peace negotiations. After the loss of the Barak government the Israeli-Syrian peace talks has not resumed. The next chapters will initiate the analysis of the two peace negotiations, and later compare the negotiations factors in order to explain the negative outcome of the Israeli-Syrian negotiations.

4 The Israeli Bargaining Strength

In this chapter I will analyse the different tactical behaviour that Israel employed in order to explain how the country further strengthened its already beneficial bargaining position, and what effect this had on the negotiation outcome. The implication of the analysis suggests that there are two distinct issues in the discussion; the bargaining strength and the tactical behaviour. The bargaining strength represents the Israeli position compared to the opponent's, and the tactical behaviour represents what Israel did in order to affect the opponent and the negotiation outcome. The findings from this chapter will support the explanation of the two negotiation outcomes. I will start with a short introduction of the Israeli bargaining strength prior to the Egyptian peace talks, before the analysis will be carried out step by step in accordance with the analytical perspective.

After the Israeli independence the lack of recognition from the Arab countries placed Israel in a precarious position. However, the Six Day War gave the country a profound bargaining strength compared to the Arab neighbours. Although the war demonstrated the Israeli military power, it did not change the fact that the country was surrounded by states hostile towards their existence. The Yom Kippur War in 1973 further revealed that the Israeli people could never feel completely safe. Despite the fact that this reminded Israel about the possibility of growing Arab strength; the Yom Kippur War did not change any of the border positions that had resulted from the Six Day War. Israel still occupied the Arab territories and thereby inhabited an important bargaining chip in future peace negotiations. This position gave Israel the opportunity to control most of an eventual peace process; Israel could give demands and conditions for a peaceful solution to the conflict (Zartman, 1992: 67). On the other hand, the Arab countries had the legitimate claim to the territories based on UN Resolution 242, which many countries on the international arena supported.

4.1 Degree of Impatience

The degree of impatience concerns expenditures connected to the bargaining process. For some parties a time consuming negotiation process causes intolerable expenditures that the party might have difficulties to manage. In the analysis of the Egyptian negotiations the focus will be concentrated towards the issue of oil and expenditures connected to the negotiation process. The examination will be directed towards how Israel benefitted from the oilfields in

Sinai and in what way this issue was used in the bargaining process. In connection to the Syria negotiations the lack of oil in the Golan Heights implies that there might have been other cost related issues that have affected the negotiation process. Since both parties regard the areas' of security importance, it will be examined how Syria related to the slow moving negotiations and if this has possessed any pressure towards the country.

A secondary focus in this section will be directed towards the implications the cost related issues produced on the outcome of the negotiations. These issues might have been used by Israel in order to pressure the opponents for concessions. An important question will then be in what way the tactic worked to produce the preferable outcome.

4.1.1 Degree of impatience in the Israeli-Egyptian negotiation

For both Israel and Egypt the issue of time became a decisive element in the peace negotiations. President Sadat's decision to go to Jerusalem represents an indication of the Egyptian need to see progress in the peace talks (Shlaim, 2000: 359). Highest on the Egyptian list of demands prior to the peace negotiations was the recovery of the Sinai Peninsula, which meant total Israeli withdrawal (Shlaim, 2000: 355). Thus, Sadat initially hoped for a swift peace agreement followed by a quick recovery of the territories. This was not at least because of the terrible economic situation in Egypt, and the fact that Israel was pumping up Egyptian oil. The Sinai oil became an important issue for Egypt in the negotiations with Israel. Every day spent on negotiations caused economic loss for Egypt, which gave the country a weaker position in the negotiations.

The Egyptian relationship towards the other Arab countries represents another element of the problems connected to the economic situation that faced President Sadat. By travelling to Jerusalem, Sadat broke off the traditional idea of an Arab coalition against Israel. The fact that he made a speech in the Knesset also indicates an indirect recognition of the Israeli state (Shindler, 1995: 88). Immediate after the trip, strong criticism was directed towards him and he was even accused of being a traitor to the Arab cause (Rabinovich, 2004: 26). To be able to justify his action, the President was depended on some sort of solution to the Palestinian question (Quandt, 1986: 219). To make things worse there was also a growing discontent in the Egyptian population because of the peace talks. These realities left Sadat with little time to spend at the negotiations. If Sadat could obtain a fast peace agreement it would allow him to

concentrate his attention on improving Egypt's relationship with the Arab countries, and not at least the country's own economy.

Prime Minister Begin represents a very different position in the peace talks. He wanted to remove Egypt from the circle of war that surrounded the country, but Israel was not in an immediate need for a peace agreement (Shlaim, 2000: 369). Realising that a peace treaty depended on Israeli territorial concession, the agreement to negotiate peace indicates that he was prepared to pay a high price. As a nationalistic man, committed to the "Greater Israel" which includes the West Bank, he had no intentions of solving the Palestinian problem. On the other hand, a territorial concession of the Sinai Peninsula would not contradict Begin's nationalistic position (Rabinovich, 2004: 24-25, Rynhold, 2001: 37). This made a trade in land-for-peace possible, but it needed to be based on Begin's perceptions of an acceptable peace for Israel. Another important issue to notice is that Israel benefitted economically from the Sinai oilfields. In fact, this represents an example of a party that has incentives to spend time in the negotiations. By stalling the bargaining process, Israel would have a decisive economic advantage compared to the Egyptian counterpart (Shlaim, 2000: 380). As a result of this situation, Israel could afford to continue the negotiation process for a longer time than Egypt.

The relationship between Egypt and Israel demonstrates that Israel was in a position where it could be patient in the peace negotiations, thereby; making its bargaining position stronger than the Egyptian. The fact that the Israeli Prime Minister was sitting face-to-face and negotiating with Israel's mightiest adversary constituted a major victory in itself for Begin (Eisenberg and Caplan, 1998: 32). If a breakdown in the talks would occur, Begin could blame the Egyptians for the lack of an agreement, without losing any political support at home.

The parties' position may be illustrated by the bargaining process that occurred during the Camp David talks. As already known, the talks lasted for thirteen days, and involved some intense rounds of negotiation. Sadat's sacrifice by engaging in peace talks with Israel implied that he depended on quick and tangible progress in order to overcome the growing domestic discontent in Egypt (Eisenberg and Caplan, 1998: 32). The Egyptian perception of the talks was that it would be some hard negotiations over the Palestinian issue. However, it seems that Israel managed to exaggerate their insistence on keeping the Israeli settlements in Sinai, and consequently drew the attention away from the real bargaining issue (Telhami, 1992/93: 636).

Seemingly more time was spent on discussing the issue of the Sinai settlements than any other issue at Camp David (Quandt, 1986: 210). Prime Minister Begin even stated several times that no Israeli leader would even consider removing the settlements (Telhami, 1992/93: 636).

As time went by, the Israeli settlements, which will be discussed later, continued to develop and Israel consolidated their control over the territories (Shlaim, 2000: 379). By moving the negotiation process slowly, Israel not only strengthened its own bargaining position and its control over the bargaining issue, it also weakened that of Egypt. The behaviour soon made Sadat realise that the chances of an Israeli territorial concession diminished (Shindler, 1995: 92). This situation made the Egyptian President feel the pressure hanging over him. According William Quandt, who was a member of the American National Security staff; “Begin was the best able to deal with the pressure of time” (Quandt, 1986: 289). Since Israel was actually benefitting from the situation itself, Begin was not in a hurry to conclude any agreement that did not satisfy his demands (Shlaim, 2000: 366). This fact is also supported by the Israeli Defence Minister Ezer Weizman at the time; “Begin preferred to creep forward inch by inch. He took the dream of peace and ground it down into the fine, dry powder of details, legal clauses, and quotes from international law” (Quandt, 1986: 165). The Egyptian foreign minister during the Camp David summit, Muhammad Ibrahim Kamel also presents a critical description of Menachem Begin; “All he (Begin) needed was sufficient time to confuse the issue and drain the initiative of its magnificent content by drawing Egypt into a labyrinth of detail by unending discussions on secondary matters or side-issues” (Kamel, 1986: 32).

The characteristics described by his own Defence Minister indicate that Begin enjoyed a slow moving process, which additionally frustrated and pressured his opponent’s in the negotiation. However, some have argued that a reason for not rushing the Egyptian peace talks was based on the fact that Begin faced problems of his own in Israel. The right-wing in the Likud party would not accept a concession of the Sinai Peninsula (Bar-Siman-Tov, 2001: 42). To prepare the Israeli people for a withdrawal from Sinai, the circumstances demanded a slow moving process. Given the domestic political situation it is possible to argue that the Israeli people needed time to digest the concessions that were demanded (Bar-Siman-Tov, 2001: 42-43). Even though such an argument is reasonable in some sense, it does not change the fact that Israel also benefitted from the time consuming activity. The result ultimately became an even

more impatient Egyptian President that found himself lowering his demands in order to speed up the negotiations towards a final settlement.

4.1.2 Summing up

When comparing the two parties, it appears obvious that Israel was the most patient part in the negotiations. In fact, knowing that such an agreement would essentially imply territorial concessions for the country, Israel controlled the bargaining issues and the pace of the negotiation. Egypt on the other hand, was suffering from its terrible economic situation. A swift peace agreement followed by a fast Israeli withdrawal would help to compensate for the economic loss. An interesting problem for Egypt was that the country more or less placed itself in a situation where it primarily issued demands. The trip to Jerusalem made the Arab countries freeze-out Egypt, because it indicated the Egyptian recognition of Israel. In order to improve the relationship to the Arab countries, Egypt needed a fast peace agreement.

For Israel there were several positive aspects associated with spending time in the peace negotiations. First, time would help the Israeli public get used to a peace agreement with Egypt. Second, it would give Israel time to consolidate its control over the other occupied territories, which would make it harder for the country to make subsequent concessions on territorial issues. Third, time would most likely result in more Egyptian concessions because Egypt needed an agreement more than Israel. Fourth, and not at least, spending time meant an income that strengthened the country's position in the negotiations. Considering the final result of the negotiations, there is little doubt that Israeli deliberately consumed time as pressure towards the Egyptians. Menachem Begin's procrastination prevented any Israeli commitment on the issue of the West Bank. The use of time seemingly made Egypt lowering their demands in order to obtain the oilfields in Sinai. Thus, the tactical behaviour of Begin had an effect on the Egyptian counterpart and hence, on the final outcome.

4.1.3 The time issue in the Israeli-Syrian negotiations

From the Madrid conference in 1991 until the final breakdown of the peace talks in 2001, the Israeli-Syrian negotiations spent nearly ten years of bargaining without any concluding agreement. Both parties were aware of the other's stand on the issue, and that they interpreted the UN Resolution 242 differently (Rabinovich, 1998: 41-42). According to the American diplomat Dennis Ross, the Shamir government would not agree that UN Resolution 242

applied to the Golan Heights. The discussions at the Madrid were more focused on the Resolution and what it required, rather than peace and withdrawal (Ross, 2004: 81).

The Syrian bargaining position prior to the peace talks was different compared to that of Egypt in their negotiations with Israel. The Golan Heights did not have the same economic importance as the Sinai; however, the strategic significance of the area to both Israel and Syria has never been in doubt (Cobban, 1999: 30). For the Syrians the main strategic sensitivity of the Golan Heights stems from its closeness to their capital Damascus (Cobban, 1999: 30). As a secondary position, the territories had a nationalistic place in the Syrian mind. These facts contributed to the Syrians patience in achieving a peace treaty, and the time spent on negotiating did not constitute any pressure on Syria. It is especially important to emphasise the economic difference. The negotiations did not promote economic advantage to any of the parties while negotiating. However, based on the fact that Israel was in possession of the negotiation issue, the bargaining position was in favour of Israel.

The Golan Heights is not a part of the historical concept of “Greater Israel” and therefore, unlike the West Bank, is negotiable for the Likud party (Golan, 1992: 41). However, Prime Minister Shamir emphasised in his argumentation that Israel had already met some of the obligations in Resolution 242 through the withdrawal from Sinai, which he argued, consisted of almost 90 percent of the territories occupied in 1967 (Rabinovich, 1998: 41). Thereby, Israel was entitled to peace with the Arab countries without offering any additional territorial concessions (Rabil, 2003: 200). Indeed, Shamir replaced the wording “land-for-peace” by “peace-for-peace” (Cobban, 1999: 36). Yossi Ben-Aharon, who headed the Israeli delegation to the Madrid conference, claims that Israel made serious attempts to negotiate with the Syrians (Ben-Aharon, 2000: 1-2). This description contradicts that of Yitzhak Shamir himself. In an interview after his election loss in 1992 Shamir said; “I would have carried on autonomy talks for ten years” (Shlaim, 2000: 500, Rabil, 2003: 201, Butler, 1997: 84, Shindler, 1995: 272).

Shamir’s confession reveals that his delegation was not interested in achieving any progress in the peace talks. Spending time in order to strengthening the Israeli control of the bargaining situation was a deliberate move by Shamir and his team. The reason why the Likud government agreed to negotiate in the first place was to satisfy the Americans in order to obtain loan guarantees (Shindler, 1995: 272). If the loan guarantees had not been an issue, there is little doubt that Shamir and his government would not have been interested in

negotiations at all (Ross, 2004: 84, Zartman, 1997: 197). This, however, does not imply that the Shamir government was not interested in peace. It only points to the fact that he wanted a peace based on Israeli demands and dictation; which indicate a one-sided peace agreement (Shindler, 1995: 272). Evidently, the reason for negotiating was to consume time, and there was no intention in making any progress in the talks. By stalling the negotiations, the country could obtain the loan from the Americans and continue to have the control over the Golan Heights.

Although the Israeli intention to negotiate changed when Yitzhak Rabin came to power, the pace of the negotiations was still going slow (Shlaim, 2000: 530). Rabin initiated the Syrian talks in the beginning of his period as Prime Minister in 1992, and it lasted until he was assassinated in late 1995. During this time there were several suspensions in the talks, which indicate that Rabin was not in a hurry. According to Rabinovich; “Rabin wanted to proceed slowly and cautiously” (Rabinovich, 1998: 55). By not rushing the negotiations he hoped that the Israeli public would become used to the idea of peace building and eventually accept withdrawal from the Golan Heights (Cobban, 1999: 72, Rabinovich, 1998: 112).

Despite the Israeli argumentation, the Syrians perceived the slow progress as a tactical behaviour by the Israelis, especially considering the experience they had from negotiating with the Shamir government. They preferred a swift execution of the peace negotiations, following a fast Israeli withdrawal. The Syrian negotiation position was not changed, and the country still demanded an Israeli commitment to full withdrawal to the lines of 1967 (Shlaim, 2000: 531). Seen from the Syrian perspective; both Rabin and Shamir was wasting time in the process, which made Syria questioning the Israeli seriousness in their intention to conclude an agreement. The Syrian ambassador to Washington, Walid al-Moualem, explains that Rabin was in control of the pace of the negotiations, and he was the one that decided when to suspend the talks (Butler, 1997: 85, Shlaim, 2000: 530). Moualem characterised Rabin as a reluctant, suspicious, and very cautious man, moving very slowly (Butler, 1997: 85). These characteristics was also supported by the Syrian foreign minister Farouq Sharaa: “This is the strategic reason; and at the tactical level, they want each Arab party to feel that it is in a waiting room, and it needs to make further concessions if it wants to get a chance to see the doctor” (Cobban, 1999: 76).

The time consuming process demonstrates a pattern in the suspension of the peace talks. The hesitance that was identified with Rabin as a person became evident after the signing of the

Oslo Accords, when he decided to moderate the pace in connection to an agreement with Syria. Rabin asked the Syrians to be patient because the Israeli public had to “digest” the agreements with the Palestinians and Jordan (Seal, 2000: 70). The American diplomat Dennis Ross contends that; “With Rabin having just concluded the Gaza-Jericho agreement (the Oslo Accords), he was in no hurry to resolve the issue” (Ross, 2004: 147). The slow negotiation process might be seen as an effort by Rabin to pressure the Syrians. If the Syrians were in an immediate need for an agreement they would probably try to compromise on their demands. However, Syria did not lower their territorial claims.

Considering that an Israeli territorial concession would most likely produce protests and demonstrations in Israel, it is not unlikely that Rabin needed to prepare the people. Another possible reason is the issue of security. Yitzhak Rabin was a man preoccupied with security issues concerning the state of Israel (Shlaim, 2000: 504). Security was such an important issue for the Israeli Prime Minister that he received the nickname “Mr. National Security” by the Israeli public (Rabinovich, 1998: 43). Historically, the Labour party emphasised the hold on the Golan Heights as an issue of national security (Golan, 1992: 41). However, it was Rabin that initiated the peace talks and he knew about the security issue of this area. When Syria refused to compromise on their border demand, Yitzhak Rabin slowed down the negotiations. It is seemingly reasonable to conclude that Rabin might have used the time in order to pressure the Syrians in the negotiations. The problem for Rabin was that the tactical effort did not have any effect on the Syrians.

When Shimon Peres became Prime Minister after the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli pace in the negotiation changed (Rabil, 2003: 211). Peres was originally critical towards Rabin’s approach to the Syrian talks, and thought that Rabin exaggerated the security issue connected to the Golan Heights (Shlaim, 2000: 553). Moualem claims that; “When Peres became prime minister, he was in a hurry – he wanted to enter the elections with the Syrian-Israeli agreement in his hand” (Butler, 1997: 85). Shimon Peres saw the advantage through dealing with several issues simultaneously, however, for reasons explained later, the two first rounds of negotiations with the Syrians failed to produce positive results (Shlaim, 2000: 554). Following the lack of progress he decided to move up the national elections. Peres calculated that this would benefit him in the elections, and therefore decided to suspend the peace talks with Syria (Shlaim, 2000: 557). This demonstrates that once more the Syrians waited in order to achieve a negotiation outcome. Consequently, Peres’ loss in the Israeli

election to the Likud leader, Benjamin Netanyahu, implied the end to the Syrian negotiation, and the talks were not resumed before a new Labour government came to power three years later.

Shimon Peres' negotiation behaviour deviates from the Israeli time consuming tactics. Based on the assumption that he would benefit from a peace treaty, Peres tried to complete it within a few months. It can be argued that this was an optimistic assumption considering the narrow time limit he had to conclude such a comprehensive agreement. It also seems like Peres realised this and, thus, postponed the negotiations. Such decision reflects similarities to the behaviour of Rabin when not seeing enough progress in the talks. No matter what the reason for calling early election was, the result was an almost three year break in the negotiations.

When Ehud Barak became Prime Minister in 1999, he announced that he would restart the negotiations on all tracks (Rabil, 20003: 216). At this stage, the outline of a peace treaty and the Syrian position towards the border dispute was well known to the Israelis. Dennis Ross explains that; "Barak clearly knew that there would be no peace with Syria unless the Golan Heights was returned to Asad" (Ross, 2004: 510). However, at this round of the negotiations it seems like Barak misinterpreted the Syrian position and it did not take long before the withdrawal line became the issue of confrontation in the negotiations. Consequently, Barak responded by slowing down the peace talks. As Ross explains it; "...Barak received the results of a poll that made doing a deal with Syria more problematic than he had thought. It was at that time that Barak decided to hold fast in Shepherdstown regardless of the Syrian moves" (Ross, 2004: 589). Rabinovich concurs that the Shepherdstown talks took longer than expected and that this was mainly due to Barak developing cold feet, and refusing to give any commitment (Rabinovich, 2004: 133). The American negotiation team reported that Barak even asked President Clinton not to move quickly towards an agreement, because slow progress in the talks would demonstrate to the Israeli public that Barak was a hard negotiator (Agha and Malley, 2002: 2). The Americans tried to convince Ehud Barak, but they were unwilling to put any real pressure on him (Slater, 2002: 99). The eventual outcome became a final breakdown in the negotiations between Israel and Syria.

It obviously became more problematic for Barak to concede the Golan Heights than he originally thought. This was the moment when the Prime Minister turned to the tactic that characterised his predecessor, Yitzhak Rabin. Seemingly Barak thought that he might obtain an advantage in out waiting the Syrians in order to pressure the country to compromise on the

border. Even though the behaviour might be justified considering the opposition towards withdrawal in Israel, it still represents a pattern in the Israeli negotiation tactic. However, Barak misjudged the Syrian dependence on a negotiation outcome, something that resulted in a final breakdown in the peace talks.

4.1.4 Summing up

When comparing Israel and Syria, it is evident that both parties were more or less equally patient in the negotiations. Regardless of the Israeli advantage in controlling the territories, the cost of haggling did not constitute any effect on the parties. Apparently Israel deliberately stalled the negotiations in order to pressure Syria into making concessions. This is especially present in Shamir's tactic. His real intention by negotiating was to obtain the loan guarantees from the US. Rabin claimed that the process needed to be slow in order to prepare the Israeli public for peace. However, he completed two other peace agreements within the same time period, which indicates that he probably wanted a better deal with Syria than what they offered. Ehud Barak assumed that he would benefit from a slow peace process, even though it ended in a final breakdown.

The three prime ministers represent a pattern of spending time in order to pressure the opponent. The problem for each of them seems to be that it did not influence Syria. The Syrians wanted a peace agreement that was based on the 1967 border, but the stalling of the negotiations did not create any pressure on the country. The main reason for Syria's patience might have been the lack of economic importance of the Golan Heights. The country did not lose any crucial income by the continuous delays in the negotiations. For both Israel and Syria the importance of the Golan Heights was based on security reasons. However, this does not change the fact that as time went by Israel further consolidated its control over the Golan Heights, and that finally there would be nothing more to negotiate over. The only character that did not directly use the time as pressure was Shimon Peres. On the other hand, he had an extremely short time period to achieve a peace agreement, something that eventually made him postpone the talks.

4.2 Aversion to Risk of breakdown

In this section I intend to focus on the risk of breakdown in the peace negotiations. At any time during negotiations there is a chance that the talks may breakdown. A party's relation towards the risk of a breakdown is usually difficult to identify since it more or less depends on the personality of the negotiator. Nevertheless, there are some indications that are possible to discover during the negotiations. One of these indicators is to identify which party will suffer the most by a breakdown. Each party have their own perceived relation towards such a risk, and the party that has the most to lose will often lower their demands in order to conclude an agreement.

In both negotiations I will pay attention towards special circumstances that may change the parties' positions in the negotiations. Another focus will be on how Israel employed its position to pressure the Arab states. Finally, I will stipulate if such behaviour affected the outcome of each negotiation.

4.2.1 Consequences of a breakdown in the Israeli-Egyptian negotiations

In stipulating Israel's relation to an eventual risk of breakdown in the Camp David talks, there is little doubt that country was in a position to benefit. Considering that Israel in reality had nothing to lose from a breakdown, Begin probably did not fear a possible collapse in the peace talks. By agreeing to participate in the peace talks much of the international pressure towards Begin was already released (Shindler, 1995: 88-91). In addition, Begin also had the support of the Israeli people. In case of a breakdown in the talks, Begin could blame the unrealistic position of the Egyptians and the Americans for the failure (Quandt, 1986: 208). On the other hand, he had an interest in ending the state of war between the countries, and thereby create a better relationship to the most powerful Arab state (Eisenberg and Caplan, 1998: 31). These facts provided Israel with an advantage in the power-balance in the negotiation process, and it is most likely that Begin did not feel any urgent consequences should the negotiations break down.

As already seen, Egypt was in a very different position compared to its neighbour. The devastating defeat in the Six Day War not only humiliated the country, but it also deprived Egypt from vital income. The economic situation had forced Egypt to accept subsidies from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to make up for the lost revenues (Cleveland, 2000: 331,

Hinnenbusch, 2002: 96). In order to regain its reputation as a strong power in the Middle East, Egypt depended on recovery of its territories, and for Sadat; this implied every inch of it. Another important factor was the issue of finding an alliance partner. Early in the 1970s, the Egyptian President expelled the Soviet allies from the country in a hope to change the country's military ally (Cleveland, 2000: 354). This made Sadat eager to achieve an agreement with the Americans in order to attain their support. In case of a negotiation breakdown, Egypt needed at least an agreement with the Americans (Quandt, 1986: 219). Such agreement would help to make up for some of the financial loss that came from the oil revenues in Sinai.

In order to make Sadat's situation even worse, his break with the Arab countries and decision to go to Jerusalem was seen as a betrayal of the other Arab countries (Shindler, 1995: 88). If Sadat could not demonstrate a victory by a comprehensive peace agreement, which included a solution to the Palestinian question, he would have to answer for the disloyalty towards the Arab states. In case of a breakdown in the negotiations, Egypt could lose everything, even the support from the Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Thereby, the country depended on some sort of solution to the Palestinian question in order to satisfy the Arab countries (Shlaim, 2000: 379). This became evident already at the beginning of the Camp David talks where it is possible to identify Egypt as the most eager party. Sadat was in a vulnerable negotiating position, and in order to compensate for what the Arab counterparts defined as a betrayal he was eager, if not depended on, to create a solution to the Palestinian question. This was in stark contrast to Begin's goal for the negotiations. He wanted the agreement to stand on its own feet, and aimed to downscale any linkage to the future of the West Bank (Shlaim, 2000: 379). The contradicting positions became evident when Begin was ready to leave several times during the talks. Whenever a proposed document indicated a too close connection to the Palestinian question, Begin refused and demonstrated no inclination to move his position (Shindler, 1995: 93). Occasionally he even posted the question why Israel should even consider any concessions at all (Telhami, 1992/93: 637). Seemingly Begin used his advantage in order to pressure Sadat by the threat of a breakdown. However, Jimmy Carter managed to keep both parties at the negotiations by applying intense pressure onto them (Shlaim, 2000: 373).

One of the major stumbling blocks throughout the Camp David talks was the Israeli settlements in the Sinai. Prime Minister Menachem Begin wanted to keep these settlements, and claimed that the Knesset and the Israeli people would not accept a removal (Shlaim,

2000: 370). During one of the discussion about the settlements, Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan told the Egyptian counterpart that if Sadat did not accept the Israeli demand they would stay in Sinai and keep pumping up the oil (Kamil, 1986: 351). At this stage, Dayan demonstrates that Israel did not depend on getting an agreement, by hinting towards what the consequences of a breakdown would be for Egypt. It appears to have been an attempt to put pressure on the Egyptians to lower their demands. Further on, if the talks did not suit with Begin's preferences, he proclaimed his willingness to leave Camp David. The sequence between Dayan and the Egyptians represents an early indication of Israel's indifference in relation to an agreement. It also represents an example in how Israel uses the reality by insinuate what will happened if Egypt does not change their position.

In the aftermath of the Camp David signing, Israel brought the oil issue back to the agenda. Because of the Islamic revolution in Iran, Israel was cut off by their major oil supplier. To give up the oilfields in Sinai suddenly seemed dangerous from the Israeli perspective (Shlaim, 2000: 379). This exogenous factor created another pressure towards a breakdown in the peace talks. Prime Minister Begin demanded a guarantee, from both Egypt and the US, that the country's oil supply would be met, if not, Israel would not even consider evacuating the oilfields (Quandt, 1986: 299). By jeopardising the peace treaty, Begin once again revealed that no agreement was an option for Israel.

At this stage, it is possible to identify the effect of a third party on the negotiations. The situation in Iran had in reality nothing to do with the peace negotiations. However, it turns out to have represented an uncontrollable factor that suddenly changed the bargaining position for Israel, and as consequence for Egypt. Without the oil from Iran, Israel would have placed itself in a difficult situation if the withdrawal had been carried out. The issue of oil alters the Israeli position and the country demands guarantees for their future supplies from their counterparts. The fact that both Egypt and the US actually agreed to the Israeli demands indicates the parties' aversion to the risk of breakdown. This is particularly the case for Egypt. Considering the already existing problems with the Arab countries, an agreement to sell oil implied another betrayal. When Sadat believed that the talks would break in the final rounds over the issue of oil, he agreed to further lower his demands and accept the Israeli offer. Begin managed to put pressure behind his threat and eventually Israel received a guarantee of the country's oil supply for the next fifteen years (Shlaim, 2000: 380). Through tactical and calculating demonstration of Israeli indifference towards a breakdown, it seems that Begin

managed to continue his hard-line until the last details of the negotiations were achieved (Telhami, 1992/93: 637).

For the Egyptians the presence of the risk of a breakdown evidently made the country narrow its expectations. This implied the deviation from a preferred settlement on the Palestinian question in order to regain the Sinai. Another example of Sadat's risk aversion is demonstrated by his need for an agreement with the Americans. During the Egyptian-US talks Carter and Sadat had developed a warm friendship, which made Sadat believe that he would achieve an agreement with the Americans no matter what the result of Camp David (Shlaim, 2000: 373). At one stage during the Camp David talks, Sadat felt that the negotiations was going nowhere and was ready to leave. However, Jimmy Carter gave him an ultimatum; leaving would mean the end to the US-Egyptian relationship and Carter and Sadat's friendship (Brzezinski, 1983: 272, Shlaim, 2000: 374). By issuing such ultimatum, Carter increased the Egyptian cost of a breakdown. Sadat immediately changed his mind and stayed at Camp David. His behaviour reveals that an agreement with the American President was the most important issue, and when this was endangered he chose to concede on his own ultimatum.

4.2.2 Summing up

When comparing the parties' relation towards the risk of breakdown it is obvious that Israel was in a better position than Egypt. Israel had already achieved legitimacy from a powerful adversary by the negotiations itself. In case of a breakdown the country would still benefit from having participated in the peace talks and its continuing hold on the Sinai. Egypt, on the other hand, would lose the possible income from the oilfields, and the political situation towards the Arab states placed the country in a vulnerable position. Later, this became the reality when the country was expelled from the Arab League, and thereby lost important support from the Arab countries.

The parties' difference towards a risk of breakdown is exemplified by Begin's hard position at the Camp David, and Sadat's sudden concessions when the oil issue was brought back on the agenda. The random factor of the oil demonstrates how Israel used Sadat's aversion towards a breakdown in order to achieve a better agreement. Egypt would lose everything in case of a breakdown and had to accept more concessions to avoid such outcome.

4.2.3 The Israeli-Syrian relation towards a breakdown

The parties' relation towards the risk of breakdown in the talks appears to be rather different in the Israeli-Syrian negotiations. The Madrid conference created a foundation for the parties to start negotiating with each other (Bercovitch, 1997: 226, Cobban, 1999: 15, Shlaim, 2000: 485). However, both parties were reluctant to participate in the first place, and it was only through pressure by the Americans that made them accept the invitation (Shlaim, 2000: 485). This makes out the first significant difference between the two negotiations. Where Egypt and Israel wanted to negotiate, Syria and Israel had to be pressured to the negotiating table (Zartman, 1997: 197). Despite the participation, neither of the parties demonstrated any interest in making concessions in order to achieve an agreement. The Madrid conference was thus, characterised by demands, counter-demands, and accusations between the participants (Rabinovich, 2004: 37). The atmosphere at the conference, and the fact that the parties were pressured, indicates that the parties were equally ambivalent towards a breakdown in the negotiations.

The Israeli position at the conference was more or less obvious. Yitzhak Shamir did not recognise that the UN Resolution 242 applied to the Golan Heights, which indicates that he had no intention of giving up the territories (Ross, 2004: 81). As seen earlier, he also revealed this in an interview some year's later (Shindler, 1995: 272). These facts demonstrate that the Israeli delegation was not interested in any peace settlement that included Israeli withdrawal, which this point to their indifference towards a breakdown in the talks.

An interesting part of the Madrid conference was that the Syrians inhabited an equal approach as the Israelis. Syria continued to demand the full Israeli withdrawal, and refused to discuss anything before Israel made such a commitment (Rabinovich, 1998: 41). The reason for the Syrian position might have been that the Americans demanded bilateral talks at the Madrid conference. Syria preferred multilateral negotiations in order to coordinate the Arab countries, and together stand stronger against Israel (Shlaim, 2000: 491). An additional reason for the country's position is the lack of Syrian economic dependence on regaining the Golan Heights; a possible breakdown would not change this situation for Syria. These positions continued to characterise the parties throughout the later peace negotiations.

Even though the Israeli interest towards peace negotiations changed with Yitzhak Rabin as Prime Minister, the aversion towards a breakdown seems to have been the same. Rabin, to

some degree Peres, and Barak attempted to influence the Syrians by continuously postponing the negotiations (Cobban, 1999: 72, Rabinovich, 1998: 112). At least for Yitzhak Rabin, the postponement was a tactical effort in order to move the Syrian position in the negotiations (Rabinovich, 1998: 130). By spending time and delaying the talks Israel seemingly anticipated that Syria would fear that a breakdown would occur, and eventually change their bargaining demands. What Rabin did not realise was that Syria was not influenced by such a risk, and it resulted in several delays in the negotiation process (Shlaim, 2000: 533).

Another example of Israeli attempts to alter the Syrian negotiation position was through the separate peace agreements with PLO and Jordan (Rabil, 2003: 228). Initially, Israel wanted to achieve peace agreements with all its neighbours. The country only had the agreement with Egypt, and there was an Israeli desire to include the others into the “circle of peace” (Cobban, 1999: 3). The conclusion of peace agreements with the PLO and Jordan made the necessity of an agreement with Syria less important, which further strengthened Israel’s bargaining position. However, even though Syria lost its Arab negotiation partners, the country did not lower its demands in the negotiations with Israel. A reasonable reaction would have been a more obliging Syria towards the Israeli demands, because Israel was now less dependent on peace with Syria. Nevertheless, regardless of the attempt to alter the Syrian position by promoting the risk of breakdown, the Syrians kept their same demands.

A similar tactical manoeuvre is evident under Prime Minister Ehud Barak. Israel and Syria had used Lebanon as pressure towards each other since the Madrid conference. In order to strip Assad from all leverage, among other reasons, Barak announced the Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon (Rabinovich, 2004: 141). The ultimate Israeli withdrawal constitutes another attempt in pressuring Syria to alter its position and demands. Syria was now without any bargaining chips in the talks with Israel. However, as was the case was with his predecessor; the decision did not constitute any effect on Syria. Evidently, the final breakdown in the peace talks demonstrates that Syria was equally indifferent towards a breakdown as Israel.

4.2.4 Summing up

The fact that the peace negotiations finally broke down exemplifies that both parties was equally indifferent towards no agreement. Neither Israel nor Syria depended on a positive negotiation outcome. This fact is reflected by Israel’s tactical efforts in order to pressure

Syria. Despite the numerous postponements of the talks, and the separate peace agreements with PLO and Jordan, it did not alter the Syrian negotiation position. Assad continued to insist on the same demands as from the Madrid conference; the Israeli withdrawal to the June 4 1967 lines. This makes it possible to conclude that despite of the asymmetrical power-balance in the negotiations and Israel's attempts to increase its own position; the effect was indifferent in the Syrian position towards a breakdown. Because of the parties' similar indifference, the effect of Israel's behaviour became no agreement, and thus eventually a total breakdown in the talks.

4.3 Inside Options

Inside options concerns the parties' alternatives to a negotiated agreement. In the negotiations between Israel and the Arab states I will emphasise the role of the Israeli settlements in the occupied territories. The fundament of the peace negotiations was the UN Resolution 242, and the demand for Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories in exchange for peace and recognition. In other words, Israel was in control of the basic issue of the negotiations and thereby had a stronger bargaining position. The settlements represent the Israeli alternatives, and an important element in this section will be to determine in what way Israel used their alternatives in the negotiations in order to obtain a preferable outcome.

4.3.1 Increasing Israeli inside options - the Israeli-Egyptian negotiations

In the continuation of the peace talks and as a reimbursement of Sadat's visit to Jerusalem, Prime Minister Begin and his team participated at the Ismailia summit in Egypt (Shlaim, 2000: 366). While not having determined what would happen to the settlements in Sinai, Israel started to work on four new settlements on the peninsula (Shlaim, 2000: 366). Consequently, the Egyptians started to doubt the Israeli intentions in negotiating peace. The new settlements in Sinai were perceived by Egypt and the US as deliberate obstacles set up to sabotage the peace process (Shlaim, 2000: 366). However, according to William Quandt, Begin never accepted Jimmy Carter's demand for no more settlements, and claimed that he never gave a commitment not to expand the Sinai settlements during the negotiations (Quandt, 1986: 162). Nevertheless, the building of new settlements did not facilitate any easing in the already tense relationship between President Sadat and Prime Minister Begin.

The Egyptian delegation started to see Prime Minister Begin as an impediment to the peace process itself (Shlaim, 2000: 366).

By creating new settlements Israel tightened their control over Sinai, thus, making it harder for the country to concede on the territory. This seems to have been a deliberate tactic to further strengthen the Israeli bargaining position towards Egypt. It was also a known fact that Prime Minister Begin wanted to retire to one of the settlements at Sinai (Shlaim, 2000: 374). “Begin (...) had even promised to settle in Northern Sinai himself when he finally stepped down from office” (Shindler, 1995: 100). The decision to expand may have been in connection to his wish. By creating new settlements the chances for a territorial compromise would probably increase. This assumption is based on the fact that more settlements would mean a more expensive evacuation from Sinai. Thus, we can explain the decision to expand the already existing settlements, with the reasoning that it gave the country another bargaining chip in the negotiations. The cost of relocating the settlements meant that a decision to withdraw would be harder to justify to the Israeli people, and thereby give Israel a reason to demand economic compensation for a peace agreement. This represent a good example of how a party may increase its inside options. By consolidating its control over the bargaining issue, the party increases its beneficial outcome of the status quo.

The issue of the Sinai settlements was brought up again at the Camp David negotiations. Both the Egyptians and Americans did not realise that the subject would be one of the hardest issues in the discussions. After the first couple of days, the Egyptian and Israeli leaders clashed over the issue of territories (Shlaim, 2000: 373). William Quandt explains that; “We did not expect the question of Israeli settlements in Sinai to be insurmountable; we in fact underestimated how tenaciously Begin would fight to keep them” (Quandt, 1986: 210). Given the UN Resolution 242, and the Egyptian demand before the Camp David summit, both the Egyptian and the Americans anticipated that the Sinai settlements would be one of the easiest issues and that the major difficulties would be the final status of the West Bank. However, Prime Minister Begin seems to have been prepared to fight hard to keep the settlements. What the Egyptians and Americans had not realised was the pressure that Begin faced from within Israel and especially from inside his own political party. Some of the Likud hard-liners believed that no territories at all should be returned, and others viewed the territories as security zones that would prevent future Arab attacks (Shindler, 1995: 94). These groups

constituted a dilemma for the Israeli Prime Minister, no matter what compromises he would agree to he would be attacked by the Israeli right (Bar-Siman-Tov, 2001: 42).

In the following after the Camp David and towards the final signing of the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty, the Sinai settlements continued to be a conflicting issue. Together with these settlements, three Israeli airbases became an additional issue that the Israeli Prime Minister used in the bargaining. According to Jimmy Carter, Begin announced that no Israeli leader could dismantle the Sinai settlements (Carter, 1982: 351, Telhami, 1992/93: 636). Because both Carter and Sadat did not anticipate Begin's hard bargaining position, the discussions became concentrated towards finding a solution to this issue. The final solution offered by the Americans was that they would finance the building of new airbases inside Israeli territory together with the removal of the Israeli settlements (Eisenberg and Caplan, 1998: 35, Quandt, 1986: 241-242, Shlaim, 2000: 380). Menachem Begin obviously achieved what he wanted, including economic compensation. The expansion of Israeli settlements in Sinai reinforced the country's connection to the territory, and Israel found itself in the positions of making financial demands in order to sign an agreement. What is evident at this stage, is the strategic manoeuvre by Begin which increased the country's bargaining power by reinforcing its inside options.

There is another area in the issues of negotiations that Menachem Begin managed to increase Israel's bargaining power in connection to the settlement policy. In the beginning of the negotiations the American president Jimmy Carter openly committed himself to solve the Palestinian question (Shlaim, 2000: 355). Carter's stand coincided with the Egyptian President's and both leaders worked hard for creating a linkage to the future of the Palestinians on the West Bank and Gaza Strip (Shindler, 1995: 93). As already known, such a position was in basic conflict with the Israeli Prime Minister. While the negotiation was developing the Israelis continued their expansion of the settlements in the West Bank (Shlaim, 2000: 379). As Carter explains; "The expanding settlements under Begin's government were creating doubt that the Israelis were bargaining in good faith concerning any reduction in Israeli influence on the West Bank" (Carter, 1982: 348). The settlements became the source of Sadat and Carter's distrust of Begin's bargaining motives, and the policy of expansion did not facilitate the three parties' relationship. Despite the Likud forces that opposed the return of Sinai, this did not coincide with Begin's primary goals for the negotiations (Shindler, 1995: 92-93). The Prime Minister anticipated that a peace agreement with Egypt would; "...allow

Israel to consolidate its hold over the West Bank through the continued development of Jewish settlements there” (Eisenberg and Caplan, 1998: 31, Shlaim, 2000: 377). At the end of the final peace agreement, Prime Minister Begin averted a clear linkage to the future of the Palestinians and West Bank (Shindler, 1995: 97-98).

During the negotiations, it is possible to identify that Israel continuously created obstacles to the second issue of the negotiations by increasing its influence in the West Bank. Thereby, strengthening its bargaining position towards the Palestinian question, and actually lowering the possibility towards an agreement involving this issue. The Israeli hard-line on the Sinai settlements, consequently made Begin able to shift focus away from the settlements issues at Gaza and the West Bank. This fact is exemplified at one of the last days of Camp David. Jimmy Carter believed that he obtained a commitment from Begin to freeze the settlements on the West Bank (Shlaim, 2000: 379). However, the day after he received a letter from the Israeli Prime Minister that promised a three months freeze and that the issue only counted for new settlements. “Indeed, at the end of October 1978, Begin publicly announced that he had decided to expand the population of existing settlements” (Shindler, 1995: 97). The Americans reacted on what they viewed as a violation of Begin’s commitment, but Begin responded that the freeze did not preclude *thickening* of existing settlements (Shlaim, 2000: 379).

Evidently, the Israeli Prime Minister’s strategy was to insist on the importance of the Sinai settlements in order to remove the Egyptians focus on the solution to the Palestinian question (Telhami, 1992/93: 636). As the peace negotiations continued, the Israelis expanded settlements on the West Bank, and as a result managed to consolidate their control over the area. The sum of all these behaviours frustrated the Egyptians together with the Americans (Shindler, 1995: 265). The consequence was that the Egyptians concentrated their negotiations towards the Sinai Peninsula, thereby abandoning the linkage to the West Bank. Considering the Likud’s ideological position regarding the West Bank, it should not have been surprising to the Egyptians and Americans that the Palestinian question would be a major obstacle in the negotiations (Shlaim, 2000: 366). Prime Minister Menachem Begin was openly devoted to the Israeli presence at the West Bank. On the other hand, the Israeli insistence on keeping the Sinai settlements might have surprised both the Americans and the Egyptians.

4.3.2 Summing up

The continuous expansion of settlements was seemingly a tactical effort by Israel to increase its inside options. As seen immediately after Sadat's Jerusalem trip, Israel started constructing four new settlements in Sinai, something that is hard not to interpret as other than a tactical behaviour. The country already benefitted from the negotiation process in the sense of the oilfields, but in order to strengthen their bargaining position and perhaps being able to make territorial compromises, an expansion benefitted the Israelis. The peace talks were already initiated, even though the parties had yet to be invited to the Camp David. The Israelis had to know that such an act would not be appreciated by the Egyptians. By creating more settlements, coupled with the stalling of the negotiations, Israel consolidated their control over the territories. This made it harder for itself to concede on the issue that both the Americans and Egyptians thought to be one of the simpler issues in the negotiation process, and drawing the attention away from the West Bank issue. After the final signing of the peace treaty, Israel once more created obstacles for a later peace agreement. Even if Likud would lose the next national election, the new settlements would limit the possibilities for a future peace agreement. Despite Begin's ideological stand and his commitment to the Likud party, the Israeli settlement policy demonstrates a technique in weakening the opponents bargaining position and strengthens its own.

4.3.3 The Israeli inside options – settlements in the Golan Heights

Initially the Shamir government demonstrated no interest in participating in the Madrid conference of 1991. It was because of the loan guarantees that Prime Minister Shamir finally accepted the invitation (Shlaim, 2000: 487). The American pressure was directed towards the settlement expansions in the occupied territories, and they demanded a freeze in the activities in order to settle a framework for the peace talks (Ross 2004: 83). However, the Israeli political right responded to the peace conference through the announcement that more settlements would be built in all of the occupied territories (Shindler, 1995: 272). The settlements were calculated to double the number of people living in the territories in four years (Shlaim, 2000: 486). Similar to that of Prime Minister Begin during the Egyptian negotiations, this is another example of increasing the inside options.

During the Madrid conference, there was little evidence of interests by the parties of making compromises (Rabil, 2003: 200). The Syrians intended to negotiate on the purpose of

implementing the UN Resolution 242, with its “territory for peace” principle (Ben-Aharon, 2000: 1). The Israeli delegation, on the other hand, simply demanded that the Arabs should give Israel peace within secure and recognised boundaries (Rabinovich, 1998: 41). In demanding recognition before any peace talks, Shamir attempted to pressure the Syrian delegation into accepting that the Israelis were in possession of the power and could dictate the peace process. The continuous building of settlements did not facilitate the relationship between the two parties. In fact, in November the same year, the housing minister Ariel Sharon announced another settlement in the Golan Heights (Cobban, 1999: 39). The Syrians interpreted any expansion of settlements as an insult and a step back in the negotiations. Thus, the settlements lowered the probability of any future Syrian control over the territories.

The Likud party’s insistence on retaining all, or nearly all of the Golan Heights made any peace agreement with Syria impossible. Prime Minister Shamir also stated that he did not believe in territorial compromise; “I believe with my entire soul that we are forever connected to this homeland” (Rabil, 2003: 94). The statement indicates that the government was not ready to deliver any territorial concessions that included the removal of Israeli settlements. After his defeat in the Israeli election against the Labour party in 1992, Yitzhak Shamir confessed his secret agenda at peace talks. When asked what he regretted after his election loss, Shamir answered; “...that the coming four years I will not be able to expand the settlements in Judea and Samaria and to complete the demographic revolution in the Land of Israel” (Shlaim, 2000: 500). The statement presents Shamir’s real plan for the peace negotiations, leaving little doubt that he did not want a peace that included an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories.

Significantly, the settlement issue did not only create an obstacle in the peace process, in fact, it would destroy it. If it continued, there would eventually be nothing left to negotiate about (Shlaim, 2000: 486). This was evidently Shamir’s agenda. He was committed to the West Bank by the Likud manifesto, but in relation to the Golan Heights he was not interested in any territorial concessions. In an attempt to make an Israeli concession harder, he continued to expand the settlements. The behaviour does not only demonstrate that he saw the Israeli “inside option” as a better option than negotiating with the Syrians, but he also increased these options. Shamir managed to further consolidate the Israeli control over the Golan Heights, leaving it more difficult for his successors to work out an agreement.

This became especially evident when the negotiations intensified. When the Labour leader Yitzhak Rabin engaged in the peace negotiations, he demonstrated willingness to achieve a peace agreement (Rabinovich, 2004: 42, Shlaim, 2000: 507). However, the policy implemented by his predecessors from the Likud party increased the Israeli bargaining position towards the Syrians. The Israeli inside options were even greater than before the Madrid conference as a consequence of the expanding settlements. For Prime Minister Rabin, an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights would imply relocations of more settlements, meaning higher economic expenses. His main issue of concern was also the security aspect, and given the negotiations lack of progress on this front, Rabin postponed the talks several times (Shlaim, 2000: 504). The calculation of a peace treaty versus no peace treaty demonstrates that Rabin would not agree to the Syrians proposed terms. In reasoning that living with the status quo was better for Israel than a withdrawal. Consequently, Yitzhak Shamir's settlement policy resulted in a dilemma for the later Israeli prime ministers.

Even though the Rabin-, and the short-term Peres-governments, did not manage to achieve a peace agreement with the Syrians, they both engaged in serious negotiations. The settlement expansion was later evident when the next Likud leader, Benjamin Netanyahu, became Israeli Prime Minister in 1996. One of Netanyahu's first acts in office was to announce new expansions in the Golan Heights (Cobban, 1997: 31). Netanyahu also made it clear that a peace agreement with Syria would be conducted without preconditions and based on "peace-for-peace" (Shlaim, 2000: 571). Revealing that there would be no territorial withdraw from the Golan Heights when Likud was in power, he also put an end to the Israeli-Syrian peace talks. Netanyahu represents a reflection of Yitzhak Shamir's policy in relation to the settlements. Realising that expansion makes territorial concessions harder; Israel increased the country's bargaining positions in making their inside options better.

For Prime Minister Ehud Barak, the inherent bargaining position seems to have been one of the decisive factors for not agreeing to a withdrawal from the Golan Heights. Even though it seems that the parties came a long way in the negotiations at Shepherdstown, Barak was not ready to make the territorial concessions (Ross, 2004: 589). Given the unpopular decision this would have been in the eyes of the Israeli population, it is likely that the Israeli Prime Minister calculated that he would benefit more from the status quo compared to a withdrawal (Rabinovich, 2004: 133).

4.3.4 Summing up

The settlement expansions in both the Golan Heights and the West Bank demonstrates an Israeli attempt to increase its inside options. This made Israeli territorial concessions more difficult by reinforcing the Israeli presence in the area, and in that way increasing the country's bargaining strength. Yitzhak Shamir admitted that he had no intention of withdrawing from either the Golan Heights or the West Bank. By creating more settlements a future territorial concession would be more difficult for coming Israeli leaders. As a concluding remark, one can say that more settlements meant less probability of territorial concessions. This became evident when Rabin, Peres, and later Barak initiated negotiations with the Syrians. The Labour prime ministers eventually found the benefits of an agreement with Syria to be less than no agreement at all. The cost both economically and in popularity could have resulted in political suicide. Additionally, when Syria demonstrated no intention to compromise on the border, the option for Israel was simply not to pursue an agreement.

4.4 Asymmetrical information

Asymmetrical information concerns the parties' possession of information and in what way this is used by one of the parties in order to obtain a beneficial outcome from the negotiations. Even though both the Egyptian and Syrian demands prior to the negotiations were well known, there existed some uncertainty about the Israeli position. This section will pay attention to the Israeli use of ambiguity when trying to protect itself from revealing its negotiating position. Ambiguity is often employed to help parties overcome difficult issues; to build bridges between the parties. A problem with this technique often occurs when certain formulations are deliberately used by one side in order to achieve a better agreement at the others' expense. It will, therefore be important to stipulate the effect the possession of asymmetrical information constituted on the two negotiation outcomes.

4.4.1 Withholding information – the Israeli-Egyptian negotiations

Immediately after Menachem Begin entered office, his government signalled to the United States their peaceful intentions in the Middle East (Shlaim, 2000: 355). After the election of the Likud leader the Arab countries feared that the Begin government would annex the West Bank and expel more Palestinians from the area. Thus, Begin's signals were positively received by President Jimmy Carter and the Egyptian President (Shlaim, 2000: 355).

The Egyptian delegation to the Camp David talks was quick to reveal their bargaining strategy to the American mediators (Carter, 1982: 340). It seems that Sadat was putting a great deal of trust in the hands of the Americans. A reason for this behaviour may have been a wish to maintain the good relationship with the US. Sadat might have calculated that by demonstrating his admiration for the American President, he would eventually win over the mediator to his side. In addition, everyone at Camp David knew Jimmy Carter's position in the conflict and his hope for a comprehensive peace that included the West Bank (Shlaim, 2000: 355). Since this coincided with the underlying goal of the Egyptians, Sadat revealed how far Egypt was willing to go in order to conclude an agreement. The problem with such behaviour is that it left the Egyptian negotiating team with little room for bargaining if the Israelis saw through their strategy. If Carter exposed Sadat's position, Begin could take advantage of this by positioning himself further away from where Sadat's ultimate limitation was.

In contrast to the Egyptian behaviour, the Israelis declined to reveal their real negotiating position to the Americans. Jimmy Carter explains that the Israelis refused to trust the Americans and the Egyptians (Carter, 1982: 356). This behaviour made it harder to work out compromises and build bridges between the two parties. By already knowing the ultimate position of Egypt and not knowing the Israeli, the Americans worked out propositions and had to wait for the Israeli response. Consequently, the US conducted most of the negotiations with Israel on behalf of the Egyptians (Quandt, 1986: 171).

What characterised the Israeli delegation was their employment of double communication. Menachem Begin was perceived by the other parties as obstinate and unwilling to make compromises, while his delegation was flexible and understanding (Shlaim, 2000: 373). Several times during the Camp David, Begin overruled compromises made by Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan and Defence Minister Ezer Weizman (Eisenberg and Caplan, 1998: 33). Considering these incidents, coupled with the time consuming, the Egyptians and Americans started to doubt the sincerity of the Israelis. According to William Quandt both Dayan and Weizman indicated that the Sinai settlements would not be an obstacle to the peace process (Quandt, 1986: 223). However, as we have seen, this issue became one of the fundamental confrontation points in the negotiating process. Even though both the Americans and the Egyptians knew that Begin had the final word in the Israeli delegation, this double communication made the process confusing for the parties.

The problems of the double communication is exemplified by Jimmy Carter's description of one of the early meetings with the Israeli Prime Minister; "Begin sounded much more flexible regarding the West Bank than I had expected, but I was to discover that his good words had multiple meanings, which my advisers and I did not understand at the time" (Carter, 1982: 300). Jimmy Carter was to learn the about the "multiple meanings" in Begin's use of words on the final day of the Camp David. The American President believed that he had obtained an Israeli commitment to freeze the settlement activity on the West Bank until the final agreement was signed. However, the next day a letter from Begin explained that the settlement freeze was only limited to three months. In addition to this misunderstanding, Begin said in an interview on US television that the Israeli military could stay in the West Bank for ten to twenty years (Shindler, 1995: 97). The misunderstandings are further exemplified by Begin's distinction of new settlements and the *thickening* of existing settlements (see "inside options"). These incidents represent techniques Begin employed to be able to limit the concessions he already had made. Since Begin did not reveal his bargaining position to the Americans, he allowed himself to give confusing statements which he later interpreted to his own advantage.

Begin's reinterpretation is even more present in connection to the two documents signed at the Camp David. The Israeli Prime Minister managed to avoid a binding commitment to the return of the West Bank and Gaza. Through strategic ambivalence, Begin allowed himself to reinterpret the agreement later; "This subtle deployment of politically ambiguous formulations outmanoeuvred the Americans and placed the first doubts in the minds of both Dayan and Weizmann as to the long-term plan of their Prime Minister" (Shindler, 1995: 99). Begin promised "full autonomy" to the West Bank and Gaza, but he refused to spell out what this exactly meant (Quandt, 1986: 256). By refusing to be more specific, he kept control of the information and eventually took advantage of not having made any concessions that he would violate later. Through the use of ambiguity and secrecy about his intentions, Begin created a sense of distrust in the atmosphere at Camp David (Shlaim, 2000: 373). Together with his time consuming activity, the deliberate use of ambiguity eventually turned the US pressure over to the Egyptians, which in turn had to make the major concessions. The strategic and tactical behaviour by Begin ultimately gave him the control over the peace process, allowing him to shape the wordings in formulations that would benefit Israel (Shindler, 1995: 96).

4.4.2 Summing up

It is obvious that Menachem Begin was a better negotiator than Anwar al-Sadat. By refusing to reveal his true intentions and his bargaining position, Begin allowed himself to analyse each situation carefully and take advantage of the Egyptian openness. This represents a beneficial strategy enjoyed by a negotiator. Neither the opponent nor the mediator knew how far it was possible to go, which gave Begin leverage to adjust his own position in order to obtain the best possible outcome. This is reflected when Begin continuously reinterpreted what he had agreed to on later stages. By using ambiguity in his formulations, neither Egypt nor the US could accuse Begin of violating his commitments. In that way the Israeli Prime Minister could consolidate the Israeli control over the West Bank, by building more settlements. Coupled with other negotiating tactics it resulted in the US putting pressure on the Egyptian to accept an agreement that was not as beneficial as they hoped for. The strategy has also been a major factor in the eventual “cold peace” that became the outcome of the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty.

4.4.3 The Israeli use of ambiguity in negotiations with Syria

The information of the parties’ bargaining positions is quite different in the negotiations between Israel and Syria. The haggling over different interpretations of the UN Resolution 242 remained the basic issue in the negotiations that followed the Madrid conference (Shlaim, 2000, 493). Since both parties knew the other’s interpretation, the information flow was quite open; the underlying problem was that the parties disagreed.

Regardless of the parties known positions, the Israeli negotiator Ben-Aharon publicly stated in 1991; that a peace treaty with Syria might include territorial compromise in the Golan Heights. However, Ben-Aharon did not specify what such a compromise would imply (Cobban, 1999: 41). His formulation was open for different interpretations, and makes it difficult to conclude on the exact meaning of the statement. Thus, right before entering the bilateral talks in Washington that followed the Madrid conference, Shamir held a speech in Israel revealing that he had no intention of conceding the Golan Heights (Shlaim, 2000: 492). The Israeli behaviour represents a rather confusing communication which resembles that of the Begin-delegation. Israel participated at the negotiations, but demonstrated no willingness in making compromises. Evidently Yitzhak Shamir’s strategy was to participate in order to convince the Americans about his intentions to make peace, but in reality he was deliberately

stalling the negotiations. In the continuation of the peace talks after the Madrid conference, many observers suspected that Shamir's delegation did not intend to negotiate towards a positive outcome (Shlaim, 2000: 499). These suspicions were later verified by Shamir himself, after his election loss, through his confession about the intention to participate in the bilateral talks (Shlaim, 2000: 500).

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin is often described as a man that deliberately used ambiguity in the negotiations (Cobban, 1999: 72-73, Rabinovich, 1998: 169, Shlaim 2000: 537). Early in the process Itamar Rabinovich presented a document to the Syrians which mentioned the term "withdrawal" for the first time. The problem for the Syrians was that it did not have any reference to what extent such a withdrawal would be. Rabinovich explains that the Syrians wanted to know if it meant full withdrawal, but Rabinovich was instructed not to specify such an issue (Rabinovich, 1998: 76). When the Syrians wanted to know how far this withdrawal would be, Rabin turned to the other negotiation tracks. This seemingly implies that he enjoyed the advantage in the use of ambiguity (Cobban, 1999: 72-73). The uncertainty in Rabin's way of communicating is also confirmed by his chief negotiator, Itamar Rabinovich. According to Rabinovich, Rabin kept a measure of openness and ambiguity with regard to security arrangements by adopting a; "...tactical decision not to announce his line of withdrawal" (Rabinovich, 1998: 169). By not specifying how far the withdrawal would be Rabin played a game of ambiguity, which would, if not discovered, give Israel a greater advantage in the negotiations. The problem with Rabin's approach was that it generated mutual suspicions that undermined the peace process (Shlaim, 1994: 38). Israel refused to say how much land it would be willing to relinquish on the Golan Heights, and considering the experience the Syrians had from the former Shamir government, this did not facilitate a positive atmosphere between the two parties.

The significant difference between Israel and Syria at this point is that Syria was very clear about their border demand. From the Madrid conference and during the following negotiations, they made it explicitly clear that the withdrawal had to be at the June 4, 1967 lines (Butler, 1997: 93). Syria emphasised the importance of clarity in the negotiations, fearing that the use of ambiguous formulations would essentially destroy the peace talks. Thus, Syria demonstrated consistency in on their bargaining position in the negotiations.

Another example of the uncertainty that surrounded Rabin's behaviour occurred in August 1993. In a meeting with the American Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Rabin

mentioned that Israel was prepared to commit to full withdrawal from the Golan Heights (Shlaim, 2000: 532). This statement was to be debated between the parties in several years after the incident. According to Rabinovich, this statement was “hypothetical”, and an approach to explore Assad’s interest in peace with Israel (Rabinovich, 1998: 104-105). The Israeli chief negotiator under the Shamir government, Ben-Aharon, supports this statement and claims that the Americans proposed the same “hypothetical” exercise to their negotiation team in the talks that followed the Madrid conference (Ben-Aharon, 2000: 8). However, Shamir’s team refused to engage in such exercise because it would not produce any of substance. The Syrians, on the other hand, claims that it was an official commitment (Butler, 1997: 83). Something that is confirmed by the American negotiator Dennis Ross; “...he (Rabin) never shared the private commitment he had made to us on withdrawal from the Golan Heights with anyone on his side except Itamar Rabinovich...” (Ross, 2004: 93).

Despite the parties’ different approach and reference to this “commitment”, it does not change the fact that it represents another example of Rabin’s ambiguous way of communicating. It seems like Rabin made a great effort in protecting himself from making commitments he could not turn back on. He never revealed any details of his plans in the negotiations, something that provided him with the absolute control over the situation. The Israeli historian Avi Shlaim concludes that;

“The most likely explanation is that Rabin himself deliberately sent conflicting signals to Damascus as part of an elaborate bargaining strategy. On the one hand, he told the Americans that, under certain conditions, he would be prepared to consider a retreat to the 4 June 1967 lines. On the other, through his chiefs of staff, he was less specific on the line of withdrawal and held out for Israeli presence on the Golan even in the context of a peace settlement” (Shlaim, 2000: 537).

Shimon Peres represents a rather different approach compared to Yitzhak Rabin. Since Peres was in a hurry to achieve a peace agreement, he needed to negotiate on several issues at the same time (Shlaim, 2000: 553). However, when it comes to the border issue Peres displayed the same reluctance as Rabin to discuss this essential issue. Peres would never commit Israel to withdrawal from the Golan Heights or declare how far they eventually would withdraw. At the Wye talks, the Syrians continued to demand a commitment to withdraw to the borders of June 1967. The Israelis, however, would not discuss the issue, but neither openly contradict it (Ross, 2004: 239). In an effort to move the process further, the Israeli delegation avoided

talking about the border of withdrawal. Eventually, when Peres decided to postpone the talks the parties were in reality standing on the same place as when Rabin was leading the Israeli delegation. What is evident at this stage of the peace talks is that the Syrians took for granted that the line of withdrawal would be the border of June 4 1967. However, the Israelis believed that this line was negotiable; something that in reality contradicted the Syrians long held position. The Syrians were open about their required border line during the whole process while negotiating; it was Israel that refused to stipulate this line.

The same issue becomes present under the premiership of Ehud Barak. After an almost three years break, the negotiations restarted when he won the election in 1999. Barak set a timetable to reach a breakthrough in the Syrian talks (Rabinovich, 2004: 124). The Syrians wanted the negotiations to continue where they had left off; with Israel's commitment to withdraw to the June 4 lines. Ehud Barak already knew of the Syrian insistence on the withdrawal, but in order to not surrender his "trump card", he tried to move around the issue without publicly accepting a commitment to the line of withdrawal (Rabinovich, 2004: 127-128). According to President Assad's biographer, Patrick Seal; "Barak has responded by saying he wants to hear from Syria on a host of other questions – water, Lebanon, terror, security arrangements, early warning, the opening of borders, the setting up of embassies – before he says how far he is prepared to withdraw" (Seal, 2000: 66). Even though the peace talks in Washington came close to a positive result, Barak refused to give the final commitment to the withdrawal (Rabinovich, 2004: 133). In the end, the Syrians left the talks in Washington in anger; "They felt that Barak kept evading discussing the demarcation of the June 4, 1967, line" (Rabil, 2003: 220). According to Dennis Ross; "If not for Barak's cold feet, there might have been a deal in January of 2000" (Ross, 2004: 589).

The Israeli ambiguity about the line of withdrawal seems to have been one of the crucial issues in the negotiations. The Syrian ambassador in Washington and part of the Syrian negotiations team claims that; "...we have always insisted that whatever agreement is reached must be very clear, without any trace of ambiguity. Because ambiguity cannot make for a lasting peace" (Butler, 1997: 89). The result became the opposite, despite years of negotiations it seems that the parties were back to where they started; the Syrian demand of the withdrawal line, and the Israeli refusal to stipulate the line.

4.4.4 Summing up

The asymmetrical information is not obvious in the Israeli-Syrian negotiations. Both parties seem to have been more or less equally distrustful towards each other, and not revealing their positions on all of the issues of negotiation. On the other hand, the line of withdrawal is the returning issue during the ten years of negotiations. At this point, the Syrians have retained their demand for the June 4 1967 line, while Israel has refused to discuss it.

In sum, it can be argued that all the Israeli prime ministers refused to agree on the withdrawal line in order to make compromises later in the negotiations. If the parties could agree on the other issues first, the line would be stipulated with some modifications. The problem with this approach is that Syria clearly stated that the withdrawal line was non-negotiable. The Israelis, however, seems to have held the perception of the opposite; that the line was negotiable. This demonstrates the problems that might occur when adapting to ambiguity in international diplomacy. Israel probably thought that this behaviour would give the country an advantage, as it was for Begin in the Egyptian negotiations. However, since Syria was particular clear that they wanted every inch of the Golan Heights back, the Israeli strategy failed. The essential effect did not influence the Syrian position, and the negotiation outcome could not be agreement. The tactic of ambiguity only made the Syrians distrustful towards the Israelis.

4.5 Issue delinkage

Issue delinkage concerns how a party may divide up a negotiating problem in order to obtain an agreement. This factor is present in the negotiations between Israel and the Arab states. In order to compensate for their weaker bargaining position towards Israel, the Arab states wanted to negotiate as a joint partner against Israel (Shlaim, 2000: 313). In that way, they would be in a stronger position to demand the full Israeli withdrawal back to the borders from June 4 1967. Israel was also seeking peace at several occasions in the aftermath of the Six Day War. However, Israel emphasised the importance to achieve separate peace agreements and not at the price of complete withdrawal from the territories (Shlaim, 2000: 313). The country saw no reason to negotiate with a joint Arab coalition, which would appear stronger in their demand for Israeli concessions (Cleveland, 2000: 364). In this section the focus will be towards how Israel managed to decouple the Arab countries in order to obtain separate peace agreements. A central part will to determine to what extent this tactic affected the negotiation outcomes.

4.5.1 Delinking Palestine - The Israeli-Egyptian negotiation

Prior to the negotiations with Israel, President Sadat's initial goal was to lead an Arab negotiation-block in order to stand stronger when facing Israel at the negotiation table. The President's problem occurred when the other Arab countries were reluctant to participate in the negotiations, and that the Israelis insisted on negotiating separately with the all the Arab countries. Additionally, the cold relationship that had developed between Egypt and Syria created another factor that made Egypt negotiate on their own (Shlaim, 2000: 359). The decision to go to Jerusalem reflects Sadat's realisation that the situation was so peculiar that the Egyptians needed to go a separate way in order to regain their territories (Shindler, 1995: 88). Thus, opening negotiation talks with Israel created the groundwork for bilateral talks between the two countries. The problem for Sadat was that his initiative provided Begin with a great advantage in the negotiations.

As already demonstrated, the Israeli leaders saw the advantage the country had in negotiating bilateral agreements with the Arab states (Shlaim, 2000: 313). Separate peace talks have been emphasised by Israeli leaders since the end of the Six Day War, which was the main reason for Menachem Begin to invite Sadat to Jerusalem in 1977 (Shlaim, 2000: 361). Sadat's initiative also convinced the Israelis that Egypt deviated from the goal of multilateral negotiations between Israel and the Arabs (Shindler, 1995: 88). Since Sadat emphasised the importance of a comprehensive peace agreement that included the future of the Palestinians, Begin needed to work hard in order to decouple such an issue. This was especially the case since his ideological commitment to the West Bank contradicted the American position on the issue. President Jimmy Carter regarded the Israeli settlements in the occupied territories as illegal, and strived for a comprehensive peace that included some sort of Palestinian autonomy (Shlaim, 2000: 355).

An indication of Menachem Begin's resistance towards an inclusion of the Palestinian issue first became evident during Sadat's trip to Jerusalem. In the Egyptian President's speech to the Knesset he emphasised the right and importance of a Palestinian state in the West Bank. When the turn came to Begin, he completely ignored the issue and concluded that Israel had no intentions to withdraw from the West Bank or Eastern Jerusalem (Shlaim, 2000: 361). The two speeches demonstrate the difficult task that was facing the leaders in the following negotiations, and represents a signal of Begin's intentions in the peace talks. In reality, the

Israeli Prime Minister made it clear in his speech that there would be no independent Palestinian state.

The Americans intention of linking the Israeli-Egyptian negotiations to a solution to the Palestinians future compensated for the weaker Egyptian bargaining strength. As we already know, despite the American support, Menachem Begin succeeded in reducing the linkage to a minimum (Eisenberg and Caplan, 1998: 33). It was a combination of two factors that made this possible for the Israeli Prime Minister. First, as has been demonstrated, the Egyptian dependence on some sort of agreement placed Sadat in a very vulnerable and difficult situation. Because of the decision to enter bilateral talks with Israel, Sadat had burned most of the bridges behind him. Second, the situation opened the way for tactical attacks on Sadat. Evidently, it was the Israeli combination of several negotiating tactics, and especially slowing down the talks that provided Begin with the beneficial outcome. The calculated arrangement of these tactics made Israel put pressure on the Egyptians and eventually the Americans, to narrow down their demands in the West Bank and Gaza. Begin's unwillingness to agree to withdraw the Sinai settlements created a diversion from the focus on the West Bank issue (Telhami, 1992/93: 636). According to William Quandt the Israeli strategy was to hold off concessions on Sinai in order to pressure Sadat to drop what the Israelis saw as unacceptable demands on the West Bank and Gaza (Quandt, 1986: 225). When Begin finally agreed to withdraw the Sinai settlements, the concession appeared to be a greater achievement than initially anticipated.

The descriptions of the Israeli employment of negotiating tactics in the previous sections demonstrate how Begin managed to decouple the Egypt-agreement from the autonomy plan for the Palestinian people. Through the different use of tactics Israel managed narrow down the linkage between the two documents in such a way that the peace agreement with Egypt stood on its own feet (Shindler, 1995: 99). Hence Israel could carry out their preferred policy in the West Bank and Gaza without the interference of the Egyptians or the Americans. The Israeli Prime Minister and his team managed to decouple two important issues in the negotiation process in order to achieve a preferable agreement for their country. The final peace agreement even strengthened Israel's future bargaining position vis-à-vis the other Arab countries, because it removed Egypt from a potential military conflict with Israel.

4.5.2 Summing up

The evidence from the Israeli-Egyptian peace agreement indicates that Israel achieved its original aim of a separate peace agreement with a minimal linkage to the future of the West Bank and Gaza. The bilateral peace talks with Egypt came out of a combination of Israeli demands and growing disagreement among the Arab countries. However, the final agreement itself was a consequence of Begin's tactical effort to decouple the Palestinian question from the final Egyptian agreement. Through the tactical combination of settlement expansion and stalling of the negotiations, the Israelis managed to shift focus away from the West Bank and towards the Sinai. The pressure eventually became too much for the Egyptians, and Sadat had to concede in order to achieve an agreement at all. With Egypt out of the picture, Israel could continue its consolidation of the West Bank. The strategic employment of negotiating tactics, especially employed by Begin, demonstrates how he coercively managed to remove one actor from the conflict of which Israel was in the centre of. By the achievement of separate peace with Egypt, Begin also paved the way for a stronger bargaining position for Israel towards the other Arab states. Further, it provided Israel with future legitimate claim for separate peace agreements with the Arab states.

4.5.3 Decoupling the Arab states - The Israeli-Syrian negotiation

After the Israeli-Egyptian peace agreement, Syria occupied a leading role among the Arab states towards Israel. The Syrians, as all the other Arab countries, preferred a joint Arab peace negotiation to compensate for the asymmetrical power-balance between the Arab countries and Israel (Cobban, 1999: 18). For President Assad, the inclusion of the Palestinians and Lebanon was a primary issue if peace negotiations were to be started (Golan, 1992: 39). After the Israeli-Egyptian peace agreement, many of the Arab countries felt that Egypt abandoned the Palestinians, which is evident in the expulsion of Egypt from the Arab League. A solution to the Palestinian future was crucial for the Syrians to legitimise a peace agreement with Israel (Rabinovich, 1998: 39).

The Israeli position towards the peace talks had not changed since the Camp David negotiations. By separating the Arab alliance, Israel knew it would increase their already existing advantage in the negotiations (Telhami, 1999: 387). For the Shamir government, bilateral peace talks with the Arab states also needed to be based on the Israeli interpretation of the UN Resolution 242, which implied Israeli withdrawal from *some* of the territories

(Rabinovich, 1998, 39). In the invitation to the Madrid conference, the Americans supported the Israeli position on bilateral negotiations (Telhami, 1999: 387).

Even though, the Americans succeeded in pressuring Syria to accept the bilateral talks, the Syrian delegation still hoped for effective coordination between the Arab delegations before any real peace negotiation would begin (Cobban, 1999: 18, Shlaim, 2000: 491). By demonstrating flexibility towards the Americans, there was also a hope of a future US support. Evidently, the Madrid conference represents an example of how Israel managed to achieve a breakthrough by using its ally to forcefully divide up the negotiating problem into separate peace talks. Even though the conference was rather symbolic, it is possible to identify similarities to the Israeli-Egyptian negotiations. The difference appears to be where Sadat decided to go his own way; the Syrians were pressured into accepting separate negotiations.

The main purpose behind dividing the Arab states was to avoid the linkage of the different issues (Golan, 1992: 39). As explained earlier, the Arab countries viewed the source of the conflict as originating from the Israeli occupation, while Israel emphasised Arab hostility. From the Israeli point of view, the country was surrounded by enemies dedicated to the destruction of the Jewish state (Jones, 2002: 116). Dealing with one country at the time, Israel would be able to achieve peace agreements that did not depend on each other, and thereby could propose minimal Israeli concessions.

The bilateral tracks inherited from the Madrid conference laid the groundwork for Yitzhak Rabin's approach to the negotiations. Rabin's position coincided with the traditionally Israeli approach; to proceed with one peace at the time. Nevertheless, he did not have any preferences to which of the Arab countries to prioritise (Shlaim, 2000: 530). Thus, he started negotiations on several parallel tracks simultaneously. Some critics have argued that; "Rabin's strategy was to decouple the Syrian track from the Palestinian, Jordanian, and Lebanese tracks. He controlled the pace of the negotiations with Syria according to what was happening on the other tracks" (Shlaim, 2000: 530, Butler, 1997: 85). Through the engagement in separate talks with each of the Arab parties at the same time, Rabin could choose the one that he felt would benefit Israel the most. Dennis Ross asserts that; "If he made headway on one, he would go slow on the other. But the obverse was also true: if progress was not being made on one, he would try to energize the other" (Ross, 2004: 137). The strategy is also verified by Rabin's chief negotiator with Syria, Itamar Rabinovich;

“Before the agreement was concluded in Oslo, Rabin wanted to establish whether Israel had any option vis-à-vis Syria” (Rabinovich, 2004: 54). Rabin’s strategy was essentially to sit back and let the interlocutors on all tracks compete among themselves for his attention (Cobban, 1999: 53). When Rabin’s choice finally fell on the PLO, he believed that a settlement with the Palestinians would lower the price of a settlement with Syria by reducing the latter’s bargaining power (Shlaim, 1994: 32).

The signing of the Oslo Accords was not appreciated by the Syrians. Assad saw it as Israel negotiating behind their back as an effort to reduce the Syrian bargaining strength (Butler, 1997: 89). The US had to pressure the Syrians into not opposing the Accords and to participate at the signing ceremony in Washington (Rabinovich, 2004: 56). Syria was promised that the peace talks would resume when the Israeli public had digested the peace agreement with the Palestinians. When the talks restarted the Israelis tried to persuade the Syrians to enter into public diplomacy (Butler, 1997: 89). However, Syria was ready to continue peace talks through the ambassador-channel in Washington and was not interested in upgrading the talks to a higher level (Butler, 1997: 82). When Rabin received the message and the talks produced little in public diplomacy, he preferred to make an agreement with Jordan (Rabinovich, 1998: 129-130).

This behaviour demonstrates a tactical delinkage of the Arab countries through single-track negotiations. When implementing such a strategy, Rabin managed to strip the Syrians of all leverage and weakened their bargaining strength. The Syrians regarded the separate deals as pressure tactics by the Israelis in order to force Syria into making concessions (Rabil, 2003: 228). Rabin created some sort of competition among the Arab states; “...Rabin’s tactics was aimed at playing the Arabs off against another in order to reduce pressure on Israel to make concessions” (Shlaim, 1994, 39). In reality, after the signing of agreements with PLO and Jordan the sudden need for peace with Syria was not that important. The Prime Minister removed the Arab countries one by one from the circle of war, leaving the Syrians and Lebanese for themselves. By the signing of the peace agreements with the Palestinians and the Jordanians, Rabin achieved most of the long-held Israeli goal of separate agreements with the Arab countries. As a result of the separate agreements Syria was now on their own, standing weaker than it would have in a joint Arab delegation.

The same tactic may be identified when Ehud Barak became Prime Minister, thus, in a slightly different way. Lebanon played a major role in the negotiations between Israel and

Syria. Both countries used it as pressure towards each other in the negotiations. After the Palestinian and Jordanian peace treaties, Syria demanded Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights and southern Lebanon (Rabil, 2003: 209). This linkage between Syria and Lebanon was not important for the Israelis to decouple much because of Syria's status and connection to Lebanon. However, when Barak became Prime Minister he announced that Israel would make a unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon. Considering the years of Israeli occupation of the area, this might be seen as a reasonable decision. However, former Israeli prime ministers had continued the occupation for security reasons. Therefore, the decision itself may be interpreted as a manoeuvre in delinking the Syrian and Lebanese issue. It appears that Barak wanted to decouple Syria from the pressure it possessed through Lebanon, and thereby strip Assad of his Lebanon card (Rabil, 2003: 224). The final withdrawal ended a nine year link between the Israeli-Syrian negotiations and the Lebanese issue (Rabinovich, 2004: 141). Even though the Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon was in accordance to the Lebanese claim, the act demonstrates another example of how the Israeli leaders managed to separate the Arab parties from each other, and weakening their bargaining positions towards Israel.

4.5.4 Summing up

The Israeli negotiating behaviour demonstrates an effective tactic in coercive issue delinkage. The Syrians were the leading country among the Arab states towards Israel after the signing of the Israeli-Egyptian peace agreement. In order to weaken the Arab bargaining position, Israel opened bilateral talks with each of the countries. This happened even though Israel would not negotiate with a joint Arab coalition. Rabin's tactic indicates how he played the Arab countries against each other, giving him the opportunity to choose which country that Israel would benefit the most from in a final peace agreement. After the assassination of Rabin, he had obtained a peace agreement with Jordan and an interim with the Palestinians, leaving Syria and Lebanon weaker in their bargaining positions. The final completion of the delinkage occurred when Barak withdrew Israeli forces from Lebanon. Regarded from the Syrian point of view, Israel succeeded in moving around the real negotiating issue by decoupling the entire source of the conflict; which was basically represented by Israeli occupation of Arab territories.

Despite the strategic advantage of the Israeli tactic, and the reduced need for a peace agreement with Syria, the Israelis continued the negotiations. Rabin, Peres, and Barak

engaged in serious talks with the Syrians. However, their position was stronger than it had been at the Madrid conference, and with a weaker Syria there was lesser reason for Israel to make concessions. Significantly, Syria was obviously weakened by the Israeli decoupling tactic, but this did not change their position in the negotiations. Jordan might have felt some sort of pressure after the signing of the Oslo Accords, and rushed into signing their own agreement. However, the Syrians did not move even though the separate agreements constituted an increase in pressure towards the country. Thus demonstrating that, although their bargaining position was weakened, the country was not so dependent upon an agreement that it would concede on territorial issues.

5 Role of the Mediator

The Arab-Israeli conflict goes all the way back, some will argue further, to the establishment of the Israeli state in 1948-49. During the years there have been several attempts by different actors to mediate between the belligerents with mixing results. In the aftermath of the Six Day War, however, the mediator role was for most of the occurrences inhabited by the United States, or at least supported by the Americans. This certainly became evident during the 1970s within Henry Kissinger's shuttle diplomacy when negotiating armistice agreements between Israel and the neighbouring countries after the Yom Kippur War (Hopmann, 1996: 221). Noteworthy of the American participation is their role as a biased mediator. As an important ally of Israel, the American mediations made the country a non-neutral part of the negotiations. The close relationship between the two countries constitutes an example of a conflict where the mediator not necessarily is impartial. As already explained, the parties' choice of the US as a mediator were based on the country's rich access to resources that it can introduce in the talks to compensate for the parties' concessions.

In the following chapter I will examine the US' impact on the negotiation process between Israel and Egypt, and Israel and Syria. The main focus will be towards how Israel has taken advantage of the US as a mediator. It will be important to observe in what way the US contributed to the Israeli tactical behaviour, and what effect this contribution had on the negotiation outcome.

5.1 The US in the Israeli-Egyptian negotiations

Early in the negotiation process, Jimmy Carter signalled to Menachem Begin that the US would not accept the Likud party's ideological claim's to the West Bank. Unlike his predecessors, Carter was deeply engaged in the Middle East conflict and devoted himself to work out a solution to the Palestinian question. Such a solution, as Carter saw it, was an Israeli withdrawal on all fronts to the 1967 lines with only minor modifications (Shlaim, 2000: 355). In accordance to the UN Resolution 242, the American President shared the Egyptian perception of a comprehensive peace that included a solution for the Palestinians (Shindler, 1995: 91). Despite this position, as already known, the negotiation outcome was not what Carter had pictured before entering the negotiations.

The degree of participation and involvement of the mediator might be a crucial factor for the negotiation outcome. Telhami explains that prior to the negotiations the Americans could choose between being a mediator or a participant (Telhami, 1992/93: 631). The Egyptian preferred the US as full participant. Anwar al-Sadat anticipated that the Americans as an active partner could support the Egyptian position in the negotiations and compensate for the weaker Egyptian position. Israel, on the other hand, wanted to take advantage of its strong position vis-à-vis Egypt (Telhami, 1992/93: 632). Realising the American perception of the conflict, Israel preferred a minimal American role in the negotiations with Egypt. Since Israel was the party benefitting from the current situation, Begin knew the advantage he was in possession of compared to Egypt. If the US would be a participant Begin feared the Americans would side with Egypt and put pressure towards the Israeli position (Telhami, 1992/93: 632). An additional factor that made the Israelis anxious was that Sadat expelled the Soviet advisors from Egypt in 1972, which made the country a tempting new ally for the Americans in the Middle East (Telhami, 1999: 381). These circumstances placed Israel and Egypt in a competition for the American influence in the negotiations, both having a different perception about what role the US was supposed to play (Eisenberg and Caplan, 1998: 34).

Regardless of the US' shared perception with Egypt about the Palestinian future, the major problem occurred when Carter refused to put real pressure on the Israelis. Following President Sadat's Jerusalem initiative, the Americans undertook several trips to the Middle East in an attempt to narrow down the gap between the negotiating parties. Jimmy Carter was not pleased by Prime Minister Begin's settlement policy in both Sinai and the West Bank. He regarded the policy as illegal and a direct violation of the UN Resolution. However, it seems that Carter feared that Israel would withdraw from the peace process, and therefore he chose not to issue any sanctions towards the country (Shlaim, 2000: 370-371). Already at this early stage in the peace process there was an indication on how far the Americans were interested to go in pressuring Israel. As discussed in the previous chapters, the Israeli settlement policy was carried out even before the parties were invited to Camp David. If Carter was to deal with this issue it would have been vice to start at an early stage. However, by not reacting on the policy, Israel acquired stronger control over the negotiation process.

Jimmy Carter was pleased with Sadat revealing the Egyptian strategy immediately after the arrival at Camp David. It was important for Sadat to demonstrate his trust in the American President, and hopefully, receive their support in the negotiations (Brzezinski, 1983: 261).

Realising what advantage an Egyptian-American partnership would have in putting pressure on Israel; Sadat believed that Jimmy Carter would support him all the way until the signing of a final peace treaty (Telhami, 1992/93: 637). The major problem by adopting such a strategy in a negotiation is that it left Egypt with little room for later manoeuvres. Sadat exposed his bargaining position and the outcome would eventually depend on the Americans behaviour.

When it became clear that the confidence the Egyptian showed the Americans was absent towards the Israeli delegation, it generated a dilemma for the American President. Menachem Begin and his team went to the Camp David well prepared and were not willing to reveal their ultimate bargaining position to the Americans (Shlaim, 2000: 371-372). Jimmy Carter explains that; “The Israeli delegation was very reluctant to trust us with any revelation of ultimate desires or areas of possible compromises” (Carter, 1982: 356). The Israeli secrecy around their bargaining position left the Americans as an active partner on the Egyptian side in the negotiations. By the knowledge of the Egyptian limitations and desires, Carter tried to protect these aspirations in the early days of negotiations with Israel. In fact, at Camp David Carter was most of the time negotiating on behalf of the Egyptians because of Sadat’s and Begin’s distrust towards each other (Telhami, 1992/93: 637).

What was evident in the early days of the Camp David negotiations was the Egyptian trust in the biased mediator together with the Israeli distrust in their good friend and ally. This might have pushed the Americans even more over to the Egyptian side, but, as will be evident below, the Israeli behaviour managed to move the pressure over to the Americans.

During the negotiations, the stalling and exaggerated demands by Israel became a problem for Carter. The negotiations turned out to be harder than expected, and suddenly he became impatient. The American midterm election was coming closer and President Carter was already behind in the polls. If Carter could conclude a peace agreement between the parties, it would probably enhance his position when the election campaign would begin (Eisenberg and Caplan, 1998: 32). However, this indicated that the President needed a swift solution to the negotiations, leaving him with little time to haggle over details in the process.

Jimmy Carter’s perception of the situations was in stark contrast to that of Menachem Begin. Riding on a boost from initiating peace talks with Israel’s mightiest enemy, the Israeli Prime Minister was not in a hurry to conclude an agreement. Jimmy Carter’s impatience also signalled a willingness to pay a high price to reach an agreement (Quandt, 1986: 337).

According to Telhami; "...the Israeli delegation seemed capable of exaggerating its position effectively, especially in the case of Israeli settlements in the Sinai. Coupled with the element of time, this gave Israel a decided advantage" (Telhami, 1992/93: 636). As already seen, the tactic was directed at narrowing down the linkage to the future of the West Bank. The time consuming in the negotiation, implied that any agreement at all would be more important to Carter, and he would not jeopardise it by confronting Israel with the Palestinian question. The consequence of the Israeli tactic of strengthening its own position towards Egypt suddenly became an effect on the powerful mediator.

In the first days of the Camp David talks, Jimmy Carter demonstrated a willingness to put some pressure on Israel. He even told Prime Minister Begin that if the summit failed Carter would publicly blame Begin for the failure (Shlaim, 2000: 373). Despite such a threat Begin gave limited concessions during the talks. It appears that the Prime Minister realised the pressure that Carter felt during the negotiations, and the tactic of out-waiting Sadat also had an effect on the American President. Considering that Israel was the only country not in an immediate need for an agreement, Begin proceeded with his hard-line strategy. His bargaining position was not weakened, despite of US pressure. It is possible that Begin realised that Carter suddenly became equally impatient as Egypt, something that left Begin as the only patient party at the Camp David.

Jimmy Carter's dependence on a peace agreement is illustrated by the incident in the middle of the Camp David talks. When Sadat was ready to leave the negotiations because of Begin's stubbornness and hard bargaining behaviour, Carter threatened Sadat about the consequences of leaving (Brzezinski, 1983: 272). The ultimatum that Carter presented to Sadat, as previously discussed, made Sadat change his mind. This situation is an indication of how desperate Carter became in achieving an agreement between the two parties. This demonstrates that the risk of breakdown suddenly constituted a problem for Jimmy Carter. He could not afford a failure in the talks, and needed to threaten Sadat in order to achieve a peace agreement.

It is important to notice that Jimmy Carter never posted such a threat towards the Israeli delegation. Already before the Camp David, President Carter committed himself not to use what he actually could have pressured Begin with. According to William Quandt; "...Carter had repeatedly pledged never to threaten to cut economic or military aid to Israel as a form of pressure..." (Quandt, 1986: 208). This provided Begin with a profound advantage compared

to Egypt, and in fact, he received this even before the Camp David summit started. Consequently, no matter the result of the negotiations, the behaviour of Menachem Begin would not endanger the Israeli relationship to the US.

Even though Carter's initial intentions coincided with Sadat's, the little pressure the US directed towards Israel soon disappeared. The Israeli employment of different bargaining tactics eventually made the Americans turn the pressure over towards the Egyptians. Jimmy Carter later explained that; "Under intense pressure, the Egyptian leader moved away from details and words and into the realm of general principles and broad strategic concepts" (Carter, 1982: 355). In the end Carter depended on achieving a peace treaty and the easiest way was to convince the Egyptians to accept the terms. President Carter would not risk gaining a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel because of the Palestinian future (Shindler, 1995: 97). This fact indicates that Carter was vulnerable towards the Israeli negotiation tactics, and that his initial goal of a solution to the future of the Palestinians was not as important as a peace agreement, even though it meant an agreement without a solution to the Palestinian question.

The American pressure towards Egypt continued in the following months after Camp David. The US soon realised that their intention to solve the Palestinian question was impossible. President Carter recognised that the Israelis were only interested in a separate agreement. As Jimmy Carter explains in his memoirs; "...And they use the settlements [on the West Bank] and East Jerusalem issues to prevent the involvement of the Jordanians and the Palestinians" (Carter, 1982: 409). The American National Security advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski met with Sadat on March 6, 1979. In an effort of winning Sadat's support for the difficult situation Carter was in, Brzezinski told the President that Begin's inclination was to stall and perhaps even contribute to Carter's political defeat. This made Sadat more cooperative and he showed concern for Carter's position (Brzezinski, 1983: 282). In sum, it can be argued that even after the Camp David, the Americans chose to put pressure on the weaker part because they knew that it was easier to obtain concessions from Sadat than from Begin. In the end the Americans relocated themselves from being an active participant towards being a mediator in the Egyptian-Israeli negotiations, and thus contributing to the Israeli behaviour to achieve a peace treaty.

5.2 Summing up

The role of the Americans during the Israeli-Egyptian negotiations demonstrates one of the problems with a biased mediator. Carter promised not to pressure Israel with threatening to hold back economic and military support during the negotiations, which provided Begin with a substantial advantage. Even though Jimmy Carter originally supported the Egyptian position in the negotiations, he ended up with putting pressure on Sadat to finalise the peace treaty. The negotiation tactics that the Israelis used towards the Egyptians turned out having an effect on the Americans. The US were sensitive to the Israeli stalling of the negotiation process, and when the Americans realised that a solution to the West Bank issue was not possible to achieve, they used the opportunity to pressure the Egyptians for more concessions. This implies that the US became a victim of the Israeli combination of bargaining tactics, and chose to follow the Israeli intention rather than putting real pressure on Israel. This makes it possible to conclude that the US became a bargaining tool in the Israeli negotiation strategy. For Jimmy Carter, a peace agreement became more important than a solution to the Palestinian question, which furthermore strengthened the Israeli bargaining position, and not at least provided Begin with a beneficial negotiation outcome.

5.3 The American mediation in the Israeli-Syrian negotiations

The American initiative to unite the Arab countries and Israel at the Madrid conference was strongly resisted by both the Arabs and Israel (Shlaim, 2000: 486). To reiterate; the US forced the Shamir government to accept to participate at the Madrid conference by withholding loan guarantees requested by Israel (Shlaim, 2000: 487). The American pressure made Shamir angry, and he declared that; “the settlements expansion will continue, and no power in the world will prevent this construction” (Rabil, 2003: 92, Zartman, 1997: 197). Despite the unfriendly tone Shamir eventually agreed to participate at the Madrid conference.

Even though the relationship between the US and Israel was rather cold before and during the Madrid conference, the Americans supported the bilateral talks between Israel and Syria. Syria originally wanted multilateral talks and required Israeli withdrawal from East Jerusalem, the West Bank, Gaza, southern Lebanon, and the Golan Heights (Golan, 1992: 39). Nevertheless, eventually it was the Israeli demand that won at the end, and the Americans

even pressured the Syrians in accepting such separate talks. Syria was on the US list over terrorism and narcotics, and by the American promise to consider a removal from the list the country would be eligible to US financial and military support (Butler, 1997: 88, Rabil, 2003: 98). Realising that their bargaining position would be weakened by accepting separate talks, the Syrians still thought they could coordinate the process with the Arab countries. In demonstrating flexibility to the Americans, there was also a hope in the future of US financial support.

The cold Israeli-American relationship immediately changed when Yitzhak Rabin and the Labour party came to power in Israel. Shortly after Rabin entered office he announced the Israeli acceptance of the UN Resolution 242, and that it applied to the Golan Heights (Shlaim, 2000: 511). The new signals were received with great positivity by the Bush administration. However, shortly after Bill Clinton became the new President in the US (Ross, 2004: 98). Clinton was a known Israel friend and he refused to put any pressure on Israel after entering office in 1993 (Shlaim, 2000: 511). The new leaders for Israel and the US implied an improvement of the relationship between the countries (Rabil, 2003: 103-104).

The Israelis preferred a lesser involved US in the peace negotiations with Syria (Telhami, 1999: 386). This reflects what Begin wanted before the Camp David negotiations. He knew that with a lesser involved US, Israel would be stronger in the negotiations towards Egypt. It seems like Rabin anticipated much of the same, but he was careful in not revealing this view to the US. In that way the American economic and military support could keep coming without the US putting any pressure on Israel during the negotiations. The Arab countries, however, were interested in an active US mediator in order to gain support on their side towards Israel (Telhami, 1999: 386).

When the leader in Washington changed from Bush to Clinton, there was an apparent change in the role of the US in the Middle East conflict. At the Madrid conference, the Americans were pressuring the Israelis even though they supported the bilateral talks. With Bill Clinton as President, the American role was pacified by the Israeli employment of negotiation tactics. In fact, the Americans contributed to Rabin's tactic of ambiguity by not declaring where the withdrawal line would be (Shlaim, 2000: 535). Even though Clinton had the opportunity, he rejected to put pressure on Rabin to clarify the uncertainty in his communication. In some ways Clinton reflects Carter in refusing to employ real pressure towards Israel. Thus, the result was that Israel could implement its negotiation tactics without any consequences.

Another issue in the pacification of the Americans was in relation to the different negotiation tracks. Clinton knew that Rabin started bilateral talks with the Arab countries, and he even approved of such an approach (Shlaim, 2000: 533-537). The manoeuvre was also supported by the US, which acted as a mediator and host during the talks. Thus, the Syrians thought that the Americans deliberately misled them in the negotiations. When asked, in an interview, what role the Americans had in the negotiations Moualem answered; “They were facilitators, witnesses. You could consider them moderators, brokers, even partners because they made proposals to bridge the gap” (Butler, 1997: 83). Despite the Syrian acceptance of bilateral talks, the US-Syrian relationship never saw any progress; “There was also pressure in that our relations with the United States never progressed during the four or five years of this process; to the contrary, we were kept on the American “blacklist,” and Congress tried to adopt additional measures against Syria this summer” (Butler, 1997: 88). This situation indicates that the Americans did nothing to limit the Israeli negotiation tactics, or to facilitate their relationship towards Syria.

The American passive behaviour was also evident under the Shepherdstown negotiations when Ehud Barak was the Israeli Prime Minister. As already known, the talks were close to a breakthrough when suddenly the mood of the Israeli Prime Minister changed. The “cold feet” that Barak developed made him refuse to give the final commitment to the June 4 1967 border. Even though the Clinton administration worked hard to broker an agreement, they were still unwilling to put any real pressure on the Israelis (Slater, 2002: 99). Based on the pacified American role, seemingly the US missed the chance of making peace by refusing to take advantage of their influence on the Israeli state. As a result, the peace talks collapsed at the end of 2000.

5.4 Summing up

It is possible to identify an American willingness to use its power and influence into pressuring Israel in the beginning of the negotiations with Syria. Significantly, it appears to have been a shift between the Bush administration and the Clinton administration. While the former demonstrated an active and determined policy towards Israel, the latter administration was unwilling to use its power towards the country. As a known Israel friend, Clinton refused to take an active part in the negotiations. When the talks continued for years it appears to be a gradual pacification of the Americans in the negotiation process. Thus, the Americans entered

the role as communicators in order to deliver the parties' demands and counter-demands. When Israel employed their negotiation tactics, the US chose not to react. In fact, Clinton even approved for the simultaneous negotiations with the Arab states. Altogether, the American mediator under President Bill Clinton acted as bystander that only contributed to the communication between the negotiating parties.

6 Domestic Politics

In this chapter I will examine the Israeli negotiating delegations' use of commitment tactics and their consideration of public opinion. In the first part the commitment tactic will represent how Israel might have used the domestic situation as a negotiating tactic in order to improve its own bargaining position. The purpose in the tactic is to put credibility behind the commitment made by the negotiator. By demonstrating to the opponent that it is impossible to concede based on the commitment, this might work in order to alter the opponent's bargaining position.

The second part of the examination will focus on domestic politics as an explanation of the negotiation outcome. If the Israeli people did not support the peace negotiations or an agreement, there is less likelihood of the country's government negotiating such an agreement. As a democratic state, the shifting Israeli governments depend on the public's support. The Israeli bargaining position will presumably be reflected by the public's opinion towards a peace settlement with the Arab countries. Before I turn to the commitment tactic and the domestic politics, I will present a short introduction to the Israeli political system and its decision rules.

6.1 The Israeli political system

The Israeli political system produced a system with two dominant political parties; Likud and Labour. When these parties are in government, they are most of the times constrained by the smaller parties that make up the governing coalition (Rabil, 2003: 149). The Knesset consists of 120 seats, and thereby making coalition building the inescapable means of forming a government (Hazan, 1996: 22). The two major parties virtually competing for support from the smaller parties. This organisation of the political system gives the smaller parties key roles in the coalition governments that are formed. These small parties are mainly oriented towards single issues, and they use their leverage to impose their platforms on the bigger parties in government (Rabil, 2003: 150).

Before the elections in 1996, Israel adopted a new electoral reform law in order to remove the comprehensive power that the smaller parties inhabited in the bargaining for the coalition governments. The reform provided the voters with two ballots, one for direct election of the

prime minister, and the other for a party in the Knesset (Rabil, 2003: 159). However, the new electoral system produced the opposite effect of what was intended. The smaller parties increased its strength since, by the new system, the voters could vote for a prime minister and for the party that concentrated their politics on a smaller issue (Rabil, 2003: 160).

Israeli law does not require that international agreements, such as peace agreements, concluded by the sitting government be presented to the Knesset for approval (Hirsch, 2006: 230). However, there has been some sort of a norm for the governments to ask for the approval by the Knesset in certain cases. Particularly when it comes to territorial concessions, Governments are interested in legitimising such a concession by applying for the Knesset's approval. "In accordance with the practice developed by Israeli governments, treaties of major political importance have been submitted to the Knesset for the latter's approval, either prior to their conclusion or afterwards" (Hirsch, 2006: 231). Through legitimisation by the Knesset the government may feel it has the best way to cope with the domestic constraints put upon them by smaller parties and the Israeli public.

6.2 Commitment tactics in negotiations with Egypt

Before the departure to the Camp David peace talks, the Israeli Prime Minister convinced the cabinet to empower his team to make decisions on the spot without reference back to Israel (Shlaim, 2000: 372). During the summit Begin faced some pressure, from the Americans and the opposition, on the one hand, and the political right and the settlers on the other. When he was confronted with the issue of settlements in Sinai, Menachem Begin said; "My right eye will fall out, my right hand will fall off before I ever agree to the dismantling of a single Jewish settlement" (Brzezinski, 1983: 263). Even though, this does not necessary imply a commitment by the Israeli Prime Minister, it indicates how important Begin felt this issue was to the Israelis. Given the impression that the Israeli Prime Minister was committed to protect the settlements rights, both the Americans and Egyptians had to consider their focus in the negotiations. Begin's hard position on the Sinai settlements seems to have been a way to signal to the Americans that under no circumstances could the Israeli Prime Minister concede the territories. The obvious consequence of the Prime Minister's behaviour was Jimmy Carter gradually moving away from the Palestinian issue and focusing on the Sinai and a final peace treaty. The American President realised that he would not be able to alter Begin's position.

On Begin's return from Camp David, the Israeli Prime Minister made another manoeuvre to reinforce his public support and release pressure from the political right in Israel. On Israeli television Begin proclaimed that the settlement freeze he promised President Carter, would only last for three months and that it only applied to certain areas (Shindler, 1995: 97). In addition, in an interview on US television Begin proclaimed that; "Israel's right to remain physically on the West Bank for the indefinite future, even beyond the transitional five-year period, and also to go forth with his settlements program" (Brzezinski, 1983: 274, Shindler, 1995: 97). Through public television the Israeli Prime Minister committed Israel into not making concessions on the West Bank when the final peace treaty with Egypt would be negotiated. Begin did not lose anything in making these statements. In fact, he reinforced his position by specifying his ideological commitment to Greater Israel. Securing the support from both the pro-peace organisations in Israel and from the hard-liners on the political right; who feared territorial concession on the West Bank.

The statement represents another attempt to signal to the other two parties in the negotiation that Israel had no intention of making territorial concessions on the West Bank. Before the final treaty was signed, he demonstrated his position by promising to the Israeli people that such a concession would never take place. If Begin actually had conceded the West Bank, this would have been a political suicide. This represents a typical example of promising his own public the continuation of an Israeli presence on the West Bank. It was probably at this stage that Carter realised that the only achievement he could hope for was an Israeli-Egyptian peace agreement.

6.3 Summing up

Menachem Begin's exaggerated commitment to the Sinai settlements seems to have represented a bluff from the Israeli Prime Minister. By indicating that he was committed to the settlements, he managed to draw the attention away from the West Bank. By signalling that he could not, and neither could any other Israeli leader, remove the settlements the two other actors had to concentrate on that specific issue. Begin's real commitment, which was stated in the Likud manifesto, was connected to the West Bank. This commitment seems to have been non-negotiable, something that is also reflected in the final result of the negotiations, especially in the fact that the Americans gave up their initial goal in connection

to the Palestinians. Begin also managed to reinforce his credibility by proclaiming on television that Israel forever would stay on the West Bank.

6.4 Commitment tactics in negotiations with Syria

Based on the earlier discussions the findings revealed that it was US pressure that finally persuaded the Shamir government to accept the invitation to the Madrid conference. However, before the Israeli departure to the Madrid conference; Shamir made a speech that stipulated an Israeli commitment; “Even as they work day and night for peace (...) Israel’s leaders cannot conceive of considering ideas aimed at concessions on Jerusalem, the West Bank, Gaza, and the Golan Heights” (Shlaim, 2000: 492). The statement represents a signal from Yitzhak Shamir to the other participants that despite his attendance at the conference, he had no intention in conceding any territories in exchange for peace. In order to reinforce his credibility, Shamir restrains himself by stating a commitment to the Israeli people. Shamir even introduced the slogan “peace-for-peace”, which implied that the Golan Heights would not become Syrian during the Madrid conference.

During the Israeli election campaign in 1992, Prime Minister Shamir reiterated his party’s commitment to the Golan Heights. Shamir emphasised his strong attachment to the Golan Heights and his determination to hold on to it (Ben-Aharon, 2000: 3). Shamir’s statements represent indicators directed both towards the Israeli people and the Syrians. When he commits himself to the continuation of Israeli presence in the territories, he leaves no doubt about his intentions in negotiating peace with Syria. These incidents reveal that there was no reason for optimism for a comprehensive peace with Likud forming the government.

In the same election campaign, Yitzhak Rabin represents a contrast to the Likud party. When Shamir promised the future Israeli control over the territories, Rabin assured that he would work for an agreement with the Palestinians and the Arab neighbours (Cobban, 1999: 44). The effect on the two contradicting commitments might be evident in the election result where Labour won 44 seats and Likud 32 in the Knesset (Shindler, 1995: 279). Without entering a deeper discussion of the election results, the statements by Rabin represents Israel’s changing attitude in regard to the peace talks. Rabin’s promise to the Israeli people provided the Americans and the Arab states with an opportunity to reinforce the peace process. It demonstrates that the Israeli commitment to the occupied territories had changed. History has

also revealed that Rabin managed to live up to his promise by signing peace agreements with both the PLO and Jordan.

Even though the new signals from Jerusalem provided incentives to conduct peace negotiations, Rabin exposed another approach later in the talks with Syria. Knowing that a withdrawal from the Golan Heights would be difficult to accept for many Israelis, Rabin declared that a peace treaty with Syria would be conditional on a referendum. The reason for such a position was a result of the public criticism that was directed towards Rabin when the idea of a withdrawal was discussed (Rabinovich, 1998: 158). The statement was thereby announced publicly by the Israeli deputy minister Mordechai Gur on behalf of the government; "...in the event the territorial price demanded from us on the Golan Heights is significant, the government will put the issue to referendum" (Cobban, 1999: 61-62). The commitment demonstrates that Rabin would let the people decide if there would be a peace agreement or not. The Prime Minister knew that any withdrawal from the Golan Heights would be a controversial step inside Israel. This was not only in the sense that it might spark an increase in the support for Likud and the parties on the right-wing, but it would be controversial in the Labour party because of the strong support the party drew from the Golan settlers (Cobban, 1999: 71). However, the commitment also represents a tactical effort by Rabin. The announcement is an indication to Syria that even though Rabin wants a peace agreement, he is restrained by the will of the Israeli people. If Syria moderates their demands and perhaps accept territorial compromises, this would probably facilitate a positive change in the Israeli attitude towards a withdrawal from some of the Golan Heights.

The problem of this tactic occurs when Syria becomes unsure about Israel's purpose and honesty in the negotiations (Rabil, 2003: 203). When Rabin made the negotiations conditional, the Syrian's interpreted the Israeli behaviour as a waste of time. The major problem for the Syrians was that they might end up with no agreement at all regardless of having made painful concessions to Israel (Slater, 2002: 97). In addition, by the commitment to a referendum, Rabin could justify his tough position on the border discussions with Syria. Pointing towards the fact that certain concessions were impossible to make because the Israeli public would not approve for such an agreement. From the Syrian point of view Rabin restrained himself from making major concessions, which made them doubt his sincerity towards a peace agreement.

Benjamin Netanyahu emerged as a reflection of the former Likud leader Yitzhak Shamir. He even based his election platform on the “peace-for-peace” slogan. By reiterating the previous Likud demands, Netanyahu signalled to the negotiating parties that Israel had changed its position in the talks. Early in his days in office he called on Syria to resume the peace talks without any preconditions. At the same time Netanyahu ruled out any Israeli retreat from the Golan Heights (Shlaim, 2000: 571). In a manifestation of his predecessor Yitzhak Shamir, Netanyahu committed himself to this strong bargaining position and refused to make territorial compromises. This is obviously one of the reasons for the almost three year break in negotiations with Syria. When Israel demonstrated no intention of withdrawing from the Golan Heights, Syria had no intention of negotiating.

Ehud Barak was elected on some of the same principles as Yitzhak Rabin was. In his campaign for the premiership, Barak announced his peace policy that included a final treaty with the Palestinians, Syrians, and a solution to the Lebanese problem (Rabinovich, 2004: 125). His campaign not only represented a promise to the Israeli people, it was also a signal to the US and Syria that the new Prime Minister wanted to restart the peace negotiations. Even though the peace treaty was missing in the end, Barak kept his promise regarding Lebanon and withdrew the Israeli forces from the country.

6.5 Summing up

Considering the findings it appears to be the case that two distinct commitment tactics have been employed by Israeli prime ministers during the Israeli-Syrian negotiations. The first undertaken by Yitzhak Shamir when he promise the Israeli people that he will not relinquish any territories that were in Israeli possession. This commitment represents a signal directed towards the Americans and Syrians that a peace agreement will not include territorial concessions. The same commitment is reinforced by the later Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Both figures give their opponents the impression that the Israeli bargaining position will not be changed, and thus, the possibility for a negotiated peace is limited.

The second commitment is stated by the Labour Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, which later is reinforced by Ehud Barak. These two characters commit Israel to negotiate towards peace. Both Prime Ministers signalled to the Arab countries that the peace option is possible, even if it is based on the “land-for-peace” principle. Rabin eventually carried through his

commitment by the signing of agreements with PLO and Jordan. This was not the case with Ehud Barak; however, he executed a unilateral withdrawal from Southern Lebanon, and thus maintained his promise of an end to the occupation.

6.6 Israeli domestic politics during the Egyptian negotiations

The election of Menachem Begin as Prime Minister in the summer of 1977 marked a change in Israeli foreign policy (Shindler, 1995: 87). The Labour party was preoccupied by the concern for security and this was reflected in the party's policy towards the occupied territories. The Likud party differed significantly from Labour in their ideological commitment to "Greater Israel" (Shlaim, 2000: 352). The guidelines in the government's platform emphasised the Israelis' rights to build settlements on their historical land. In addition it stated that the government would work to achieve peace with Israel's neighbours (Shlaim, 2000: 355).

Central for Israel's foreign policy is its conception of the country as surrounded by hostile Arab states. Considering all the wars the country has been involved in since its independence, the Israeli public has viewed the Arab neighbours with great scepticism and mistrust (Jones, 2002: 122). This conception has made Israeli foreign policy revolve around security issues and maintaining a powerful military force, in addition to strong ties to the USA (Jones, 2002: 123). The Israeli public's scepticism suddenly changed when Anwar al-Sadat initiated his change in policy to come to Jerusalem. Seemingly his slogan "no more war" made an emotional impact on the Israeli people, making them believe that there was a real opportunity for peace in the region (Shlaim, 2000: 360). This change is reflected in the opinion polls where an overwhelming 90 per cent of the Israeli people welcomed the Egyptian President (Bar-Siman-Tov, 2001: 41). This support seems to have encouraged Begin to accept the invitation to the Camp David summit.

Even though the public support for the peace talks provided Begin with the confidence he needed to start the negotiations, at the same time there emerged two contradicting groups at the domestic level in Israel. Inside Prime Minister Begin's own party there was the hard right-wing which together with the Sinai settlers coordinated their struggle against the peace talks (Bar-Siman-Tov, 2001: 41). The group opposed a peace founded on territorial compromises

(Shindler, 1995: 92-93). The settlement question was a sensitive issue for the right-wing parties, feeling that by accepting the Camp David Accords they were abandoning the settlements at Yamit in Sinai; “Those who opposed the agreement were concerned about both the security aspects and the economic loss involved in returning Sinai to the Egyptians” (Shindler, 1995: 99). On the opposite side, the opposition parties together with the interest group Peace Now supported the peace talks. This group later accused the government of wasting an opportunity for a comprehensive peace by upholding a tough bargaining position (Bar-Siman-Tov, 2001: 41). The two groups demonstrate the division that existed in the Israeli population regarding concession of territories.

When Begin eventually gave in and conceded on the settlements in Sinai, he did this on the condition of ratification in the Knesset (Bar-Siman-Tov, 2001: 42, Shlaim, 2000: 374). Such ratification may seem reasonable since Israel is a democracy. However, by making the Camp David Accords conditional on the Knesset ratification, Begin removed some of his responsibility of conceding the Sinai (Shlaim, 2000: 376). This decision might be interpreted as a manoeuvre to protect himself from some of the accusations in Israel, leaving it up to the Knesset to take the final decision. If the Knesset refused the Camp David, Begin could argue towards the Americans that he had done everything in his power. However, the criticism from his own party continued, and some even accused the Prime Minister of national betrayal (Bar-Siman-Tov, 2001: 42). They believed that the concession of Sinai implied that Begin would do the same with the West Bank and Gaza. Not realising that Begin in fact conceded Sinai in order to keep the Israeli control over the West Bank (Shindler, 1995: 99). The decision also demonstrates another attempt to divert the attention from the issue he actually was committed to not negotiate over; the West Bank. Begin removed the pressure that the Americans had put on him by leaving it up to the Knesset to vote for such an action to take place or not.

In order to cope with the opposition in his own party Begin immediately made the Camp David Accords a national issue, and thus neutralised most of the opposition inside Likud (Shindler, 1995: 94). By allowing his party fellows to freely criticise the agreements, he also released some of the pressure that was directed towards him (Stein, 1993: 92). To assure the ratification of the agreement, Begin bypassed Likud’s political caucus, and requested that the Knesset schedule an early debate (Stein, 1993: 92). This decision deprived his party the opportunity to oppose the agreement before it would be voted for in the Knesset, something which seems to have contributed to the ratification. Begin anticipated that he would receive

support from the peace movement and then from some of the Left-wing parties, and particularly some of the Labour opposition (Bar-Siman-Tov, 2001: 42). He even received public congratulations from the leader of the Labour party; Shimon Peres (Shlaim, 2000: 376). Shimon Peres supported the peace agreement and appealed to his followers to accept it. On September 27, 1978, the Knesset vote produced 84 in favour, 19 opposed and 17 abstentions. Begin managed to achieve a majority support for the Camp David without demanding party discipline. However, the remarkable fact was that only two-thirds of the supporters came from the government coalition (Shindler, 1995: 98). On the other hand, the Accords were widely supported in the Israeli population; “Indeed, 75 per cent of the public expressed satisfaction with the Camp David agreements; 78 per cent justified the concessions made by the government; 70 per cent supported the possible removal of the Rafiah settlements” (Bar-Siman-Tov, 2001: 42).

The interesting part of Begin’s manoeuvring is that he used the stick and carrot in an effort to convince his own government to support the Camp David Accords. In order to deal with some of the criticism he received, he accompanied the announcement of the cabinet’s positive vote by the decision to expand the settlements on the West Bank (Shlaim, 2000: 379, Shindler, 1995: 97). The announcement implies an attempt to obstruct a future weakening of Israel’s position in negotiations with other Arab countries. As discussed in previous chapters, the thickening of settlements on the West Bank would further strengthen the Israeli control over the territories and thereby making it harder for the country to concede on the removal of settlements.

The final peace treaty was ratified on March 19 1979 by the Knesset with the votes; 95 in favour, 18 against, and two abstained (Shlaim, 2000: 381). The overwhelming support for the peace agreement reflected the Israeli public’s view. For most Israelis a peace with Egypt meant a peace with the militarily strongest Arab country, and the removal of what the public saw as the biggest threat to Israeli security (Bar-Siman-Tov, 2001: 43). With Egypt out of the picture, Israel also further strengthened its position towards Jordan, Syria, and the Palestinians (Quandt, 1986: 330-31). However, there was demonstrations lead by the settlement groups that opposed the peace agreement, although it never endangered the implementation of the treaty itself (Bar-Siman-Tov, 2001: 43). The major legitimacy problem of the government remained within the Likud party, where seven of its members opposed the agreement.

In the aftermath of the peace treaty, domestic opposition grew because of the negotiating style and settlement policy on the West Bank. The policy by the government was aimed at ensuring the Israeli control of the West Bank (Bar-Siman-Tov, 2001: 44). Begin managed to create obstacles for the development of a Palestinian state. Given the Likud party's commitment to Greater Israel, the result of the Israeli-Egyptian peace agreement should not have been a surprise. However, as seen above, the tactical manoeuvring by the Israeli delegation succeeded in diverting the attention from the Palestinian question towards the Sinai settlers (Telhami, 1992/93: 636).

6.7 Summing up

In sum, the Israeli-Egyptian peace negotiations represent an example of how the Israeli government managed to negotiate both on the international and domestic level. Israel may be pictured as a divided society of the left-right opinion towards the country's foreign policy. Prime Minister Begin managed to neutralise these two groups with his double-communication and the compromise by withdrawing from the Sinai, and expanding settlements on the West Bank. Significantly this way of negotiating, points in the direction that the majority of the opposition to the peace agreement came from the Prime Minister's own coalition. While his party colleagues opposed the withdrawal from the Sinai, a great majority of the Israeli public supported the decision. In fact, the Israeli people seemed to have been critical towards the Prime Minister's hard-line bargaining behaviour and later the expansion of the settlements on the West Bank. Consequently, the findings indicate that the domestic pressure constituted a major contribution to the conclusion of the peace agreement.

6.8 Israeli domestic politics during the Syrian negotiations

The Shamir government's clear commitment to "Greater Israel", coupled with its uncooperative behaviour, did not create a sense of optimism at the Madrid conference (Shlaim, 2000: 461). Even though a negotiation about the future of the Golan Heights would not contradict the ideological position of the Likud party, Yitzhak Shamir had already signalled that this was not an option for Israel (Golan, 1992: 41). The Shamir government was also pressured prior to the conference by "The Campaigning Group for the Golan Heights", that stressed that the retention of the Golan Heights was a matter of national security

(Shindler, 1995: 271). This group also made an impact on the Labour party, which historically has received massive support from the Golan settlers.

Although the Likud leader showed reluctance towards the peace talks, the Israeli public revealed that it held another view towards the future relationship with the country's neighbours; "Public opinion polls showed unambiguously that the Israeli public was much more impressed than its government by the signs of moderation on the other side and much more willing to trade land for peace" (Shlaim, 2000: 496). This was also reflected in association towards the settlement policy. Opinion polls suggested that over 70 per cent wanted a freeze in the settlement policy in order to start peace negotiations (Shindler, 1995: 274). In other opinion polls, the Israeli people listed the peace process as the most important issue for the government to undertake, and settlements were the least important issue on the list (Golan, 1992: 42). The public opinion demonstrates that the Israeli public was on a collision course with the Shamir government; however, regardless of this situation the Israeli delegation did not change their position. The Madrid talks did not produce a peace agreement and Shamir and his team went home to prepare for the national election.

The Israeli election in 1992 resulted in the victory of the Labour party and Yitzhak Rabin. Shamir's failure to deal with the absorption of new immigrants, his clash with the US, and an inability to improve the Israeli economy are some of the reasons for the Likud loss (Rabil, 2003: 156). The American negotiator Dennis Ross highlights another issue which he claims Shamir miscalculated; "When the Israeli public believes they have a partner for peace, they want a government that is capable of negotiating peace" (Ross, 2004: 84). Significantly, the Israeli public demonstrated its interest in peace through the opinion polls. Thus, when the government was incapable in providing such a desire, the people changed the government to a more pro-peace figure. The election result indicates an example of Putnam's negotiation on the two-level game, where the public is not satisfied by its leaders and thus replaces it with another.

Even though Labour won an overwhelming victory compared to the Likud, the results was a typical reflection of the Israeli political system. Yitzhak Rabin still depended on the support from the smaller parties in the Knesset (Shlaim, 2000: 503). Regardless of the Arab parties achievement of enough seats to support Rabin's coalition, he was reluctant to include them in his government; "The implicit assumption of Israeli politics requires the procurement of a "Jewish majority" for such major decisions" (Rabil, 2003: 156). To be able to legitimise his

peace policy, Rabin could not be depended on the Arab parties and found support by the Shas party which had been part of the Likud bloc (Shlaim, 2000: 503).

Shas, which held six seats after the election, contributed to the important “Jewish majority” in the Rabin coalition government (Shlaim, 2000: 503). It represented one of the smaller parties in the Knesset which concentrated its politics towards specific religious issues. Itamar Rabinovich describes the party as an; “...unusual combination of an ultra-Orthodox party and a grassroots movement of Israelis of North African extractions” (Rabinovich, 2004: 42). Territorial concessions did not represent an important issue for Shas. Their politics were rather concentrated towards religious issues and financial government support for religious groups. Rabin, thus, gave the party key positions in the government which made it possible for the party to follow their religious agenda (Rabil, 2003: 157).

Regardless of the public support for Rabin’s peace policy, the Israeli public was not unified in their approach to the peace process. After the signing of the Oslo Accords, the government was exposed for hard criticism in the Israeli public. Apparently the Labour leadership did not anticipate the domestic opposition, and was targeted with hard accusations at the political arena (Bar-Siman-Tov, 2001: 46-47). The conflicting domestic opinion towards the Oslo Accords is reflected in the ratification in the Knesset. The agreement received only 61 votes in favour, while 50 opposed it (Shlaim, 2000: 521). As it turned out, had it not been for the Arab parties, which were not part of the coalition, the government could not have ratified the agreement (Rabil, 2003: 157). However, a Gallup polls indicated a popular support for the interim, with 65 per cent said that they approved the accords (Shlaim, 2000: 521). These results demonstrate ambivalent feelings in the Israeli population and at the political arena towards the peace process. The Israeli society was divided on the issue of peace in exchange for territorial concessions.

Similar indications are evident after the ratification of the Oslo Accords when the criticism from the opposition escalated. Yitzhak Rabin was accused of being a traitor and for selling out parts of the Jewish historic homeland, and undermining security for Israeli society (Rabinovich, 2004: 57). The internal relations in Israel left the Rabin government open for attacks because of their peace policy. It became above all evident when the news about negotiations with Syria became known (Shlaim, 2000: 521). The government’s support base and legitimacy began to be eroded by public disenchantment towards the idea of withdrawal from the Golan Heights. The “Golan Lobby”, consisting of Golan settlers, tried to entrench

the 1981 Golan Law, which extended the Israeli law to the Golan Heights (Rabinovich, 2004: 68). The government barely managed to resist the law, and the Oslo II was scarcely approved by the Knesset. It seems that the support for the governments peace policy was shrinking, and together with it; the possibility for a peace agreement with the Syrians (Rabinovich, 2004: 68). The present opposition towards Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights represents the difficulties for a government to negotiate both on the international level and the national level at the same time. While undertaking negotiations with the Syrians, the Rabin government simultaneously was battling the opposition and public interest groups such as the Golan lobby. The resistance to implementation of the 1981 Golan Law represents an extreme example of such a fight.

In order to accommodate the public pressure, Rabin tried to convince the Syrians to engage in public diplomacy (Shlaim, 2000: 534). This was a strategy to demonstrate to the Israeli public that Syria was interested in peace with Israel. The Syrians, on the other hand, felt that they needed to work with their own population to justify the peace negotiations with the enemy, and refused to obey Rabin's demands. The Syrian negotiator Walid al-Moualem explains that; "We always felt that the Israelis wanted us to do their work for them. They wanted us to convince their public that peace was in their interests. We prepared our own public for peace with Israel" (Butler, 1997: 87). When Rabin saw little progress in public diplomacy, he moved on the other negotiation tracks. Even though Rabin's request for public diplomacy is reasonable considering the public and political opposition towards the peace in Israel, Moualem makes a logical conclusion in his remarks. Considering the negotiating tactics that Israel employed towards Syria, it was difficult to identify the honesty behind the Israeli negotiating position. For the Syrian population there were also many feelings attached to the Golan Heights, and the Syrian government needed defend their own participation in the peace talks with Israel.

In October 1994, Rabin signed a negotiated peace agreement with Jordan (Shlaim, 2000: 544). Regardless of some of the opposition towards the Oslo Accords and the negotiations with Syria, this treaty turned out to be widely supported by both the Israeli public and the Knesset. The approval in the Knesset revealed 105 in favour of the agreement and only three against. The Israeli public also demonstrated its support for the agreement with 91.5 per cent in favour in a Gallup poll (Bar-Siman-Tov, 2001: 48). There are several reasons for the massive support of the Jordanian peace agreement. First of all, Jordan was seen as one of the

friendlier neighbours by the Israeli public. This was based on the assumption that the Jordanian claim of territory was recognised as legitimate, and probably because the country did not participate in the Yom Kippur War. Second, the final treaty hardly involved any territorial concessions by Israel (Rabil, 2003: 159). In order to avoid concessions the parties worked out a creative agreement to swap land with each other (Eisenberg and Caplan, 1998: 98). As an additional factor was the Israeli public's sympathy for the Jordanian King (Bar-Siman-Tov, 2001: 48). All these factors demonstrate that the positive feelings in the Israeli population towards the peace agreement caused a swift and easy implementation of the peace agreement. The Rabin government satisfied the domestic interests, and then received the legitimacy to implement the peace agreement with Jordan.

After the signing of two peace agreements, Yitzhak Rabin reengaged in negotiations with Syria. Despite the sudden support the government received from the Jordan agreement, the opposition to Syria negotiations re-emerged. The major difference at this stage was that the criticism was not only from the political opposition and some public groups, but also from deep within Rabin's own party (Cobban, 1999: 80). Demonstrations occurred more frequently and the violence escalated through civil disobedience and disruption of public order. "As it turned out, in this context of violence, delegitimization, and demonization a small fanatical group was operating with the belief that the only way to stop the peace process was to assassinate Yitzhak Rabin" (Rabinovich, 2004: 68). On November 4, 1995, Yitzhak Rabin was killed because of his peace policy by Yigal Amir. The assassination seems to have been a direct outcome of the delegitimation campaigns that occurred in Israel (Bar-Siman-Tov, 2001: 47). The tragic incident reveals the strong nationalistic feelings that are rooted in some parts of the Israeli society. Even though it is quite extreme to link the peace policy to the assassination of the Prime Minister, it still demonstrates the growing unpopularity that occurred among the Israeli public. The issue of negotiating peace with Syria did not have the same support as the negotiations with Jordan. This opinion was also reflected by the public through the protests and demonstrations.

As already known, Shimon Peres distanced himself from Yitzhak Rabin's slow going peace process. What characterised Shimon Peres was that he wanted to move fast on the Syrian-track. Peres calculated that a peace treaty with Syria would help him win the Israeli election scheduled for October 1996 (Shlaim, 2000: 554). However, during the second Wye Plantation talks there was a series of suicide attacks organised by Hamas inside Israel (Rabinovich,

2004: 74). The attacks damaged the public support for Peres and his government; which was perceived as not preoccupied by the security of the Israeli people. Demonstrations started to occur in Israel against the Prime Minister and his peace process (Shlaim, 2000: 557). At the same time Peres was pressured by his own party to move up the national elections. Peres had received a major boost in support in public polls in his early months in office, and party members wanted him to benefit from this support (Shlaim, 2000: 552). In an attempt to cope with the pressure from the public, opposition, and his own party, Peres eventually decided to move up the elections in 1996. According to Rabinovich, the decision to hold early elections was based on the assumption that the negotiations made little progress (Rabinovich, 2004: 74). The negotiations with Syria continued for a while, however, in the end Shimon Peres suspended the peace talks. This was based on his reluctance to make major concessions close to the coming election (Shlaim, 2000: 557).

There is little doubt that the suicide bombings were the most important reason for Benjamin Netanyahu's victory over Shimon Peres in the May election (Bar-Siman-Tov, 2001: 48). The fact that the Syrian delegation, according to Rabinovich, refused to condemn the terrorist attacks did not support the peace process (Rabinovich, 2004: 74). Evidently, the Israeli public felt the sense of insecurity in the society and was dissatisfied by Shimon Peres' politics. The election result represented the public's attitude towards the peace process and the security politics, and the choice fell on another candidate that emphasised the security before peace negotiations.

Benjamin Netanyahu's government was based on the support of right-wing parties and from Shas (Shlaim, 2000: 569). The new electoral law did not produce the system it was intended to; "While the parties of the right would naturally oppose concessions to peacemaking with Syria, some parties of the centre such as Shas would most likely use peacemaking as a bargaining chip to extract domestic concessions" (Rabil, 2003: 160). This party managed to receive another important position in the government by shifting side from the left to the right. Even though the election produced a narrow victory for Netanyahu, the results demonstrated a certain mood in the Israeli population regarding the peace talks with Syria. In the 1992 election, Labour received 60 percent of the votes in the Golan Heights. However, in the 1996 election, the percentage had fallen to 27 (Rabil, 2003: 163). As already mentioned, the Golan Lobby was traditionally made up of Labour-voters; however, the 1996 election demonstrated an important power in the opposition to the peace policy. It turned out that the

Israeli public was not ready for another peace agreement at that moment and therefore went for a hard-liner that demanded “peace-for-peace” in the negotiations.

The election of Benjamin Netanyahu made Israel distance itself from the US. The new Prime Minister’s unwillingness to continue peace negotiations on the basis of his predecessors caused the deadlock and an almost three year break in the talks. When Ehud Barak eventually won the 1999 election, the poor relationship with the US seems to have represented an important impact on the results of the negotiations. Prime Minister Barak formed a broad-based government with the support of 73 members of the Knesset, and this was without adding the Arab parties to the coalition (Rabinovich, 2004: 125-126). The strategy was similar to that of Rabin some years before him. By not including the Arab parties, Barak calculated that through a ratification of a peace treaty in the Knesset he would win even if some of his coalition would not support it. He also signalled to the Americans and Syrians that Israel intended to engage in peace negotiations.

What appears to have been an important factor for Barak’s victory was the Israeli relationship to the US. Benjamin Netanyahu, through his peace-dictation policy, made the international community distance itself from Israel. When a new character arise promising to restart negotiations on all tracks and ending the Israeli presence in Lebanon, the public seems to have embraced his initiative. The Israeli public demonstrated its dissatisfaction with the country’s policy and thereby replaced its leader.

During the negotiations with Syria, Barak signalled his willingness to withdraw from the Golan Heights. He even started to prepare the Israeli public for the withdrawal to the lines of June 4, 1967 (Rabinovich, 2004: 133). “Despite Barak’s eagerness for peace, the parliament tepidly endorsed his quest for a comprehensive peace. This gave him the foretaste of the problems that a strategy predicated on a broadly based coalition would generate” (Rabil, 2003: 218). While receiving criticism from the opposition parties and declining support in the Knesset, domestic resistance started to grow again in Israel. This made Barak cautious and he decided to slow down the Syrian negotiations (Ross, 2004: 539). It seems that Ehud Barak was extremely preoccupied with the Israeli public opinion, and that this shaped his approach in the Syrian negotiations. According to the American negotiator Dennis Ross; “...Barak received the results of a poll that made doing a deal with Syria more problematic than he thought” (Ross, 2004: 589). He insisted that it would have been a grave mistake to offer Assad an explicit commitment to withdraw, and that it was Assad’s insistence on this

precondition that obstructed the talks (Enderlin, 2002: 128, Rabinovich, 2004: 134). Ross also explains that this gave Barak cold feet, and if this had not happened, there might have been a peace treaty in January 2000 (Ross, 2004: 589).

As the peace process continued on the different tracks, the opposition became hard to handle for the Prime Minister. In summer 2000, Barak experienced the final collapse of the Syrian negotiations. The Prime Minister concluded the Israeli withdrawal from the southern Lebanon, and devoted his attention to the Palestinians (Rabinovich, 2004: 143). His coalition government started to crumble, and several parties resigned from the government. In the end Shas also left, and in November Barak was left with a coalition consisting of 30 members of the Knesset. Rabinovich explains that; “The conventional wisdom at the time stated that a majority of the Israelis supported an agreement with the Palestinians but opposed the concessions that such an agreement entailed. It was widely assumed that the Knesset would approve neither an agreement based on massive concessions nor a referendum that would endorse such an agreement” (Rabinovich, 2004: 149). The collapse of the Barak government eventually made him call for new elections in 2001, which he lost to the new Likud leader Ariel Sharon (Rabinovich, 2004: 182). With the defeat at the election, the peace negotiations with Syria also disappeared.

The noticeable feature with Ehud Barak was that he emphasised the public’s opinion while he was negotiating. Following Dennis Ross’ argumentation, the primary reason for the collapse of the peace negotiations with Syria originates from the Prime Minister’s devotion to the public opinion polls. He was not ready to jeopardise his popularity over a peace treaty. The irony behind Barak’s preoccupation is that he eventually lost the 2001 election, even without a peace agreement. Evidently the Israeli public opinion shifted in the approach to the peace process, and this resulted in a remarkable effect on the sitting Prime Minister. When Barak’s government started to crumble, the public support disappeared and the same happened with the opportunity for peace.

6.9 Summing up

Israeli domestic opinion has clearly exercised significantly influence on the government’s negotiations on the international level. The Shamir government did not provide the Israeli people with the desired peace. This was reflected in the negotiation style and unwillingness to

participate at the Madrid conference. As a consequence, the Israeli people replaced the Prime Minister with the pro-peace figure Yitzhak Rabin. Thus, the Israeli people demonstrated that the Israel was prepared to negotiate peace with the neighbouring countries.

The approach towards the peace process was further reflected in the opinion polls after the signing of the Oslo Accords, even though the results were not overwhelming. On the other hand, when the Jordan agreement was finalised, even the opposition parties in the Knesset delivered a massive approval. What seems to be a significant issue is the shifting domestic attitude towards the withdrawal from the Golan Heights. When Rabin restarted the peace talks after the PLO and Jordan agreements were accomplished, there appears to have been a growing resistance in the population. The resistance culminated in the election of Benjamin Netanyahu instead of Shimon Peres in 1996. There is little doubt that the election was a reaction to the suicide bombings that occurred in Israel at the time. Additionally, it is important to remark that the election was won by the smallest possible margin. However, it does not change the fact that peace was not the highest issue on the Israeli public's agenda at the time.

Much of the same impact from the people explains the overwhelming election victory to Ehud Barak in 1999. Israel's relationship to its most important ally, the US, was terrible after three years of Netanyahu government. Barak also proclaimed a peace policy on all fronts, which was positively received by the people. Nevertheless, it seems that Barak was not the right person to implement unpopular decisions. His attention to firmly focus on the public opinion; he decided to move slowly in the negotiating process to be viewed as a hard negotiator. Eventually it was the public polls that made him decide that he could not carry through the negotiations, and the peace talks with Syria finally ended without an agreement.

In sum, evidently the Israeli public opposed a territorial concession of the Golan Heights. As argued above, this seems to have constituted one of the crucial factors that eventually broke down the peace negotiations between Israel and Syria. If the Israeli people had accepted concessions of the Golan Heights, there might have been possible to achieve a peace agreement between the countries.

7 Conclusion

This chapter will present the comparative result of the analysis of the two peace negotiations. I will summarise the most important findings in each of the negotiations and highlight the most obvious similarities and differences in both cases. In addition, I will try to place the findings in a broader perspective of the negotiation literature and present how the answers may contribute to some of the literature on conflict reduction.

The aim of this thesis was to uncover: *Why did Israel achieve a peace agreement with Egypt, but not Syria?* To put it differently, which factors may explain how Israel managed to achieve a peace agreement with Egypt, but no agreement with Syria? I will outline the major findings of the analysis below, but to answer the research question; I found that a mixture of the opponent's reaction to Israel's bargaining tactics, the role of the mediator, and the domestic politics in Israel was different in the two negotiations. While Egypt was affected by the Israeli use of bargaining tactics, Syria was indifferent and able to uphold their negotiation demands. In the case of the mediator, the US turned out to be an active participant issuing pressure towards Egypt in order to obtain an agreement. However, in the Syrian negotiations, the Americans became more and more pacified as the negotiations slowed down, and eventually seemed indifferent to achieve a peace agreement. The most striking factor that explains the different outcomes seems to have been the domestic opinion towards peace agreement in Israel. When the people almost unitarily supported peace with Egypt, they appeared to be more opposed to a peace with Syria. It is important to underline that "peace" implied an Israeli withdrawal from territories occupied in the 1967 war. While the Israeli people supported the Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula, they opposed the same form of withdrawal from the Golan Heights. In the following I discuss the similar findings compared to each other, before I turn to the differences.

7.1 Major Similarities

At the onset of the negotiations the obvious similarities between the negotiations was the bargaining issue; territories occupied by Israel, the parties' power-balance; that favoured Israel grounded on their strength and control of the bargaining issue, and the mediator; the US tried to help the parties towards a solution to their dispute.

In order to answer the research question I examined three explanatory factors that to a certain degree could have affected the outcomes. This was the Israeli bargaining strength, the mediator, and Israeli domestic politics. In relation to this bargaining strength I identified and examined five bargaining factors; impatience, risk of breakdown, inside options, asymmetrical information, and issue delinkage. These factors constitute a mechanism that eventually can represent an effect on the opponent and the negotiation outcome. The analytical findings presented an interesting result in that Israel employed to a certain degree all of these factors in both negotiations. The combination of these tactical behaviours further strengthened the Israeli bargaining power relative to both Egypt and Syria.

By focusing on the time aspect in both negotiations it became evident that Israel was a very patient actor in the processes. In fact, Israel deliberately slowed down the pace of the process when their negotiators felt pressured or in order to take advantage of the opponents' weaker position. This was exemplified when Menachem Begin saw the Israeli benefits from the Sinai oil, and consumed time by focusing on details and withholding concessions as long as possible. The same behaviour is evident in Yitzhak Shamir's confession of his plan to negotiate for ten years. Additionally both Rabin and Barak consumed time in order to prepare the Israeli people for a peace agreement. The fact that Israel was in control of the issue of the negotiation constitutes a psychological impact on the opponent. The empirical findings indicate that Israel had an incentive to stall the negotiation as a tactical effort to out-wait the opponents.

The major reason for the Israeli patience is based on the fact that Israel was not in a need of a peace agreement with any of the Arab parties. The analysis of the risk-factor revealed that the Israeli negotiators in both cases were more or less indifferent towards a negotiation breakdown. It was evident in connection to the Iranian oil, when Begin was ready to jeopardise the peace agreement if Egypt would not accept his demands, and particularly in the numerous postponements of the Syrian negotiations. The Israeli consequence of a breakdown in both negotiations would be the continuation of status quo, which implied that the country could maintain its occupation. This meant its control over the Sinai oil and the strategic important Golan Heights. If the negotiations did not bring about what Israel demanded it would provoke the possibility of a negotiation breakdown. The situation represents an example of when a party is in control of the negotiation issue the offer in the bargaining have

to present something that will benefit the stronger part, or else there will be no solution to the conflict.

In close connection to the mentioned factors, the situation caused the Israeli constructions of new settlements in the same territories that the parties were negotiating about. By increasing its inside options it further strengthened the countries bargaining power towards its opponent. This behaviour represents an effective tactic when the discussions are directed to a disputed territory. The weaker party is in no position other than protesting against the activities, while the stronger party consolidates its control over the area *while* the negotiations are performed. The consequences are palpable; the negotiation issue will slowly disappear while the stronger party increases its presence in the area. As the negotiations maintain in a slow progress, in the end there will be nothing left to negotiate about, because the increased Israeli control limits its leverage for territorial concessions. In such circumstances we can identify a growing frustration with the weaker party, and the behaviour itself may cause a growing distrust in the negotiations. This was also the case for both Egypt and Syria, where both Arab countries started to question the sincerity of the Israeli opponent.

The distrust is also identified in the sense that Israel never revealed its real bargaining position in any of the negotiations. This reflects an attempt to take advantage of the opponent by pushing for more concessions in the negotiations. Menachem Begin evidently refused to expose his ultimate position, and coupled with his double communication this gave a confusing signal to the opponent. Similar findings are also identified in the Israeli prime ministers attempts to move around the border discussions in the negotiations with Syria. Seemingly in both negotiations the Israeli leaders tried to protect themselves from making concessions that they would not be able to go back on. In contrast, Israel more or less knew the Egyptian and Syrian bargaining positions.

The Israeli tactical behaviour led further to the delinkage of the negotiation issues. In both negotiations it was evident that Israel used tactical behaviour in order to divide up the negotiation issues. The decoupling of the negotiation issue was conducted in the Israeli-Egyptian negotiation through the effort of narrowing down the linkage to the Palestinian question. In the case of Syria, Israel played the Arab countries against each other in order to pressure the countries to lower their demands. At this stage one can add that by dividing up the negotiation issue in the Egyptian negotiations, Israel probably missed a real chance of a comprehensive peace settlement with the Arab countries. However, considering the Likud

party's commitment to the West Bank, there were small chances for a solution to the Palestinian issue.

In sum, the findings from the first part of the analysis indicate that Israel employed more or less the same tactical behaviour in order to pressure the opponents in both negotiations. As have been demonstrated, the Israeli relation to the bargaining factors provided the country with a profound advantage during the negotiations. All these tactics further strengthened the country's bargaining position relative to the opponents. The slow progress, its indifference towards a breakdown, continuous expansions of settlements, not revealing its bargaining position, and decoupling the Arab states all caused an increased Israeli strength. However, even though the findings indicates that Israel employed the same tactical behaviour in both negotiations, the question still remains the same; why was the negotiation outcome negative in the Israeli-Syrian negotiations?

7.2 Major Differences

Based on the evidence that demonstrate the same tactical behaviour of Israel in the negotiations, we have to focus on the opponent's reaction to these tactics in order to explain the different outcomes. It is the combination of all these mechanisms that will provide the party that make use of them with a profound advantage in a negotiation process, if they have an effect on the opponent. In the findings of the analysis it is the effect of all these behaviours that turns out to be a noteworthy difference in both cases.

When focusing on the negotiations with Egypt I discussed the consequences the Israeli behaviours had on President Sadat. The major findings indicated that the tactical combination eventually made up such a pressure on the Egyptian President that he finally had to concede on some of his most important issues. In the Syrian negotiations, to the contrary, I found indications that Syria was in an all together different position than Egypt. While the factors affected the Egyptian negotiation position and made the country concede, it had no, or nearly no, effect on the Syrians. Even though Israel increased its bargaining strength relative to Syria as a consequence of the tactical behaviour, Syria would not under any circumstances yield for the Israeli demands. This is especially evident in the parties' relation to the risk of breakdown. Egypt could not afford the negotiations to breakdown and eventually accepted to sell Israel the oil, however, the final breakdown in the Israeli-Syrian talks demonstrate that Syria was

not depended on a peace agreement with Israel. Thus, the country would not yield for Israeli tactics.

In order to understand the outcomes of the two peace negotiations we have to look at the situations the two Arab countries found themselves in. Each of the countries' contextual situations was explained in the Background. Even though the cases are seemingly similar, with both countries feeling humiliated after the war; their territorial claims differ in connection to the countries' economic dependency. While Egypt came into a terrible financial situation, Syria was not in an immediate need of the Golan Heights. In other words, we see that the status of the territories lost in the Six Day War was strikingly different for Egypt and Syria. These findings reveal implications for the use of negotiation tactics. As the empirical findings demonstrate, the effect is depended on each country's position and dependence on the negotiation issue. Even though the Golan Heights was strategically important for Syria, the border to Israel had more or less been stable since the end of the Yom Kippur War. This indicates that the security importance was not a sufficient factor for the Syrians to compromise on their demands. Further, this reveals that a country's dependency on regaining territories needs to be sufficient in order for the tactical behaviour to have an effect, which was the case for Egypt.

Considering these findings it leads us further to the role of the mediator. In the examination of the mediator's impact on the negotiating parties, I found that the role of the mediator differed in both negotiations. In the Israeli-Egyptian talks the US inhabited an active role in the negotiations. In fact most of the time, Jimmy Carter negotiated on behalf of the Egyptians. The American Presidents throughout this period seems to have had a major interest in solving the Middle East conflict by achieving a comprehensive peace agreement. The problem of the mediator appears when they were getting too much involved in the negotiations. The Americans, together with Egypt, became victims of the negotiation tactics employed by Israel. Thus, the result was that Jimmy Carter needed a peace agreement in the end, and eventually started to put pressure on the weaker part in the negotiations. This represents further implications for the weaker party. Even though Egypt tried to threaten to leave the negotiations, i.e. no agreement, the US directed an intense pressure towards Egypt that would increase the consequences for a breakdown in the negotiations. These findings is almost absent in the Israeli-Syrian talks. Bill Clinton undertook a passive role in mediating between the parties, and as the negotiations continued in slow motion, the Americans were more and

more pacified in the process. In this case the mediator refused to put pressure on any of the parties. In sum, the findings indicate that the Israeli tactical behaviour in the Egyptian talks forced the US to be a major part of the conflict. In the Syrian talks, on the other hand, the Americans seem to have inhabited the same indifference towards the breakdown as the Syrians.

Despite the findings discussed so far, none of these truly explains why Israel refused to compromise in the peace talks with Syria. In order to account for this, we have to turn to the third explanatory factor which is concentrated towards the domestic political situation in Israel. This factor is based on a simplified version of Putnam's model of the two-level game, where a country has to negotiate both on the international arena and the national arena in order to achieve an agreement. In the analysis I found that the Israeli people were overwhelmingly supportive to a peace agreement with Egypt. Evidently this also included the territorial concessions of the Sinai Peninsula. The major opposition to the agreement came from, obviously, the Sinai settlers and from within Begin's own political party. However, the public support for the agreement coincides with the theoretical assumption that domestic factors may encourage and pressure political leaders to initiate conflict reduction. This fact leaves little doubt that the Israeli public support at least made Begin's decision to accept the peace treaty easier and justifiable.

The interesting finding from this part of the analysis is that with the Syrian negotiations we find the opposite opinion in the Israeli population. While the people supported the withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula, there were a clear resistance towards the withdrawal from the Golan Heights. An indication of this resistance is evident in the election loss of Shimon Peres and later Ehud Barak. Both of them were deeply involved in the negotiations with Syria, however, the resistance in the people made Israel change its leaders. Even though it probably existed other factors that may explain the election losses, it demonstrated a certain mood in the Israeli population. This mood is represented in the public opinion polls where the results, and the demonstrations that occurred during Rabin's period of the negotiations, revealed strong resistance towards the withdrawal from the Golan Heights. This became especially evident for Prime Minister Barak, which indicates that the situation made it impossible for him to accept a withdrawal. The result of the analysis represents an example of how the domestic factor may inhibit the leaders from initiating conflict reduction, at least when it is depended on territorial concessions.

7.3 Further implications in the Middle East conflict

This thesis has revealed some interesting results from the examination of peace negotiations Israel has participated in. The results have revealed that Israel has employed the same negotiation tactics in two peace negotiations conducted in different periods of time. Particularly the constructions of settlements in the occupied territories have created a major obstacle in the peace talks. This constitutes a frustrating psychological factor within the Middle East conflict. The fact that Israel is “sitting in the areas” that makes out the negotiation issue constrains the facilitation of the atmosphere in the conflict. The continuous construction of settlements in the occupied territories further limits the possibility for a peaceful solution. This is particularly present in the postponed negotiations today between Israel and the Palestinian Authorities (PA). It has been nearly twenty years since the signing of the Oslo Accords and the parties have yet to finalise the concluding peace agreement. While the Israeli leadership wants to dictate the peace talks, the Palestinians refuse to negotiate before Israel renounces the settlement expansions.

While the constructions of settlements continue, the optimism disappears, which also is the case of mediation in the conflict. The complexity of the conflict seems to deter the international community from intervening in the conflict. Even though objections occasionally occur towards the Israeli settlement policy, my assumption is that the international reactions are passive. Without a solution to the conflict in the Middle East, it will generate into a boiling pot that sooner or later will explode.

With the uncertain situation that occurs in Syria at the time of writing, the hopes for a solution for the future of the Golan Heights also seems to disappear. One of the conclusions that can be drawn from this analysis is that, considering the unstable situation in Syria, Israel missed a real chance at peace in the final rounds of the peace negotiations. No one knows what the future in Syria will bring, and the Syrian claim for the Golan Heights is still legitimate no matter which regime will sit in Damascus in the end.

7.4 Conclusion

This comparative analysis has presented some obvious similarities in the Israeli negotiation behaviour. The analysis has consisted of an examination of peace negotiations that Israel has participated in, thereby the focus has been towards what the Israeli delegations have done

during the talks. The main reason for focusing on Israel is grounded in the fact that it is the country that has been in possession of the territories that has been a central part of the negotiations. This has given Israel the opportunity of issuing demands and conditions in order to agree in the peace talks. The study has not been emphasising the Arab behaviour too much. The reason is both based on the length of the thesis and the fact that Egypt and Syria constitute two different countries. There is no reason to believe that the two countries have acted similarly in the negotiations with Israel.

As mentioned in the introduction chapter of this thesis the goal has not been to generalise from my findings. What the analysis has demonstrated is what strategies and tactics Israel has used in the peace negotiations in the Middle East. This has revealed a pattern in the Israeli way of behaviour when peace negotiations are initiated. Consistent for all the factors analysed in connection to the bargaining strength is the Israeli use of tactics in order to further strengthen their own position, and not at least weaken the opponent. This was conducted in both negotiations through consuming of time, increase the risk of breakdown, take advantage of the inside options by expanding settlements in order to consolidate the control over the areas, not revealing information about own bargaining intention (the use of ambiguity), and coercive delinkage of the negotiation issue. These results may provide us with information that might be important for actors that wishes to find a solution to the conflict. Especially the employment of inside options, or to be specific; the construction of settlements demonstrates the degree of problems that is faced in the conflict. At the moment of writing, these settlements seem to represent the most important reason for the absent solution to the entire conflict. For every day that goes by with settlements increasing or new ones being created, the chances for a peaceful solution disappear. Without a permanent freeze in the constructions, the possibility for a peaceful solution in the region seems very far away.

This leads to the final conclusion of this study. The analysis has demonstrated that the reason for the breakdown in the Israeli-Syrian negotiations is a complicated question to answer. Considering the events that are happening in Syria today and the indeterminacy about the future of the country, I will conclude with the remark that both Israel and Syria missed a good opportunity for peace during the final negotiation rounds in 2000.

8 Bibliography

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