

Israeli Aid to Africa, 1954-1974

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Israeli Nahal Youth Leadership experts speaking with their Liberian counterparts at the National Youth Organisation Camp at Harrisburg in Liberia, 10 June 1966.
Photo Credit: Pridan Moshe, Israeli Government Press Office.

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Prof Dr Corinna Unger**

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DECLARATION

I declare in lieu of an oath that I wrote the dissertation entitled 'Israeli Aid to Africa, 1954-1974' which I submitted to the Department of History at the Bundeswehr University Munich, without any assistance from others, that I did not use any resources other than those listed in the bibliography, and that I obtained the relevant scientific findings independently.

The dissertation was supervised by Prof Dr Marc Frey.

- I have not yet published the dissertation.

- I have not submitted an application for a doctoral degree procedure at any German or foreign university or presented this or any other similar paper in the form of a dissertation.

I have read and understood the Doctoral Degree Regulations of the Bundeswehr University Munich.

Neubiberg, (date)

..... (Signature)

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Abstracts

Scholarly discourse on Israel and foreign aid is heavily focused on the assistance relationship between the State of Israel and the United States of America. Little researched and under-discussed by scholars and the wider public alike is the extremely successful agricultural, development and financial aid given to sub-Saharan Africa by Israel during the period 1954 and 1974. Essential, and for many nations crucial, to the economic growth of these newly independent states, the foreign aid policy pursued by Israeli leaders had Zionist roots which emerged from the writings of Theodor Herzl and the Zionist beliefs of Israel's then Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion and Foreign Minister, Golda Meir. They and others in the Israeli leadership at the time believed it was Israel's duty to help these newly emerging nations rise out of poverty and develop into economically successful independent states, just as Israel had. Israeli initiatives led to unprecedented co-operation between Israel and Africa, resulting in an Israeli aid program that took many different forms, including the building of infrastructure, joint economic ventures, technical assistance, and the training of African students in agricultural techniques both in their villages but also in co-operative settlements in Israel. This transfer of people and knowledge remained rooted in Zionism and led not only to an improvement in the development policies of African states but also an improvement in the political standing and public image of Israel in the world that sustained up until the outbreak of the Yom Kippur war. This dissertation examines the reasons for Israeli aid to Africa: Zionism, but also the diplomatic and political benefits Israel hoped to achieve and the reasons why Africa accepted Israeli aid. Through the use of Israeli, American, and British archives, as well as those of the United Nations and World Bank, the assistance programs of the Israeli government, of Israeli businesses and private citizens, including the transfer of knowledge, are discussed. Finally, this dissertation connects the activities of Israelis to international organisations and transnational epistemic communities in order to produce a comprehensive study of Israeli aid to Africa between 1954 and 1974 that argues for the success of the program, both for Israel's international legitimacy and standing in the diplomatic community and also as an assistance program that provided economic and social development to sub-Saharan Africa.

Der wissenschaftliche Diskurs über Israel und die Entwicklungshilfe konzentriert sich stark auf die Hilfsbeziehungen zwischen dem Staat Israel und den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika. Wenig erforscht, und von Wissenschaftlern wie auch von der breiten Öffentlichkeit zu wenig diskutiert, ist die äußerst erfolgreiche Landwirtschafts-, Entwicklungs- und Finanzhilfe, die Israel zwischen 1954 und 1974 an die afrikanischen Länder südlich der Sahara geleistet hat. Das von der israelischen Führung verfolgte Entwicklungshilfe Konzept, das für das wirtschaftliche Wachstum dieser neuen unabhängigen Staaten unerlässlich und für viele Nationen von entscheidender Bedeutung war, hatte zionistische Wurzeln, die aus den Schriften von Theodor Herzl und den zionistischen Überzeugungen des damaligen israelischen Premierministers David Ben-Gurion und der Außenministerin Golda Meir hervorgingen. Sie und andere in der damaligen israelischen Führung hielten es für Israels Pflicht, diesen neu entstehenden Nationen dabei zu helfen, sich aus der Armut zu befreien und sich zu wirtschaftlich erfolgreichen, unabhängigen Staaten zu entwickeln – so wie es Israel getan hatte. Die israelischen Initiativen führten zu einer beispiellosen Zusammenarbeit zwischen Israel und Afrika, die in einem israelischen Hilfsprogramm mündete, das viele verschiedene Formen annahm, darunter den Aufbau von Infrastrukturen, gemeinsame wirtschaftliche Unternehmungen, technische Hilfe und die Ausbildung afrikanischer Studenten in landwirtschaftlichen Techniken, sowohl in ihren Dörfern als auch in genossenschaftlichen Siedlungen in Israel. Dieser Transfer von Menschen und Wissen war im Zionismus verwurzelt und führte nicht nur zu einer Verbesserung der Entwicklungspolitik der afrikanischen Staaten, sondern auch zu einer Verbesserung des politischen Ansehens und des öffentlichen Images Israels in der Welt, welches bis zum Ausbruch des Jom-Kippur-Krieges anhielt. In dieser Dissertation werden die Gründe für die israelische Entwicklungshilfe für Afrika untersucht: Zionismus aber auch die diplomatischen und politischen Vorteile, die Israel zu erreichen hoffte, sowie die Gründe, warum Afrika die israelische Hilfe annahm. Anhand israelischer, amerikanischer und britischer Archive sowie der Archive der Vereinten Nationen und der Weltbank werden die Hilfsprogramme der israelischen Regierung, israelischer Unternehmen und Privatpersonen, einschließlich des Wissenstransfers, diskutiert. Zudem werden in dieser Dissertation die Maßnahmen der Israelis im Kontext internationaler Organisationen und transnationaler epistemischer Gemeinschaften erforscht, um eine umfassende Untersuchung über die israelische Entwicklungshilfe für Afrika zwischen 1954 und 1974 zu erstellen. Die Studie zeigt den Erfolg des Programms auf, und zwar sowohl im Hinblick auf die internationale Legitimität und das Ansehen Israels in der diplomatischen Gemeinschaft als auch für Israels Hilfsprogramm, das für die wirtschaftliche und soziale Entwicklung in Afrika südlich der Sahara sorgte.

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Introduction

1 From the Musings of Herzl to the Development of the State of Israel

'I am not ashamed to say, though I may expose myself to ridicule in saying so, that once I have witnessed the redemption of the Jews, my people, I wish also to assist in the redemption of the Africans.' Theodore Herzl, *Altneuland*, 1902.¹

The State of Israel and foreign aid are usually discussed both in popular and scholarly literature in terms of the huge influx of capital and aid that Israel receives annually from the United States of America. Under-researched and often ignored in the historiography is the aid programme that Israel embarked on in the mid-1950s that lasted almost two decades, and which provided vital assistance to the newly independent states in sub-Saharan Africa, as well as in Latin America and Asia. Theodore Herzl's musing in his seminal work *Altneuland*, published at the turn of the twentieth century, was used with almost messianic language by Israel's early leaders as justification for, and the reasoning behind, Israel's aid programme to Africa. Whilst such messianic undertones provided good political leverage, this dissertation will explore the reasoning behind Israel's decision to embark on the ambitious programme of foreign aid to Africa and whether Israel's programme can be judged to have been successful.² The analysis of the success of the programme is based on both the aims laid out by the Israeli government, but also the position of the State of Israel in the diplomatic community at the end of the aid programme when compared to the onset of Israel's development programme. This dissertation will also offer an

¹ As quoted by Golda Meir in Golda Meir, *My Life*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1975, p. 266.

² In this dissertation, 'Africa' will be used to refer to the geographical part of the African continent south of the Saharan desert. North African states will be referred to by name, as will South Africa, which despite being sub-Saharan and with a Black majority, operated a policy of Apartheid and was economically more developed than the rest of sub-Saharan Africa. South Africa also had a very different relationship with Israel than its northern neighbours. The use of the term Africa as a general term for the sub-Saharan continent requires caution. As Chris Allen has highlighted: the African continent is not uniform and "it is a mistake to look for just one African political system." See: Chris Allen, *Understanding African Politics, Review of African Political Economy*, Sep., 1995, Vol. 22, No. 65, ROAPE Review of Books, p. 302.

analysis of what the long-term implications of Israel's aid programme were for both Israel's diplomatic standing in the world, for the wider global political sphere, and whether it can be assessed that Israel's foray into the world of foreign aid provided both Africa with sustainable and meaningful development aid and Israel with long-lasting diplomatic success.

In order to achieve the aims of the dissertation, the following pages will include a historiographical review of the current literature before moving onto a discussion of Israel's development, both through the Jewish settlers that settled pre-state and Israel's rapid development post-1948. A discussion of Israel's development programme to Africa will follow, before ending with an analysis and discussion of the rupture in relations and the longer-term implications of Israel's aid programme to Africa. This dissertation will argue that Israel's aid programme to sub-Saharan Africa was extremely successful in achieving Israel's diplomatic aims. There is one caveat that needs to be added to the analysis of Israel's aid programme. Whilst there was success in Israel's attempts to improve the livelihoods of Africans at the grassroots level through her civilian aid programme, Israel also bears a large responsibility for the unnecessary arming of Africa and the consequences that the arming of militias and brutal dictatorships had for the average citizen of sub-Saharan Africa. The arming of Africa, and also the role that the Cold War and Israel's own conflict with her Arab neighbours played, are intertwined with Israel's international aid programme and will also be discussed throughout as their role impacted both Israel's and African states' foreign policies.

A variety of sources have been used for this dissertation, including the national archives of Israel, the United States and the United Kingdom, newspaper archives and through the analysis of Israel's development programme's course syllabi and the writings of both Israelis and Africans who were part of the aid programmes. African archives have not been utilised due to problems with access to documents and the availability of the written records of the aid programme. Access to the archives in the United States of America and the United Kingdom allowed access to all the material that was sought, however there were some complications with access to Israel's State Archives in Jerusalem. The Israeli archives release documents every thirty years, as per their declassification regulations. However, most of the Israeli

documents that relate to defence matters, including the procurement of weapons and the sale of weapons, remain classified as they deal with security or defence affairs, and therefore there are gaps in the archives when it comes to certain arms issues during the period. One way to circumvent this issue was through an analysis of newspaper articles from the period, where confirmed arms sales and arms agreements were reported in the media, especially in the United States. The newspaper analysis was also beneficial as no contemporary literature on the topic has analysed newspapers for the public reaction to the aid programme and the discourses that were present around Israel's aid programme at the time. This is a neglected part of the literature and is needed to provide a full narrative and analysis of Israel's aid programme. Israel sought diplomatic legitimacy both diplomatically, but also for the psychology of the Israeli population to feel secure within their borders as a state that had been formed by a United Nations resolution, but not yet accepted by the international community. Public discourse was reported daily in western media sources and the newspaper articles provide a good angle from which to analyse whether Israel was able to achieve the international legitimacy she sought and to map the public discourse, and thus the diplomatic position, of Israel throughout the period under research. As well as newspaper articles, the writings of the African students who were educated in Israel were analysed through their *African Student* magazine that was written and published in Israel by the African student groups. It offers an insight into the experiences of the African students. An analysis of the magazine reveals how the students viewed their time in Israel, both the positive and the negative, and the issues that they faced in their day to day lives, as well as their education. The magazine has not been analysed in any of the literature on the topic to date and therefore, like the newspaper archives, it provides new angles and approaches to understand the impact on Israel's own image in the world through her aid programme to Africa. The World Bank Group archives were also consulted, and several economic reports and agreements between the World Bank and Israel, and Africa, were declassified for this project.

There is also an Israeli Defence Forces archives that is situated at Tel HaShomer, in the suburbs of Tel Aviv, but access to the materials there is even more limited than at the State Archives, and so they were not utilised. It must also be noted here that much of the Israeli aid programme, whilst planned by the Israeli Foreign

Ministry, was responsive and the experts were pragmatic and dealt with issues and resolved most problems on-the-spot, without consultation with the Foreign Ministry. Whilst this allowed them to proceed with their programme without delay, the degree of autonomy it led to caused a lack of paper-trail for some parts of the aid programme. In order to compensate for this, this dissertation will draw on the reports and surveys conducted by social scientists at the time, who had travelled to Africa and recorded what they witnessed of Israel's aid programme.

Despite the importance of Israeli aid to Africa, contemporary scholarly literature on the technical cooperation and foreign aid projects between Africa and Israel is limited. Literature published in the 1960s included the detailed analysis of certain projects and reports in real-time, and their progress, but lacked the hindsight to examine the longer lasting impact of the Israeli aid programme. Authored mostly by sociologists and economists, the works lacked analysis and were rather more report-based studies. Mordechai E. Kreinin's seminal work *Israel and Africa: A Study in Technical Cooperation*, published in 1964, is the most detailed and relevant for this dissertation. Kreinin, who was Professor of Economics at Michigan State University, provides a rich source of detail on the first half-decade of Israel's aid programme to Africa, whilst forecasting predictions for future programmes. Kreinin published a definitive study of the technical cooperation between Israel and Africa that was based on his extensive field research. The economist's stance is evident from the first page where he prominently placed Herzl's quote that would also be referenced in Golda Meir's autobiography *My Life* and in many of her speeches as both Foreign Minister and Prime Minister.³ Based on lengthy personal interviews with those 'on the ground' working at the grass-root level in both Africa and Israel, Kreinin's work begins with the history of the political and social progress in Israel before outlining the rural development programmes, land settlement, and agricultural training that took place both in Africa but also at training centres that were established in Israel. Kreinin touched on youth organisations, community development, training programs for managers and leaders of companies, as well as the medical training that

³ Golda Meir served as Israel's Minister of Foreign Affairs from June 1956 to January 1966 and as Israel's Prime Minister from March 1969 until June 1974. Her autobiography was published in 1975, titled *My Life*.

was provided by medical schools in Israel. Both the benefits and pitfalls of all of these projects are analysed using data collected by Kreinin. Thus, the unique nature of Kreinin's work is that he outlined and detailed several of the actual assistance programs in real-time, based on his observations and interviews with those who participated in the projects.⁴

More recent scholarly work on the topic has attempted to provide a more critical analysis of the Israeli programme in Africa. Zach Levey's *Israel in Africa 1956-1976*, offers a somewhat concise account of the programme, focusing on the military aspects of aid to Africa. Levey is also to be considered one of the most important contemporary scholars on the topic whose 2012 book was preceded by four published articles. The four articles deal with the Congo and Ghana and the start and break up of relations. His 2003 publication deals with the civilian and military involvement in the Congo which summarises not only the relationship with the Congo but also with the wider African continent. Levey describes how Israel hoped to gain United Nations votes, and her initial reluctance to provide military aid that was not 'authorised' by either the United Nations or the United States of America. Despite Israeli aid to the Congo being limited when compared to other nations in Africa, the importance of military aid is evident by Levey's article, of which two-thirds deals exclusively with the topic.⁵

Levey's article dealing with Ghana, published the same year, dealt with the importance of Ghana to Israel's relations with Africa, something that cannot be overemphasised. Levey's article included a discussion of the sources, the beginning of the relationship, the building of the close ties between the two nations, and an analysis of that relationship and ends with the eventual break in relations.⁶ My

⁴ Despite being published almost sixty-years ago Kreinin's work is still the most important work on the topic that more recent scholars have failed to expand on, instead preferring to focus more on the military aspects of Israel's aid programme. See: Mordechai E. Kreinin, *Israel and Africa: A Study in Technical Cooperation*, London: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964.

⁵ Zach Levey, Israeli's Involvement in the Congo, 1958-68: Civilian and Military Dimensions, *Civil Wars*, Vol. 6, No. 4 (Winter 2003), pp.14-36.

⁶ Zach Levey, The Rise and Decline of a Special Relationship: Israel and Ghana, 1957-1966, *African Studies Review*, Vol. 46, No. 1 (Apr., 2003), pp. 155-177.

dissertation will attempt to build on Levey's article through analysing not only Israel's relationship with Ghana, but the wider region, and how that impacted on Israel's image of itself in the diplomatic community. Incorporating the works of his 2003 articles Levey then published a comprehensive study of Israel's strategy in Africa between 1961-67 that highlighted the transnational nature of the aid as well as the importance of the United States and the Soviet Union in Israel's strategy towards Africa.⁷ Levey's final article on the topic is the best text on the rupture in relations that makes use of recently declassified sources to chart the break down in relations from the beginning of 1973 until the end of the rupture, and in doing so is one of only a few scholarly texts that make use of Israeli sources. The article will be used as the key text for the background knowledge on the break in relations.⁸ My dissertation will both complement Levey's work but also take a different track that allows for a work that complements and adds to the current scholarly literature on Israel in Africa.

Olusola Ojo's *Africa and Israel: Relations in Perspective* was published in 1988 and approaches from a more diplomatic and political perspective, with only one chapter dealing with the actual technical programmes initiated by Israel. The Nigerian scholar at times appears to take a pro-Nigerian stance and discusses Nigeria's decision to break relations with Israel by dwelling on Arab pressure and blackmail. Ojo also appears more interested in the rupture of relations from 1973 and this is evident by only the first, thirty-three-page chapter dealing with Israel and Africa prior to 1973. Nevertheless, the text provides a wealth of background information and it is possible to decipher the reasons for the break from the attitudes both sides took post-1973, something Ojo deals with extensively. That the author relied on a political and diplomatic history allows two things: one, for the reader to appreciate the intricate diplomacy and difficult political decisions made by both sides, and two, provides a good political background from the viewpoint of an African scholar.⁹

⁷ See: Zach Levey, Israel's Strategy in Africa, 1961-1967, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (Feb., 2004), pp. 71- 87.

⁸ See: Zach Levey, Israel's Exit from Africa, 1973: The Road to Diplomatic Isolation, *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 35(2), pp. 205- 226.

⁹ See: Olusola Ojo, *Africa and Israel: Relations in Perspective*, London: Westview Press, 1988.

Joel Peters' *Israel and Africa: The Problematic Friendship*, was a Doctoral Dissertation at the University of Oxford and is another book-length text that deals with Israel and Africa. Peter's narrative and argument is similar to the previous works, although Peters placed more emphasis on the benefits Israel received from her relationship with Africa and the negative impact of the subsequent fallout. Following a similar structure to Ojo, Peters also devotes two-thirds of his work to Israeli relations post-1973, and Peters' main argument is the betrayal Israel felt when African states "abandoned" her at the time she needed allies the most during the Yom Kippur War of 1973.¹⁰

Michael Curtis and Susan Aurelia Gitelson's edited volume *Israel in the Third World* is another crucial work that outlines political and cultural relations, the Global South's attitudes, and the economic relations and technical assistance programme between Israel and Africa and Israel and Latin America, with Israeli civil servants amongst the contributors.¹¹ With the book published in 1976 it is fair to assume that the chapters were authored in the months following the rupture in relations. Diplomats and experts who have since passed away did not hold back in their opinions of where Israel went wrong, and where Africa went wrong, in each of their approach to bilateral relations. The attitudes of the authors are also varied and there is large divide in the opinions on whether Israeli aid to Africa was a mistake and should not have been reexplored in the future, whilst there were also those who believed that the break in relations would last only a short period of time. Dan Segre, then Professor of International Relations at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, argued that there were political and ideological factors behind a small developing country providing aid to larger, some mineral-rich, developing nations. Segre argued that not only did the aid to Africa pay dividends on the political, diplomatic and economic fronts, but that Israeli citizens believed in aid to Africa as a way to end the political isolation. For Segre, it was the Israeli pragmatic activism, immigration and Zionist beliefs that encouraged Israel's leadership to offer aid. Segre also qualified

¹⁰ See: Joel Peters, *Israel and Africa: The Problematic Friendship*, London: British Academic Press, 1992.

¹¹ See: Michael Curtis and Susan Aurelia Gitelson (eds.), *Israel in the Third World*, New Jersey: Transaction Books, 1976.

Israeli aid through the agricultural experience the majority of Israeli citizens had through their exposure to the kibbutzim and moshavim way of life.¹² Netanel Lorch, the former Security-General of the Israeli Knesset (Parliament), wrote of the Global South's desire to find a 'cause', which failed so miserably, when rather than focusing on disease and hunger, African states abandoned Israel and succumbed to Arab blackmail, and thus made the Global South's cause the Palestinian issue.

Eli Ginzberg, Professor of Economics at Columbia University in New York City, wrote of the differences amongst Israelis about the role of religious observance hindering their development but simultaneously praised the Diaspora which was an "asset" to Israel. Relating directly to Israeli activities in Africa, Shimeon Amir of Tel Aviv University wrote of the impact of mass immigration to Israel and how Israel attempted to use her experience with the absorption of such large numbers of totally different peoples to create an 'Israeli' identity. Eliyahu Kanovsky at the State University of New York spoke of the importance of the Israel Defence Force (IDF) as a means to develop Israel while the former Israeli Ambassador to Ghana outlined in detail and with considerable insights the beginning of Israel's mission in Africa. Akiva Eger wrote of the Histadrut's, Israel's Trade Union organisation, role in the Global South and the importance of the Histadrut in being both the provider of the expertise via their experts, but also through the use of their facilities to train African students in Tel Aviv. Histadrut was also the umbrella organisation that owned many of the companies that provided infrastructure and water management resources in Africa. The economic and youth sides are discussed by Moshe Alpan, who was Director of the Koor Intertrade Company, one of the key trading companies that did business in Africa, and who wrote of the economic relationship. Shimeon Amir, in a second chapter, wrote about the importance of the youth both in developing Israel but also on the African continent where the population was young. Gitelson herself then produced a most insightful chapter that is full of primary source material and newspaper articles containing quotes from Israeli and African diplomats and political leaders. The third and last section of the book is devoted to the political benefits Israel sought at the United Nations from African votes as well as a somewhat theological

¹² Kibbutzim and moshavim were co-operative settlements that were founded in Israel pre-1948. The singular of each is kibbutz and moshav.

and ideological summary provided by Professor of Sociology and Political Sociology at Rutgers, Irving Louis Horowitz, who dealt with the Jewish people and the State of Israel's transformation from a pariah peoples to a pariah nation as a consequence of Israeli relations with Africa.¹³

The remainder of the secondary literature is either country specific or deals more with foreign aid as a concept using Israeli aid as an example. Books that deal exclusively with one, or a small group, of African nations' development or a single nation's foreign policy often include either a sub-chapter or several references to Israel. W. Scott Thompson's *Ghana's Foreign Policy 1957-1966: Diplomacy, Ideology and the New State* makes references to the relationship with Israel, Nkrumah's relationship with the Israeli government, and the Casablanca conference before going on to provide a narrative of the end of the 'special relationship' between Israel and Ghana. Another example is Haggai Erlich, *Ethiopia and the Middle East* which starts as far back as the Prophet Mohammed's writings, before moving onto more modern history and Ethiopian relations with both Israel and Egypt. Arye Oded's *Africa and the Middle East Conflict* puts the Arab-Israeli conflict and the pressure from both the Arabs and the Israelis on the newly independent African nations at the core. The book provides a great overview of the importance of the Middle East conflict on Israeli-African relations and the breakdown of that relationship. Suzanne Cronje, *The World and Nigeria: The Diplomatic History of the Biafran War 1967-1970*, provides a great background text to the Biafran War that focused on Britain's role but also Israel's relationship with Nigeria that was negatively impacted when Israel made the decision to arm both sides of the conflict; thus, Cronje provides the necessary narrative in order to understand Israel's role in the conflict. John J. Stremlau, *The International Politics of the Nigerian Civil War, 1967-1970* takes the same topic but from more of an international relations perspective. Tony Avirgan and Martha Honey, *War in Uganda: The Legacy of Idi Amin* deal with a darker side of Israeli aid to Africa and the role Israel played in supporting dictators through providing them with intelligence in what was a politically unstable period of African history. Avirgan and Honey also discuss the role of the Israeli secret service, the

¹³ See the relevant chapters in: Michael Curtis and Susan Aurelia Gitelson (eds.), *Israel in the Third World*, New Jersey: Transaction Books, 1976.

Mossad, and Israel in Amin's rule in the country and the Entebbe airport raid.¹⁴ One final example related to Amin is Amii Omara-Otunnu, *Politics and the Military in Uganda, 1890-1985* which deals with Amin's dictatorship, Ugandan politics and Amin's approach to diplomacy during the period, and the resulting implications for Israel.¹⁵

One anomaly to this group of texts on Israeli bilateral relations is Ralph M. Kramer's 1970 publication *Community Development in Israel and the Netherlands: A Comparative Analysis*.¹⁶ The book is somewhat limited in its scope but provides one or two useful statistics and snippets of information that are not found in more recent publications. Kramer also offers a good comparative analysis of community development in Israel and the Netherlands, including a good amount of depth on the issues it covers. The rest of the literature deals primarily with Israeli development policy which needs to be understood in order to understand the programs and initiatives that Israeli experts implemented in Africa. Raanan Weitz, who was known affectionately as Professor/Mr Development, published along with Avshalom Rokach the highly regarded *Agricultural Development: Planning and Implementation (Israel Case Study)* in 1968 that provided a plethora of detailed analyses of the history of the State of Israel starting with the Jewish settlement during the British Mandate of Palestine. Weitz's publication allows for the analysis and comparison of the expertise Israelis gained through their own development projects and their later implementation of similar programmes in Africa. The training and

¹⁴ The Mossad is the national intelligence agency of Israel, responsible for intelligence gathering, and counter-terrorism activities.

¹⁵ See: W. Scott Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy 1957-1966: Diplomacy, Ideology and the New State*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969; Haggai Erlich, *Ethiopia and the Middle East*, London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994; Arye Oded, *Africa and the Middle East Conflict*, London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1987; Suzanne Cronje, *The World and Nigeria: The Diplomatic History of the Biafran War 1967-1970*, London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1972; John J. Stremlau, *The International Politics of the Nigerian Civil War, 1967-1970*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977; Tony Avirgan and Martha Honey, *War in Uganda: The Legacy of Idi Amin*, Dar es Salaam: Tanzania Publishing House Ltd., 1982; and Amii Omara-Otunnu, *Politics and the Military in Uganda, 1890-1985*, London: Macmillan Press, 1987.

¹⁶ See: Ralph M. Kramer, *Community Development in Israel and The Netherlands: A Comparative Analysis*, California: University of California, 1970.

methods used both in African villages and Israeli educational centres have their roots firmly grounded in the programmes Weitz outlined. Prof/Mr Development published an earlier, but less detailed work in 1963 which took a much more economical approach and was more a timeline and plan for the future development of Israel with projections of increased needs, the issues due to the lack of water, and the agricultural needs of a growing nation.¹⁷

Two years prior to Weitz and Rokach publishing their work, an anthropological study by Alex Weingrod, *Reluctant Pioneers: Village Development in Israel* presented a case study of a real Israeli settlement that was first occupied by new immigrants from Morocco.¹⁸ Unfortunately, for reasons unknown, Weingrod changed the name of the settlement to the fictional “Oren” making both the analysis of his work for historical accuracies and further research impossible. However, what the publication does show was how Israel managed to merge many different characters and backgrounds into one group of citizens who all identified as being 'Israeli'. Whilst the new kind of cooperative settlements that Israel tried to export to Africa were a resounding failure, Weingrod's publication enhanced the anthropological aspects of development and broadened the overall approach to Israeli development. Further works that deal with Israel's development include D. Weintraub, M. Lissak and Y. Azmon, *Moshava, Kibbutz, and Moshav: Patterns of Jewish Development in Palestine* which deals exclusively with development prior to the establishment of the State of Israel.¹⁹ A final useful publication is the Truman Research Institution Publication No. 6 that provides case studies of educational,

¹⁷ See: Raanan Weitz and Avshalom Rokach, *Agricultural Development: Planning and Implementation (Israel Case Study)*, Dordrecht-Holland: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1968 and Raanan Weitz, *Agricultural and Rural Development in Israel: Projection and Planning*, Rehovot: Division of Publications, 1963.

¹⁸ Alex Weingrod, *Reluctant Pioneers: Village Development in Israel*, New York: Cornell University Press, 1966.

¹⁹ D. Weintraub, M. Lissak and Y. Azmon, *Moshava, Kibbutz, and Moshav: Patterns of Jewish Development in Palestine*, London: Cornell University Press, 1969.

health and nutrition programmes, and the economic and social implications of aid programmes, among others.²⁰

Theoretical texts include Tomohisa Hattori, who succinctly outlined the theoretical arguments over foreign aid and its use. Hattori argued that according to political realism, foreign aid "...is a policy tool originated in the Cold War to influence the political judgements of recipient countries in a bi-polar struggle." For liberal internationalism, foreign aid is rather "...a set of programmatic measures designed to enhance the socio-economic and political development of recipient countries." Finally, the world system theory defines foreign aid as "... a means of constraining the development path of recipient countries, promoting unequal accumulation of capital in the world." Hattori further argued that foreign aid is often applied to military sales that are provided on loan or credit, but that this is not aid but rather a commercial transaction where the recipient is indebted to the donor for the military sales. Whereas "...forms of technical assistance, economic grants, disaster relief and health care can be classified as mostly unreciprocated foreign aid."²¹ Israeli aid to sub-Saharan Africa followed the political realism school of thought, and whilst the Israeli government sought to project their aid programme as a means to prevent the spread of Communism in Africa, that was not an aim of the programme. The programme was very much about gaining international legitimacy for the State of Israel and bringing the newly inaugurated African leaders to the Israeli side of the Middle East problem. The altruistic and ideological reasoning behind the aid was present, as was the Ministry of Defence's desire to open new arms markets for Israeli weaponry and intelligence, but when Israel first ventured into Africa the primary driving force was most certainly a desire for international legitimacy and support in the conflict with her Arab neighbours and the Palestinians, along the political realism path.

²⁰ The Harry S Truman Research Institute, *Technical Assistance and Development: Proceedings of the Truman International Conference on Technical Assistance and Development*, Jerusalem: The Hebrew University, 1970.

²¹ Tomohisa Hattori, Reconceptualising Foreign Aid, *Review of International Political Economy*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (Winter, 2001), pp. 634-639.

Jan Nederveen Pieterse at the turn of this century defined development thinking as "... steeped in social engineering and the ambition to shape economies and societies, which makes it an interventionist and managerialist discipline." He further went on to argue that it "...involves telling other people what to do – in the name of modernisation, nation building, progress, mobilisation, sustainable development, human rights, poverty alleviation and even empowerment and participation."²² Frederick Cooper spoke of development in Africa as being "modernization ... people from backward villages would move to dynamic cities; nuclear families would replace extended ones; rigid social hierarchies would give way to openness and to individual achievement.." Cooper noted that "African intellectuals saw modernization as "Westernization" and as a danger to a uniquely African way of life. Still others thought that Africans could adapt and change without becoming Western." For Cooper, the reality of African development saw a situation arise in which the outcome "did not fit a pre-packaged modernity, nor did it constitute "tradition" or "community." People were fashioning and refashioning forms of connections and association."²³

Returning to Tomohisa Hattori, who further talks of the symbolic power politics between donor and recipient and how the process of giving aid "...transforms material dominance and subordination into gestures of generosity and gratitude."²⁴ The fundamental condition that is required in foreign aid is "...basic material inequality between donor and recipient: one has resources to give that the other lacks." As Hattori noted, foreign aid was an important tool in the Cold War as recipient nations had to choose how to navigate their position within the global context, and how they wished to align themselves based on how their needs could be provided for.²⁵ In Africa, with independence came the realisation that development

²² Jan Nederveen Pieterse, After Post-Development, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (Apr., 2000), p. 182.

²³ Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940, The Past of the Present*, 2nd Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019, p. 174.

²⁴ Tomohisa Hattori, Reconceptualising Foreign Aid, *Review of International Political Economy*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (Winter, 2001), p. 633.

²⁵ Tomohisa Hattori, Reconceptualising Foreign Aid, *Review of International Political Economy*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (Winter, 2001), pp. 639-641.

was now an agreement between two independent governments, “legally equal but in fact distinguished into those who gave and those who received.”²⁶

Through the literature review, it is possible to see that the complexities of Israel’s aid programme to Africa requires a broad overview and examination of several aspects of transnational history in order to understand the reasoning behind Israel’s aid programme. It is also needed in order to analyse from a historical perspective whether Israel’s aid programme was a success for both Israel and Africa. This dissertation moves away from some of the current historical writing methods that focus heavily on theory and will not present theoretical arguments or engage in theoretical debate, but rather the aim of this dissertation is to provide a narrative and analysis from a historical perspective of Israel’s extensive aid programme to sub-Saharan Africa. The transnational perspective of “transgressing national bias” allows me to examine Israeli aid to Africa not only on a bilateral level that focuses narrowly on the two nations involved, but rather acknowledges that there were wider ramifications of Israeli actions on the African continent, be that in the Cold War setting, in pan-African relations, Israel-Arab relations or African-Arab and African-West relations.²⁷ As Ian Tyrell has argued, transnational history “...enables scholars to recognise the importance of the nation while at the same time contextualising its growth”, something that will be an important approach of my project. This dissertation will examine not only what the actual aid and assistance was and the motives and goals of the aid, but also how that aid impacted not only the continent, but again, also the wider world at the time.²⁸ Another important factor of the transnational approach is the transnational flow of knowledge and technology from Israel to Africa and transnational epistemic communities will be examined. The transfer of knowledge between Israelis and Africans was one of the key features of the aid programme, especially when one considers how little capital Israel had

²⁶ Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940, The Past of the Present*, 2nd Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019, p. 127.

²⁷ Dominic Sachsenmaier, A conversation in need of expansion: the transnational perspective and historical practice, <http://www.transnationalhistory.com/discussion.aspx?id=1738>, [accessed 17 March 2013].

²⁸ Ian Tyrell, What is Transnational History?, <http://iantyrell.wordpress.com/what-is-transnational-history/>, [accessed 17 March 2013].

available to invest in the projects and that the wealth of Israel's aid programme was very much in her brainpower and knowledge. The importance of an international and transnational approach is further shown when one considers the international make-up of the Israeli experts, most of whom were young-to-middle-aged men who had not been born in Israel but had rather emigrated to Israel either in the 1930s when it was the British Mandate of Palestine or just after the independence of the State. They became Israelis due to their experiences in developing Israel but still carried with them their own cultures and experiences of living in Europe, or the Soviet Union, being exiled due to the war, and then moving to the new land. Foreign aid programmes are ultimately a human endeavour and the experiences of the experts must be considered when looking at the execution of the aid programme.

Alongside the transnational approach, this dissertation will also take an international history approach, and a diplomatic approach. International history is important as the manuscript will deal with bilateral relations and international relations between nation states, and a diplomatic history approach is needed as diplomacy is key to international relations and present throughout Israel's aid programme. In a world where Israel desperately sought international recognition from fellow nations, and used aid as a means to achieve that, an understanding of the diplomatic machinery and mechanism that govern international relations and foreign affairs, and an appreciation for diplomatic history is crucial. The final theoretical approach will be a comparative analysis to assist in analysing the usefulness and determining the success of Israeli aid while also answering the question of exactly what, if anything, was so unique about Israeli aid.

One issue with the current literature is that it is either Israel-centric or Western-centric with no literature providing a serious examination of the negative aspects of Israeli aid or even mentioning possible issues with Israeli experts in Africa. Unfortunately, due to archival limitations my dissertation will not offer much in the way of change in this regard. However, the interdisciplinary approach I have taken in making use of a discourse analysis to analyse newspapers and magazines from the period that discuss Israeli aid to Africa, should help with an analysis of the African attitudes towards Israel's aid programme and issues that arose. The Israeli media heavily publicised all aspects of the Israeli aid programme and it was an important

factor in Israelis' psychology that they no longer felt isolated or surrounded by enemies. As newspapers and the media also contained interviews with those who were at the core of the programme, a discourse analysis made sense for this project. A visual history approach may also be used when analysing newsreels and images in newspapers. The importance of images of Israel's own development was twofold: it sold Israeli aid to African nations, but it also showed the Diaspora what Israel could achieve and her technical abilities which encouraged further donations and financial support. Through an analysis of the media, it is clear that the imagery and discourse presented played a large part in Israel's own sense of self-worth in diplomatic arenas but also in Israel's ability to source funding for Israel's own development from the Jewish Diaspora.

This dissertation will argue that through Israel's foreign aid programme, Israel was able to gain the diplomatic and international legitimacy that Israel so desperately sought following her declaration of independence in 1948. The analysis of Israel's diplomatic contacts, the amount of formal bilateral agreements signed with Africa, and the numerous exchanges of ambassadors leaves no room for argument that Israel achieved great diplomatic success with her foreign aid programme. What this dissertation adds to the literature, in addition to the analysis of newly declassified World Bank Group archival documents and the newspaper and popular media discourse, is both an in-depth review and analysis of not only Israel's aid programme to Africa, but this dissertation links that aid programme to Israel's own development to understand the capabilities of Israel's aid programme, and the reasons why there were aspects of the aid programme to Africa that were less successful.

On the issue of Israel's international legitimacy, through the words and actions of her diplomats and government officials, the importance of Israel's aid programme as a means for Israel to improve her international standing is clearly evident. Through a review of international communiqués and summits, as well as the votes at international organisations, there is an argument to be had that Israel had achieved her international legitimacy through the very fact that international communiqués never once called for Israel's destruction nor removal from the world stage, and nor did they question Israel's right to exist. What is most interesting for this dissertation when looking at the question of international legitimacy is the press articles and

media reports of Israel's aid programme and her bilateral contacts with most of sub-Saharan Africa. As this dissertation will argue, through Israel's aid programme with Africa, Israel achieved the international legitimacy and diplomatic recognition that she so desperately sought, and through her aid programme to Africa, Israel was able to cement her presence in the Middle East and her position within the international community.

To first understand how Israel was able to produce an aid programme that caught the attention of the world during the 1960s, it is first necessary to trace Israel's own development history and the history of the experts who would later be sent to Africa to represent Israel in the field. Current historiography and literature on the topic are somewhat disjointed in that it does not link Israel's own development with the Israeli development programme, and yet throughout Israel's aid programme to Africa the development of Israel is present. It was the experiences of the Israeli experts' own development of Israel that enabled them to bring their knowledge and expertise to Africa, and so in order to understand the Israeli aid programme it is first imperative to understand Israel's own development history. The history of Israel's own development is also central to any comparative history or analysis of Israel's success in her development programme as it was the direct transfer of Israeli methods to Africa that caused many of the issues that the Israelis faced when it came to agricultural development, in particular when it came to the transplanting of cooperative settlement ideals onto Africa.

1.1 *Israel's Development: Pre-statehood*

Prior to the establishment of the State of Israel, there had been a Jewish presence in Jerusalem for thousands of years. These ultra-Orthodox religious Jews lived mainly on charity with their centre of life being very much within the walls of the Old City. In 1875 they founded a society "for the cultivation of soil and redemption of the land."²⁹ In 1878 the city of Petah Tikva was founded by this society

²⁹ D. Weintraub, M. Lissak, and Y. Azmon, *Moshava, Kibbutz and Moshav: Patterns of Jewish Rural Settlement and Development in Palestine*, London: Cornell University Press, 1969, p. 32.

of city-dwellers who had no agricultural experience, but who believed strongly that farming and the settlement of the land was not just beneficial for their own livelihoods as a means to detach themselves from their reliance on charity and the Diaspora, but also as a religious self-fulfilment.

The religious Jews of Jerusalem purchased 850 acres south of Yafo, in an area that lacked any sort of road network and at which the Turkish authorities were unable to enforce law and order. Foodstuff and medical assistance were also near-to impossible to obtain and during the rainy season floods caused the new settlement to be cut off from Yafo. With the floods came an influx of malaria-carrying mosquitoes, and soon the majority of the settlers had become unwell and died. The following year, more Jews from Jerusalem arrived and sought to live on the riverbed, and despite the remaining settlers being against the idea, these new arrivals built their property close to the river and went through the same fate once the malaria-carrying mosquitoes arrived. In 1882 some of the original batch of settlers returned to the site and this time built at Yehud, a hill that was far enough away from the River Yarkon and the swamps that were the breeding ground for the mosquitos. Within two years of their arrival at Yehud, the settlers built a school where two teachers taught fifteen pupils traditional ultra-Orthodox Jewish studies, and where they also welcomed outsiders from the town of Bialystok in Poland. The settlers understood that their initial rejection of outside sources was one of the reasons for the failure during the first two years of settlement. The Jews from Jerusalem and the Jews from Bialystok came together on the understanding that only a return to manual labour and the development of the barren land into successful and sustainable agriculture would allow for the Jews to flourish outside of Jerusalem and without the need for charity; it was this that became the founding principle of Petah Tikva. The emergence of community settlement and a cooperative way of life was also seen in the founding days of Petah Tikva, again related to a desire for financial independence from charity and the Diaspora, and the settlers' new policy was to not ask for donations for unspecified reasons, rather any donations from the Diaspora were to be used for specific public projects only.

By 1888, Baron Rothschild had begun to support families in Petah Tikva and his foundation took over full responsibility for the families it assisted and enabled them to survive. However, what Rothschild's foundation did in effect was take full

control of the settlement and the settlers took on the status of hired labourers on their own land as all decision making was under the authority of Rothschild. Whilst Baron Rothschild's authority over the farmers took away their autonomy and ability to make independent decisions, Rothschild did provide the finances for the settlement and was the driving force behind the change from agricultural field crops to fruit farming, which provided higher yields and the ability to export to Europe. Rothschild's support for Petah Tikva was short-lived and in 1897 the Baron stopped his patronage and left the settlers without his backing.

With Rothschild's exit from the settlement, the settlers had to find another crop to enable them to remain independent of the Jews of Jerusalem and the Diaspora's donations, and for that they turned to the citrus groves. The switch to citrus groves was at the initiative and at the cost of the farmers themselves, in a self-sufficient and cooperative manner. At the turn of the twentieth century, the first citrus-grove association was established in Petah Tikva that was responsible for marketing the crop, and within several years the Petah Tikva farmers through their pioneering zeal had managed to both market their crop to Europe, but also improved their seedlings and the way they cultivated their oranges. By 1914, Petah Tikva had six-thousand acres of groves and the production and export of the Jaffa orange became the staple of their existence. The Jewish settlers of Petah Tikva took many risks and often uprooted fruit-yielding trees in order to plant a new variety to experiment with which seedling and variety would be the most profitable for the settlement, and this risk-taking is something the Israeli experts also took with them to Africa. This method of pioneering and development, of trial and error, served the Israeli pioneers well and the struggle of the initial settlement and the problems caused through malaria-carrying mosquitos, in addition to the failure of the vineyards and the subsequent move to citrus groves, saw this trial-and-error method repeated throughout Israel's agricultural development, both pre- and post-Statehood. Israeli experts who studied under these pioneers would be sent to Africa as part of Israel's foreign aid programme, where once again, the trial-and-error method became a central theme of the Israeli

experts' pragmatism and use of initiative to provide really meaningful grassroots level change for African farmers.³⁰



View of Petah Tikva, 30 June 1936. Photo Credit: Kluger Zoltan, Israeli Government Press Office.

Whilst Petah Tikva became the first moshava, where each family owned their parcel of land and all property was theirs, the kibbutz of Ein Harod was the first attempt at a truly collective settlement in Palestine, without ownership of property and with a pioneering spirit. The founding principle of the kibbutz movement, that each person would work according to their abilities, stemmed from the experiences of the kibbutz movement founders who on arrival in Palestine found themselves in competition with the cheaper Arab labour. This resulted in them struggling to find work and support themselves and their community. The communality of the kibbutzim (plural of kibbutz) also presented an alternative to the urban lifestyle through the fulfilment of each member's needs through an active social and cultural programme. Like all settlements in the British Mandate of Palestine, Ein Harod was

³⁰ For the history of the development of Yafu, Yehud and Petah Tikva and the livelihoods of the Jews of Jerusalem, see: D. Weintraub, M. Lissak, and Y. Azmon, *Moshava, Kibbutz and Moshav: Patterns of Jewish Rural Settlement and Development in Palestine*, London: Cornell University Press, 1969, ch. 2.

built on land that was owned by the Zionist institutions, and that allowed for development with the security of ownership and that the settlement would be permanent.

Ein Harod was also the first settlement in Palestine to introduce machines into its agriculture, with all of the settlement's crops harvested by machinery by the mid-1920s, thus reducing the labour-intensive practice and allowing the settlement to uphold its ideals of no outside hired labour. The mechanisation of the settlement through the use of tractors also allowed the kibbutz to more effectively use their land as the tractors were used to transport members to fields further away from their homestead.³¹ Mordechai E. Kreinin wrote that one of the sights that often impressed the African leaders on their visits to Israel was that "of primitive people employing complicated machinery." The African delegations would often see newly arrived immigrants from the Arab nations, who were not as educated as the Jews of Europe and the United States, working agricultural machinery and using modern industrialised farming techniques, that were then sought by the independent nations of Africa. Not only were the African visitors able to see the less-educated working complicated farm machinery, but they could also observe highly qualified men performing manual labour on the farm and senior Cabinet ministers washing dishes on their kibbutz whilst at home for weekends.³²

Ein Harod was also the first settlement in Israel to introduce the eight-hour working day, with one day of rest per week. The kibbutz also provided twelve years of formal education to all children.³³ The membership of the kibbutz was highly selective and in many ways benefited from being a community that admitted only like-minded people, both in terms of political views and origins. Therefore, the kibbutz did not have to deal with any ethnic unrest or conflict between differing

³¹ D. Weintraub, M. Lissak, and Y. Azmon, *Moshava, Kibbutz and Moshav: Patterns of Jewish Rural Settlement and Development in Palestine*, London: Cornell University Press, 1969, pp. 91-93.

³² Mordechai E Kreinin, *Israel and Africa: A Study in Technical Cooperation*, London: Praeger, 1964, pp. 7-9.

³³ For the history of the development of Ein Harod, see: D. Weintraub, M. Lissak, and Y. Azmon, *Moshava, Kibbutz and Moshav: Patterns of Jewish Rural Settlement and Development in Palestine*, London: Cornell University Press, 1969, ch. 3.

groups. Once membership to a kibbutz or moshav had been achieved, and in Israel this was mostly a personal choice and a voluntarily act, the tenure was secure and guaranteed through the inheritance rights of each family member that ensured an “intergenerational continuance”.³⁴ This should have provided the African farmers with the security that their families would be provided for, and most importantly that their children could remain on the land and provide for them when they aged and could no longer work. However, the kibbutzim and moshavim ideals struggled in Africa and largely failed. Nevertheless, the cooperative settlements provided the Israeli experts with their background and knowledge and played a central role in the formation of their ideology and therefore must be considered in any analysis of Israel’s development programme.



General view of Kibbutz Ein Harod in the Jezreel Valley, 30 March 1937. Photo Credit: Klugar Zoltan, Israeli Government Press Office.

In order to govern a kibbutz, there was a General Assembly that met as often as three times per week where decisions on all aspects of kibbutz life but also the

³⁴ D. Weintraub, M. Lissak, and Y. Azmon, Moshava, *Kibbutz and Moshav: Patterns of Jewish Rural Settlement and Development in Palestine*, London: Cornell University Press, 1969, see p. 276 and p. 283.

lives of kibbutz members were discussed. Whilst the kibbutz principle dictated that all members were equal and all had one vote, a political elite within the kibbutz emerged and those who held leadership positions often had their voices heard louder than those who did not. The average kibbutz member who worked the field was often ignored, and due to the frequency of the general assembly meetings it was common for as little as 30% of the adult population of the kibbutz to attend, and those that did often were detached and uninterested. As well as the General Assembly, there were numerous committees that discussed all issues that impacted the life of a member, including whether members were to be allowed kettles in their living quarters and even if a child would be permitted to accompany their parents on a trip abroad.³⁵ From the General Assembly system, the kibbutz required both unity amongst the membership, but also a willingness amongst the members to be guided and have their lives controlled by the general consensus of the Assembly. The uniqueness of the kibbutz way of life through the social organisation of the community, as well as the societal norms that were prevalent in the kibbutz were very different to traditional types of settlement. The African leaders who toured Israel's cooperative settlements often failed to appreciate the difficulties that would arise when a programme attempted to reshape the societal conditions into a set of ideals, such as community ownership and strict adherence to a cooperative way of life.

The kibbutzim attracted members of the same political parties or beliefs and was very much a homogenising society.³⁶ The kibbutzim also appealed to the early centre-left governments of Israel and much of the early Israeli leadership came from the cooperative settlements. The development of the kibbutz and the workings of the kibbutz are important in understanding how Israel executed her aid programme to Africa. Of the plethora of African delegations who visited Israel, and of the thousands of African students who studied in Israel, the vast majority visited various kibbutzim throughout the country. Kibbutzim were also formed in close proximity to the Arab

³⁵ For membership criteria and the role of the kibbutz's general assembly, see: Richard Schwartz, Democracy and Collectivism in the Kibbutz, *Social Problems*, Vol. 5, No. 2, Special Issue on the Kibbutz (Autumn, 1957), pp. 137-147.

³⁶ Richard D. Schwartz, Democracy and Collectivism in the Kibbutz, *Social Problems*, Vol. 5, No. 2, Special Issue on the Kibbutz (Autumn, 1957), pp. 138-141.

settlements and were later used for defence purposes. The defence and security benefits of having youth live and work on kibbutzim in border regions was also a contributing factor in the attraction of the kibbutz system.

Many of the African leaders saw the kibbutz as offering benefits for their nations through the development of agriculture and the modernisation of food production. Through the use of the kibbutzim ideals several of the African leaders had also hoped to reinforce nationalism. The importance of understanding the methods used to govern kibbutzim stems from Israel's attempts to export the kibbutz ideal, with the excitement and encouragement of African leaders. However, due to the collective nature, the need for every decision to pass the general assembly and the emergence of a kibbutz elite, the kibbutzim failed in Africa, where there were existing societal structures and social norms that the Israeli experts struggled to mould into kibbutzim ideals. Neglected in the excitement for economic development along the ideals of the kibbutzim movement was the realisation that African and Israeli agricultural needs were different, as were the farmers who worked the fields. In Israel, binding the kibbutzim members together was Zionism and the Jewish faith, and, post-1948 the pioneering spirit of building a new state out of the horrors of World War II. There is a valid assumption that without the Zionist ideology of the kibbutz members, the kibbutzim ideal would fail elsewhere. One African remarked that if kibbutzim were established in Africa, its members would spend all day sleeping.³⁷ As Richard Schwartz noted in 1957, "Israel's kibbutzim were built under unique historical circumstances by a highly selected group of work intellectuals."³⁸

The third type of settlement that emerged in the British Mandate of Palestine during the pre-independence period was the moshav. The first moshav was founded in the north of Israel at Nahalal in 1921. As with the founding fathers of the kibbutz, the founders of the moshav movement had been working as hired labourers and sought a means of becoming farmers and owning land within their own settlement.

³⁷ Mordechai E Kreinin, *Israel and Africa: A Study in Technical Cooperation*, London: Praeger, 1964, p. 35.

³⁸ Richard D. Schwartz, Democracy and Collectivism in the Kibbutz, *Social Problems*, Vol. 5, No. 2, Special Issue on the Kibbutz (Autumn, 1957), p. 137.

The ideals of the moshav movement were that whilst the land was owned by the Jewish institutions in Palestine, and later the State of Israel, each farmer was given a plot of land and was free to do what he pleased with his allocation. In return, the farmer would keep all profits made on his land. Whilst in a kibbutz there was equality for all in terms of workload and reward, in the moshav system there was equality of opportunity, but the reward was based on the work of the family unit and the success of the individual farmer. One of the fundamental differences between a kibbutz and moshav, apart from the ownership factor, was that a moshav allowed the use of hired labour, whereas a kibbutz fulfilled all manhour requirements from its members. Although the use of hired labour remained controversial and was allowed on a temporary basis only, the reality was that hired labour was a feature of moshav life throughout. Outside labour happened through necessity on the first moshav, as in the Jezreel Valley where Nahalal was founded, there were large swamps that were a breeding ground for malaria-carrying mosquitos and the drainage of these swamps was considered a priority that required outside labour.

In order to maintain the moshav ideals, at Nahalal all farmers were provided with 25 acres of land with a contractual basis that inheritance of the land was to pass to one child only. The idea behind this was to prevent the division of the land parcel and the potential for bankruptcy in the future due to land division. As opposed to the kibbutzim's general assembly that met multiple times per week, the moshav's general assembly met once per year and elected via a secret ballot the executive officers who were responsible for the running of the moshav. To assist the members, the cooperative nature of the moshav meant that the moshav purchased the heavy plant equipment needed and was responsible for marketing agricultural produce, and through the cooperative the farmer benefited from both economies of scale, but also from the savings of not having to purchase tractors and other machinery individually. Public facilities, such as roads, schools, and communal buildings were also built by the moshav, and unlike the kibbutz, the moshav collected tax from its members to fund these projects.³⁹

³⁹ For the history of the development of Nahalal, see: D. Weintraub, M. Lissak, and Y. Azmon, *Moshava, Kibbutz and Moshav: Patterns of Jewish Rural Settlement and Development in Palestine*,



Aerial View of Nahalal, 3 August 1951. Photo Credit: Eldan David, Israeli Government Press Office.

The need to understand Israel's own development trajectory and history is important to understand her aid programme. Israel's government could not offer financial incentives as the new nation never had the ability to loan or grant the large sums that were needed. Therefore, what Israel offered was her knowledge, and the Israeli knowledge came directly from the early settlers and their experiences. The new migrants to Israel from Europe, and the Jews from Jerusalem, had no agricultural background that they brought with them; what they knew, they learned whilst developing Israel. Therefore, I argue that in order to understand both the benefits and the pitfalls, as clear links to both are found, one must first understand Israel's own development history and methods. The development ideals of the moshava, kibbutz, and moshav were, as mentioned, sought after by African leaders and those who visited Israel and saw the growth of these cooperative settlements for themselves. Israeli experts who went abroad also spoke about their lives within their cooperative villages. These collective farms were not only used as a means to produce the necessary food requirements and create settlements in important border regions, they

London: Cornell University Press, 1969, ch. 4. For the difference in tax collection between a kibbutz and moshav, see: Richard Schwartz, Democracy and Collectivism in the Kibbutz, *Social Problems*, Vol. 5, No. 2, Special Issue on the Kibbutz (Autumn, 1957), pp. 137-147.

were also used to create an Israeli identity and absorb the millions of new immigrants who arrived in Israel both pre- and post-1948.

Pre-1948 immigration to Israel occurred in five major waves, known as *aliya*. The first aliya of the 1880s saw between twenty and thirty thousand Jews from Eastern Europe and Russia emigrate to Palestine. The second aliya occurred between 1904 and 1914 and brought between thirty-five and forty thousand settlers, most of whom were young, middle-class Jews from Russia. Following the cessation of hostilities during World War I the British Foreign Secretary, Arthur Balfour, in a letter to Baron Rothschild, revealed that His Majesty's Government supported the establishment of a state within the British Mandate of Palestine for the Jewish people. What followed was the third aliya between 1919 and 1923 with mostly Russian Jews, numbering approximately 37,000, migrating to Palestine. The fourth aliya saw some sixty to eighty-thousand Jews, mostly from Poland, arrive in Palestine. The fifth aliya occurred in the decade before the outbreak of World War II and saw some 230,000 Jewish people move to Palestine. The first arrivals were poor Polish Jews, but as the decade went on there was an influx of wealthier German Jews who sought refuge from the policies of Adolf Hitler. This huge influx of people into the British Mandate of Palestine put a strain on food supply but also saw the beginnings of Israel's industrial development, as the well-educated and wealthier German Jews brought with them large amounts of capital that they invested in industrial enterprises that ranged from pharmaceuticals, textiles, and engineering to food preservation.⁴⁰ With these new enterprises and industry, the agricultural settlements grew to meet the food needs of the growing population and new cities were formed by dwellers who worked in the industrial factories and those who had come with a professional background who wanted a life away from agriculture.

⁴⁰ For the migration of Jews to Palestine, pre-statehood, see D. Weintraub, M. Lissak, and Y. Azmon, *Moshava, Kibbutz and Moshav: Patterns of Jewish Rural Settlement and Development in Palestine*, London: Cornell University Press, 1969, ch. 1.

1.2 *Israel's Development: Post-statehood*

1.2.1 *Social Development*

Israeli society during the early period of independence could be divided into four subgroups: the Ashkenazim Jews who settled in Israel from Central and Eastern Europe; the Mizrahim Jews who arrived from North Africa and the Arab countries; the Arab population who remained following the 1948 War; and the Haredim, or religious Ultra-Orthodox Jewish population.⁴¹ The Ashkenazim were largely educated, had arrived in Israel with professional backgrounds, and took up positions of leadership within their fields and within government. The Mizrahim arrived with less of a professional and educated background and found themselves discriminated against by the Ashkenazim whose policies were at times contradictory to full integration of the Mizrahi population. In order to address the needs of the Mizrahi population, in 1957 Israel opened a new vocational centre at the Agricultural Experiment Station, close to the town of Akko, to train adults who lacked a trade or profession. Twelve adults enrolled in the eleven-month course that concluded with the Ministry of Labour finding them jobs on completion. The centre was financed by the Ministry of Labour and the students were taught turning, mechanical work, metal fitting and welding. Whilst the Ministry of Labour funded the training and provided a salary throughout the training period, the centre was partly provided with modern equipment from the United States' technical assistance programme.⁴² The centre was built for the needs of the Israeli population but Israel's experience through the training of their minority populations was utilised during their planning for the civilian aid programme they provided to Africa, and there are examples of Israel initiating similar centres as part of the aid programme.

⁴¹ Ashkenazim, Mizrahim and Haredim are the plural of Ashkenazi, Mizrahi and Haredi.

⁴² Daily Press Review Vol. IV, No. 49, 13 June 1957: From Yesterdays & Today's Press, Vocational Training Center, General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 1782, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

In 1961, 80% of the new immigrants who arrived in Israel came from North Africa. Edward A. Bayne argued in 1963 that “the needs of this mass underprivileged people for training and education, often in the fundamentals of sanitation and literacy, have been tremendous ... great reliance was placed upon the army as a training and linguistic agency.” Despite the Israel Defence Forces being used as a nation building agency, the gaps between the Ashkenazim and Mizrahim were wide. In 1963, the poorer half of the Israeli population received one-quarter of the national income whilst the upper half received three-quarters. The upper half were Ashkenazim, and earned 112% of the national average, whilst the Mizrahim earned just 76% of the national average.⁴³

As Ralph M. Kramer noted in his study, there was very much a ghettoisation of the Mizrahim Jews arriving who arrived from non-European countries. From his western perspective, Kramer argued that the Mizrahi immigrant was bewildered by democracy and sought strong leaders. They often had a lack of Hebrew and their children were less likely to attend high school or university.⁴⁴ The shared religion of the Jewish population in Israel did not prevent conflicts nor did it alleviate the issues associated with getting different groups to work together. One resource used in Israel was community officers who were dispatched to guide the new residents, assist in their integration, and ensure that they understood the new laws.⁴⁵ These community officers and social workers were also to discourage movement to larger urban centres.⁴⁶ Such aims and policies would later be adopted in Africa, where the movement of youth to the urban areas for clerical work was highly discouraged. The secondary impact of these community officers was that they inadvertently reinforced

⁴³ Edward A. Bayne, *Development and the Cultural Reinforcement of Class: Israel*, in K. H. Silvert (ed.), *Expectant Peoples, Nationalism and Development*, New York: Random House, 1963, pp. 379-381.

⁴⁴ Ralph M. Kramer, *Community Development in Israel and the Netherlands: A Comparative Analysis*, Berkeley: University of California, Berkeley, 1970, pp. 20-23.

⁴⁵ Shimeon Amir, *Israel's Development Cooperation with Africa, Asia and Latin America*, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974, pp. 14-15.

⁴⁶ Ralph M. Kramer, *Community Development in Israel and the Netherlands: A Comparative Analysis*, Berkeley: University of California, Berkeley, 1970, p. 28.

the ghettoisation and segregation through their role to prevent social mobility or movement, by ensuring that the settlers remained in their villages.

The Jews from North Africa and the Arab countries of the Middle East who arrived in Israel during the late 1940s and 1950s had little commitment to Zionism and were considered by the Jewish leaders, who hailed from Russian and European backgrounds, to be in need of education both in the literacy and numeracy sense, but also in hygiene, sanitation, and how to keep a home.⁴⁷ The immense cost of absorption of the immigrants, which it is argued is still incomplete to this day, was a burden on the State's finances. Whilst not as profound now, Kramer's argument in the 1970s that the gap between the Ashkenazim and Mizrahim Jew was considered the most serious problem in Israel due to the Mizrahi immigrant to Israel having had little social mobility or opportunity to rise out of the poverty in which many of the immigrants arrived, is certainly accurate. However, Israel benefited from conditions that made integration and nation-building a different process to that facing Africa. For the new state, where to settle the land and build new communities was a more straightforward process, as the State owned 90% of the land. Therefore, the new State had complete control over who was settled, where, what was farmed, and how the land was managed. The Jewish population of Israel had their shared history of persecution binding them together, whether it was the Ashkenazim experience in Europe, or the Mizrahim expulsion from the Arab states. Within the new State of Israel, almost all aspects of life were touched by the government. Between forty and fifty percent of Israelis belonged to one of the political parties, which in turn possessed great power and influence over the population through their ownership of a range of social facilities. In 1966, a decade into Israel's aid programme to Africa, half of the 650,000 families in Israel received financial assistance or aid-in-kind from the state.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Ralph M. Kramer, *Community Development in Israel and the Netherlands: A Comparative Analysis*, Berkeley: University of California, Berkeley, 1970, p. 16.

⁴⁸ Ralph M. Kramer, *Community Development in Israel and the Netherlands: A Comparative Analysis*, Berkeley: University of California, Berkeley, 1970, pp. 8-13.

Whilst the minority Mizrahim population was a focus point of development for the Israeli government, the Arab population of Israel had remained excluded from nation-state building, were not conscripted to the Israel Defence Forces, and were not a part of Israel's economic and nation-building plans. For the religious Haredim, their economic activity was limited, and they lived largely as they had before the Declaration of Independence, with many of the Haredim families having settled in Palestine several generations before the Israeli state came into being.

1.2.2 Political Development

In November 1947 the United Nations General Assembly passed UN Resolution 181 that partitioned the British Mandate of Palestine into a Jewish state and a state for Palestinians, with Jerusalem being designated a city under international control. On 14 May 1948, David Ben-Gurion and other prominent Zionist leaders gathered in Tel Aviv and declared the State of Israel's independence. Of the four independent African states in 1947, Liberia and South Africa voted for the United Nations partition plan, Egypt voted against and Ethiopia abstained.⁴⁹ As Israel gained her independence, the bipolarisation of the Cold War battle had begun. Israel's relationship with Africa must, therefore, also be viewed within the global context of the Cold War.

Immediately at war with her Arab neighbours, Israel's leaders sought support, arms, and economic aid from the United States and the Soviet Union, as well as Western Europe. Israel's relationship with the Soviet Union had paid dividends during the 1948 War of Independence when Moscow supplied Tel Aviv with \$750,000 of merchandise, mostly fuel, and sold Israel wheat; both products were desperately needed by Israel and hard to obtain from other nations. In February 1949, Israel had also received a loan of \$100 million from the United States, and so both superpowers

⁴⁹ See: 'Resolution Adopted on the Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Palestinian Questions, <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/038/88/IMG/NR003888.pppdf?OpenElement>, [accessed 11 March 2013].

provided the immediate relief that Israel sought during the first months of independence.⁵⁰

Israel depended heavily on the United States for subsidies in order to purchase raw materials, as well as funds for her development budget,⁵¹ but Israel's relationship with Washington D.C., was not always warm. For the White House and Department of State, openly supporting Israel was problematic in the global Cold War context. Support for Israel risked losing the support of the Arab states to the Soviet Union, and American access to Arab oil, something that no American administration wanted. The superpower struggle between the conflicting ideologies of the United States and the Soviet Union led to the developing countries declaring themselves as non-aligned, a group Israel believed that she naturally belonged to. But Israel was not completely non-aligned as the Israeli government had openly sought to enlist the Jewish lobby groups and her Embassy in Washington D.C. as an inducement to the African states to accept Israeli aid and form diplomatic relations with Israel. The Israelis allowed and even encouraged African leaders to believe that closer ties with Israel would lead to closer ties with Washington. Whilst Israel may not have been aligned as closely to the United States as other nations were, there was a clear leaning towards Washington, especially during the 1950s. This lean persevered throughout the various moments of tension between Israel and the White House that occurred during the Eisenhower administration, as will be discussed. Israel's international relationship with Washington was also important for Israel's own domestic military industry. The aid provided Israel with the funding to be able to produce her own arms industry, and it must be also argued that the funding provided by the United States of America allowed Israel to free up other sources of funds from her own treasury to support her aid programme.

Israel sought not only support from the United States, but in the years immediately after independence, also sought the support of Moscow. Not only were they both superpowers, but they were also home to the two largest Jewish

⁵⁰ Uri Bialer, *Between East and West: Israel's Foreign Policy Orientation 1948-1956*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp. 124-131.

⁵¹ Shifts in US Aid Affecting Israel, *New York Times*, 2 January 1958.

populations. Those two largest populations were needed, as Michael Brecher argued, for immigration, but there was more to it than just immigration. Whilst during the 1950s the majority of Jewish immigration to Israel came from Europe and North Africa, by the 1960s that source of migration had dried up and the Jewish populations of the United States and the Soviet Union were needed for remittances and donations as well as for immigration. As Brecher later argued, the link between Israeli foreign policy and the Diaspora was special, with David Ben-Gurion recorded as having said often that “Israel’s only absolutely reliable ally is world Jewry.”⁵² The importance of the Diaspora in both Washington and Moscow merits a brief discussion of their impact on Israel’s foreign policy.

During 1954, when Israel faced international scrutiny over the arrest of the sabotage ring in Egypt and the *Bat Galim* affair, support from Washington was weak.⁵³ At the end of that year, Israel had found herself “excluded and isolated from the mainstream of United States policy in the Middle East, concerned about its status and the Administration’s attitude towards it, without any real military aid and without a contractual pact, and pinning its hope as in the past on support of the Jewish community.”⁵⁴ The American Diaspora was used to strengthen Israel’s relationship with the administration of President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Under Eisenhower, not only was the United States unwilling to supply Israel with arms for reasons to be

⁵² The Soviet Union and Eastern bloc nations became arms suppliers to the Arab states, and in the summer of 1955 the Soviet bloc sold arms on a large scale to Egypt and Syria; between 1957 and 1967, Moscow provided Syria and Egypt with approximately \$3 billion worth of arms. See: Michael Brecher, *The Foreign Policy System of Israel: Setting, Images*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972, pp. 38-43. For the quote from David Ben-Gurion see p. 39.

⁵³ The Lavon affair was an Israeli attempt in the summer of 1954 at a covert operation that targeted Egyptian, American, and British civilian targets in Egypt, with the plan being to blame the attacks on the Muslim Brotherhood and thus ensure Britain maintained her troops on the Suez Canal. The *Bat Galim* affair was the Israeli attempt to enforce the Convention of Constantinople for the freedom of all ships through the Suez Canal, and in September 1954 Israel sent the Israeli flagged and manned ship, the *Bat Galim* to traverse the Canal. The ship was detained at the Canal and the cargo it was carrying was appropriated by the Egyptian Government. More importantly, it proved to Israel that her goods would no longer be able to freely travel via the Canal.

⁵⁴ Relations with the United States, Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel: State of Israel, Volume 9, 1954, Jerusalem: Government Printer, 2004, p. xxviii.

discussed, but Israel's activities to divert water to within Israeli territory from the River Jordan also angered Washington, who during this period was an active supplier of arms to the Arab states.⁵⁵ Washington sought to maintain their position in the Arab arms market, whilst Israel sought to receive greater and more advanced weaponry than the Arabs to maintain their superior firepower against their neighbouring states. A similar dynamic would play out in Africa, where Israel wanted the United States to provide arms to African nations to keep them away from the influence of Libya, Egypt, the Gulf States, and Saudi Arabia. Israel sought to ensure their diplomatic support and as the 1960s progressed, to provide a market for Israeli arm sales. That Washington had provided the Arab states with arms, but not Israel, was of great concern to Ben-Gurion and his Cabinet and they sought to find a means to entice from Washington the substantial arms they wanted, and the Jewish lobby groups and Diaspora were one method used.

Contacts with Moscow saw the relationship with the Soviet Union raised to ambassadorial level, and whilst in reality contact between the two nations was limited to little more than a small amount of trade, it provided Israel with an ambassador in the Soviet Union. Israel's diplomatic legation provided access to the second largest Jewish community in the world. The Soviet Jewish community were a focus for Israel who sought their migration. However, when the issue was raised at the Israeli Ambassador's presentation of his credentials, the response was a sharp and definitive 'no'. The Israeli Ambassador therefore reported back to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and recommended that the subject be abandoned, and that Israel focused on individual cases of immigration, rather than seek the widespread movement of Soviet Jews to Israel. Moscow ignored the Israeli legation in Russia and refused most of their requests and did nothing to extend any special welcome or to make the Israeli diplomats feel wanted within the diplomatic corps appointed to the Soviet Union.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ R. Shiloah (Washington) to the Israel Ambassador in Washington, 8 January 1954, Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel: State of Israel, Volume 9, 1954, Jerusalem: Government Printer, 2004, p. 15.

⁵⁶ Uri Bialer, *Between East and West: Israel's Foreign Policy Orientation 1948-1956*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, p. 144.

Moreover, the Russians went so far as to prevent Israeli diplomats from all cultural, political, consular, and economic activity, and even, at one point, prevented the Israeli diplomatic staff from the right to contact with the Soviet Jewry.⁵⁷ Not only did the Soviet Union refuse to allow the Jewish population to leave for Israel, but they also began to vote against Israel and cast their veto votes. Moshe Sharett's conclusion was that Moscow had decided to appease the Arab states in order to thwart any Western defence arrangements in the Middle East. For Sharett and the Government, they now understood that "Israel...must take into account Soviet opposition on every issue brought before the Security Council" that involved Israel.⁵⁸ The explosion of a bomb near Moscow's Embassy at Tel Aviv in 1953 saw the suspension of relations for a brief period of time, before the Soviet Union suspended all diplomatic relations with Israel in the aftermath of the 1967 war and maintained the status quo until the exchange of ambassadors in 1991.⁵⁹

Whilst relations with Washington had deteriorated by the mid-1950s, and the Soviet Union had made clear that it was prepared to use their Security Council veto against Israel, Israel's relationship with France had warmed up. France, who had been trying to dampen a nationalist uprising in Algeria that brought it into confrontation with the Arab League, and had therefore seen Israel as a natural ally, began to accept Israel's requests for weapons and arms. By 1954, France was a source of diplomatic support as well as an arms supplier and a number of contracts, including for the sought-after Mystère planes, light tanks and canons, were agreed.⁶⁰ With relations with France improving, the other large non-aligned nation that Israel had sought to have relations with was India. In 1954, Jawaharlal Nehru had made it clear that India

⁵⁷ Uri Bialer and Moshe Tlamim, Top Hat, Tuxedo and Cannons: Israeli Foreign Policy from 1948 to 1956 as a Field of Study, *Israel Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1, Foreign Relations, (Spring, 2002), p. 31.

⁵⁸ The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel: State of Israel, Volume 9, 1954, Jerusalem: Government Printer, 2004, p. xxxiii-xxxv.

⁵⁹ Uri Bialer, *Between East and West: Israel's Foreign Policy Orientation 1948-1956*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, p. 147.

⁶⁰ Relations between Israel and France, Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel: State of Israel, Volume 9, 1954, Jerusalem: Government Printer, 2004, p xxxii.

had no interest in any form of diplomatic relationship with Israel.⁶¹ When analysing India's relationship with Israel it is important to recognise that India's own borders were not secure, and the dispute with Pakistan over Kashmir prevented New Delhi from sending an ambassador or opening formal diplomatic relations with Israel for fear of Arab retaliation in the disputed border region. The similarities of the socialist governments of both India and Israel could not overcome the fear of the Arab nations' response and possible interference in Kashmir, and Israel's Middle East conflict began to impact her diplomatic relationship with a third country, an occurrence that would reappear throughout this period.

Within a period of four-weeks in the spring of 1954, Israel had been dealt two further public blows from another of the powerful nations when Anthony Eden told the United Kingdom's House of Commons on 31 March 1954 that the United Kingdom would be obligated to rush aid to Jordan if Jordan became embroiled in war.⁶² This was reinforced by Selwyn Lloyd, then a Minister in the British Foreign and Commonwealth Department, who also made clear to Israel that should there be an occasion when Israel attacked Jordan, the Anglo-Jordanian agreement would be implemented and Britain would aid Jordan in any war against Israel.⁶³ The relationship between Britain and Israel had become so bad that the Israeli Foreign Ministry's analysis of the situation in the autumn of 1954 was that whilst it was "...true that diplomatic protocol exists ... there is not one practical matter in which Israel enjoys the political support of Britain."⁶⁴ Meanwhile, across the Atlantic in the United States an agreement had been reached to continue to supply arms to Iraq unconditionally, a move that left Israel enraged.⁶⁵ There was a belief in Israel that due

⁶¹ Contacts with the Asian States, Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel: State of Israel, Volume 9, 1954, Jerusalem: Government Printer, 2004, p. xxxv.

⁶² E. Elath (London) to W.S. Churchill (London), 13 April 1954, Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel: State of Israel, Volume 9, 1954, Jerusalem: Government Printer, 2004, p. 155.

⁶³ E. Elath (London) to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1 July 1964, Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel: State of Israel, Volume 9, 1954, pp. 261-262.

⁶⁴ G. Aver (London) to W. Eytan, 27 August 1954, Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel: State of Israel, Volume 9, 1954, Jerusalem: Government Printer, 2004, pp. 331-332.

⁶⁵ R. Shiloah (Washington) to the United States Division, 27 April 1954, Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel: State of Israel, Volume 9, 1954, Jerusalem: Government Printer, 2004, pp. 175-176.

to the Cold War, the United States had intended to arm all Arab states so as to ensure they remained within their sphere of influence and did not engage with the Soviet Union.⁶⁶

The relationship between Washington and the Arab states was of utmost importance within the military and Cold War context, especially as the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia as early as September 1954 had signed an arms deal with Egypt. To counter Soviet arms in her neighbourhood, Israel requested arms from Washington, with the request being rejected in mid-December 1955.⁶⁷ In April 1958, the United States Ambassador at Tel Aviv met with Foreign Minister Golda Meir in her Jerusalem office and requested, on behalf of the Saudis, that Israel remove her naval vessels stationed in the southern Israeli port of Eilat, something that the Israelis were unprepared to do.⁶⁸ During a September 1959 meeting between Israeli Foreign Minister Golda Meir and United States Secretary of State Christian Herter in Washington D.C., Meir again requested that the United States provide Israel with further arms. Whilst the Americans noted that they would review the Israeli request sympathetically, they also reminded Meir that it was Washington's policy to supply Israel with only nominal quantities of purely defensive items, and the tone of the meeting made clear that the United States would not provide the sort of arms that Israel had sought.⁶⁹ Golda Meir wrote in her autobiography that in the late 1950s, Israel had found itself "in any respects entirely alone, less than popular and certainly misunderstood ... our relationship with the United States was strained, with the Soviet bloc it was worse than strained and in Asia – despite all our efforts to secure real acceptance – we had, for the most part, come up against a stone wall ... the

⁶⁶ Political Consultation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 30 May 1954, Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel: State of Israel, Volume 9, 1954, Jerusalem: Government Printer, 2004, pp. 214-215.

⁶⁷ Uri Bialer and Moshe Tlamim, Top Hat, Tuxedo and Cannons: Israeli Foreign Policy from 1948 to 1956 as a Field of Study, *Israel Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1. Foreign Relations (Spring, 2002), p. 59.

⁶⁸ Telegram from the Embassy in Israel to the Department of State, Tel Aviv, 8 April 1958, 2p.m., *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Arab-Israeli Dispute, United Arab Republic, North Africa, Volume XIII, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1958-60v13/d17>, [accessed 18 June 2021].

⁶⁹ Memorandum of a Conversation, Department of State, Washington, September 29, 1959, 2p.m., *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Arab-Israeli Dispute, United Arab Republic, North Africa, Volume XIII, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1958-60v13/d91>, [accessed 18 June 2021].

Chinese were not at all interested in having an Israeli embassy in Peking [Beijing], and Indonesia and Pakistan, as Moslem states, were openly hostile to us.”⁷⁰

By 1959, Israel’s presence had started to grow in Africa and the White House had no issue with Israel’s movements on the continent. However, bar a loan from the Central Intelligence Agency for training activities, Washington did not want to be openly associated with the Israeli aid programme out of concern for relations with the Arab states, a concern that would be maintained throughout this period. One prominent example was the United States’ Assistance Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs, who at the end of the 1950s noted that Washington regarded Israel’s endeavours in the field of foreign aid in Africa “... with favour. We are pleased that Israel is able to assist newly emergent nations by supplying them with technical guidance. However, we have declined suggestions by them that we underwrite some of the expenses of this activity because of its adverse impact on our relations with certain other countries.”⁷¹

Across the Atlantic, Israel had found the British more willing to sell heavy armaments, but once again, Israel faced issues with concern for Arab reactions to any heavy arms sales to Israel. The British were very much aware that any movement towards Israel and any arrangements with the Israeli government was to be handled most delicately so as not to run the risk of “alienating” the Arab states. For the British, and the Americans, the Arab states were “indispensable” to any plans for the defence of the Middle East and both powers therefore had to move carefully within the region to avoid the wrath of both the Arabs and the Israelis. An August 1953 Cabinet paper noted that “the co-operation of these Arab states both in providing facilities for Allied troops and in building up their own forces, remains indispensable to any plans for the defence of the Middle East. Any arrangements with Israel must, therefore, be such as to evoke the minimum of hostility from the Arab states.” The UK Government continued that their policy thinking was that Israel was in “... no position to insist on

⁷⁰ Golda Meir, *My Life*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1975, p. 263.

⁷¹ Memorandum for the Record, undated, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Arab-Israeli Dispute, United Arab Republic, North Africa, Volume XIII, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1958-60v13/d83>, [accessed 18 June 2021].

their own point of view where that differs from the plans and wishes of the Western powers upon whom Israel is dependent financially and economically.”⁷²

In February 1956 the British Cabinet had once again discussed Britain’s obligation under the Anglo-Jordanian Treaty. The Government of Jordan had asked for reassurance that British military assistance would be forthcoming if the Hashemite kingdom was attacked by Syria or Israel. The British Cabinet agreed that if Israel attacked Jordan or another Arab state, the Tripartite Declaration of 1950 would be enacted and the United Kingdom Government would be obligated to fight side by side with Jordan to resist any Israeli aggression, and that would have included British military reinforcements being sent to Jordan.⁷³ Whilst Cabinet discussions were top secret and there is no documentation to suggest that Israel was conveyed the above message, that the British Government had decided to uphold their agreement with Jordan, and potentially go to war with Israel if Israel was to strike first, justified Israel’s insecurity over her borders and her place in the Middle East and wider diplomatic community. Africa was, therefore, to provide Israel with the diplomatic network that would ensure Israel’s viewpoints got a fair consideration when it came to the Middle East conflict. Here again, Israel’s need to form relations with the African bloc of independence states is visible, as it was hoped that through a large diplomatic network the State of Israel would be able to break out of the Arab encirclement and find her place in the international community, a space that would be secure enough for the major arms suppliers to disregard Arab concerns and sell to Israel.

⁷² Her Britannic Majesty’s Government Cabinet Meeting C. (53) 228, 7 August 1953, in The National Archives, CAB 129/62/28.

⁷³ Her Britannic Majesty’s Government Cabinet Meeting C.M. (17) 56, 28 February 1956, in The National Archives, CAB 128/30/17. For the text of the Tripartite Declaration, see: <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/tripartite-declaration-may-1950>, [accessed 21 June 2021].

1.3 *Israel's Development and Her Capital Inflow*

An American Embassy dispatch to the Department of State in March 1958 listed five factors that they considered when analysing Israel's economic development in their annual economic assessment of Israel for 1957.⁷⁴ The first was the lack of natural resources with even the basic necessity of water being in short supply. The second was the high rate of immigration and the large sums of money that Israel had to spend for integration, housing, language courses and all the other supplementary costs associated with the large influx of new migrants. The third was the neighbourhood in which Israel is located was a hostile one and required not only large expenditure on defence forces, but also resulted in a boycott of all economic ties with Israel's immediate neighbours. The fourth factor was unique to Israel and concerned the huge sums of money that flowed into the Israeli treasury from foreign sources, with restitutions from Germany and donations from the Diaspora being the two main sources. Calculations by United States' embassy personnel put this at a net income of \$3 billion, which continued at a rate of \$250 million-\$300 million per year. These figures do not include the aid and loans from the United States, which in 1957 was \$73 million. Between 1952 and 1962 Israel received \$665.9 million in aid, or roughly \$317 per capita, on top of further American loans amounting to \$209.3 million.⁷⁵ The fifth element was the Government's control of the economy: fiscal controls, trade controls, foreign exchange control, subsidy policies, and control over virtually all of the transfers listed allowed the government to tightly control foreign currency and the direction of Israel's economy, as well as maintain the high rate of investment and economic expansion.⁷⁶ Within the five factors identified by the

⁷⁴ Amos Yoder and John Levien, Embassy of the United States of America at Tel Aviv, to the Department of State, Annual Economic Assessment – Israel, 1957, Desp. No 597, 26 March 1958, General Records of the State Department 1955-1959, RG 59, Box 4930, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

⁷⁵ Memorandum From Secretary of State Rusk to President Kennedy, 7 August 1962, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Volume XVIII, 1962-1963, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v18/d14>, [accessed 21 June 2021].

⁷⁶ Amos Yoder and John Levien, Embassy of the United States of America at Tel Aviv, to the Department of State, Annual Economic Assessment – Israel, 1957, Desp. No 597, 26 March 1958,

American embassy at Tel Aviv, the restitutions from Germany and the income received from Jewish agencies abroad and private Jewish individuals, hold the key to Israel's rapid development and provided the necessary capital for Israeli expansion of both the economy but also of education. Whilst Israeli experts learned to adapt and make do with what was available, African nations lacked the huge influx of targeted foreign capital in their development programmes, and no matter how good the education and the experts, without the capital sub-Saharan Africa struggled to match Israel's development pace.

The success of Israel's economy was not only seen in her infrastructure, but also in her agriculture. The importance of food self-sufficiency was central to Africa's development post-independence and was the aim of much of the aid that was provided in the 1960s. Israel's own success was impressive with Israel producing only 30% of the basic foodstuffs it required in 1949 for its population of 650,000. Within eight years Israel had increased production to meet 75% of their foodstuff requirements for a population of 2 million.⁷⁷ A shared problem of both the Israeli agricultural system and Africa was the need for a cheap animal protein for human consumption, and Israel found the answer to be chicken eggs. In June 1958 Israel's egg supply had been expanded to produce approximately 60 million eggs per month, against a monthly consumption of between 40-50 million eggs for the Israeli population; between October 1957 and September 1958 Israel exported 100 million eggs. The increase in the supply of eggs and chicken rearing also saw a fall in the retail price of chicken meat that was seen as an important measure in order to increase meat consumption in Israel to Western European standards, and thus to gain the resulting benefits to health

General Records of the State Department 1955-1959, RG 59, Box 4930, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

⁷⁷ Duncan A. D. Mackay, First Secretary of the Embassy at Panama, to the Department of State, Israel's Consul in New York Announces Diplomatic Relations with Panama at Press Conference, Desp. No 551, 5 May 1958, General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 2365, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

through a high protein diet.⁷⁸ Israel's expertise in chicken and egg production was one of the success stories of her aid programme to Africa.

The precarious situation of Israel's own development, and the lack of Israel's own natural resources provided Israel with the expertise and experience to provide effective aid to Black Africa, but also saw Israel become the recipient of huge amounts of food aid. From January 1958 Israel experienced practically no rain for eleven months and the drought left approximately three-quarter of a million dunams, mostly in the south of Israel, with no yield at all from their crops. Another half a million dunams, also mostly in the south, suffered severe damage and yielded very limited crops that left the farmers with no income for the year. The drought cost the Israeli farmers approximately IL£30 million in losses from the extra cost of irrigation, feed, having to slaughter animals before their prime weight, and the loss of income from sales of meat and crops. In order to alleviate the damage caused by the lack of rain, Israel requested from Washington 6,000 tons of wheat and 70,000 tons of feed grains, and that was in addition to 25,000 tons of wheat and 18,000 bales of upland cotton that was sold on the local Israeli market to compensate the farmers for losses to pastures and the extra costs of irrigation.⁷⁹ Not only did the drought have a negative impact on Israel's food supply, but her own domestic production limitations meant that it was not until February 1959 that Israel abolished rationing of edible oil, chocolate, rice, meat, and fish filet, as well as cocoa for children; sugar and coffee rationing continued for several more years.⁸⁰ Israel's experience with drought was devastating to the local economy, but Israel benefited from access to donations from the Diaspora and United States' aid, something that Africa did not have readily

⁷⁸ Amos Yoder, Second Secretary of the Embassy at Tel Aviv, to the Department of State, Comments on Israel's PL 480 Request, Desp. No 173, 5 September 1958, General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 1782, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

⁷⁹ Frank P. Butler, Counselor of Embassy for Economic Affairs at Tel Aviv, to the Department of State, Transmittal of Israel's Application for Emergency Assistance Under Title II of PL 480, Desp. No 534, 25 February 1959, General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 1782, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

⁸⁰ Foreign Service Despatch from Embassy at Tel Aviv to the Department of State, Desp. No. 469, Weekly Economic Review – 4, 23 January 1959, General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 4390, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

available. It must be recognised again, when analysing Israel's own development, how the acquired expertise was transferred to Africa. It was Israel's knowledge – a classic transfer of knowledge through epistemic communities – that provided development relief to Africa, but that Israel's own development was as reliant on capital inflow as it was on knowledge.

In 1960, with a population of two-million, Israel's gross agricultural output was approximately \$461 million, which provided for 75% of its food needs, and allowed for exports of \$72 million, seventy percent of which were citrus fruits. By comparison, the gross agricultural output in 1954 was \$240 million. Imports of foodstuffs and raw materials in 1960 amounted to \$70 million, as compared to \$65 million in 1959; most of the imported goods were grain, sugar, fats, and oils.⁸¹ Despite the increase in exports that provided foreign currency, Israel's reliance on imported products continued throughout the period covered. Government policy was not to produce a fully self-sufficient economy or to rely on rationing in order to eliminate imports completely. Rather, Israel pursued a policy of exporting products on which they had an advantage and importing products that would have cost more to produce domestically.

By 1968, despite a trebling of the population domestic production in Israel was able to amount to about 80% of domestic consumption, although 90% of her food grains, 100% of oil grains, and 80% of sugar needs were still imported.⁸² Therefore, even though Israel achieved rapid development and was able to industrialise her economy fairly quickly after independence, there were still shortages of food and essential items and Israel still relied heavily on food imports to meet domestic requirements. Israel's experts and ministers therefore should have managed African expectations of what their aid programme could produce, and understood that domestically Israel struggled with foodstuffs, and it was therefore unrealistic for

⁸¹ State of Israel Bonds, 2nd Development Issue Prospectus, 13 February 1962, World Bank Group Archives, Washington D.C., Folder No: 1047572 – R1988-039 – Other # 62 Box # 4232B – Israel – External Debt.

⁸² JoAnn Fagot Aviel, Effect of the World Food and Fuel Crisis on Israeli Policy-Making, *The Western Political Quarterly*, Vol. 31, No. 3 (Sep., 1978), pp. 319-322. For the figures on Israel's imported foodstuffs, see p. 324.

Africa to expect Israeli aid to be able solve their food crises. Israel also benefited from food aid from the United States, and Washington was a key source of grain and food products. Israel also looked to Africa for meat imports, in particular kosher beef from East Africa, and the need for a solid trade relationship to secure Israeli access to African food exports was another factor in the consideration of Israel's relationship with sub-Saharan Africa. Israel needed foreign currency to import the foodstuffs from Africa as Israel had to purchase and pay for their African food imports in hard currency, and fundraising from the Diaspora was once again a source of foreign currency.

As well as importing food stuffs at a huge cost to the Israeli treasury, Israel also spent approximately \$20,000 per immigrant on housing, social overheads, as well as productive inputs and Israel's 1969 immigration target of 20,000 persons per year involved a \$400 million capital outlay. This was compounded, in particular, due to the migrants that arrived with skills that Israel already had in abundance, and therefore needed to be retrained, as well as due to the those that had arrived with low literacy rates.⁸³ The funding for the settlement and absorption of the new migrants was to mostly come from the Jewish Agency and the American Diaspora.

Israel's capital flow influx provides an explanation in order to appreciate the means with which Israel's own development programme was able to accelerate and outpace both expectations, but also to explain why Africa's hopes of matching Israel's development pace were unrealistic during the period of this dissertation. The wealth of funds Israel had available to it were evident in August 1950 when the Israeli parliament, the *Knesset*, passed a \$182 million budget for building and construction, agriculture, and for industrial and communication projects. The majority of these funds were covered by the sale of \$980 million worth of government bonds, mostly sold to American Jews, and through equipment that Israel was able to purchase from loans from the United States.⁸⁴ In December 1950, Washington approved a \$35

⁸³ Economic Committee, EC/M/69 – 12 Conclusions and Recommendations on the Economy of Israel 26 March 1969, in World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1848822 – A2004-020 Other # 4 – Box No # 213095B – Benjamin B. King Country Files: Israel – Correspondence.

⁸⁴ Development Funds Approved in Israel, *New York Times*, 11 August 1950.

million loan for Israel to purchase American equipment and materials for their agricultural development; this was in addition to the \$100 million that the United States had borrowed Israel during the first two years of statehood. The \$35 million loan in December 1950 was used for fertiliser production within Israel, for irrigation projects and the expansion of the kibbutz and moshav network, as well as for the growth of Israel's citrus industry that was crucial for Israel's foreign exchange and exports.⁸⁵ Whilst Black African nations also received loans and grants from various sources, they did not have access to the same wealth and donations from their Diaspora community as the State of Israel had from the Jewish Diaspora, in particular from American and South African Jews.

One such example of the ways in which the Jewish Diaspora advanced Israel's development was the \$250 million five-year land improvement programme that was financed by American Jewry and proposed in 1951. The funds were used to purchase 44,000 acres of land and to plant 50 million trees, as well as towards the irrigation of the Negev and the drainage of the Huleh swamp in the Galilee.⁸⁶ The irrigation of the Negev was part of Israel's wider programme of 'making the desert bloom' and saw remarkable success. Modern irrigation methods throughout Israel contributed to an annual growth of real output of 10% per annum in the 15 years to 1965, with a sustained growth in the value of output in the agricultural sector of more than 10% annually.⁸⁷

Within the three-year period after independence, Israel had already started work on making the Negev Desert a productive location that was suitable for settlement, and settlements increased from 26 in 1948 to 51 in 1951. Israel's \$250 million five-year land improvement programme envisaged the creation of 50,000 farms in 500 new villages that in turn would provide a livelihood for 250,000

⁸⁵ U.S. Grants Israel \$35 Million Loan for Farm Development, *Daily Boston Globe*, 27 December 1950.

⁸⁶ Proposes Vast Development of Israel Land, *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 21 January 1951.

⁸⁷ Summary of Conclusions, Attachment to the Economic Committee, EC/0/67-25/1, Economic Policy Memorandum from the Europe and Middle East Department: ISRAEL, 21 February 1967, in World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1854298 – A1995-172 – Other # 1 Box # 182570B – Israel – General – Correspondence – Volume 1.

farmers.⁸⁸ The migrants who were placed in these new settlements not only in border regions or in the Negev but all over Israel, received substantial and essential assistance from various governmental and Jewish agencies, including the Jewish Agency, the Histadrut, and the State, and without such assistance such settlements would not have survived.⁸⁹ The scale of the project, in relation to Israel's small size was massive, and the ability of the American Diaspora to provide \$250 million over five-years was crucial to Israel's development, and to the Israeli ability to transform their land so quickly. Whilst receiving the \$250 million from the American Diaspora, Israel continued to import foreign capital from the United States, two such examples being in 1957 when the United States provided IL£12.5 million for a power plant at Ashdod and IL£14.5 million for the development of seventy villages in the Galilee and Jerusalem corridor.⁹⁰

Diaspora Jewry not only provided capital and funds for large projects, but there was also a campaign in the early 1950s that sought to encourage young American Jews to spend a year or two in Israel to aid in the industrial development of the country. These young volunteers brought their skills and knowledge to assist in the domestic development programmes, and the Israeli government saw this as important as direct investment. In order to support the young Jews, who mostly came from the United States, the Jewish Agency and the United States Zionist groups each put up £500,000 for housing the volunteers during their placements.⁹¹ There was no similar programme anywhere in Africa, and the failure of the Israeli government to recognise that their development was not solely the result of their expertise, would severely hamper their relationship with sub-Saharan Africa towards the end of the 1960s, when African leaders questioned why they never saw the same results in their nations as they had witnessed in Israel.

⁸⁸ Proposes Vast Development of Israel Land, *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 21 January 1951.

⁸⁹ Clarmont Skrine, Economic Development in Israel, *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 117, No. 3 (Sep., 1951), pp. 314-316.

⁹⁰ Shifts in US Aid Affecting Israel, *New York Times*, 2 January 1958.

⁹¹ Israel Seeks Skilled U.S. Youth To Aid Industrial Development, *New York Times*, 13 March 1952.

It must also be recognised that by the 1950s, the vast sums of money being sent to Israel by world Jewry in order to develop Israel's agricultural and light industry had resulted in Israel having machinery and means that were well in advance of what other nations of her size and economic power had achieved. In the first half of the 1950s, Israel had succeeded not only in attaining machinery, but also piped irrigation systems, sprinkler systems to water crops, the necessary fertilisers for those crops to flourish, and even the means to transform malaria infested swamps in Hadera and Degania into fertile, rich ground that produced wheat, citrus, and eucalyptus.⁹²

To understand better Israel's own economic position and to understand why despite the huge influx of capital, Israel was unable to lend or grant money to Africa to compete with the Arab financial aid to the continent it must be recognised that Israel's own economy during this period was struggling. Despite the huge inflow of capital from abroad that provided Israel with a per capita income of approximately \$1,400, which at that time was the same level as several of the European industrialised nations, Israel's economy was not as strong as those same European nations.⁹³ World Bank forecasts for Israel noted two aspects of the foreign influx of capital in Israel's treasury: firstly, that Israel's economy depended heavily on the inflow of foreign capital and that Israel had a long way to go before it became a self-supporting economy. Secondly, there was an inadequacy in Israel's national savings, especially in the public sector.⁹⁴ Scholars of the period attributed Israel's economic concerns with the huge cost of defence and the maintenance of the Israeli Defence Forces, but the World Bank did not believe that the defence expenditures had a negative impact on Israel's own internal development as most of the extra defence

⁹² Clarmont Skrine, Economic Development in Israel, *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 117, No. 3 (Sep., 1951), p. 309.

⁹³ Economic Committee EC/M/69 – 12, Conclusions and Recommendations on the Economy of Israel, 26 March 1969, World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1848822 – A2004-020 Other # 4 – Box No # 213095B – Benjamin B. King Country Files: Israel – Correspondence.

⁹⁴ Economic Committee, Economic Policy Memorandum from Europe, Middle East and North Africa Department, 28 February 1969, World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1848822 – A2004-020 Other # 4 – Box No # 213095B – Benjamin B. King Country Files: Israel – Correspondence.

costs were covered by donations from abroad.⁹⁵ Regardless of the source of the income, Israeli defence expenditure represented 26 to 30% of the government's budget.⁹⁶ In June 1964, Prime Minister Levi Eshkol informed the Administration of President Johnson that Israel was spending \$450 million per year on defence.⁹⁷ With Israel's occupation of the West Bank, that figure increased exponentially after 1967.

The American Diaspora throughout the 1960s had been recruited and encouraged to provide further and even more substantial funding for Israel in order that Israel could continue her activities in Africa, and by inference, continue to challenge the Arab states diplomatically through her friendships on the continent. The American Jewish community was led to believe that their funds contributed directly to that effort. 1964 saw further funds being raised with a new Third Development issue of Israeli government bonds that totalled \$400 million earmarked for the development of the Negev and Galilee regions. This was in addition to the record bond sale of 1963 that saw \$70 million worth of bonds sold. One afternoon luncheon hosted by the Greater New York Women's Division of State of Israel Bonds, with the Israeli Prime Minister's wife in attendance as their special guest, saw \$310,000 raised for Israel.⁹⁸ It is important to note that the Israeli bonds sold abroad were purchased almost entirely by individuals of the Diaspora Jewry who were not driven by financial motives, but rather goodwill towards the State of Israel.⁹⁹ Israel received not only funds from the Diaspora, but also political support and lobbying in Washington, D.C.

⁹⁵ Economic Committee EC/M/69 – 12, Conclusions and Recommendations on the Economy of Israel, 26 March 1969, World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1848822 – A2004-020 Other # 4 – Box No # 213095B – Benjamin B. King Country Files: Israel – Correspondence.

⁹⁶ Memorandum of a Conversation, Department of State, Washington, February 16, 1960, 3p.m., *FRUS*, 1958-1968, Arab-Israeli Dispute, United Arab Republic, North Africa, Volume XIII

<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1958-60v13/d123> [accessed 17 June 2021].

⁹⁷ Memorandum of Conversation, Washington, June 2, 1964, 11:15am, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, Volume XVIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1964-1967, https://history.state.gov/historical_documents/frus1964-68v18/d67 [accessed 17 June 2021].

⁹⁸ \$310,000 Raised for Israel, *New York Times*, 13 October 1964.

⁹⁹ Mr Escott Reid to Frans Lutolf, Proposal by Governor Horowitz, 18 October 1962, in World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1855658 – A1995-172 Other # 2 Box # 182571B – Israel – General Negotiations – Correspondence 01.

and other state capitals that was used to protect the American support for Israel politically, and for Israel's defence needs through the supply of weaponry, but also through the approval of American aid programmes to Israel.

Israel's heavy dependency on the importation of foreign capital caused "structural dependence" on surplus imports. In most industrialised nations, the importation of raw materials, equipment, and machinery are used in industry and then sold to the domestic market or exported. In Israel there was too much dependency on the importation of capital and industrial output was mostly for the local market, which was small.¹⁰⁰ But, by the mid 1960s, Israel's economy needed a greater growth of exports to finance and provide the capital for Israel's imports of raw materials that were needed for the development of a modern and efficient, but also sustainable, industrial sector in Israel. Those raw materials, especially timber, rubber, and diamonds, were sourced from Africa, and therefore Israel had to maintain diplomatic relations with the nations that provided these essential raw materials. Africa also provided an export market for Israel's surplus domestic production, as will be discussed.

The period of the early 1960s was one of economic hardship for Israel that did not allow Israel the means to have substantial funds for her international aid programme. Despite the economic hardship, the World Bank in 1969 described Israel's past economic performance as "remarkable". Regardless of the wars that Israel had to finance, the massive inflow of migrants and near-total lack of natural resources, Israel's real GNP grew at a rate of 10% during the 1950s and 1960s, while per capita production increased by an average of 5%. As the World Bank noted, such achievement was possible due to two factors: a capable and determined population that was mostly well-educated and energetic with a determination to overcome the difficulties and ensure economic development and prosperity, and a large and

¹⁰⁰ Report prepared by Bank of Israel and Treasury economists, enclosed in a document sent from D. Horowitz, Governor of the Bank of Israel, to Robert S. McNamara, President of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 23 February 1971, in World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1854299 – A1995-172 – Other # 1 Box # 182570B – Israel – General – Correspondence 1969 / 1971 – Volume 1.

continuous inflow of foreign capital from American Jewry and reparation payments from Germany. Israel's "... economic miracle would have been impossible if one of these two growth factors – human skill and foreign capital – had been lacking."¹⁰¹

The contribution of Diaspora Jews to Israel's finances, and her economic development, were dwarfed by the payments Israel received from the West German government in reparations. By 1950, the issue of reparations and compensation from West Germany had become a major objective of Israeli foreign policy, and it was argued by Uri Biller and Moshe Tlamim that "the agreement extricated Israel from its crippling economic crisis and for this reason was seen as a major foreign policy victory."¹⁰² Israel agreed with West Germany a reparation payment of approximately \$798 million to be paid over a dozen years starting in 1952.¹⁰³ In addition to this, the German government paid reparations and compensation to German Jews living in Israel, and those with relatives who had died during World War II or suffered losses during the War; this figure amounted to \$44 million for 1957.¹⁰⁴ By 1959, German reparations had grown to \$65 million, whilst German restitutions payments were \$70 million.¹⁰⁵ So important were German reparations for Israel's economy that a World Bank mission to Israel in March 1959 to study the economic situation and prospects

¹⁰¹ Economic Committee: Economic Policy Memorandum from Europe, Middle East and North African Department, EC/0/69-30/1, 28 February 1969, in World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1848822 – A2004-020 Other # 4 – Box No # 213095B – Benjamin B. King Country Files: Israel – Correspondence.

¹⁰² Uri Bialer and Moshe Tlamim, *Top Hat, Tuxedo and Cannons: Israeli Foreign Policy from 1948 to 1956 as a Field of Study*, *Israel Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1. Foreign Relations (Spring, 2002), pp. 45-52.

¹⁰³ Foreign Service Despatch: Embassy Tel Aviv to the Department of State, Washington, D.C., Annual Economic Assessment – Israel 1957, Desp. No. 597, 26 March 1958, RG 59, Box 4930, 1955-1959 General Decimal File, 8848.00/3-2658, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

¹⁰⁴ Foreign Service Despatch: Embassy Tel Aviv to the Department of State, Washington, D.C., Annual Economic Assessment – Israel 1957, Desp. No. 597, 26 March 1958, RG 59, Box 4930, 1955-1959 General Decimal File, 8848.00/3-2658, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

¹⁰⁵ Mr J. Rucinski to Donald W. Jeffries, ISRAEL – Economic Situation, 1959, 15 April 1960, in World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1855658 – A1995-172 Other # 2 Box # 182571B – Israel – General Negotiations – Correspondence 01.

of Israel, included a stopover in Bonn to discuss with the West German government their expectations with regards to the flow of funds to Israel, with the World Bank acknowledging “the importance to the Israeli economy of German reparations and restitution payments.”¹⁰⁶ By 1967, a decade into Israel’s aid programme Israel had approximately \$500 million in unrequited transfers that included German reparations flowing into state coffers.¹⁰⁷ There was also the foreign aid from the United States and whilst the amount varied, and different sources put different figures on the aid depending on whether they included all donations by American Jewry to Israel or only formal state aid, in early 1960 the figure quoted in a meeting between State Department employees was \$300 million annually.¹⁰⁸

The Canadian economist and former United Nations employee, Frederick F. Clairmont, calculated that over a forty-year period between 1956 and 1996, Israel received “yearly \$3 billion of official U.S. ‘aid’. To this must be added two billion dollars from private international Jewry. That’s 5 billion dollars. Israel’s population [in 1996] is around 6 million. The US government alone provides Israel with \$3 billion dollars in economic and military aid... in addition, the US provides Israel with \$2 billion dollars of loan guarantees a year. Many of these loans will never be repaid.” Clairmont then continues that Israel had also received “gifts, donations and reparations (notably from Germany) of over \$230 billion. The Marshall Plan, by comparison, was \$20 billion. Israel in short is a multi-billion-dollar welfare state recipient, paid for by the American taxpayer.”¹⁰⁹ Whilst those are 1996 figures, and twenty years after the end of this dissertation, the amount of aid that the United States

¹⁰⁶ Joseph Rucinski to Raymond J. Goodman, Terms of Reference of the Mission to Israel, 27 March 1959, World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1855616 – A1995-172 – Other # 1 Box # 182570B – Israel – General – Terms of Reference – Correspondence 01.

¹⁰⁷ Economic Committee EC/0/70 – 136, Israel: Country Program Paper, 30 October 1970, World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1855660 – A1995-172 Other # 2 Box # 182571B – Israel – General Negotiations – 1969 / 1971 – Correspondence – Volume 1.

¹⁰⁸ Notes on a Conversation Between the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Jones) and the Under Secretary of State (Dillon), Department of State, Washington, May 31, 1960, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Arab-Israeli Dispute, United Arab Republic, North Africa, Volume XIII, <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1958-60v13/d149> [accessed 17 June 2021].

¹⁰⁹ Frederic F Clairmont, Israel: The Dilemmas of Growth, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 31, No 48 (Nov. 30, 1996), pp. 3107-3108.

provided to Israel started to rise in the 1960s and remained high throughout the period of this dissertation, and continues to this day. Clairmont's article appears to have a political dimension, but that does not distract from his economic argument or the fact that Israel's capital inflow from the United States of America was unparalleled in modern history.

1.4 *Israel's Agricultural and Industrial Development and the Impact of the Inflow of New Citizens to the State*

In the period between 1948 and 1958, Israel's population grew by one million, of which 800,000 were new citizens from abroad. Of the additional one-million citizens, one-third were new wage earners that lived in the 430 new settlements that were established, as well as the vastly expanded rural and urban settlements that existed pre-state. The diversity of the immigrants led to the formation of the Settlement Department, which sought to place immigrants in kibbutzim and moshavim with their fellow villagers and community leaders before introducing 'outsiders' into the community.¹¹⁰ This step was considered important in order to prevent social strife and jealousy or any suspicion of discrimination based on origin.

Israel had the benefit of starting the settlements from new and therefore they were able to maintain a unified population as they decided who settled where, whereas in Africa an attempt was made to convert existing villages into cooperative villages with little success. One reason for the lack of success in Africa was the rapid succession of change that Israel tried to introduce. As Shimeon Amir of the Tel Aviv University argued, the changes that Israel sought to introduce should have been done only when necessary and at a steady pace with new methods transferred to existing institutions. Furthermore, efforts should have been made to ensure that patterns of

¹¹⁰ Amos Yoder, Second Secretary of the Embassy at Tel Aviv, to the Department of State, Desp No 391, 8 January 1958, General Records of the State Department 1955-1959, RG 59, Box 4930, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland. For the strain on the social services of Israel and the population figures for Moroccan Jews, see: Alex Weingrod, *Reluctant Pioneers: Village Development in Israel*, New York: Cornell University Press, 1966, in particular chapters I and II.

life that were compatible with new techniques were conserved. For Amir “ever major change presents an effort and therefore creates tensions and difficulties.” The Israeli settlement experience proved that success was had when the changes were less sweeping and if some of the former ways of the inhabitants were preserved and incorporated into the new way of living.¹¹¹



Yemenite and "Habanim" Immigrants From Yemen in Tents at an Immigrant Camp near Kibbutz Ein Shemer, 1 September 1950. Photo Credit: Pinn Hans, Israeli Government Press Office.

For Israel, this recognition mostly came about when it came to the settlement of the Jews that came from Yemen, North Africa, and the other Arab states, when there was a sudden realisation that in order to assimilate and succeed in the development of new settlements there had to be an understanding and respect for their traditions and their way of life. For Amir, if this was repeated in Africa, this would

¹¹¹ Shimeon Amir, Traditional Leadership and Modern Administration in Developing Countries, in Michael Curtis and Susan Aurelia Gitelson (eds.), *Israel in the Third World*, New Jersey: Transaction Books, 1976, pp. 37-38.

have achieved “a proper interdependence between change and continuity”¹¹², which it must be acknowledged is key to all successful development programmes, especially when the aim of the programme is to transform an existing structure or settlement, rather than start from zero.

Largely due to the success of the cooperative kibbutzim and moshavim settlements, within the same ten-year period between 1948 and 1958, the Israeli agricultural industry achieved great success and rapid development with more than 45,000 agricultural workers settled with an increase in cultivated land of 2.2 million dunams, of which Israel had irrigated more than 800,000 dunams. Israel also massively increased her domestic production of meat, with an increase of 170% in cattle to 58,000 head and a 360% increase in sheep, to 80,000 head.¹¹³ Israel’s water development was equally as impressive, especially for a state that’s only natural water source is the Sea of Galilee. Israel’s recognition of the seriousness of their water shortage and the urgency for a solution saw Israel, within their first decade of independence, execute a waterworks programme that connected the Yarkon in the centre of the country to the Negev desert in the south. Israel thus provided the means to populate desert regions using skills and knowledge that were sought after in Africa.¹¹⁴

¹¹² Shimeon Amir, Traditional Leadership and Modern Administration in Developing Countries, in Michael Curtis and Susan Aurelia Gitelson (eds.), *Israel in the Third World*, New Jersey: Transaction Books, 1976, p. 43.

¹¹³ Amos Yoder, Second Secretary of the Embassy at Tel Aviv, to the Department of State, Desp. No 391, 8 January 1958, General Records of the State Department 1955-1959, RG 59, Box 4930, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

¹¹⁴ Amos Yoder, Second Secretary of the Embassy at Tel Aviv, to the Department of State, Desp. No 391, 8 January 1958, General Records of the State Department 1955-1959, RG 59, Box 4930, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.



"Mekorot" Workers Laying a Waterpipe Near Kibbutz Mefalsim in the Northern Negev, 6 July 1949.
Photo Credit: Kluger Zoltan, Israeli Government Press Office.

However, Israel's soil and water resources, despite the success with irrigation, were still desperately lacking. In May 1965, Israel's water resources provided enough to irrigate only 40% of the arable land. Israel's population of 2.4 million in May 1965 had increased by 4-4.5% per annum, or at a rate of 50,000 to 60,000 persons. In order to meet the domestic demand, Israel set an ambitious agricultural output growth rate of 6%, and an annual target of 10-12% for industry. For both targets to be met the State had to utilise all available water resources. Israel's water resources were estimated by World Bank experts to have a potential of 1,800 million m³, of that 1,300-1,350 million m³ were already utilised for urban water supply, industry and agriculture. That left a quarter of the potential water resources available for future development. About 80% of Israel's water was used for agriculture and that was

expected to grow to one-half million acres by the end of the 1960s. Israel therefore had to look towards water desalination plants and research into such things as evaporation losses control.¹¹⁵ Sub-Saharan Africa, which suffered from perpetual droughts and whose water shortages caused devastating agricultural issues, looked to Israel for expertise on water management, irrigation and different types of seedlings and crops that were more drought-resistant. Israel's own attempt to minimise water usage in agriculture, and in irrigating the desert, provided invaluable input for Israeli experts in Africa.

Israeli industry saw a rapid growth with the investment made by the wealthier European Jews paying dividends during the first decade of statehood. Between May 1948 and March 1957, the Investment Centre in Israel approved 1,250 new industrial enterprises that absorbed 46,000 new wage earners into the Israeli economy.¹¹⁶ The number of employed industrial workers in 1950 stood at 65,000, with output at \$190 million, by 1960 there were 163,000 employed in industry and output stood at \$408 million. The consumption of electricity by factories and industrial works only stood at 74 million kilowatt hours in 1946, with a tenfold growth to 770 million kilowatt hours by 1960.¹¹⁷ Such was the pace of Israeli development, that in November 1960 the United States and Israel agreed to discontinue the American technical aid programme to Israel that had employed 87 American technical experts who had provided training courses for Israelis in Israel. The total outlay for the State Department programme between 1952 and its end in June 1962 was \$10.8 million. With the end of the development aid, the economic aid to Israel continued without interruption, with a figure of \$684.6 million of aid given

¹¹⁵ Louis Garnier, Report of Visit to Israel, 5-15 May 1965, in World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1855658 – A1995-172 Other # 2 Box # 182571B – Israel – General Negotiations – Correspondence 01.

¹¹⁶ Amos Yoder, Second Secretary of the Embassy at Tel Aviv, to the Department of State, Desp. No 391, 8 January 1958, General Records of the State Department 1955-1959, RG 59, Box 4930, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

¹¹⁷ State of Israel Bonds, 2nd Development Issue Prospectus, 13 February 1962, World Bank Group Archives, Washington D.C., Folder No: 1047572 – R1988-039 – Other # 62 Box # 4232B – Israel – External Debt.

to Israel between 1948 and 1959.¹¹⁸ The massive growth in industrial output drove Israel's rapid development and impressed upon the African leaders on their visits to the country of the ability of the Israeli experts. But it also led to false hope and exaggerated expectations, as without the massive capital inflow, Africa would never achieve the development pace that Israel had.

Israel attempted to use her experiences, some of which had been gained from the American aid programme to Israel, to increase the agricultural yields, animal husbandry, water irrigation techniques, transportation and industrial expertise in Africa. Israel had to develop transportation and housing estates out of a necessity to transport goods to the border regions that Israel had decided to populate, and in order to provide adequate housing stock for the new immigrants. Again, within the same timeframe of Israel's first decade of independence, Israel built 800 kilometres of main trunk roads and a further 500 kilometres of approach roads and minor roads were built, with the new state spending more than \$40 million to import buses, trucks for transporting goods, taxis and other public vehicles. The total number of vehicles registered in Israel was approximated to be 60,000 in 1958. Rail transport increased just as rapidly with 270 kilometres of track and sidings added to the Israeli rail network with the introduction of diesel-powered engines.¹¹⁹ Such an expansion was also imperative to Israel for the development of the Negev desert region in the south of the country. The population of the Negev and the town of Eilat required food and other necessities to be transported by road or rail, and by the 1960s, 113,000 tons of food, 175,000 tons of building materials, and 100,000 tons of fuel were being transported annually from the centre of Israel to the south.¹²⁰ Israel had gained extensive experience in transporting goods to and from areas with inhospitable terrain

¹¹⁸ U.S., Israel Agree to End Technical Aid, *Los Angeles Times*, 30 November 1960.

¹¹⁹ Amos Yoder, Second Secretary of the Embassy at Tel Aviv, to the Department of State, Desp. No 391, 8 January 1958, General Records of the State Department 1955-1959, RG 59, Box 4930, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

¹²⁰ J. Arnon, Director General of Israeli Ministry of Finance to S. Aldewergeld, Director of Technical Operations, World Bank, 5 January 1962, World Bank Group Archives, Washington D.C., Folder No: 1855822 – A1995 – 172 Other # 5 Box # 182574A – Israel – United Nations Development Programme [UNDP] Projects – Correspondence.

that would later be utilised in Africa for the transportation to market of agricultural goods and farm animals.

With Israel at war with her neighbours making the cross-border land movement of goods impossible, Israel depended heavily also on her sea and air transport for the import and exports of both goods and people. Within the first ten years, Israel's ports were expanded and by March 1957 Israel had a fleet of 31 ships that totalled 190,000 tons. In 1960, Israel requested from the World Bank a \$30 million loan for three ports: an expansion of the existing port at Haifa, a new port at Eilat on the Gulf of Aqaba, and the completion of the construction of a third port at Ashdod. Israel's expertise on shipping resulted in the first joint enterprise between Israel and Africa when the Black Star shipping line was formed with Ghana, a crucial part of the aid programme that will be expanded on in the following chapters. World Bank President Eugene Black was impressed by Israel's "... large reservoir of experts in many fields." There were links made in the media that Israel's request for a World Bank loan came after the World Bank approved a \$56 million loan to Egypt to widen the Suez Canal at a time when Israeli vessels were barred from the Canal.¹²¹ The impact of the Middle East conflict on all aspects of Israel's diplomacy, including her negotiations with international bodies, was ever present, and it must be remembered that in most of those international forums the African states had gained a vote each.

The development of Israel's ports were crucial for Israeli trade which in 1949 amounted to approximately \$35 million, but by 1957 had grown to \$205 million and included "citrus fruits, industrial diamonds, tires, motors, automobiles, refrigerators, construction materials, electrical products, radios, pharmaceutical products and textiles", the vast majority of which were transported by sea.¹²² More impressively

¹²¹ See: Frederick Kuh, To Help Mideast, Africa, undated, and World Bank Eyes Israeli Projects, *New York Times*, 27 March 1960, both accessed at the World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1855658 – A1995-172 Other # 2 Box # 182571B – Israel – General Negotiations – Correspondence 01.

¹²² Duncan A. D. Mackay, First Secretary of the Embassy at Panama, to the Department of State, Israel's Consul in New York Announces Diplomatic Relations with Panama at Press Conference, Desp. No 551, 5 May 1958, General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 2365, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

for the new nation was that the Israeli merchant marine carried 700,000 tons of cargo and Israeli passenger ships carried 73 percent of all passenger traffic that arrived by sea into the state; German reparations and foreign aid were to expand the fleet even further. The Israeli national state-owned airline *El Al* was set up to provide a means for air travel for Israeli citizens and the government abroad, and *Arkia* was formed to provide domestic flights within Israel.¹²³ The Israeli airline industry and ship lines also provided Israel with the means of transport to provide her aid programme to Africa, and whilst there was no significant cooperation in the airline industry, it was nevertheless an important means of transport for Israeli experts and goods to sub-Saharan Africa.

With the increase in Israel's electrical output and infrastructure, Israel was able to expand its telephone and communication facilities, something that it would also assist several African nations to do, and 76,000 new telephone instruments had been installed by 1957. These telephone points were crucial for national security, and not merely used as a means for communication between friends and family but rather were also used as a means to communicate with settlements and towns in border regions, especially during times of unrest. The kibbutzim and moshavim that were located on the border provided advance-warning of any possible build-up of troops or incursion into Israeli territory. Border settlements were one solution to the housing problem, but they were inadequate to house all the 800,000 new immigrants. Israel's housing stock was increased by 180,000 dwellings constructed by the government, the Jewish Agency, and other public bodies that sought to provide housing, whilst a further 50,000 dwellings were built by private individuals.¹²⁴ The development of the housing stock was important as a means to lift people out of poverty through the provision of suitable housing, that provided sanitation and a means to cook for their families. The improved cooking and sanitation led to improved health and a healthier workforce. Post-independence Africa required a similar housebuilding programme

¹²³ Amos Yoder, Second Secretary of the Embassy at Tel Aviv, to the Department of State, Desp. No 391, 8 January 1958, General Records of the State Department 1955-1959, RG 59, Box 4930, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

¹²⁴ Letter No. 7, Mr Escott Reid c/o David Horowitz, 10 December 1964, in World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1855658 – A1995-172 Other # 2 Box # 182571B – Israel – General Negotiations – Correspondence 01.

that would expand the electricity and water network to provide for both the rural and urban dwellers, but whilst Israel had the Jewish Agency spending over \$100 million of donations per annum, Africa had no such equivalent. The capital disparity between what Israel was able to raise in donations and what sub-Saharan Africa could afford to spend was a central reason for the differing levels of development success, despite the Israeli expertise.

In addition to the 230,000 new dwellings, a further 70,000 were restored and made fit for human habitation by the Israeli government's Development Authority, and the combined housebuilding and improvement effort saw a total of 40,000 wage earners engaged in the house-building industry. Whilst the house building industry was being formed Israel had to build temporary structures that consisted of huts and tents to provide immediate shelter to the new arrivals, and whilst they were dismantled by the mid-1950s the cost ran into several millions of Israeli pounds, mostly funded by donations from abroad.¹²⁵ When making comparisons with Israel's own development, it is important to remember that Africa did not face the acute housing shortage that Israel did, but that the Israeli experience provided them with experts in bricklaying, electrical wiring, plumbing, and building maintenance, something that the African nations did require in order to improve the health of their populations. The house building expertise was also useful when it came to the large building and construction projects that Israel undertook in Africa, and those included life-saving medical clinics and educational institutions. Israel's bricklayers and housebuilders were also utilised to build the new schools that Israel set up to train Africans at Tel Aviv, and other cities throughout the country.

Israel's own experience in classroom building was impressive with 8,500 new classrooms built by 1957 that expanded primary education capacity to 290,000 pupils. In addition to this, classrooms were built for *Ulpan* lessons where new immigrants spent up to six-months learning Hebrew. The increase in primary education was necessitated by the increased population of one-million, one-fifth of which was

¹²⁵ Amos Yoder, Second Secretary of the Embassy at Tel Aviv, to the Department of State, Desp. No 391, 8 January 1958, General Records of the State Department 1955-1959, RG 59, Box 4930, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

natural growth through the birth rate and that required maternity clinics, of which Israel opened 280, as well as increased the number of hospital beds by 7,700. Medical expertise was something that Israel became renowned for and was something that provided immediate relief at the withdrawal of colonial medical staff from Africa. The long-term impact of the medical provision improved the lives of Africans, prevented unnecessary deaths during childbirth, and eradicated preventable illnesses that impacted livelihoods, like blindness caused by onchocerciasis or 'river blindness'. Israel's own development and health advancements were therefore intertwined with that of Africa's through her aid programme that offered Israeli expertise that improved the health of hundreds of thousands of African citizens.

1.5 *Israel's Diplomatic Relationship with Washington*

After the passage of the United Nations Resolution of 1947 and the subsequent Declaration of Independence in May 1948, the newly established State of Israel focused her attention on gaining military and economic aid from the United States, the United Kingdom, France and the Soviet Union.¹²⁶ Immediately attacked by her Arab neighbours, Israeli diplomats and politicians recognised the immediate urgency of securing arms to strengthen their military capabilities and enable the restocking of hardware spent during the war in 1948. Israel's primary target for economic funding, military hardware, and diplomatic support was the United States of America. However, United States' aid was not always guaranteed, and the relationship between Israel and Washington was fractious. Despite the huge sums of aid that were outlined above, Israeli requests for American aid were frequently rejected, and the numerous requests demonstrated just how large of an aid programme Israel expected from the United States. Within weeks of Israel's declaration of independence, King Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia made clear to the White House that he may be forced to place sanctions against oil concessions to the United States if Washington concluded an

¹²⁶ Zach Levey, *Israel in Africa, 1956 – 1976*, Dordrecht: Republic of Letters Publishing BV, 2012, p.1.

arms deal with Israel.¹²⁷ In March 1951, as Israel approached the third anniversary of her declaration of independence, the Israeli Ambassador to the United States, Abba Eban, met with Secretary of State Dean Acheson and requested \$150 million grant-in-aid for the twelve month period from July 1951, as well as an invitation for Prime Minister Ben-Gurion to pay an official visit to the United States, and whilst Acheson agreed to look into the aid request, the suggestion of an official visit by the Israeli Prime Minister was flatly rejected.¹²⁸

By the summer of 1953, the Arab-imposed blockade on Israel had started to negatively impact Israel's finances and ability to trade, and Secretary of State Dulles found Israel "in an acute fiscal and economic situation."¹²⁹ Dulles and his officials had determined that Israel's situation was caused by the over-importation of goods that had already "obliged" the United States to loan them \$7 million to prevent default, and the Secretary of State expected another request for \$100 million to prevent the Israeli government going bankrupt. It was in July 1953, with the new administration of Republican President Dwight D. Eisenhower and his Vice President Richard M. Nixon that a harder line was taken towards Israel, and the assumption of unwavering and unquestionable support for the Jewish state was dismissed. Whilst President Truman had denied Ben-Gurion an official state visit, the Israelis understood the rationale behind the decision and accepted it; now Eisenhower had made them doubt American support, the Israeli psyche was impacted. At the National Security Council meeting, the President opined whether the United States was "...being as tough with the Israelis as with any other nation." His Vice President added that it was exactly that question that disturbed him as he "...saw the situation [whereby] the United States had been for some years under very heavy political

¹²⁷ Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs (Henderson) to the Secretary of State, 26 May 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V, Part 1 https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1948v05p1/pg_15 [accessed 25 May 2021].

¹²⁸ Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State, 22 March 1951, *FRUS*, 1951, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v05/d297> [accessed 25 May 2021].

¹²⁹ Memorandum of Discussion at the 147th Meeting of the National Security Council, 1 June 1953, in *FRUS*, 1952-1954, The Near and Middle East, Volume IX, Part 1 <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v09p1/d137> [accessed 25 May 2021].

pressure to subsidize the Israeli economy which could never balance itself. It began to look as though they would come back again and again for handouts from the United States, with no prospect of permanent stabilization or improvement.” The power of the Jewish lobby group in Washington was evident when the president mentioned that he had met the previous day with Rabbi Abba Silver, an American Zionist leader who was a central player in garnishing support for Israel from both American Jews and the wider American population and political elite.¹³⁰ Israel needed both Rabbi Silver and the pro-Israeli Congressmen and women to advocate on Israel’s behalf, but also to expand her own diplomatic network to be less of a diplomatic burden on the United States.

Eisenhower’s National Security Council in July 1953 also discussed Israel’s domestic policies and questioned whether the Israeli immigration law that allowed any Jew who wished to reside in Israel to migrate was wise when the financial situation of the new state was considered. With the estimation that 2 million Jews would arrive in years that followed, Washington was also worried about Arab reactions to a growing Jewish population in Israel.¹³¹ Official National Security Council policy in July 1953 was to take action that ensured that the Arab states believed that “...the United States ... is capable of acting independently of other Western states and of Israel.” Furthermore, the National Security Council recommended that “...the United States should make clear that Israel will not, merely because of its Jewish population, receive preferential treatment over any Arab state; and thereby demonstrate that our policy toward Israel is limited to assisting Israel in becoming a viable state ... and that our interest in the well-being of each of the Arab states corresponds substantially with our interest in Israel.” More worryingly for Israel, and where there was a gulf in the divide between government opinion in Israel and Washington, was the Council’s recommendation that they seek progress to solve the Arab refugee problem “... to the extent feasible, repatriation to the area now

¹³⁰ Memorandum of Discussion at the 153rd Meeting of the National Security Council, 9 July 1953, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, The Near and Middle East, Volume IX, Part 1 <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v09p1/d144> [accessed 25 May 2021].

¹³¹ Memorandum of Discussion at the 153rd Meeting of the National Security Council, 9 July 1953, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, The Near and Middle East, Volume IX, Part 1 <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v09p1/d144> [accessed 25 May 2021].

controlled by Israel” and to “use our influence to secure Arab-Israel boundary settlements, which may include some concessions by Israel.” The Council’s policy advice also broached the topic of Israeli immigration policy and the Council sought to “discourage further large-scale Jewish immigration to Israel.” In regard to aid, the Council’s policy was to “progressively reduce the amount of economic aid furnished to Israel, so as to bring it in to impartial relationship to aid to others in that area.”¹³² Whilst National Security Council policy was highly confidential, nothing contained in the policy outline would have been viewed as satisfactory to Israel.

Throughout the 1950s, Israel was also faced with the psychological blow of the major western countries refusing to recognise Israel’s claim on Jerusalem as her capital. To the anger of Israeli officials, Washington’s policy was to inform other governments that the United States, in accordance with United Nations Resolutions and the international community, refused to recognise Jerusalem as Israel’s capital, and therefore placed their diplomatic mission to Israel in Tel Aviv.¹³³ For Israel, the issue of the status of Jerusalem went further than that. An invitation from Israel for President Eisenhower to send a personal representative to Israel’s tenth Independence Day celebration was answered with only the U.S. Ambassador to Tel Aviv being appointed as Eisenhower’s special representative.¹³⁴ As part of the tenth anniversary celebrations, Israel had planned a large-scale military parade through the Israeli controlled sector of Jerusalem. The State Department summoned the Israeli Counsellor in Washington to express American concern about the heavy weaponry that was to be involved. The United States also informed the Israeli Counsellor that they planned to release a statement advising all American citizens that the United

¹³² Statement of Policy by the National Security Council, 14 July 1953, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, The Near and Middle East, Volume IX, Part 1 <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v09p1/d145> [accessed 25 May 2021].

¹³³ Memorandum of Conversation, Washington, 18 January 1962, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Volume XVII, Near East, 1961-1962, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v17/d167>, [accessed 21 June 2021].

¹³⁴ Memorandum from the Secretary of State to the President, Washington, 5 March 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Arab-Israeli Dispute, United Arab Republic, North Africa, Volume XIII, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1958-60v13/d12> [accessed 21 June 2021].

States Government does not recommend travel to Jerusalem during that period.¹³⁵ Not only had the United States refused to send a representative from Washington, but they also actively discouraged their citizens from any overt display of support for Israel's tenth anniversary celebrations. One of the features of Israel's aid programme was the location of African embassies and chanceries, with many of the African nations placing them in Jerusalem. Of importance to note, is that the issue was still important to Israel sixty years later, when similar diplomatic manoeuvres were outplayed under the Premiership of Benjamin Netanyahu, when he openly offered support to Latin American nations in exchange for their embassies being placed in Jerusalem. The importance of the recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel has never diminished and was of great psychological importance during the period of Israel's aid programme to Africa.

To Israel's dismay, in February 1959 the United States Department of State was again "reminding" other nations that their Embassies should be in Tel Aviv, and not in Jerusalem. An instruction from the Department of State to all American diplomatic posts read "... the Department as occasion permits continues to advise friendly governments which for the first time are contemplating establishment of diplomatic missions in Israel, of the importance of respecting UN resolutions concerning the status of Jerusalem." The missive was clearly aimed at the newly independent African nations and continued that even though Israel had moved her seat of Government to Jerusalem, "... the United States Embassy and most other diplomatic missions in Israel remain located at Tel Aviv." The note concluded with the statistic that fifty nations had diplomatic relations with Israel, of which forty had established diplomatic offices in Israel with all but four or five located at Tel Aviv.¹³⁶ This did not go down well with Israel's Government, and Foreign Minister Golda Meir protested strongly to the Acting Secretary of State during their meeting in March 1959. Meir requested that the State Department end their pressuring of other states

¹³⁵ Memorandum of Conversation, Department of State, Washington, April 21, 1958, 5:35p.m., *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Arab-Israeli Dispute, United Arab Republic, North Africa, Volume XIII, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1958-60v13/d19>, [accessed 17 June 2021].

¹³⁶ Instruction From the Department of State to All Diplomatic Posts, 20 February 1959, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Arab-Israeli Dispute, United Arab Republic, North Africa, Volume XIII, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1958-60v13/d65>, [accessed 19 June 2021].

with regards to the location of their diplomatic missions, and that the Israeli government "... would appreciate the United States taking a more passive role than in the past with other governments on the questions of locating diplomatic missions in Israel" and noted that several were located in Jerusalem, including the Netherlands. Meir hypothesised that "... others would move there too if they were not afraid that to do so would incur the displeasure of the United States." The Acting Secretary merely replied that "The United Nations regards the Jerusalem question as an international issue. Consequently, the United States feels it has a moral obligation in the matter." The Israeli Ambassador and Meir were unsatisfied and spoke of Liberia moving their Embassy from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv due to United States pressure.¹³⁷ Israeli policy in Africa was to encourage the placing of their chanceries in Jerusalem, and it became an important aspect of bilateral relations. For the majority of Africa, the location of their Embassies in Israel was not of great importance to them and many did place their Embassies in Jerusalem.

To add to the issue of the United States advocating for other nations to site their embassies at Tel Aviv, the United States Ambassador to Israel avoided official functions in Jerusalem, and when he needed to go to Jerusalem on official business he would meet officials in their private homes rather than in government buildings.¹³⁸ The United Kingdom followed in the United States' lead and took the same approach.¹³⁹ The psychological impact in the 1950s of Israel's capital not being recognised by the United States nor the United Kingdom, and Washington's frequent

¹³⁷ Memorandum of a Conversation, Department of State, Washington, March 9, 1959, 3:30p.m., *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Arab-Israeli Dispute, United Arab Republic, North Africa, Volume XIII, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1958-60v13/d67>, [accessed 19 June 2021].

¹³⁸ Memorandum for the Record, undated [most likely 11 June 1959], *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Arab-Israeli Dispute, United Arab Republic, North Africa, Volume XIII, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1958-60v13/d83>, [accessed 19 June 2021].

¹³⁹ Her Britannic Majesty's Government Cabinet Meeting C.M (56), 28 February 1956, in The National Archives, CAB 128/30/17.

reminders to Israel that they had never been a major supplier of arms, and had no desire to become one, made Israel's move towards Africa all the more significant.¹⁴⁰

With the election of John F. Kennedy in November 1960, United States' foreign policy very much focused on the Cold War and the emerging Soviet presence on the island of Cuba. Kennedy's policy towards Israel was not a drastic shift from that pursued by his predecessor Eisenhower. There was still no official visit granted, but Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion did make a private visit to the United States at the end of May 1961 and was granted an audience with Kennedy in New York. Ben-Gurion's meeting with the newly inaugurated Kennedy followed much along the same lines as previous meetings between the Israeli Prime Minister and Eisenhower's administration officials, where Ben-Gurion sought weapons, economic aid, and American diplomatic support. Kennedy, according to briefing notes prepared for him, was to bring up the issue of the Israeli nuclear reactor being developed at Dimona in the Negev desert. The United States had insisted on regular checks to ensure that Israel's nuclear reactor was solely for peaceful energy needs, and that Israel had no desire to develop atomic weapons.¹⁴¹ At their May 1961 meeting, there were clear disagreements and tension between the president and prime minister over the issue of Dimona, with Kennedy making clear that he expected the United States to be able to send engineers to inspect the plant. Kennedy frankly discussed with Ben-Gurion his concerns over possible Arab reactions, in particular that of Egypt, if Israel had indeed built a nuclear reactor or produced an atomic weapon.¹⁴² The publicity regarding Dimona served two purposes: one to add further pressure to Israel to allow inspections, but also to ensure that the Arab world was aware that the United States

¹⁴⁰ Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs (Rountree) to the Secretary of State, Washington, 28 June 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Arab-Israeli Dispute, United Arab Republic, North Africa, Volume XIII, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1958-60v13/d25>, [accessed 17 June 2021].

¹⁴¹ Memorandum From the President's Deputy Special Counsel (Feldman) to President Kennedy, Washington, 26 May 1961, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Volume XVII, Near East, 1961-1962, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v17/d55>, [accessed 17 June 2021].

¹⁴² Memorandum of Conversation, New York, 30 May 1961, 4:45pm- 6pm, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Volume XVII, Near East, 1961-1962, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v17/d57>, [accessed 21 June 2021].

was enforcing their demands for inspections; however, by this time, it was already widely assumed that Israel had the knowledge to produce atomic weapons. The Arab states had thus influenced American policy towards Israel and reinforced the need for Israel to be able to stand independent of Washington in the diplomatic community, and her aid programme to Africa sought to do just that.

Whilst the United States and Israel had agreed to end the American technical aid programme, throughout the first months of the Kennedy administration the Israeli government sought to develop a partnership with the United States whereby Israel would provide the experts if the United States financed her aid programme to Africa. Moshe Dayan, then the Israeli Minister of Agriculture, argued that nearly all new African states had turned to Israel for agricultural assistance. The Israeli methodology when agricultural aid was provided usually involved a mission from Israel visiting the African state to study their cultivation and soil issues, followed by the preparation of recommendations to meet the agricultural problems, and finally the dispatch of experts to the state, or the implementation of Israel's proposals.¹⁴³ For Israel, this was an expense that it struggled to afford. Nevertheless, the Israeli request for a partnership with the American Department of State did not bear fruition, and Washington was hesitant to provide any funding to Israel for her aid programme, again due to concerns of the Arab states. By 1962 Israel was spending about \$4 million per year in Africa, and so in cash-terms was unable to compete with the American, British, French or West German aid programmes that provided economic assistance with cash injections and funds for larger projects. However, Israel's \$4 million was sufficient for Israel's aims in Africa. The exports of Israeli chemicals, pharmaceuticals, machinery, and other products were also believed to have exceeded the value of the raw materials Israel imported from Africa, so there was a trade benefit for the Israeli government.¹⁴⁴

It was not only Dimona that had caused a strain in relations. The fragility of the relationship was further highlighted in March 1962 when the United States rebuked the Israeli Ambassador in Washington over an Israeli retaliation raid in

¹⁴³ Israel Seeks Role In U.S. Aid Effort, *New York Times*, 28 July 1961.

¹⁴⁴ Israel Sets Africa Ties, *The Baltimore Sun*, 19 May 1962.

which the Israeli Defence Forces crossed the border into Syria, next to the town of Tiberias. In Washington's analysis, Israel had "...applied force of much greater magnitude than that directed against Israel." The United States was clear to Israel that "regardless of the provocation under which Israel acted, the United States continues very much opposed to the employment of such raids." The Israelis responded to that comment forcefully and asserted their belief of Israeli sovereignty over all of the Sea of Galilee (also known as Lake Tiberias or the Kinneret) and the shoreline around the sea. Interrupting the Ambassador, the Americans objected and reminded the Israelis that the United States "... does not accept this Israeli assumption of unlimited sovereignty."¹⁴⁵ Israel's border claims were thus rejected by the United States, and Israel was left isolated when it came to the determination of her territory.

Just three months later, a memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs to the Secretary of State Dean Rusk highlighted the issues of contention between Israel and the United States and the sources of friction between the two allies as: Israel's policy of retaliatory raids; Israel's refusal to cooperate with the UN and its peacekeepers in the region; Israel's refusal to trust the efforts with regards to the Palestinian refugees; questions over the sovereignty of the Sea of Galilee; Israel's objection to Washington encouraging states to place their diplomatic missions at Tel Aviv and not Jerusalem; Israel's pursuit of resolutions that only called for direct negotiations within the UN General Assembly on the Middle East conflict; and finally, Washington's restraint in regards to funding the training of third country nationals in Israel as part of Israel's foreign aid programme.¹⁴⁶ During the administration of John F. Kennedy, the Minister at the Israeli Embassy in Washington D.C. made clear to officials of Kennedy's National Security Council that unless Israel was provided with what was sought, the Israelis would continue to lobby Congress and the "hullabaloo" over American/Israeli

¹⁴⁵ Memorandum of Conversation, Israel's Reprisal Raid on Syrian Positions Overlooking Lake Tiberias, 20 March 1962, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Volume XVII, Near East 1961-1962, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v17/d216>, [accessed 21 June 2021].

¹⁴⁶ Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Talbot) to Secretary of State Rusk, 9 July 1962, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Volume XVIII, Near East, 1962-1963, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v18/d2>, [accessed 21 June 2021].

relations would have continued to occupy Congress.¹⁴⁷ These same supporters in Washington, D.C. would also be enlisted to lobby for African interests that Israel was keen to advance, for Israel's access to the political elite of Washington was one of the advantages of diplomatic relations with Israel for those African nations that also sought American aid.

The importance of the United States' policy toward Israel is that it laid the groundwork for the reasoning behind Israel's attempts to provide assistance to Africa. This dissertation argues that whilst the speeches of Golda Meir and David Ben-Gurion invoked an almost messianic reasoning for the aid, it was rather *realpolitik* and Israel's desperate need to improve her standing in the world, both through support at international organisations and forums, but also psychologically for the Israeli people to feel a sense of security and being within the world. This was heightened and reinforced throughout the early 1950s and 1960s when United States' support for Israel, whilst strong, was not public enough and left Israel feeling isolated and unsure of whether they could rely on Washington for their economic and security needs. As early as September 1954, at the beginning of the development of Israel's movements into Africa, Ambassador Eban had told the United States' Secretary of State and his advisors that the Israeli government and public felt a sense of "isolation, vulnerability and insecurity" and sought reassurances from Washington. The Ambassador noted that Israel was the only Near Eastern state that did not have a defensive alliance with anyone and sought from the United States formal commitment of their support for Israel.¹⁴⁸ Israel had also expressed concern that the British government had committed to give Iraq "a good air force." For the Israelis, this removed "any possibility ... that the present balance of power in the area could be maintained."¹⁴⁹ Therefore, the issue of Israel's sovereignty of the Sea of Galilee, of her cross-border

¹⁴⁷ Memorandum for the Record, 14 May 1963, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Volume XVIII, Near East, 1962-1963, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v18/d248>, [accessed 21 June 2021].

¹⁴⁸ Memorandum of Conversation, by the Officer in Charge of Israel-Jordan Affairs (Bergus), 15 September 1954, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, The Near and Middle East, Volume IX, Part 1 <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v09p1/d893> [accessed 25 May 2021].

¹⁴⁹ Memorandum of Conversation between Ambassador Eban of Israel and Mr Allen of the Near East section at the Department of State, 5 April 1955, General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 1781, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

raids into Syria, the status of Jerusalem, and her activities at Dimona all required greater diplomatic support, as all of these issues had the potential to come before international organisations. Sub-Saharan Africa's voting bloc was sought to provide Israel the necessary votes to prevent defeat on the issue. Arms sales and economic aid were largely bilateral issues, but the above issues that came before international organisations were crucial to Israel's understanding of her place in the world and her own security. Israel's first major international challenge was to occur in 1956, as the African nations were on the cusp of independence and Israel sought access to the Suez Canal.

1.6 *Eilat, the Suez Crisis and Israel's Route to Africa*

A further strain on Israel's international standing and on her relationship with the diplomatic community came during the Suez Crisis of 1956. The Suez Canal is a crucial shipping route that connects the Red Sea with the Mediterranean Sea and negates the need to travel around the southern part of the African continent on voyages from the Indian Ocean to Europe. The operation of the Suez Canal thus took away business from South African ports who no longer serviced ships that were making the journey around Cape Agulhas. This is an important point for this dissertation as during periods in which the Suez Canal was closed, South Africa benefited economically from Egypt's loss. It was not only that Egypt lost out and South Africa benefited, but the East African ports at the mouth of the route to the Canal also lost business.

The Suez Canal had been owned by Egypt, but the shareholders of the operating company were European, mostly British and French. In July 1956, the Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser decided to nationalise the Canal, removing the British and French shareholders and placing the Canal under full Egyptian government control. The British and French were anxious that the Suez Canal remain in their hands as they saw it as an essential route for Middle Eastern oil and the French were unhappy with Egyptian interference in Algeria. Israel, worried and concerned that Egypt's military were building up their forces with Soviet arms, also saw an opportunity to strike and weaken Egypt's forces before the full array of armaments

from the Soviets had arrived. On 29 October 1956, Israeli troops moved into the Egyptian Sinai heading for the Canal and were supported on 5 November by British and French paratroopers who landed alongside the Suez. The Egyptian forces were overwhelmed by the strength of the British and French armies but prior to their retreat they blocked the Canal and sunk all ships that were transiting at the outbreak of the war, and the Canal was closed until March 1957.

President Eisenhower was unaware of the British, French and Israeli plans and was absolutely furious, threatening to sink the British economy through the sale of American sterling reserves, and he put an immediate hold on all aid to Israel. With the White House furious, the Kremlin threatened to take military action against Israel if she did not cease fighting and withdraw her troops.¹⁵⁰ Eisenhower, likewise, demanded an immediate ceasefire and withdrawal of troops and placed an immediate ban on United States passport holders from traveling to Israel, a ban that remained in place until the middle of 1957. In a letter from Eisenhower to Ben-Gurion in February 1957, Eisenhower lamented the continued presence of Israeli troops on Egyptian territory after the British and French withdrawal. Eisenhower warned Ben-Gurion that if Israel refused to return her troops to Israel relations between Israel and the United States could be “seriously disturbed”.¹⁵¹ Within weeks, Ben-Gurion had written to Eisenhower to inform him that Israeli forces had withdrawn from the Sinai and the Gaza Strip “...which in my profound conviction – for both political and security reasons – we ought not to have had to evacuate”.¹⁵² That Ben-Gurion withdrew his troops due to American pressure supports the argument that Israel was very much isolated diplomatically, and reliant on Washington for her international support. Therefore, Israel could not afford the displeasure of the American president when they sought arms and economic aid from his administration. An expansion of

¹⁵⁰ Uri Bialer and Moshe Tlamim, Top Hat, Tuxedo and Cannons: Israeli Foreign Policy from 1948 to 1956 as a Field of Study, *Israel Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1, Foreign Relations (Spring, 2002), p. 64.

¹⁵¹ Message from President Eisenhower to Prime Minister Ben Gurion, 3 February 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1957, Volume XVII <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v17/d54> [accessed 25 May 2021].

¹⁵² Message from Prime Minister Ben Gurion to President Eisenhower, 7 March 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1957, Volume XVII <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v17/d201> [accessed 25 May 2021].

Israel's bilateral relationships with Africa was to serve to strengthen Israel's position with the United States in the diplomatic arena.

Israel made important gains for her maritime fleet as a result of the Suez Crisis, the most crucial of these being access to Israel's southernmost port, the strategically important port of Eilat. The port of Eilat was, and is, vital to Israel's commercial relationship with East Africa and a key port for Israeli trade.¹⁵³ Israel spent \$80 million developing Eilat from a small village of a thousand mostly port workers and soldiers, to a town of more than twelve thousand by the start of the 1967 War. As well as providing a Red Sea port to trade with East Africa, and from there the African continent, Eilat was also where most of Israel's oil imports arrived and was the southern terminus of Israel's oil pipeline; such was the importance of the city, that Israel also constructed a desalination plant.¹⁵⁴ In 1956, trade with East Africa kickstarted with the opening of the port and Gulf of Aqaba to commercial shipping between Eilat and the ports of Eastern Africa, made possible through the Suez Crisis.¹⁵⁵ These new routes facilitated the development of trade between the African continent and Israel, both increasing Israel's ability to export to new emerging markets, but also allowed Israeli aid programmes to grow and flourish on the back of the new markets. The Suez Crisis also proved to the Israeli psyche that their military could take on their Arab neighbours and be victorious, as proved by the defeat of the strongest Arab military in the Middle East. The Israeli military also grew stronger through Suez as the Israeli Defence Forces gained possession of large amounts of Soviet military equipment that had been abandoned during the Egyptian retreat, enough to provide Israel with military superiority for several years.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵³ Israel Strengthens Her Pioneer Port, *New York Times*, 10 December 1961.

¹⁵⁴ Israel Now at Crucial Point in Development, *Los Angeles Times*, 4 June 1967.

¹⁵⁵ Bernard Reich, Israel's Policy in Africa, *Middle East Journal*, Vol 18 No 1 (Winter, 1964) p. 19.

¹⁵⁶ Michael Brecher, *The Foreign Policy System of Israel: Setting, Images, Process*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972, p. 60.

1.7 *The Beginning of Israel's Relationship with Africa*

With access to African ports secured, access to the independence leaders would happen through some luck, but also through a determined and persistent effort on behalf of the Israeli government to gain access to independence leaders and grant full recognition to their independence movements. As mentioned, Israel's position *vis a vis* the United States in the 1950s was a sign of the early realisation that the State of Israel would have to rely on her military, and not her diplomats, for survival and the Suez Crisis reinforced this belief. This made the relatively little attention that Israel gave to the African elite fighting for independence prior to the mid-1950s somewhat understandable. Israel needed friends who could provide economic and military support and that was something that the African independence leaders lacked. Therefore, Israel's friendship with Africa only took on urgency in the mid-1950s with the emergence of a serious and organised nationalist movement demanding independence in many African nations. The 1955 Bandung Conference was the spark that made Israel actively seek relations with Africa. Since her inception Israeli leaders viewed Israel as a socialist, non-aligned developing nation, and the Bandung Conference was the first attempt to organise this group of states, which Israel desperately sought to be a part of.¹⁵⁷ The exclusion of Israel from the Conference in Indonesia effectively ended any diplomatic relations with the wider Asian community and left Israel feeling isolated in a world with hostile neighbours, no firm support from either superpower nor any real 'friends' in Europe. Not only was Israel excluded, but the Communique at the end of the Asian-African conference in April 1955 declared that the 29 countries of Africa and Asia represented at the conference supported "...the rights of the Arab people of Palestine and called for the implementation of the United Nations Resolutions on Palestine and the achievement

¹⁵⁷ For the background to the Bandung Conference see: Netanel Lorch, *An Israeli View of the Third World*, in Michael Curtis and Susan Aurelia Gitelson (eds), *Israel in the Third World*, New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1976, p. 27. For the impact of Bandung on Israeli relations with the Third World and the rise of Egypt and the Arab states see: Meron Medzini, *Reflections on Israel's Asian Policy*, in *ibid.*, pp. 205 – 207; for the Israeli reaction to their exclusion from Bandung, considered to be a "serious political defeat" see: Ran Kochan, *Israel in the Third World*, in *ibid.*, pp. 252-254.

of the peaceful settlement of the Palestine question.”¹⁵⁸ The statement was considered by Israel to be anti-Israeli and an attempt to challenge the legitimacy of the borders of Israel.

Israel’s attempts at relations with Beijing also stalled due to the Israeli belief that recognition should be granted to any country declaring independence, which included the Republic of China (Taiwan), as well as the added complication of Chinese troops fighting UN forces on the Korean peninsula. Likewise, with India, relations failed to mature, and whilst New Delhi recognised the State of Israel in 1950, they really only established meaningful diplomatic relations in 1992.¹⁵⁹ The lack of diplomatic recognition for Israel, who had only eight embassies abroad in 1957, left Israel seeking international legitimacy from Africa.

Israel’s initial contacts with the developing nations came through the trade union movement. David Ben-Gurion and many of the early leaders of the State of Israel had trade union backgrounds, something they shared with the independence leaders in Africa. In keeping with Israel’s policy of offering immediate recognition to any state which existed in fact and was firmly in control of a territory and population, Foreign Minister Golda Meir visited Africa for the first time to attend the one-year anniversary celebrations of the independence of Ghana. Travelling first to Liberia, Meir was the guest of President Tubman who she described as a “devoted friend of the Jews”, apparently due to his experience in the United States where he befriended the Jewish congressman, Emanuel Celler, who, it was said, understood his loneliness as a Black leader in Washington. Israel’s Diaspora community had therefore played a role in her early relationship with Liberia, without actively seeking to. Meir went on to describe Tubman as having “evident affection for Israel and ... [a] strong feeling that we had much in common.” Meir’s trip to Africa put her in contact with the local population whose fascination she entertained, and questions about Israel she

¹⁵⁸ Final Communiqué of the Asian-African conference of Bandung, 24 April 1955, accessible at: https://www.cvce.eu/obj/final_communique_of_the_asian_african_conference_of_bandung_24_april_1955-en-676237bd-72f7-471f-949a-88b6ae513585.html, [accessed 21 June 2021].

¹⁵⁹ See: Yaacov Shimoni, Israel and the People’s Republic of China, in Michael Curtis and Susan Aurelia Gitelson (eds), *Israel in the Third World*, New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1976, ch. 16.

answered willingly; the African population knew of Jerusalem from the Bible and were fascinated to have a visitor who lived in that Holy City.¹⁶⁰

From Liberia, Meir went onto Ghana where she met Dr Kwame Nkrumah. After Nkrumah had taken up the office of Prime Minister of Ghana, “he sought pan-African unity”. An April 1958 conference held at Accra was attended by the African leaders who “discussed for the first time African affairs at an inter-governmental level.”¹⁶¹ Meir’s initial impressions of Nkrumah was that he was someone who she liked but Meir believed that he talked about the need for independence and freedom, whereas Meir spoke about the post-independence issues of “...education, public health and the need for Africa to produce its own teachers, technicians and doctors”, an early sign of what Meir foresaw her Ministry’s foreign aid programme’s focus to be. Ghana was hosting both their anniversary celebrations and the First All-African Peoples' Conference, a gathering of all the African liberation movements, which afforded the foreign minister the opportunity to meet 60 of Africa's future prime ministers, presidents and senior diplomats. The “curious and dramatic” confrontation was the start of an aid programme to Africa that resulted in a decade of extremely close friendship and knowledge transfers. Meir would later describe Israel’s exhaustive aid programme to Africa as her proudest project.¹⁶²

Meir's ability to personally connect with African leaders at the All-African Peoples' Conference was key to forming those relationships, and the African leaders appreciated the time Meir took to answer their questions and expressed great interest

¹⁶⁰ See: Golda Meir, *My Life*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1975 ch. 11. The quote on President Tubman is from p. 267.

¹⁶¹ Kelechi Johnmary Ani and Victor Ojajorotu, Pan-Africanism, African Union and the Challenge of Transformative Development in Africa, *Journal of African Unity Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (Apr. 2017), p. 16.

¹⁶² See: Golda Meir, *My Life*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1975 ch. 11. The quote about her meeting with Dr Nkrumah is p. 269. Meir described the Africa project as “... profoundly significant, not to say unprecedented, attempt on the part of one country to better human life in other countries, and I am prouder of Israel's International Development Cooperation Programme and of the technical aid we gave to the people of Africa than I am of any other single project we have ever undertaken” see: p. 265.

in Israel's kibbutzim, the Histadrut, the structure of Israel's armed forces and Israel's own development project, that many Africans saw as a miracle to be replicated in their own nations. In order to win the trust and the friendship of the African leaders, Meir and the Israeli government had to assure the Africans that although they were white, with the ruling elite of Israel being of white European descent, they were different to the white Europeans who controlled the slave trade, while the large Arab Jewish population from North Africa were not the same North Africans who engaged in the Arab exploitation of Africans.¹⁶³ This appears to be a more important issue than scholars have recognised. The African states were looking for new partners to provide aid that were not their former colonial masters, nor the United States or the Soviet Union. Previous memories of the slave trade as well as the exploitation of Africans by the Arabs made Africans, initially at least, reluctant to accept Arab aid; Asia had no means to provide aid, nor did Latin America, and so Africa welcomed Israeli assistance.

¹⁶³ Zach Levey, The Rise and Decline of a Special Relationship: Israel and Ghana, 1957-1966, *African Studies Review*, Vol. 46, No. 1 (Apr., 2003), p. 157.

Chapter Two

2 Israel's Aid Programme to Africa



A map of the African continent, including the Arab world and Israel. The map is for illustrative purposes only and is presented solely to assist the visualisation of the size of Israel's aid programme on the continent. Shaded black and labelled is the State of Israel. In the three shades of grey, the darkest are the nations that refused any diplomatic relationship with Israel. The mid-grey are those nations that were not yet independent by the end of the period of this dissertation, and so also had no relationship with Israel. The light grey are those sub-Saharan nations where Israel had a diplomatic presence and provided aid. The North African countries and the Arab world are unshaded, as is South Africa. Map produced by the author using RStudio (Version 1.4.938) with data from the spData package (Buvand, Nowosad & Lovelace, 2021) using sf package (Pebesma, 2018).¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁴ The African nations that received Israeli aid were: Botswana, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Dahomey, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, the Ivory Coast, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malagasy Republic, Malawi, Mauritius, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Swaziland, Togo, Uganda, Upper Volta, Zaire, and Zambia.

Foreign aid and the State of Israel are almost exclusively discussed in terms of the support that Israel received from the United States of America. Little researched and under-discussed by scholars and the wider public alike is the influx of Israeli agricultural, civil, financial and military aid to sub-Saharan Africa. The Israeli aid programme, which during the mid-1960s became in per capita terms one of the largest programmes to Africa, ranged from civilian aid and the rural development of small villages to the training of presidential bodyguards and elite paratroopers, involvement in African civil wars, and the provision of Israeli arms and military hardware into Africa.

Essential, and for many nations crucial, to the economic growth of the newly independent African states, the foreign aid policy pursued by Israeli leaders had Zionist roots which emerged in the writings of Theodore Herzl and the Zionist beliefs of the then Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion and Foreign Minister Golda Meir. They and others in the Israeli leadership at the time believed it was Israel's moral duty to assist these newly emerging nations rise out of poverty and develop into economically successful independent states, just as they were guiding Israel to do. The idea of it being their duty stemmed from the writings of Herzl, and the quote from his *Altneuland* work, as quoted at the beginning of this dissertation. Israel's leaders also hoped to gain international legitimacy for the State of Israel through the recognition and acceptance of Israel's right to exist by sub-Saharan Africa. Africans, looking for sources of funding and assistance from countries other than their former colonial masters, and keen to not have to align to one side of the Cold War battle, accepted Israeli aid in the hope that they could replicate the economic successes they had witnessed in Israel through learning from Israeli development programmes, agricultural settlements and youth initiatives. As Frederick Cooper has noted, it was not just Israel that had to position herself diplomatically as the Cold War emerged, but "as African countries became self-governing, they faced a problem of balancing their cooperation with each other against their need for the resources of the wealthy countries, in the context of Cold War rivalries and the efforts of different countries to

find a place in global economic and political systems after the collapse of colonial empires.”¹⁶⁵

As this chapter will show, Israeli aid to Africa had success in aspects of the civilian programmes and achieved Israel’s aims of improving her public image and the discourse around Israel. The international legitimacy that the early leaders of the State had sought was also achieved. While Israel initially foresaw an aid programme that focused on civilian development, what developed was a situation where African leaders conditioned civilian aid on their receiving Israeli military and intelligence aid. This led to an Israeli aid programme to Africa that had diplomatic ramifications not only on the bilateral level, but also the international and transnational levels. In the 1960s Israel found herself heavily involved in the internal politics of the African continent, the Cold War battle, African relations with Washington, and Arab-African relations both within the Organisation of African Unity and with the oil-producing Arab states. The importance of the global political sphere must not be understated when looking at Israel’s aid programme. The Cold War rivalry between the two superpowers played out in the Middle East, and the newly decolonised African continent. The Soviet Union and the Eastern European satellite states armed the Arab states of North Africa who in turn worked to prevent any Israeli influence or foothold in sub-Saharan Africa. The Israelis gained their weaponry from the Americans, the British and the French, and therefore the Cold War played out on the African continent through an arms race used to gain influence on leaders in an attempt to ensure that they remained within the respective sphere of influence.

Israel’s small size and recent history was seen as an attractive quality to the African nations and that Israel was not a military superpower and posed no threat to the integrity of the new African states was immediately recognised as a positive factor. Her small size meant that Israeli experts were used to improvisation and making do with their limited resources in order to achieve their aims. Israel in 1966 was about double the size of Los Angeles county,¹⁶⁶ which made her problems, and

¹⁶⁵ Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940, The Past of the Present*, 2nd Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019, p. 107.

¹⁶⁶ How Israel’s Scientists Help World and Nation, *Los Angeles Times*, 7 September 1964.

more importantly for sub-Saharan Africa her expertise, all the more relevant. As Mordechai E. Kreinin succinctly surmised in 1964, why should African students learn the techniques required to print 4 million newspapers a day, when they only needed to print, in Liberia, for example, 5,000 a day. Israel, which printed 25,000 a day, was much more comparable and the equipment Israel used was much cheaper than that of the United Kingdom or the United States of America with their mass production techniques.¹⁶⁷ In December 1967 there were twenty-five independent African states, each with a population of less than 5 million people. The domestic output of these countries was generally less than the average purchasing power of a Western European town of 500,000 people.¹⁶⁸ Such a scale did not require massive factories or huge industrial plants for their production lines, as they had neither the need nor the means to churn out such quantities. Israel's small-scale production and small size made touring and first-hand practical experience possible. Many of the young pioneers who had been responsible for Israel's initial development were still working the fields, and later became the experts who taught Africans in Israel and Africa their development knowledge. Of the Israeli experts, approximately one-third were kibbutznik (kibbutz members) or from a moshav, and the majority of the experts were Ashkenazi Jews from European countries.¹⁶⁹

Israeli aid also lacked red tape and once a request was made for aid the Israelis could have a team of experts on the ground within three days.¹⁷⁰ The speed in which Israel provided the aid also proved problematic. Israel at times over promised and did nothing to lessen the expectations of the receiving states, which then led to frustration and disappointment at the end stage when targets and expected results were not achieved. From the perspective of the experts on the ground, they often lacked the

¹⁶⁷ Mordechai E. Kreinin, *Israel and Africa: A Study in Technical Cooperation*, London: Praeger, 1964, p. 113.

¹⁶⁸ King Osafo, General Secretary of the African Students Association, Africa Has a Great Diversity of Resources – Why is it so poor?, *The African Student*, number 10, December 1967, p. 6, in General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 4937, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

¹⁶⁹ D.V. Segre, The Philosophy and Practice of Israel's International Cooperation, in Michael Curtis and Susan Aurelia Gitelson, *Israel in the Third World*, New Jersey: Transaction Books, 1976, p. 10.

¹⁷⁰ Olusola Ojo, *Africa and Israel: Relations in Perspective*, London: Westview Press, 1988, p. 13.

necessary training from the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs and were often sent abroad unprepared. The turnaround speed between request and the deliverance of the aid would often mean that experts were dispatched to their destination countries with the bare minimum of information and were expected to use their initiative on arrival. On-the-job contact between the Israeli expert and Israel for advice from their superiors was often patchy and more related to who you knew in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs than the need of the experts.¹⁷¹ The mindset of the Israeli pioneers was very much focused on the end result through whichever means necessary. In Africa there were considerations that were difficult to reconcile and where societal customs were widely respected. Oftentimes, newly educated African trainees returned to their villages unable to implement the change they had been shown due to the importance of maintaining social norms and respect for elders. Manual labour was also not an attractive occupation for educated African youth and a certificate in agriculture was seen as a means to leave the rural lifestyle and settle in an urban district doing clerical work.¹⁷²

Israel's movements in sub-Saharan Africa can loosely be divided into segments for analytical purposes that show the broad range of Israel's aid programme. Each segment faced its own issues and had its own successes and failures, but through them one is able to gain a fuller picture of Israel's aid programme on the continent. Israel's aid programme can further be divided into civilian aid and military aid. Civilian aid included the training of African youth and women, the training of Africans in Africa in various fields of agricultural and industry, the training of Africans in Israel, and finally, the joint ventures and commercial relationship that focused on infrastructure and development, as well as economic growth. Military aid to Africa encompassed the wide variety of training of African military personnel both in Israel and Africa, as well as Israel's intelligence agencies that used their information to support African leaders and prevent coups. Linked to this was Israel's involvement in African civil wars through her arms sales and desire to promote an

¹⁷¹ Mordechai E. Kreinin, *Israel and Africa: A Study in Technical Cooperation*, London: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964 p. 145.

¹⁷² Samuel Decalo, *Israel and Africa: Forty Years, 1956-1966*, Florida: Florida Academic Press, 1998, pp. 76-77.

African arms market. The roots of these programmes were sown in Israel's aid programme to Ghana.

2.1 *An Overview of Israel's Aid Programme: Israeli Aid to Ghana*

The meeting between Ghanaian and Israeli trade unionists at the International Socialist Conferences and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions led to Israel opening her consulate at Accra in 1956, months before Ghana attained independence and Israel upgraded the Consulate to an Embassy with a permanent resident Ambassador.¹⁷³ At the end of Ghana's independence celebrations, Dr Kwame Nkrumah presented the Israeli delegation with a list of urgent requirements that he had also presented to the other nations that had sent representatives. Ghana's requirements included the formation of a shipping line to transport Ghana's exports, which at that time was mostly cocoa; for advisors to advise on agricultural needs; technical assistance in light industry; and advice on education and youth. Within one year of the list of requirements being presented to the Israeli delegation, Israel had installed a full Embassy team at Accra and every item on Nkrumah's list was initiated and worked on, with over 200 Israelis involved in the various projects.¹⁷⁴

Israeli aid was both sought after and needed. During the early 1950s, as African independence movements were beginning to grow, the British Governor of the Gold Coast made remarks that suggested that the lack of trained African civil servants, both technical and administrative, would mean that Europeans would have to play a role in the governance and civil service sector for an indefinite period.¹⁷⁵ Israel moved in to occupy that space and provided advice to Nkrumah throughout the early days of his leadership. Such was the rapid development of Israeli and Ghanaian ties that within three years of Israel's consulate in Accra opening, there were 280

¹⁷³ Joel Peters, *Israel and Africa: The Problematic Friendship*, London: British Academic Press, 1992, p 2.

¹⁷⁴ Ehud Avriel, *Israel's Beginnings in Africa*, in Michael Curtis and Susan Aurelia Gitelson, *Israel in the Third World*, New Jersey: Transaction Books, 1976, pp. 70-72.

¹⁷⁵ The Consul at Accra (Cole) to the Department of State, 4 February 1952, *FRUS*, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v11p1/d104> [accessed 7 June 2021].

Israelis living in Ghana.¹⁷⁶ The Trade Union movements were the driving force between the relationship during this initial period, and in 1957 John Tettegah, the then Secretary-General of Ghana's Trade Union movement, said after his visit to Israel that "Israel has given me more in eight days than I could obtain from two years in a British university." Tettegah was not the only one to express such sentiments. Tom Mboya, a Kenyan trade unionist, noted that "any African who tours Israel cannot fail to be impressed by the achievements made in such a short time from poor soil and with so few natural resources. We all tended to come away most excited and eager to return to our countries and repeat all those experiments."¹⁷⁷

In late 1957, Israel's envoy in Ghana encouraged Golda Meir to visit during the March 1958 celebrations of the first anniversary of independence. Meir returned from her trip to Africa with an enthusiasm and desire to provide genuine and meaningful aid to the newly independent states.¹⁷⁸ When it was time to appoint an Ambassador to Accra, Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion and Foreign Minister Golda Meir chose their close confidant, Ehud Avriel whose one-man diplomacy "completely dominated" the political scene and who achieved great success in winning over the Ghanaian leadership. Avriel's ability to command respect for his State, and place Israel at the forefront of the diplomatic corps at Accra was impressive. During the three years that he served as Ambassador between 1957 and 1960, Avriel ensured that Israel was firmly on the map of Ghanaian officials. Avriel's achievement is even more impressive when one considers that by 1962 there were fifty embassies in Accra and Israel's still remained one of the most important. Avriel had three major objectives which he hoped would turn Ghana into the showpiece of Israel's aid project: first, he worked to gain influence over the Prime Minister, Dr Kwame Nkrumah. Second, he initiated and encouraged an increase in economic cooperation and ties between the two states, and third he started what would become

¹⁷⁶ Israel Presses Asia-Africa Ties, *New York Times*, 4 October 1959.

¹⁷⁷ Joel Peters, *Israel and Africa, The Problematic Friendship*, London: British Academic Press, 1992, p. 3.

¹⁷⁸ Zach Levey, The Rise and Decline of a Special Relationship: Israel and Ghana, 1957-1966, *African Studies Review*, Vol. 46, No. 1 (Apr., 2003) p. 159.

a key and central theme of Israeli aid, and one of the biggest attractions for Africa's leaders: military aid.¹⁷⁹

Returning to Avriel's first aim, the Israeli Ambassador managed to build up a unique relationship between himself and Prime Minister Nkrumah. A striking example of their friendship was displayed in January 1958 when the Ghanaian Prime Minister requested dinner at the Ambassador's house. Not only did Nkrumah request dinner, but he also requested that he be collected from his official residence by the Ambassador and travelled in the Ambassador's car without police outriders or bodyguards. Once at the home of the Ambassador and his family, Nkrumah discussed Egypt and a major statement that he had prepared to deliver on foreign policy in which he would define his government's attitude towards Nasser and his desire for leadership of African affairs. Nkrumah asserted that he would never "sacrifice the principles and accepted standards of [Nkrumah's] policy to certain opportune situations. I am interested to get Egypt as an equal partner into the All-African Congress, but I am not ready to refute certain ideals in order to get them here."¹⁸⁰ Egypt was Israel's greatest competitor on the continent, with Gamal Abdel Nasser's repeated attempts to link the needs of Africa with those of the Palestinian people, and through his policy of working to exclude and remove all traces of an Israeli presence from the African continent.

The rivalry between Nkrumah and Nasser for leadership of Africa was well-known in African diplomatic circles and through his meeting with the Israeli Ambassador, Nkrumah had given assurances that Egypt would not be allowed to influence Ghanaian foreign policy, and in particular, with regards to Ghana's relationship with Israel. Despite Nkrumah's assurances, he sent an Ambassador to Cairo before he sent one to Tel Aviv, and he never visited Israel. However, whilst Nkrumah refused to visit Israel, Ghana's first ministerial delegation to make an

¹⁷⁹ Zach Levey, *The Rise and Decline of a Special Relationship: Israel and Ghana, 1957 – 1966*, *African Studies Review*, Vol. 46, No. 1 (Apr., 2003), p. 158.

¹⁸⁰ Letter from Chanan Yavor at the Embassy of Israel, Accra to Maasaf, Dr Kwame Nkrumah, Prime Minister, 13 January 1958, in Israel State Archives, Folder 3103/10.

international trip abroad, post-independence, included Jerusalem as the main stop of their trip.¹⁸¹

2.1.1 The Role of the Trade Unions in the Bilateral Relationship

Frederick Cooper analysed the importance of trade unions in Africa's own development and spoke of the trade unions and others who "had seized the openings of the post-war moment and made a variety of claims: for access to material resources, for their voices to be heard, for the exercise of power. The pioneer in the move to independence, Ghana, had shown that elites moving toward sovereignty could exclude alternatives to their exercise of power from the realm of possibility."¹⁸² Furthermore, in Ghana, the trade unions "were familiar with the task of representing the interests of diverse workers." Likewise, farmers in Ghana had "decades of experience with the cultivation and marketing of export crops such as cocoa."¹⁸³ African trade unions moved towards their international counterparts in the post-war period in their "demand for equal wages, for the end to oppressive colonial legislation, and for fuller recognition of collective bargaining to a worldwide movement."¹⁸⁴ Extolling the virtues of the Israeli trade union movement, the Histadrut, the *Ghanaian Times* reported that it was the "major constructive factor in the economic life of the country. Histadrut has demonstrated that a labour community can successfully undertake the responsibilities of national reconstruction and social planning in the spirit of voluntary cooperation. Histadrut has created and consolidated the economic basis of Israel's political freedom." This appealed to African nations who sought national reconstruction and social planning to develop their economies, and societies, as they celebrated their independence. In return for between 3 to 4.5%

¹⁸¹ Samuel Decalo, *Israel and Africa: Forty Years, 1956-1996*, Florida: Florida Academic Press Inc., 1998, p. 3.

¹⁸² Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940, The Past of the Present*, 2nd Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019, p. 95.

¹⁸³ Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940, The Past of the Present*, 2nd Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019, p. 67.

¹⁸⁴ Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940, The Past of the Present*, 2nd Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019, p. 78.

of the member's wages, as reported in the article, the Histadrut provided trade unionism, health care, and social services to its members. Within Africa, health care and social services were both desperately underfunded and access to both was limited, and so the Histadrut's system appealed to the African working man. The *Times* article continued that the Histadrut was there "not to simply protect the workers' interests, but to create a working class by immigration and training, to build up industry and agriculture, to give the workers a livelihood, and to provide them with modern social services"; again, something that the African nations sought.

The article also dealt with another issue that faced the African nations, and that Israeli experts came up against, and that was how to encourage their citizens to undertake manual labour and agricultural work. There had to be a realisation that gaining a certificate from participation at an agricultural seminar could no longer be used to gain employment in the urban district as a clerk. The article spoke of the Israeli pioneers who "accepted personal responsibility of living and working in such a way as to help the new society to be born. And because workers are the foundation of any normal society, they understood ... [the importance] in husbandry and in other trades." The importance of agricultural husbandry as the root of all development was something that Israel had experienced and sought to pass on through its aid programme, but as mentioned, this met resistance from some communities in sub-Saharan Africa who did not want to engage in farm work or animal husbandry and instead preferred to move to the cities for more comfortable office work.

The Israeli trade union was further extolled when it was described that the trade union and consumer cooperative system "grew up to supply the labour villages and urban workers, and now caters to one-third of the population. Over 160,000 people live in homes built through the Histadrut's building programme." They continued that "cooperatives play a dominant role in road transportation ... in shipping and air transportation ... irrigation ... banking and insurance. One hundred and seventy thousand families or 27 per cent of Israel's total labour force gain their livelihood directly through the labour economy." The message to the reader was that trade unionism and hard work through the labour sector was the key to a successful economy and to building an independent society reliant on only its own domestic manpower. The cooperative enterprise "in which groups of workers band together to

cultivate the soil, engage in industry or provide services, is highly developed.” Manual labour was not to be looked down on and indeed, a prerequisite to development was manual labour and a desire by all to work for the greater good of the nation, and not just their family unit.

The 12-page supplement also included dozens of photographs of the Israeli development programme, with photographs also of the training of the youth in Israel; the impressive and imposing headquarters of the Histadrut movement in Tel Aviv; photographs of suburbs built by the Histadrut and examples of worker’s homes; modern department stores built by the cooperative movement, as well as modern vehicles being used to unload products from the collective settlements at the cooperative regional station; a fully stocked cooperative store is pictured above a photograph of a moshav member working the land on a modern tractor, whilst the next page showed a kibbutz member harvesting grain with a combine harvester; a hen shed was also shown full of hens with women collecting baskets full of eggs on a kibbutz, with the caption stating that Israel exports millions of eggs per year due to excess production; clinicians treating a young baby were also shown, with the final page showing the Biblical city of Nazareth after renovation with modern homes on display for the readership to admire. The supplement was to show Africa what could be achieved with Israeli development aid, and in a short period of time.¹⁸⁵ Israel’s Histadrut movement was at the forefront of Israel’s aid programme and involved in Israel’s relationship with Ghana, and other African and Asian states, from the beginning. As the *Ghanaian Times* reported, the Histadrut provided most of the social welfare needs of their members, including housing, health care, and education. With specific focus on Ghana, not only were the trade union movements the source of contact between Israelis and Ghanaians, but there was also an Israeli Histadrut official who was seconded to Ghana’s Trade Union Congress in November 1961 for a period

¹⁸⁵ Half A Century of Socialist Achievement – the Histadrut of Israel, *The Ghanaian Times Supplement*, 5 April 1962, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1903/14.

of twelve months, but who proved so useful to Ghana, that they requested he remain another year in order to complete his work.¹⁸⁶

Further trade union projects in Ghana included economic and training ventures, rural water development, and the successful trial of what would become an important aid project throughout Israel's programme in sub-Saharan Africa and that was chicken rearing. Israel would be very successful in introducing commercial poultry-raising to west Africa. The project in Ghana began in 1959 and within three years Ghana was producing domestically enough eggs that they no longer needed to import the five-million eggs per annum that they had been.¹⁸⁷ The benefit was not just the economic savings of having to import eggs, but there was also an important nutritional benefit for the Ghanaian population as eggs were a cheap source of animal protein, something that was lacking in most African diets, whilst chicken husbandry was relatively straightforward and easy with minimal start-up costs. Israel faced some initial reluctance amongst some of the African rural communities who were not familiar with eating chicken eggs, but the Israeli programme overall was hugely successful with most of West Africa becoming self-sufficient in eggs and their populations seeing the benefits of regular animal protein in their diets.

¹⁸⁶ Letter from the Deputy Secretary-General of the Ghanaian Trade Union Congress to the Israeli Ambassador at Accra, 27 July 1962, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1903/14.

¹⁸⁷ Mordechai E. Kreinin, *Israel and Africa: A Study in Technical Cooperation*, London: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964, p. 88.



An example of a West African student being trained in chicken rearing in Israel. An agricultural trainee from Dahomey and Rachel Iflach collecting eggs at her chicken run, at her farm in Moshav Devorah, in the Taanach area in northern Israel, 3 February 1964. Photo Credit: Pridan Moshe, Israeli Government Press Office.

2.1.2 Examples of Israel's Aid Programme to Ghana

Two examples that demonstrate the breadth and spread of Israel's aid programme to Ghana are the assistance provided in the meteorological and resettlement fields. In November 1962, Israel sent to the Ministry of Communications and Work in Accra a report on the meteorological services in Ghana and offered to teach Ghanaian students in Israel modern meteorological methods.¹⁸⁸ In April 1963 a provisional agreement between the meteorological services of Ghana and Israel was signed, in which Israel offered one fellowship in the basic networks and the principles of the establishment, operation and inspection of different kinds of metrological

¹⁸⁸ Letter from the Ghanaian Minister of Communications and Works to the Israeli Ambassador to Ghana, 30 November 1962, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1903/16.

stations. The fellowship was to last 3 to 6 months and at the end of which an Israeli expert would accompany the fellow to Ghana for one month. A second fellowship of 6 to 12 months was offered for an instrument technician in the field of repair, maintenance, construction and calibration of conventional meteorological instruments. The final fellowship was for a meteorologist to study the principles of micro-climatology and maritime meteorology. Israel also supplied specimen meteorological instruments, manufactured in Israel, for testing and the carrying out of experiments in Ghana.¹⁸⁹ In February 1963, Israel hosted the Deputy Secretary who was in charge of the Volta River Authority's resettlement programme and the Welfare Officer who was in charge of relations with the communities in the areas to be flooded out. They spent a fortnight in Israel where they gained experience in the planning and execution of resettlement programmes and studied how Israel had developed her rural communities from an administrative perspective.¹⁹⁰

Ghana was also one of several African countries where small loans and grants for agricultural development paid off handsomely for the Ghanaian rural population. In 1958, the Prime Minister requested an Israeli senior advisor in agriculture to take charge of an Israeli agriculture team in Ghana. The Israelis in Ghana initiated several large-scale agricultural projects that saw real results. The first of these projects were two farms, one at Tadzewu and one at Akatsi. The State Cattle Farm at Tadzewu was established in 1962 and was 2,000 acres with 1,500 head of cattle. They also grew maize, fodder, legumes and vegetables. Not only was the farm an improvement on Ghanaian agricultural methods, but the Israeli advisors impressed their Ghanaian counterparts through their willingness to work in the fields throughout the day, and that they slept in the local village rather than commuting from the urban centre. The second state farm was set up at Akatsi, with 1,200 acres of grain and vegetable farming. The Akatsi farm was a massive success and within twelve months was

¹⁸⁹ Provisional Agreement for Technical Cooperation between the Meteorological Services of Ghana and Israel, 9 April 1963, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1903/17.

¹⁹⁰ Letter from the Chief Executive of the Volta River Authority to the Israeli Ambassador to Ghana, 30 November 1962, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1903/16.

producing 52% of all the maize harvested on state farms in Ghana, despite having only 3% of the acreage.



Akatzi State Farm run by Ghana's Ministry of Agriculture in cooperation with a team of Israeli Agricultural experts, 15 September 1962. Photo Credit: David Eldan, Israeli Government Press Office.

The Israeli experts also set up two demonstration farms in the Accra plains that were devoted to dairy, intensive cultivation and poultry, something that Nkrumah was keen on. Goat farming was also improved, with 40 goats and an Israeli veterinary officer sent to Ghana in 1961 to set up a goat farm, with a second farm being set up in 1969. In 1963, the director of the Tel Aviv zoo also was sent to Ghana to set up a private zoo for Nkrumah.¹⁹¹ By 1969, the Tadzewu farm had grown to 8,000 hectares with fodder crops that were drought-resistant and provided green feed year-round. This was an important development as it allowed the cows to reach their full weight in 2.5 years, instead of 5, provided for more profitable farming and high return on their investment, as the cattle only had to be fed and reared for half of the time before slaughter, thus reducing overheads and cost.¹⁹² The farm did come up against some

¹⁹¹ Moshe Decter, *To Serve, To Teach, To Leave: The Story of Israel's Development Assistance Program to Black Africa*, New York: American Jewish Congress, 1977, pp. 58-61.

¹⁹² State of Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Agriculture, *Israel's Agricultural Cooperation with Developing Countries*, Jerusalem: Government Press, 1969.

problems in the initial set up, with the original plan being to set up the farm with an investment of \$490,000 for superior cattle from Mali, and to invest in European machinery. A lack of funds resulted in a delay and machinery sourced from other Ghanaian state farms, and inferior cattle from other Ghanaian cattle stocks.¹⁹³

Throughout the late 1960s, Ghanaian agriculture was developed and diversified with palm oil, sugar cane, cotton, and rubber all produced for export.¹⁹⁴ The infrastructure needed to modernise the agriculture sector was also underway during this period, with the training of youth in farming practices and their planned settlement in the farming communities. The youth were expected to succeed as farmers, and thus remain out of the urban centres that did not have the employment capacity for the young population. However, not all of these programmes were a success: of a sample size of three-hundred trainees who studied in Israel on national service projects, only 10% returned home and took up national service, with the majority of the remaining 90% working in desk jobs in the civil service.¹⁹⁵ Nevertheless, those that did remain in the rural society were encouraged to use existing irrigation techniques whilst also adapting to the Israeli irrigation methods. Farm mechanisation was introduced slowly both due to cost, but also to reduce the resistance that rapid change would have provoked. The Government also worked on access roads and infrastructure for the rural farmers to get their produce to the city, rather than just to local rural marketplaces. Further incentives for farmers were government price guarantees for rice and maize, and an increase in produce prices for crops.¹⁹⁶ The social organisation of the Israeli agricultural sector was that the

¹⁹³ Samuel Decalo, *Israel and Africa: Forty Years, 1956-1996*, Florida: Florida Academic Press Inc, 1998, p. 78.

¹⁹⁴ Government of Ghana March 1969, Ghana's Economy and Aid Requirements – January 1969 to June 1970, in World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1761568 – A1995-149 – Other # 9 Box # 181502B – Ghana – General – Consultative Group – 1969 / 71 Correspondence – Volume 1.

¹⁹⁵ Abel Jacob, Israel's Military Aid to Africa, 1960-1966, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (Aug., 1971), p. 184.

¹⁹⁶ Government of Ghana March 1969, Ghana's Economy and Aid Requirements – January 1969 to June 1970, in World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1761568 – A1995-149 – Other # 9 Box # 181502B – Ghana – General – Consultative Group – 1969 / 71 Correspondence – Volume 1.

government aimed to provide a similar income for agricultural and industrial workers. Ghana's guarantees of crop prices was similarly an attempt to make farming profitable for the farmer.

2.1.3 Trade and Joint Companies

In 1956 the Israeli Counsellor for Economic Affairs in Washington and the Israeli Consul-General in New York met with the Gold Coast's Minister of Finance where prospects for future economic cooperation were discussed. One point of interest to the Israelis was the 50,000 tons of West African timber that they had purchased in 1955, and whether Ghana exported the same type of timber. The Israelis also sought access to Ghanaian cocoa beans and promoted Israel as a potential source of metallic magnesium for the Volta project's aluminium plant. Whilst Israel's trade relationship with Ghana did not commence immediately following the meeting, Israeli ties with Ghana started to accelerate.

By 1958, Ghana and Israel enjoyed a "... 'special relationship' whose key components were the Black Star Line, a joint shipping company financed 40 percent by Israel's Zim Navigation, and the operations of Solel Boneh, the Israeli Histadrut-owned building firm."¹⁹⁷ The Black Star Line was incorporated at the cost of \$1.5 million, 40% of which came from Israel.¹⁹⁸ The other 60% of the Black Star Line was financed and owned by the Ghanaian government. During the first ten months of its incorporation, the Line's sole vessel carried 122,000 tons of cargo between West Africa and Israel. By the beginning of 1968, almost all of Ghana's freight and insurance receipts were from the jointly-owned shipping line.¹⁹⁹ The joint company was not immune from the Middle East conflict though and two years after incorporation Ghana requested that the Black Star Line was restructured to

¹⁹⁷ Zach Levey, Israel's Strategy in Africa, 1961-1967, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (Feb. 2004), p. 74.

¹⁹⁸ Israel 'Soft Sell' Spurs African Aid, *New York Times*, 16 October 1960.

¹⁹⁹ Government of Ghana, January 1968: Ghana's Economy and Aid Requirements in 1968, in World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1761567 – A1995-149 – Other # 9 Box # 181502B – Ghana – General – Consultative Group – Correspondence – Volume 1.

circumvent Egypt's refusal to allow their ship's passage through the Suez Canal on account of the line being part-Israeli owned. As part of the restructuring agreement, Accra sought Israeli managerial advice for twenty-five years, but the final agreement provided for full Ghanaian ownership of the Black Star Line with Israeli managerial advice for five years.²⁰⁰ To ensure the lasting the success of a joint company, there had to have been processes and procedures in place, so that before Israel relinquished her shares she had ensured that her experts had equipped and prepared their African counterparts for the responsibility of taking over management roles. Frustratingly, as Mordechai E. Kreinin noted, the Israeli experts were often reluctant to entrust the locals with positions of responsibility.²⁰¹ There was also frequently no suitable understudies working with the Israelis until the final twelve-months of the Israeli expert's mission.

Nevertheless, the Black Star Line was the first of many joint enterprises between Israel and Africa, and in 1958 the Ghana National Construction Company was established with the co-operation of Solel Boneh, a construction and civil engineering company owned by the Histadrut.²⁰² The Ghana National Construction Company was immediately successful and with an initial operating start-up cost of just \$600,000 the company handled \$12 million worth of projects and made in 1960 a profit of \$100,000.²⁰³ In 1958, Israel also extended a loan of \$20 million to Ghana, and in Washington D.C. Israel assisted Ghana and guided their new Ambassador around the United States capital in order to secure aid for his new nation.²⁰⁴ Israel provided very few loans to Africa, and her aid programme was much more about the transfer of knowledge than the transfer of capital. Whilst the knowledge was sought

²⁰⁰ Zach Levey, Israel's Entry to Africa, 1956-1961, *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (September 2001), pp. 99-100.

²⁰¹ Mordechai E. Kreinin, *Israel and Africa: A Study in Technical Cooperation*, London: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964, p. 143.

²⁰² Y. Leo Kohn, Israel and the New Nation States of Asia and Africa, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 324, Resolving the Russian-American Deadlock (Jul., 1959), p. 100.

²⁰³ Israel 'Soft-Sell- Spurs African Aid, *New York Times*, 16 October 1960.

²⁰⁴ Olusola Ojo, *Africa and Israel: Relations in Perspective*, London: Westview Press, 1988, p.19.

after and benefited Africa, the lack of capital left Israel vulnerable to competition from the Arab states who could afford to loan Africa vast sums.

Israel did however provide small sums of trade credit on occasion. In August of 1958, Israel's Ambassador at Accra and Ghana's Minister of Trade and Commerce signed a trade agreement that extended to Ghana an Israeli credit of IL£7.5 million for the purchase of Israeli goods. The agreement was signed for an initial period of four-years and provided for Ghana to purchase from Israel chemicals, light industry products, cement and building materials, vehicles, machinery and food products. From Ghana, Israel purchased cocoa, oil seed, copra, hides and wood. This was the first time that Israel had extended financial assistance of this kind to another country.²⁰⁵ The agreement not only provided Ghana with a financial incentive to trade with Israel, but it also cemented Israel's trade relationship with Accra, and the extension of the trade markets to western Africa. However, it took Ghana's parliament thirteen months to ratify the trade deal, due to concern and unhappiness over the consequences for default payments on the loan, with the Ghanaian parliamentarians concerned that this would put Ghana "...under the thumb of the Israeli government."²⁰⁶

Thus, Ghana's relationship with Israel was important not just for the aid that Ghana would receive from Israel, but Israel also wanted to open up an export market for Israeli goods and new markets for trade. In September 1956 a company in which the Israeli state had an interest, the Dizengoff West Africa company, had moved into a set of offices in Accra and within nine months had received orders of \$550,000 and purchased \$250,000 worth of Ghanaian goods. In August 1958, the Dizengoff

²⁰⁵ Foreign Service Dispatch from the American Embassy at Tel Aviv to the Department of State, Weekly Economic Review, Desp. No 147, 22 August 1958, General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 4930, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

²⁰⁶ See: Foreign Service Dispatch from the American Embassy at Tel Aviv to the Department of State, Weekly Economic Review, Desp. No 298, 30 October 1959, General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 4930, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland and Foreign Service Dispatch from the American Embassy at Tel Aviv to the Department of State, Weekly Economic Review, Desp. No 332, 15 November 1959, General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 4930, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

Company and Kaiser-Frazer of Israel established a joint marketing company which would distribute Kaiser-Frazer products to Ghana and Liberia, with the first shipment of 30 Kaiser-Frazer vehicles dispatched to Africa that September.²⁰⁷ However, as the Israeli Ambassador at Accra had suspected and encouraged, arm sales would play a central role in any bilateral Israeli-African agreement, and the importance of arms in both the Cold War sphere and in Israeli aid to sub-Saharan Africa became apparent early on. As early as the beginning of 1958, Ehud Avriel discussed with Shimon Peres, then Director-General of the Defence Ministry, the need to send a military representative to Accra to develop training and arms sales with Ghana, in particular due to Ghana's recent rejection of Egypt's offer to assist in the organisation and development of Ghana's military forces.

In January 1958, two years after the Dizengoff West Africa company had started trading, the Ghanaian government asked that an agreement be reached with Israel that included Israeli instructors, apprenticeships for Ghanaian foremen in Israel, engineering know-how and technical advice and services and for the provision of machinery that originated from third countries for specific projects, in the case that specific machinery could not be supplied direct by Israel. Ghana therefore wanted Israel to procure items, and trade via third countries, to enable Ghana to obtain the necessary light industrial machinery for Ghanaian development that Israel was unable to provide. Ghana further requested that the outfit allowances, fares of the instructors, engineers, experts and apprentices be also added to the list of goods Israel was to provide to Ghana. Israel agreed that with regards to Ghanaian goods and goods that were produced by both Ghana and Israel, Israel would attempt to sell both countries' goods together so as to develop larger and joint markets. For goods that Israel did not produce, but which were produced by Ghana, Israel would also try to sell as goods of Ghanaian origin, and likewise for Israeli goods sold in Ghana. For Ghanaian products that were sold through the London markets, Ghana was to facilitate their purchase for

²⁰⁷ Foreign Service Dispatch from the American Embassy at Tel Aviv to the Department of State, Weekly Economic Review, Desp. No 134, 15 August 1958, General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 4930, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

Israeli experts in Ghana.²⁰⁸ Israel's trade relationship with Ghana was thus one that provided real benefits to both countries.

2.1.4 Diplomatic Relations

Foreign Minister Golda Meir's 1958 trip had included stops in Ghana, the Ivory Coast, Liberia, Nigeria and Senegal, all nations that would later be important to Israel's movements in sub-Saharan Africa. Upon Meir's return from west Africa, she reported that she had gone there seeking friends for Israel and was expecting African leaders to make state visits in the coming months.²⁰⁹ Meir had decided that Ghana was to be used as the showpiece and gateway for Israel on the African continent. Through focusing attention on Accra and development projects in Ghana, Israel hoped that other west African states would notice and allow Israeli development aid in.

There were setbacks early on in Israel's relationship with Ghana. In 1959 Ako Adjei, the Ghanaian representative at the United Nations, adopted a position that was against the State of Israel during discussions on the rights of Palestinian refugees. Further setbacks appeared when Nkrumah replaced the pro-Israeli Foreign Minister with the pro-Arab Adjei in April 1959, which coincided with Ghana's more critical stance towards Israel's relationship with France. Six months later, in another display of the one-sidedness of the Ghanaian-Israeli relationship, Nkrumah demanded from Israel more experts to assist with Ghana's health, education, and agricultural affairs, and implied that if Israel did not agree then Avriel's standing in Accra, and Israel's in Ghana, would suffer. Avriel wrote to the Israeli Foreign Minister Golda Meir and recommended that Israel met Nkrumah's demands to keep Accra out of the hands of the Soviets and the Arabs. An angered Meir and a disappointed Avriel decided at the end of 1959 that Israel's special treatment towards Ghana should end. Nkrumah could not expect to receive every demand he made but they also realised that the reality of

²⁰⁸ Payment Agreement Between the State of Israel and Ghana, 13 January 1958, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1950/14.

²⁰⁹ African Ties Stressed, *New York Times*, 2 April 1958.

the situation was such that Israel could not do anything or remove anything that would seriously inhibit their relationships with Ghana as their presence in Accra, and their development programme in Ghana, enhanced Israel's international image. Any reduction in aid would have harmed Israel's interests as much as Ghana's, something Israel could ill-afford with most of sub-Saharan Africa on the brink of independence. For Nkrumah, Israel was an important supplier of intelligence on Egyptian and Arab activity on the continent, and such intelligence was important in Nkrumah's bid to be seen as the de-facto leader of the continent.²¹⁰ But relations between Israel and Ghana had to now be seen on a more level-headed footing and there had to be an understanding both at the governmental level, but also amongst the public, that ties with Ghana were not to be viewed through rose-tinted lenses, but rather the harsh reality that the relationship was often at times a difficult one, and that Israel could no longer expect Nkrumah to acquiesce to all Israeli hopes of support in international forums with regards to the Middle East conflict.

2.1.5 Ghanaian's in Israel

Ghanaian businessmen and politicians, who understood the Biblical link to Israel and the familiarity with the Biblical city names in the country, warmed towards the Holy land and the State of Israel's ambassador at Accra. The African delegations who travelled to Israel during the aid programme were excited to have walked in the footsteps of Jesus and in places of Biblical significance. It was an aspect that Israel knew well, and one that Israel was prepared to exploit in order to garnish friendship with their African visitors. The Ghanaian representative to the Israeli Seminar on Cooperation that was held in Israel from November 1958 to February 1959, Mr Atiemo, was quoted as stating that "The African representatives have found a new inspiration in the Israeli pattern. We have also achieved a lifetime ambition of paying

²¹⁰ Zach Levey, *The Rise and Decline of a Special Relationship: Israel and Ghana, 1957-1966*, *African Studies Review*, Vol. 46, No. 1 (Apr., 2003), pp. 159-163.

a pilgrimage to the Bible Land.”²¹¹ Sentiments such as these were repeated often, as will be discussed throughout the following paragraphs.

In September 1959 a six-man delegation headed by the Ghanaian Transport Minister arrived in Israel for a ten-day tour to study the organisation of the Israeli transport system, particularly the cooperative sector, as well as the operations of youth organisations in Israel.²¹² Israel’s transportation network consisted primarily of a cooperative bus movement, *Egged*, that provided intercity bus services, with a network that covered most of the country, and was particularly successful. *Egged* was active in Ethiopia as well, but had less success, as will be discussed. During the Minister’s trip to a tyre factory at Hadera, the Minister proposed the establishment of a joint tyre factory in Ghana, to be owned by a joint Ghanaian and Israeli company. The Minister also started negotiations for the supply of Israeli buses to Ghana, with the assistance of the Israeli Ministry of Transportation and *Egged*.²¹³

In May 1963 the Director-General of Ghana’s Ministry of Agriculture spent twelve days in Israel meeting various officials of the Ministry of Agriculture and Israel’s Department for International Agricultural Cooperation, visiting various kibbutzim around the country, and touring Christian sights in the Holy Land.²¹⁴ The importance of Christian sights and the Biblical history of Israel was shown also in a March 1963 letter from the Chief Commissioner of the Ghana Girl Guides Association to the Israeli Embassy at Accra. The Commissioner requested a visit to Israel to see the developments in Israeli youth work, resettlement centres, women’s

²¹¹ Seminar of Cooperation: For Co-operators from Asian and African Countries, 13th Nov. 1958-15th Feb. 1959, Tel-Aviv, Israel in General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 4937, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

²¹² Foreign Service Dispatch from the American Embassy at Tel Aviv to the Department of State, Weekly Economic Review, Desp. No 191, 18 September 1959, General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 4930, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

²¹³ Foreign Service Dispatch from the American Embassy at Tel Aviv to the Department of State, Weekly Economic Review, Desp. No 209, 25 September 1959, General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 4930, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

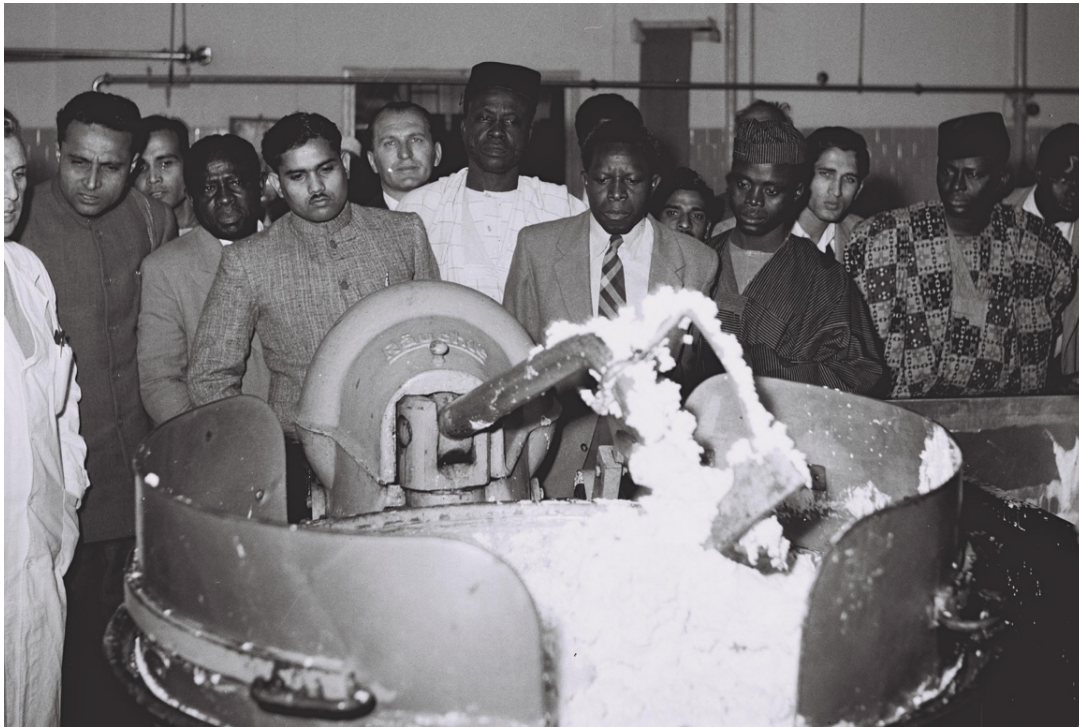
²¹⁴ Proposed Program for the Visit of the Director-General of the Ministry of Agriculture, Ghana, from 18 May 1963, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1903/17.

work, farming and handicraft centres, but importance was given to Biblical places, and Israeli holy sites in the request.²¹⁵ Israel was therefore able to capitalise on the Biblical connection that the Christian community of Africa had, and they did so with Africa, and in particular Ghana; Asian nationals who never had a history of Christianity did not have the same attachment to Israel.

The first major training of African students in Israel began in November 1958 with a seminar held in Tel Aviv. The seminar was divided into four parts: six-weeks of lectures that covered the international cooperative movement; the economic problems in low-income countries; cooperative law and administration, as well as cooperative settlement and farming; and lectures on cooperation in Israel, followed by tours of cooperative kibbutzim and moshavim. The second part of the course dealt with daily life in the kibbutzim and moshavim, with lectures on regional settlement planning and agricultural settlement. There was then a week-long session of lectures that focused on cooperative dairy planning, cooperative department stores, and further lectures on credit, insurance, audits, education, social welfare and specialised agricultural problems; there were also lectures on Israel and the history of the Jewish people, including a lecture by Golda Meir on the birth of the State of Israel. The seminar concluded with the participants being received by the President of the State of Israel and the Foreign Minister where further concluding lectures were given on world cooperative movements, social planning, the use of solar energy, and on the integration of a nation. The participants of the seminar were well qualified for the course. The Ghanaian delegation comprised members of the United Ghana's Farmers' Council and members of the Cooperative Bank, and they left Israel hopeful that the new methods they had studied and witnessed would help in Ghana. However, the Ghanaian delegation did not believe that the kibbutz system would succeed, but

²¹⁵ Letter from the Chief Commissioner of the Ghana Girl Guides Association to the Israeli Ambassador to Ghana, 4 March 1963, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1903/17.

they were optimistic that with some slight modifications, the moshav system of cooperative agriculture would be a success.²¹⁶



Members of the Afro-Asian Seminar at a Tnuva Factory, 9 December 1958. Photo Credit: Pridan Moshe, Israeli Government Press Office. Tnuva was for its first seventy years an Israeli food processing cooperative owned by the kibbutzim and moshavim.

The programme of having Africans live and study in Israel for an extended period of time produced a large amount of good will for the State of Israel. African leaders often sent their relatives to Israel for training, one example is Joseph Nyerere, the brother of the Tanzanian president, who spent a considerable amount of time training in Israel. The experiences and their impressions of Israel influenced African policy towards Israel.²¹⁷ There were also examples of African leaders training in

²¹⁶ Seminar of Cooperation: For Co-operators from Asian and African Countries, 13th Nov. 1958-15th Feb. 1959, Tel-Aviv, Israel in General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 4937, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

²¹⁷ Joel Peters, *Israel and Africa: The Problematic Friendship*, London: The British Academic Press, 1992, p. 9.

Israel, with Idi Amin receiving his flying wings in Israel.²¹⁸ This goodwill would endure throughout the rupture in relations, and most importantly, the youthfulness of the African continent and the percentage of their populations that were under 25 years of age also bode well for Israel. These African youth were trained in Israeli *gadna* and *nahal* methods and their memories of their positive experiences and of what the Israeli experts had offered to their communities, and their countries, remained vivid throughout the decades that followed. Their experiences played an important part in the alumni of these courses calling for a resumption in relations with Israel within just a few years of the rupture. The youth training programmes will be discussed separately in the subchapters on *gadna* and *nahal*.

2.1.6 Israel's Aid Programme in the American Media

The Israeli government's own promotion of its aid programme was complimented by the media coverage of Israel's activities in Africa. As early as the mid-point of 1959, the Israeli aid programme had established itself and was reported on in the major printed press in the United States, including a lengthy piece in *The Washington Post* titled "Israel Lending a Welcome Hand". The article highlighted how Israel, then only 11 years old, had instituted a foreign aid programme that was "wide-ranging" and "diverse."²¹⁹ *The Chicago Defender* was equally as positive in their coverage of Israel. An article in May 1959 mentioned the \$20 million loan Israel had provided to Ghana and the African and Asian trainees that were studying on Israeli agricultural settlements, with instruction being given on the topics of city planning, the use of Israeli irrigation methods as well as the Israeli cooperative movement. Not only had Israel managed, according the *Defender*, to escape the Arab encirclement and countered Egypt's Nasser, but she had also achieved phenomenal success with a soil that was barren and "... against physical odds that would deter the

²¹⁸ Idi Amin, President of Uganda from 1971 to 1979, appeared extremely proud of his Israeli wings and wore the insignia even after his country had severed formal diplomatic relations with the State of Israel.

²¹⁹ Israel Lending a Welcome Hand, *The Washington Post*, 17 May 1959.

most hopeful.”²²⁰ Such complimentary and informative articles in respected American newspapers also benefited Israel amongst the American political elite and the Diaspora communities throughout the country, upon which Israel was so heavily reliant for her political, economic and military support. An outlet to the Diaspora community in the United States was something that Israel also deemed beneficial for when they sold government bonds to raise funds for their domestic needs. The articles also allowed Israel to achieve her aim of international legitimacy with the reporting of African and Asian nations having contact with Israel, and therefore accepting Israel’s right to exist, something that was important to both the government and the people of Israel.

2.1.7 Israel’s Aid Programme to Ghana: A Critique

Israel’s aid programme to Ghana succeeded in being the showpiece for the rest of the continent to look to, and achieved both the international legitimacy Israel sought and succeeded as a base for Israeli activities in Africa. Despite Israel’s training being largely lauded, one example being *The Chicago Defender* reporting that Israel’s training of the military was “...comprehensive and extended beyond that of an ordinary infantry officer. It was designed to build self-confidence, and other attributes of leadership as well as the administrative qualities of staff officers”, there was also critique and issues with Israel’s programme to Ghana specifically.²²¹ In May 1969, B. A. Bentham then-Secretary-General of the Ghanaian Trades Union Congress met with Avraham Cohen, the Israeli Ambassador at Accra, which led to a follow up letter where Bentham offered his critique of the Israeli aid programme to Ghana. Bentham opined that when there was rapid transition from what he perceived as a traditional to a modern form of society conducted solely at the governmental level, the citizens got left behind. Therefore, they did not have the same level of involvement in the development as they would have had if there had also been a sense of mutual co-operation between the populace of both the donor and recipient countries. Bentham noted that governments came and went, but that citizens go on forever. With specific

²²⁰ Israel and Independent Africa, *The Chicago Defender*, 30 May 1959.

²²¹ Israel and Africa, *The Chicago Defender*, 28 September 1963.

reference to Israeli aid to Ghana, Bentham complained that there was not enough follow-up and there was a need for a regularisation of contacts between Israelis and Ghanaians that would have allowed reciprocal attachment to the donor country. On a more practical level within Ghana, Bentham stated that many of the Ghanaian workers sought the basic provision of shelter and a place to live. Whilst the Trades Union Congress had the manpower and materials, they needed Israeli technical expertise to develop a co-operative housing scheme.²²²

Another, more general criticism of Israel's aid programme to Ghana, but also of all aid programmes to sub-Saharan Africa during this period, was the lack of coordination. Israel sought to be a part of the multinational aid effort, and to be part of discussions on the coordination of aid to Africa to improve the efficiency and outcome of the various aid programmes that were active. However, much of the multinational aid was uncoordinated with no communication between the various actors and donor nations, or between the different international organisations that had been working in Africa. Whilst Israeli aid in Ghana was very much focused on the aims that the Israelis had, and the need to satisfy Nkrumah's wants, in other parts of Africa Israel did towards the end of her aid programme attempt to be part of the international aid effort. In March 1969, Israel requested membership to the Consultative Group for East Africa at the World Bank. The Consultative Group had met in order to coordinate aid programmes within East Africa. The World Bank responded to the Israeli request ambiguously that the Bank was "... not anxious for the consultative group to have bigger membership ... however, any country had a case for becoming a member of a group if it was an active donor in development assistance." Moshe Meirav, the Economic Counsellor at the Israeli Embassy in Washington responded that Israel would request membership.²²³ The Consultative Group on East Africa that was held in April 1970 did not have any representation by Israel,²²⁴ but the Consultative Group meetings that dealt specifically with Ghana in

²²² Letter from B. A. Bentham, Secretary-General of the Trade Union Congress, Ghana to the Israeli Ambassador at Accra, 31 May 1969, in Israel State Archives, Folder 4181/6.

²²³ Office Memorandum from Richard Clements, East African Consultative Group, 17 March 1969, in World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1575825 – A1995-134 – Other # 5 Box # 193302B – East Africa – General – Consultative Group – Correspondence – Volume 1.

²²⁴ The countries that formed the Consultative Group on East Africa were Canada, Denmark, Finland,

December 1970 included a representative from Israel.²²⁵ Therefore, it does appear that Israel did attempt to take part in some multinational attempts to coordinate the aid effort, but for the most part it was uncoordinated and Israel worked independently and that prevented coordination that could have enhanced the outcomes for the recipient nations.

Israel also faced challenges throughout her relationship with Ghana on the diplomatic front, and as described, Israel's bilateral relationship with Ghana did not bring complete diplomatic support from Nkrumah nor from the Ghanaian parliament nor the Ghanaian diplomats posted at the United Nations in New York. As early as October 1959 there was an anti-Semitic outburst in the Ghanaian parliament debate on Israel and Ghana's trade agreements²²⁶, and the Casablanca Declaration of 1961 was a shock to both Israeli ministers and the public.²²⁷ Ghana's friendship with Israel came with downsides for Nkrumah's standing on the continent amongst the Arab states of North Africa and the Arab Gulf nations. Nasser frequently remarked that his intention was to remove Israel from the African continent, and Egypt and Syria's leaders refused to attend Ghana's celebration of independence due to the Israeli presence and Nkrumah's friendliness with Israel. Further to that, the Arab bloc reminded Nkrumah at every opportunity that they considered his friendship with Israel unnatural and that Ghana's place was amongst the Afro-Arab bloc of nations. To reinforce this point, Black Star Line vessels were refused permission to transit the Suez Canal and Jordan refused to purchase any products made by joint Afro-Israeli

France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States. See: Consultative Group for East Africa Meeting on Tanzania, 28 April 1970, in World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1575826 – A1995-134 – Other # 6 Box # 193303B – East Africa – General – Consultative Group – 1969 / 1971 Correspondence – Volume 2.

²²⁵ Meeting of the Consultative Group for Ghana, 14 December 1970, in World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 17561569 – A1995-149 – Other # 10 Box # 181503B – Ghana – General – Consultative Group – 1969 / 1971 Correspondence – Volume 2.

²²⁶ Zach Levey, Israel's Entry to Africa, 1956-1961, *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, Vol. 12 No. 3 September 2001, pp. 100-101 for the outburst in the Ghanaian parliament.

²²⁷ The Casablanca Conference of 1961 branded Israel as a neo-colonialist bridgehead in Africa and blamed the Middle East conflict on Israel's denial of a Palestinian state. See: Olusola Ojo, *Africa and Israel: Relations in Perspective*, London: Westview Press, 1988, pp. 24-25.

companies.²²⁸ Kwame Nkrumah saw himself as a leader of the continent and was conscious that his relationship with Israel harmed that desire to lead the African continent. Whilst Bulgaria was active in Ghana, Nkrumah also sought assistance from the Soviet Union. Moscow then further pushed Nkrumah towards the Arab states as the Soviet Union was a large arms supplier to those Arab nations.

For Israel, another critical issue was Kwame Nkrumah's belief that he had solved the Cuban Missile Crisis and could therefore solve the Middle East issue. Israel was sensitive to any external interference in the Middle East peace process and repelled any African attempts to mediate between Israel and the Arabs for fear of Israel appearing uncooperative. Israel was conscious of any blame being placed on her for the conflict, thus negating the hard work Israel had done in forging closer relations with the African states. In October 1965, Ghana had hosted the Organisation of African Unity conference, and in a sign of Nasser's growing influence on the continent, Nkrumah acceded to Nasser's demand that the Israeli Ambassador's invitation be withdrawn. This was despite Nkrumah viewing Nasser as a rival for control of the continent and provided Nkrumah the opportunity to host the OAU conference without his foe present. Zach Levey argued that by the mid-1960s Israel had grown cautious of supporting African leaders whose positions were unstable,²²⁹ and whilst there was definitely some caution shown by the Israeli government when dealing with African leaders, there never appeared to be much hesitation when dealing with dictators who were struggling to cement their rule or were at very real risk of being overthrown.

Rather, Israel's approach was very much to deal with the situation as it arose, and they took a pragmatic attitude toward developments on the continent and sudden changes in leadership. Levey further argued that by 1967 Israel had "largely failed to

²²⁸ Joel Peters, *Israel and Africa: The Problematic Friendship*, London: British Academic Press, 1992, p. 22.

²²⁹ For Zach Levey's arguments on the issue, see: Zach Levey, The Rise and Decline of the Special Relationship: Israel and Ghana, 1957-1966, *African Studies Review*, Vol. 46, No. 1 (Apr., 2003), pp. 165-171.

attain its strategic objectives on the continent.”²³⁰ I would disagree, and whilst Levey acknowledged the early success Israel had in the late 1950s, there can be no argument that Israel’s aims in Africa were met, both within Ghana and on the continent. Whether we take the often-quoted view put forward by Ben-Gurion and Meir that Israel had followed in the words of Theodore Herzl and provided aid to Africa on an altruistic basis, or whether we take the more political aim that is more plausible, that Israel sought to provide aid to Africa in order to gain international legitimacy there is no doubt that Israel achieved both of these aims in Ghana. Through diplomatic relations Israel had received not only the legitimacy but also had provided an avenue for Israeli exports, and a way to export Israeli propaganda and the Israeli viewpoint of the Middle East problem. Such international recognition is irreversible: no matter how quickly or how brutal the rupture in relations with sub-Saharan Africa, nothing could be done to reverse the international recognition that Israel had achieved from Ghana and then from sub-Saharan Africa. Likewise, Africa could not question Israel’s right to exist as they had maintained diplomatic relations and exchanged Ambassadors with the State of Israel. Ghana was the first African nation to provide that legitimacy with the relationship between Israel and Ghana that started prior to Ghanaian independence. Accra provided the Israeli government with the psychological security that it required and the knowledge that Israel was not going to be isolated amongst the non-aligned nations, nor was Israel going to see her fellow newly independent nations castigate her or deny her a place in the developing world. Ghana was the key to this, and it was Ghana and the Ghanaian trade unionists, as well as Nkrumah, who provided Israel the steppingstone that had been sought to gain influence amongst other independence leaders.

2.2 *The Congo*²³¹

Israel’s aid programme to the Congo was not as extensive as it was to other African nations, but it highlighted Israel’s willingness to devote the majority of their

²³⁰ Zach Levey, Israel’s Strategy in Africa, 1961-1967, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (Feb., 2004), p. 71.

²³¹ The Democratic Republic of the Congo was later renamed Zaire.

resources in one nation to military means. The initial contact between Israel and the Congo focused mostly on the medical field and placed Israel firmly within the sights of the Congo's leaders, including Joseph Mobutu. Within days of the Congo's declaration of independence from Belgium, the country had descended into violence and the army's discipline had deteriorated to such a level that they mutinied against their commanding officers and the European population fled. At the end of July 1960, less than a month after the Congo's independence, Israel responded to urgent appeals for medical aid and both the Foreign Ministry and the Israel Defence Forces dispatched rapidly to replace the European medics who had withdrawn. The Israeli medical team included "48 internists, surgeons, paediatricians and nurses, who remained in the Congo for several months."²³²

During the first two years of the Congo's independence Israel trained its foreign service in the use of communications and ciphering equipment, as well as received nearly 150 Congolese students. Israel provided training in public administration, the police force, and youth programmes, as well as conducted an agricultural survey.²³³ In 1961, Israel also began a programme of three-year courses for student nurses from the Congo, Malawi and Liberia. The courses were taught in English and French and at the end of the three years, the students were awarded their Registered Nurses degrees. Whilst the initial courses were successful and followed the same programme as the Israeli nursing students did, the African students were somewhat unprepared and unaware that as part of the course they had to learn Hebrew in order to pass the practical part and interact with the patients on the wards. The Israeli school also added extra courses in midwifery and tropical medicine for the African students that allowed for more focus on the issues that they faced when they returned home. Due to the issue with language, Israel by 1966 had changed their focus to shorter courses of nine-months at a more advanced level.²³⁴ The Congolese students who gained their nursing degrees in Israel brought back to the Congo a level

²³² Zach Levey, *Israel's Involvement in the Congo, 1958-1968: Civilian and Military Dimensions*, *Civil Wars*, Vol. 6, No. 4 (Winter 2003), p. 17.

²³³ Zach Levey, *Israel's Involvement in the Congo, 1958-1968: Civilian and Military Dimensions*, *Civil Wars*, Vol. 6, No. 4 (Winter 2003), p. 21.

²³⁴ Leopold Laufer, *Israel and the Developing Countries: New Approaches to Cooperation*, New York: The Twentieth Century Fund, 1967, pp. 190-191.

of goodwill and expertise that was invaluable to both the Congolese population but also Israel's diplomatic aims in Africa. The need for medical training was evident with it having been estimated that Africa lacked more than 80,000 doctors in 1968.²³⁵

The rapid medical aid to the Congo on her independence was appreciated, and in December 1960 the Congo's Foreign Minister noted that Joseph Mobutu had ordered the removal of Egyptian personnel from the country, and that the Congo and Israel were allies. The minister went on to inform the Israelis that "... the new government of the Congo would 'open its gates' to Israel on condition that Israel provide military training at a level similar to its programs in Ghana and Ethiopia, and then bluntly announced that he was 'anti-Arab.'"²³⁶ Further civilian aid to Congo was limited, and in the five-year period following the opening of the Mount Carmel Centre at Haifa, only 19 women from the Congo participated in courses, out of a total of 431 African women.²³⁷ The lack of civilian aid after the initial burst of medical aid was disappointing and exposed Israel to criticism for her focus on military aid, as well as diminished Israel's projected aims of providing altruistic aid for Africa that was based on Zionism and Herzl's writings, as what developed in the Congo was an aid programme that clearly prioritised the maintenance of Mobutu's regime, and the continued use of defence forces to sell arms to, and to maintain influence in central Africa.

The Congo's preference for military aid over civilian aid was made clear to Israel, but rather than refuse military aid on the basis of the instability of the Congolese political situation, Israel's defence ministry engaged with the Congolese and started a programme of extensive military aid to keep Mobutu in the Israeli sphere and away from Soviet arms and Nasser's propaganda. By 1965, Mobutu had "put an end to the masquerade of the prime ministers. He ruled for the next thirty-two years as dictator. He did so with a great deal of Western support, both military and financial,

²³⁵ Shimeon Amir, *Israel's Development Cooperation with Africa, Asia, and Latin America*, London: Praeger, 1974, p. 57.

²³⁶ Zach Levey, Israel's Involvement in the Congo, 1958-1968: Civilian and Military Dimensions, *Civil Wars*, Vol. 6, No. 4 (Winter 2003), p. 19.

²³⁷ Jehudi J. Kanarek, *Israeli Technical Assistance to African Countries*, Geneva: Geneva-African Institute, 1969, p. 103. The Mount Carmel Centre will be discussed later in the chapter.

from those who knew how corrupt and undemocratic his regime was but saw him as a bastion against communism or other destabilizing forces.”²³⁸

2.2.1 *Military Aid to the Congo*

The role of Golda Meir in Israel’s military aid to the Congo is somewhat interesting, as Meir openly supported and lobbied Ben-Gurion, who served simultaneously as Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, to provide military aid to the Congolese. This was a departure from Meir’s usual stance and somewhat in contrast to other military aid programmes to Africa that were mostly initiated and led by the Israeli defence apparatus, and usually to the chagrin of the Foreign Ministry which sought to focus on civilian aid. During December 1960, Mobutu had asked Israel to accept Congolese officers for training at the IDF’s artillery school. In early 1961, the Congolese requested that Israel train large numbers of Congolese youth in moshavim in Israel with the intention to set up moshavim throughout the Congo to improve the agricultural output and security situation; Israel also committed to organising the Congolese police force.

In March 1963, Yitzhak Rabin, then Israel’s Deputy Chief of the General Staff, visited the Congo to meet with United States military personnel and Israeli forces on the ground. At the time of Rabin’s visit, the Congolese paratrooper force consisted of only 39 men, and the Deputy Chief of Staff proposed the training of a further 100 to 200 men. The training by Israel was envisaged to provide the Congo with a more effective paratrooper force that would strengthen Mobutu, but also create a more professional military force for Mobutu who had become an important ally to both Israel and the United States.²³⁹ However, despite Washington’s initial support, the Pentagon refused to fund the training of Congolese paratroopers in Israel and

²³⁸ Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940, The Past of the Present*, 2nd Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019, p. 249.

²³⁹ For the narrative of military aid to the Congo, and of Golda Meir’s position, see: Zach Levey, Israel’s Involvement in the Congo, 1958-1968: Civilian and Military Dimensions, *Civil Wars*, Vol. 6, No. 4 (Winter 2003), pp. 19-24.

rather funded courses in the Congo only. In July 1963, two years prior to Joseph Mobutu becoming president, Israel flew Congolese soldiers to Israel's parachute school at Israeli expense. Mobutu demanded that Israel facilitated a separate parachute course for himself and ensured that Israel presented him with his own set of paratrooper's wings. Mobutu was therefore one of the 256 Congolese trained by Israel, 220 of whom passed the IDF's parachute school training course. Israel had thus trained militarily the future leaders of independent sub-Saharan Africa, as Mobutu passed out of the Israeli parachute school despite fulfilling only two of the required five jumps, and through the training and military expertise, Israel was building influence and goodwill amongst the young men who would take senior political positions on the continent.²⁴⁰

²⁴⁰ Zach Levey, Israel's Involvement in the Congo, 1958-1968: Civilian and Military Dimensions, *Civil Wars*, Vol. 6, No. 4 (Winter 2003), pp. 24-26.



General Mobutu, Commander of the Congo Armed Forces, undergoing parachute training in Israel, after his first parachute jump, 15 August 1963. Photo Credit: Eldan David, Israeli Government Press Office.

The United States had wanted Israel to focus Mobutu's mindset and work with him on the training of his military personnel, rather than providing equipment and military hardware, which was what Mobutu was more interested in. In January 1964, the United States Department of State assigned Israel responsibility for training 700-800 Congolese soldiers that were to be deployed at government facilities.²⁴¹ In 1965,

²⁴¹ Zach Levey, Israel's Strategy in Africa, 1961-1967, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (Feb., 2004), p. 76.

Israel's arm sales to the Congo continued when Israel provided the Congo with ten M4 Sherman tanks. Despite the tanks being old, their importance to the Congolese military is highlighted by the fact that the Congo received no armour heavier than this until the 1970s.²⁴²

Israeli involvement in the Congo was controversial throughout, but Israel whilst at moments was cautious and sought American approval of their actions in the Central African nation, Israel did not allow such concerns to stop their own determination to solidify their relationship with Mobutu. Zach Levey has highlighted that Israel's actions in the Congo "compromised [Israel's] claim to be a 'neutral alternative' to which Africans could turn as East-West competition on the continent intensified ... The Congo was the most divisive issue on the African continent, and a military mission and influence with Mobutu involved Israel in that dispute while compromising its claim to be non-aligned."²⁴³ There was also some discussion and back and forth between the Israelis and Congolese regarding who was to pay the costs of transporting the Israeli military experts from Israel to the Congo. From the Israeli side, there was concern due to the instability of the Congolese government of the time.²⁴⁴

During Israel's early courtship of Africa there was an emphasis on Israel being non-aligned and a bridge between the east and west in the bipolarisation of the Cold War. However, the emphasis on non-alignment very quickly diminished as Israel rather sought bilateral relationships that improved her economic and military standing and used her trade union contacts to promote the country as a socialist state that was aligned to neither sphere, but was independent and able to pursue its own foreign policy without worry for either superpower. Israel would discover that her bilateral relationships with Africa was impacted not only by the Arab nations, but also by fellow African nations. Israel's role in the Congo came at a political cost to

²⁴² Zach Levey, *Israel's Involvement in the Congo, 1958-1968: Civilian and Military Dimensions*, *Civil Wars*, Vol. 6, No. 4 (Winter 2003), p. 31.

²⁴³ Zach Levey, *Israel's Strategy in Africa, 1961-1967*, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (Feb., 2004), p. 76.

²⁴⁴ Military Cooperation Agreement between Israel and the Congo, 4 September 1964, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1360/4.

her ties with Ghana who severely criticised the relationship. Tension arose with Kwame Nkrumah over Israel's support for the pro-Western regime at Leopoldville against the rebel groups that had been aided by Arab states with the support of Ghana.²⁴⁵ The strain in relations stemmed from the deployment in 1960 of most of the Ghanaian army in the Congo as part of a United Nations' peacekeeping force. Ghana could not afford to have her military stationed in the Congo for United Nations purposes, and the Israelis who advised Nkrumah and the Ghanaian military were also unenthusiastic about the arrangement. Despite this, Israel maintained her relationship with the Congo, whilst Ghana's finances suffered from their military presence in the Congo.²⁴⁶ Israel is not to be viewed as a neutral state in this battle, as Israel was aware that its support for the regime in Leopoldville placed it in conflict with Ghana's support for the rebels. Furthermore, by October 1964, Gamal Nasser of Egypt had attempted to gain influence in the Congo and provided military support to Leopoldville in their battle with Brazzaville, in exchange for Congolese support in the Middle East.²⁴⁷ Further Egyptian attempts to gain a foothold in sub-Saharan Africa at this time included Nasser's attempt to establish an African postal service which would unite the north with the south and offer an entrance point to sub-Saharan capitals for Nasser.²⁴⁸

By 1965, Israel had already sought to reduce its military involvement in the former Belgian colony and minimise their exposure to military unrest. Mobutu demanded that Israel continued her training of his armed forces, to which Israel agreed, but upon which the Israeli Foreign Ministry had decided to place increasing emphasis on the expansion of civilian aid and trade with the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Mobutu's second coup of November 1965 ended civilian rule in the Congo, strengthened his regime, and put his focus solely on military aid with little regard for the diplomatic necessities of Congolese-Israeli relations. By 1966, Israel's

²⁴⁵ Zach Levey, Israel's Involvement in the Congo, 1958-1968: Civilian and Military Dimensions, *Civil Wars*, Vol. 6, No. 4 (Winter 2003), p. 26.

²⁴⁶ Zach Levey, Israel's Entry to Africa, 1956-1961, *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (September 2001), p. 104.

²⁴⁷ Report from Brazzaville, 20 October 1964, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1361/3.

²⁴⁸ Telegram 403: United African Postal Service, 20 October 1964, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1361/3.

15-man military mission to the Congo outnumbered the small number of foreign service staff who manned the Israeli Embassy, and Mobutu himself made no effort to appoint a permanent ambassador to Tel Aviv with instead a temporary appointee taking charge of the Congo's diplomatic mission.²⁴⁹ Mobutu was prepared to make small diplomatic overtures towards Israel, like providing Israeli experts with full diplomatic immunity, something that was of importance to Israel as some of the experts were IDF military personnel and still on active duty.²⁵⁰ However, Mobutu was not prepared to have active duty Israeli Defence Forces personnel visible during the Organisation of African Unity Heads of State meeting in September 1967, and he ordered the removal of all IDF personnel from Kinshasa for the duration of the meeting. The Congolese Foreign Minister made clear to the Israeli Embassy that the Arab states had threatened to sabotage the meeting if IDF personnel were not removed from Kinshasa and Mobutu had warned that the Israeli Ambassador would be declared *persona non grata* if the Israelis refused his request.²⁵¹ Israel's declared aim to prevent Egyptian influence from interference in their relations with sub-Saharan Africa had hit a roadblock and Israel had little choice but to abide by Mobutu's demands.

Despite the lack of attention paid to the diplomatic aspect of the relationship, there is no doubt that Joseph Mobutu was very much aware that it was Israel that was sustaining his regime through military arms, training and intelligence. Mobutu considered the paratrooper training programme that Israel provided the most effective of all the military aid training programmes that the Congo had received. In 1968, Israel's defence industry realised one of its aims of creating an arms market for Israeli defence exports on the African continent when the Congo purchased from Israel

²⁴⁹ Zach Levey, *Israel's Involvement in the Congo, 1958-1968: Civilian and Military Dimensions*, *Civil Wars*, Vol. 6, No. 4 (Winter 2003), p. 15 for Mobutu's demand for further military aid, and p. 30 for the size of Israel's military mission to the Congo and Congolese representation in Israel.

²⁵⁰ Draft Cooperation Agreement between Israel and the Congo, 5 July 1964, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1360/4.

²⁵¹ Dispatch 357, September 1967, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1387/21.

\$1.7 million of arms, making the Congo one of Israel's principal defence clients in Africa.²⁵²

Military aid to the Congo was part of Israel's wider effort to open up an arms market in Africa. Whilst Golda Meir was responsible for the start of the aid programme, the Israeli Ministry of Defence took a keen interest from the outset and the intertwined nature of the Israeli aid resulted in an aid programme that sought to be civilian under the Israeli Foreign Ministry, but where the African leaders sought the military aid that was offered and provided by the Israeli Defence Ministry. Almost all Israeli citizens had performed service in the Israeli Defence Forces and most of the Israeli experts sent to Africa had extensive military experience. The first director of Mashav, the Israeli foreign aid programme, was Aharon Remez whose previous role was as Commander of the Israeli Air Force.²⁵³ When one considers the Israeli development programmes and the civilian aid projects that Israel wanted to export, the ideals of the kibbutzim, Gadna and Nahal youth programmes, all of these have military beginnings, whether to secure border regions or to prepare Israeli youth for military service, and it was difficult to remove the military aspect from any of these ideals, as that is what formed the basis and founding principles for these programmes. However, one unintended consequence of what originated as a civilian aid programme was the unnecessary arming of Africa.²⁵⁴ The political and economic instability of many of the African states has to be kept in mind when civilian aid programmes that involve a military element are analysed. Samuel Decalo has argued that for some African leaders the Israeli Nahal programme was seen purely as means

²⁵² See: Zach Levey, Israel's Involvement in the Congo, 1958-1968: Civilian and Military Dimensions, *Civil Wars*, Vol. 6, No. 4 (Winter 2003), pp. 31-2.

²⁵³ Abel Jacob, Israel's Military Aid to Africa, 1960-1966, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (Aug., 1971), p. 166.

²⁵⁴ For more on the unnecessary of arming of sub-Saharan Africa see: Patrick McAuslan, Good Governance and Aid in Africa, *Journal of African Law*, Vol. 40, No. 2, Liber Amicorum for Professor James S Read, (1996), p. 176. The Israeli *Gadna* and *Nahal* programmes will be discussed later in this chapter.

to cement their rule.²⁵⁵ The influx of weaponry, whether through Nahal or through the advanced military training and expertise that Israel provided, along with the intelligence and Israel's overt involvement in civil wars, led Israel to being responsible not only for civilian aid but also bearing responsibility for the unnecessary influx of arms to Africa, and the Congo was a key arms market for the Israeli defence industry.

2.2.2 *The Post-1973 Relationship*

In October 1973, two days before the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War, Joseph Mobutu informed Israel that relations were to be terminated. Zach Levey described the four factors that made Zaire's, as the Congo was then known, break with Israel so significant: Mobutu was leader of the most powerful state in Central Africa and held influence on the continent; Mobutu's influence meant that he was able to get other African states to follow his example; Zaire's break had come as a complete surprise to Israel, who had no prior indication; and it was just two days before the Yom Kippur War, and had caught Israel totally off-guard.²⁵⁶ However, Zaire was also one of the first countries to re-establish relations with Israel and did so as soon as Israel had withdrawn from the Egyptian Sinai. Media reports at the time suggested that the belief in the West was that despite the rupture, Israel had trained Mobutu's secret police and that Israeli agricultural experts maintained senior managerial positions at two of Mobutu's personal estates. Israel also trained Mobutu's personal bodyguards during the period between the rupture in relations and the resumption in relations.²⁵⁷

Mobutu's unpredictability and instability of the 1960s and 1970s had not disappeared, and despite initial musings that he would place his Embassy in

²⁵⁵ Samuel Decalo, Afro-Israeli Technical Cooperation: Patterns of Setbacks and Successes, in Michael Curtis and Susan Aurelia Gitelson (eds.), *Israel in the Third World*, New Jersey: Transaction Books, 1976, p. 83.

²⁵⁶ Zach Levey, Israel's Exit from Africa, 1973: Road to Diplomatic Isolation, *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 2, August 2008, p. 217.

²⁵⁷ Israel's Toehold in Africa May Fall Victim to War, *New York Times*, 19 June 1982.

Jerusalem, the Zairian Embassy was re-established at Tel Aviv, and Mobutu also openly expressed his support for the Palestinians and the Palestine Liberation Organisation. Mobutu believed that through a restoration of relations with Israel, he would receive military and civilian aid, and from the Jewish lobby in Washington he hoped for support in the United States Congress, who had reduced the level of US assistance to his nation to just \$4 million. With ties restored and Embassies reopened, Israel again offered to train Zairean students and the Jewish lobby groups in Washington began lobbying on behalf of Zaire.²⁵⁸

Mobutu made the decision to resume relations himself and as Arye Oded noted Mobutu was an admirer of “Israel’s prowess, its military ability and know-how in various spheres of economic development” and Oded acknowledged that just as crucial was Mobutu’s desire to recruit the Jewish lobby in Washington to improve Zaire’s economic position and standing in the United States Congress. Mobutu’s grave disappointment with Arab aid was also a contributing factor.²⁵⁹ Whilst the then-Zaire’s own economic issues, as well as Mobutu’s own insecurity were influencing factors for his regime to initiate the resumption of relations with Israel immediately following Israel’s withdrawal from the Sinai, credit must also be placed on Israel’s successful aid programme that left a lasting goodwill amongst Mobutu and the Zairian people. The Congo aid programme therefore achieved Israel’s aims and must be assessed to have been a successful programme from the Israeli perspective. The relationship between Israel and the Congo was always strong, despite the issues with Mobutu’s diplomatic stance over his Embassy, and the expulsion of IDF personnel during the OAU summit. The warm contact between the two states provided Israel with the international legitimacy that it sought, and the goodwill persevered through the rupture and led to a resumption in ties shortly after Israel’s withdrawal from African territory. I argue that Israel did not need to seek further legitimacy, as despite the rupture in relations, the very recognition of Israel as a state by the Congo during the 1960s provided Israel with the legitimacy she sought, and a rupture in relations

²⁵⁸ Joel Peters, *Israel and Africa: The Problematic Friendship*, London: British Academic Press, 1992, pp. 120-122.

²⁵⁹ Arye Oded, *Africa and Israel: African Attitudes Towards Resumption of Diplomatic Relations*, Jerusalem: The Hebrew University, 1986, p. 13.

does not remove the legitimacy of the independence of a state. Just as important was that the Congo never called for the destruction of the State of Israel during the rupture.

To conclude, in the Congo, Israel achieved its aims and Mobutu personally also achieved the military and security assistance he wanted, as well as the benefits of the medical and limited civilian aid that Israel provided alongside their military relationship. The Congo also provided a platform for Israel to both showcase her military aid offering, as well as a means to display to the West that Israel had something to offer Africa. Israel sought western support, in particular support from Washington for her activities in Africa, and Israel's relationship with Mobutu provided benefits for western aims in the bipolarisation of the global order during the Cold War.

2.3 *Ethiopia*

2.3.1 *Ethiopia and the Cold War*

Israel's relationship with Ethiopia was one of her most important strategically and provided Israel's access to East Africa. The breadth of the aid programme, which was on par with Israel's biggest on the continent, was due to the importance of Ethiopia to Israel both for diplomatic support, which Israel believed would be forthcoming due to the Imperial family's ties to Jerusalem, but also due to Israel believing that Israel and Ethiopia had a common Muslim enemy. For Israel, the enemy was the Arab states that surrounded it and for Ethiopia it was the Eritrean separatists. In exchange for the large level of aid that Israel provided, Israel was permitted to establish naval bases on some of the islands just off the Eritrean coast and the Straits of Bab el Mandeb.²⁶⁰

²⁶⁰ Joel Peters, *Israel and Africa: The Problematic Friendship*, London: British Academic Press, 1992, p. 8.

During a 1957 trip by United States Vice President Richard M. Nixon, Ethiopia's development needs and position within Africa were discussed. The Vice President's report noted that Gamal Nasser of Egypt wielded a large amount of influence over the Muslims of Eritrea, then a part of Ethiopian territory, and that the governments of East Africa considered Nasser "a threat to their independence and are therefore cautious in their attitudes towards him." Of the Emperor, Nixon commented that Ethiopia was "ruled by a highly sophisticated and cultured minority – the Amharas" whilst "the Muslim minority plays little role in the political life of the country."²⁶¹ The Eritrean independence movement and Muslim minority would later be a decisive factor in Selassie's decision to break ties with Israel. Interestingly for Israel's own relationship with Ethiopia was Selassie's dissatisfaction with American aid and support to his nation, in particular with reference to the building up and modernisation of the Ethiopian military.

Emperor Selassie had felt that the United States had reneged on a promise they had made in 1953 for military aid and he expressed his displeasure to both the Vice President, visiting Congressmen, and American military officials. United States diplomats in Addis Ababa noted that the "military assistance program ... was until recently in a very bad way" and acknowledged that American "deliveries of materials already promised have been very slow and haphazard ... [and] relations between the military officers concerned were very inadequate." During 1955-1956 there had been "a deterioration in the cordial relationship and the influence [that] the United States had enjoyed in Ethiopia." The Deputy Under Secretary of State in his letter to his counterpart at the Department of Defence encouraged a re-evaluation of Washington's ties with Addis Ababa in order to ensure that Ethiopia remained pro-Washington and so that "a crescent of friendly countries south and west of Egypt" could be established to prevent Soviet intrusion onto the continent.²⁶² However, the relationship between Washington and Addis Ababa continued to deteriorate into 1957

²⁶¹ For the quotes from Vice President Nixon's trip, see: Report by the Vice President, 5 April 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Africa, Volume XVIII, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v18/d19> [accessed 10 June 2021].

²⁶² Letter from the Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (Murphy) to the Assistance Secretary of Defense (Gray), Washington, 5 July 1956, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Africa, Volume XVIII, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v18/d110> [accessed 10 June 2021].

and it provided a perfect opening for Israel to gain influence, and as will be discussed, to offer to assist the Emperor in his relationship with the White House via the Jewish lobby groups and the Israeli Embassy in Washington, D.C.

Israel promoted her African aid programme to the United States and Western Europe as a means to ensure that the Arabs and the Soviets did not gain a foothold in the newly decolonised nations and thus, to prevent them from siding with the Soviet Union in the Cold War battle. However, at the end of December 1961, Emperor Selassie laid the foundation stone of the technical school donated by the Soviet Union at Bahir Dar. The technical school was gifted from Moscow during the Emperor's visit to the Soviet Union during June and July 1959. The new school was to be fully equipped to educate 1,000 Ethiopians in mechanics and technology for the textile industry; special training for wood workers; the training of mechanics for agricultural machinery; chemists to analyse samples in laboratories; and electrical engineers for the industrial sector. The school was constructed by an Ethiopian company with Soviet experts' advice and the building materials and appliances that were used for the construction were from the Soviet Union. Moscow also provided all the equipment for all aspects of the school, including the laboratories and appliances for the training programmes.²⁶³ Selassie had therefore made no attempt to hide both his displeasure with the Americans nor his willingness to accept Soviet aid.

2.3.2 Israeli Strategic Interests in East Africa and her Aid

Programme to Ethiopia

The 1956 Suez Crisis had temporarily opened up the Suez Canal to Israeli shipping and allowed Israel access to East Africa. The Ethiopian Emperor controlled the headwaters of the River Nile and Ethiopia's coastline in the province of Eritrea dominated the southern end of the Red Sea through which Israeli commerce, shipping and oil tankers had to pass in order to reach Eilat. All other ports on the Red Sea were

²⁶³ Soviet Press Bulletin Supplement from the Embassy of the USSR, Addis Ababa, 2 January 1962, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1903/10.

in Arab hands.²⁶⁴ With Israel's most southern port of Eilat being a vital trading route, Ethiopia's Eritrean ports at the mouth of the Red Sea became the focus of attention for Israel's aid programme in East Africa. Israel sought to support the Christian Emperor, who was surrounded by Islamic regimes, and assisted with intelligence gathering that helped ensure that Eritrea never gained independence, and thus prevented the Eritrean ports from being under Arab control. Israel feared any possible Islamic control in Eritrea with the inference being that they would have closed access to the ports for Israeli vessels.²⁶⁵ The importance to Israel of access to Eritrean ports on the Red Sea was further evident through the breadth of the programmes that Israeli experts initiated in Ethiopia: there was a fisheries development programme; advice on road construction; experts on traffic engineering issues; port maintenance was critically important to Ethiopia, and indirectly to Israel, and an Israeli team advised on that; there was also a cotton farm at Abadir; something that Israelis in East Africa were to become known for was their expertise in the tourism industry and a hotel management training school was set up in Ethiopia, as well as Israeli hotel managers running some of Ethiopia's luxury hotels; working alongside the Ethiopian Red Cross, an Israeli team established a blood bank; Israeli pharmaceutical experts developed the pharmaceutical industry in Ethiopia; there was cooperation in the Natural Sciences between the Halle Selassie I University of Addis Ababa and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, as will be discussed below; several Israeli experts also provided their expertise on the organisation and marketing of handicrafts; and agricultural advice was also rendered to Ethiopia, in particular in the Tigre province.²⁶⁶

In January 1962, the Ethiopian government requested three veterinarians as a grant-in-aid paid for by Israel to improve the conditions of Ethiopian livestock and prevent disease. Ethiopia had received offers from other nations for assistance from

²⁶⁴ Israel and Africa, *The Christian Science Monitor*, 5 May 1972.

²⁶⁵ Joel Peters, *Israel and Africa: The Problematic Friendship*, London: British Academic Press, 1992, pp. 8-9.

²⁶⁶ Letter from Y. J. Taub, Secretary-General at the Bank of Israel to M. P. Benjenk at the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 2 November 1971, World Bank Group Archives, Washington D.C., Folder No: 1855661 – A1995 – 172 Other # 2 Box # 182571B – Israel – General Negotiations – 1969 / 1971 Correspondence – Volume 2.

their veterinarians, but the Ministry of Agriculture believed that Israeli veterinarians were better suited to work in Ethiopia and would be more successful in eradicating livestock disease from the Empire. Therefore, Ethiopia actively sought out Israeli assistance rather than an expert from a larger, more developed nation.²⁶⁷ The Israelis responded within three-weeks and offered one Israeli veterinarian to assist with Ethiopian livestock, on the condition that Ethiopia met the cost of the airfare of the Israeli, his wife and children, which Ethiopia agreed to.²⁶⁸

In 1962, Israel conducted surveys of eye disease in Tanganyika, Kenya and Ethiopia where the total blind population in those three countries alone was estimated at 200,000. In Ethiopia, there were specific campaigns that targeted trachoma and its eradication, and the education of blind school students. One estimate put Ethiopia's incidence of active trachoma amongst school children at between 30% and 90% in some school districts.²⁶⁹ The Hadassah Medical Organisation also sought to not only educate African students in the medical field, but also to train medical schoolteachers so that medical schools could be established on the continent.²⁷⁰ Israeli doctors and engineers also planned and built the \$10 million Haile Selassie hospital in Massawa.²⁷¹ The Director of the Government Hospital in Massawa was an Israeli physician, as was the Head of Surgery. In Harar, the Director of the hospital was likewise an Israeli who also had an Israeli assistant, as was the Director of Asmara hospital. The Head of Ophthalmology at the Hebrew University conducted research on eye disease in Ethiopia whilst the Emperor's personal doctor and the official doctor to the Emperor's Court was an Israeli professor of medicine.²⁷² In December

²⁶⁷ Letter from the Ethiopian Assistant Minister of Agriculture to the Acting Consul-General of the State of Israel, 5 January 1962, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1903/10.

²⁶⁸ See: Letter from the Vice-Consul to the Ethiopian Assistant Minister of Agriculture, 24 January 1962 and the reply Letter from the Assistant Minister of Agriculture to the Vice-Consul, 2 February 1962, both in Israel State Archives, Folder 1903/10.

²⁶⁹ Leopold Laufer, *Israel and the Development Countries: New Approaches to Cooperation*, New York: Twentieth Century Fund, 1967, p. 129.

²⁷⁰ Israel Giving Strong Helping Hand to Many African Nations, *New Pittsburgh Courier*, 5 May 1962.

²⁷¹ Israel and Africa, *The Chicago Tribune*, 15 December 1963.

²⁷² See: Cooperation with Ethiopia, undated, in Israel State Archives, 1903/10 and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Israel's Programme of International Cooperation*, Jerusalem: Government Printer, 1967, pp. 39-40.

1962, an Israeli plastic surgeon visited Addis Ababa to advise on the modern aspects of surgery and gave lectures that were then distributed to all Ethiopian doctors through the Ethiopian Medical Association.²⁷³

Solel Boneh, the Histadrut trade union's construction company, in one of their many contracts with Ethiopia, constructed the Haile Selassie I Stadium at Addis Ababa some two months ahead of schedule, and in time for the Ethiopian Football Federation to play their games for the African Cup at the stadium. The stadium therefore showcased to all of Africa what Israeli construction could achieve in a short period of time.²⁷⁴ In 1961, there was an East African study group that visited Israel to study the trade unions and the cooperatives movements. The session participants benefited greatly from their in-person interactions with the leading Israeli trade union and cooperative movement figures, including the Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion and the Foreign Minister Golda Meir. The study group comprised legislators, farmers, women and Swahili speaking members of East Africa, and as such the general programme was a mixture of theoretical studying, demonstration visits and visits to cooperative and trade union offices. The itinerary enabled all the participants to get an understanding of the development activities in Israel, even if they did not necessarily understand the full workings of the Histadrut or the Israeli cooperatives. There were, however, issues encountered with the study group, and these were common to most of the study tours that Israel hosted, and most were also common to the training courses that Israel provided to African, Latin American, and Asian students throughout the period. The diversification of the group, for example, also had a negative aspect as it was impossible for the general lectures that provided a survey of the topic to cover all aspects of the expertise that were present. Whilst participants saw a broad sector of Israeli development, there were aspects that they would have not been familiar with if they did not have a prior understanding of the programme, for example Israel's *nahal* and *gadna* programmes. It was not just on the field tours that it had a negative impact, there were occasions where the lecturer may

²⁷³ Letter from the Ministry of Public Health to the Charge d'Affaires of Israel at Addis Ababa, 28 December 1962, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1903/12.

²⁷⁴ Certificate from the Ministry of Public Works, Imperial Ethiopian Government, 10 March 1962, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1903/10.

have spoken on a topic without first providing the required background knowledge to understand fully what was being discussed. There was also a tendency at these study courses for the lecturer to be the highest-ranking person of the company or organisation, and they were not necessarily the best person to teach or lecture students on their organisation or development programme. Not only was there at times a lack of understanding of the lecturer and the context on the part of the students, but preventable issues also occurred when the lecturer did not have a solid understanding of the background of their students, and consequently the lecturer did not tailor the content to the students that they were teaching.²⁷⁵

In January 1963, Ethiopia requested that Israel send a coffee expert to assist with their coffee industry, a crucial export to the Ethiopian economy.²⁷⁶ In April 1963, the Israeli coffee expert, Yaacov Hirshfeld, conducted a survey of the Ethiopian soil and the suitability for growth in the coffee industry and how it could better be marketed. Hirshfeld reported that the soil in Ethiopia was indeed very suitable for coffee growing, and that Ethiopia was largely free of pests and disease that could have impacted the coffee harvest. The Ethiopian coffee plants were mostly wild plantations which grew in the mountainous regions of the country under giant trees, which provided shade for the plants and left the Ethiopian coffee farmer with very little to do but reap the crop and pass it to the local merchants for processing. The crop of 50,000 tons was all exported and there had always been enough demand so that there was no excess supply, this however, had the side effect that the Ethiopians had never had any incentive to improve the quality of their coffee. In the 1960s competition increased exponentially and Ethiopia then needed to compete with an international coffee market. Mr Hirshfeld recommended that the Ethiopians sold part of the crop as 'wet processed' to the European market and for the farmers to harvest their crop as late as possible so that they reduced the number of unripe beans that were harvested, and thus the number of black beans. The Israeli coffee expert also

²⁷⁵ Letter from Bill Sutherland on the East African Study Group on Trade Union and Cooperatives in Israel, October-November 1961, in Israel State Archives 1903/14.

²⁷⁶ Letter from the Minister of Commerce & Industry, Imperial Ethiopian Government to Mr Rahamin Timon, Charge d'Affaires, Consulate-General of Israel at Addis Ababa, 3 January 1963, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1903/12.

offered to teach four Ethiopian coffee farmers on his farm in Israel for one-month during the picking season.

Yaacov Hirshfeld also streamlined the transportation of coffee from farm to market by removing unnecessary custom controls that almost doubled the price it cost to transport a ton of coffee over a ton of other commodities, with the extra cost for coffee largely caused by the time the delivery driver spent waiting at custom checkpoints. Another issue resolved easily was the moisture level of the beans when exported through the use of cheap and readily available equipment that ensured that the coffee bean was monitored, and that its moisture levels remained within acceptable ranges. Further recommendations to assist with the export of coffee was to build warehouses close to the railway stations to enable exporters to store their coffee close to the transportation hub so that the coffee could be sampled immediately prior to departure for moisture levels. One final recommendation was for more selectivity when planting new plantations, the previous method was to plant all available seedlings without selection of plants, and this resulted in about 20% of coffee trees being planted that had little hope of bearing much fruit.²⁷⁷ The importance of the coffee bean to Ethiopia's population is evident when one considers that in 1961 the total population of Ethiopia was estimated to be between 12 million and 20 million of which 95% were rural dwellers and 90% were farmers.²⁷⁸ The benefit of the Israeli expert was therefore massive, and the Ethiopian coffee industry was a very good example of a successful Israeli aid programme that cost very little, as it required only the costs of the expert, but yet provided knowledge and training that improved the livelihoods of the coffee farmers. The effect of the education was long-lasting without the need for repeated visits by experts. Once the knowledge had been transferred, the aid programme had succeeded in the education of the farmers and had changed their methods and immediately improved their yields, the livelihoods of the farmers, their families, and their villages. Ethiopia also sought

²⁷⁷ Survey on the Ethiopian Coffee Industry and Its Marketing, from the Ambassador of Israel to the Minister of Commerce and Industry, Imperial Ethiopian Government, 4 April 1963, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1903/12.

²⁷⁸ What do doctors say? Addis Ababa, 11 October 1962, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1903/11.

large-scale farming assistance, whilst Selassie was especially interested in cooperative farming.²⁷⁹

Ethiopia was also the recipient of agricultural and fishing aid from Israel. In September 1960, Moshe Dayan, then Israel's Minister of Agriculture, visited Ethiopia and met Emperor Selassie in Addis Ababa. It is prudent to note here, that even though Dayan was the Minister of Agriculture, he discussed at length the diplomatic relationship between Israel and Ethiopia. The Emperor had stressed to Dayan the close cooperation between the two nations on matters of security and explained to the visiting Minister of Agriculture that Ethiopia had not recognised Israel out of fear of the Arab states. That was also the reason why the Ethiopian's maintained only a Consulate-General in Jerusalem, but Selassie reiterated that he had told Nasser that Ethiopia would eventually recognise Israel. Dayan responded that friendship between the two countries must be based on full diplomatic relations and that Israel was willing to assist Ethiopia in instruction and training of personnel.²⁸⁰ However, Dayan made clear to Selassie that Israel did not have the funds to finance Ethiopia's development, and that the Ethiopians would need to consult Washington for funding, with the possibility raised of the United States being used to fund Israeli aid to Ethiopia, although there is no evidence that this occurred.²⁸¹ Within Dayan's own ministerial remit, the importance of Ethiopia to Israel concerned Israel's own food requirements. Ethiopia was one of only very few countries that Israel imported kosher food from, and throughout this period, Israel purchased a large proportion of her meat from Ethiopia where kosher butchers were established to supervise the slaughter of cattle.²⁸²

²⁷⁹ Ethiopia Seeking Big Investments, *New York Times*, 4 November 1962.

²⁸⁰ Israel Consulate-General in Addis Ababa to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 16 September 1960, in Israel State Archives, *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Volume 14, 1960, Jerusalem: Government Printer, 1997, p. 404.

²⁸¹ Israel Consulate-General in Addis Ababa to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, 24 September 1960, in Israel State Archives, *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Volume 14, 1960, Jerusalem: Government Printer, 1997, p. 405.

²⁸² Israel and Africa: The Honeymoon is Over, *Africa Weekly*, 8 May 1959, in Israel State Archives, Folder 3103/10.

Ethiopian fishing was thoroughly transformed through Israeli assistance and knowledge. Prior to the arrival of the Israelis, Ethiopia's fishing fleet had comprised mostly of wooden sailing boats known as *dhow*s that ranged in size from 30 feet to 60 feet. Each boat had a capacity of around 40 fishermen who would spend the fishing season at sea whilst smaller boats would collect the fish to bring to shore. These smaller boats that collected the catch would offload the fish, dry it, and then sell the dried fish at market. Whilst the Israeli fishing expert saw the benefit of the Ethiopian methods and understood that it was a productive way to catch fish, he advised that the *dhow*s be fitted with engines that provided the fishermen with more power and speed and the freedom to fish wherever they wanted, rather than being constrained by the direction and speed of the wind. The Israeli expert organised the modification of the *dhow*s to accommodate the engine, as well as trained the pilots and set up repair facilities and spare parts for the new engines. By the end of the Israeli advisor's time in Ethiopia, the fishing fleet numbers grew to 150 engine-powered *dhow*s, with a workshop fully functioning at the Massawa fisheries dock. Not only was the fishing fleet modernised, but the Israeli advisor also developed improved transportation methods, and a fish-canning industry on a commercial scale. Interestingly, the advisor even found a use for the seashells that were found in abundance on the Ethiopian coast, with most of the button blanks that Italy imported originating from these seashells. The left-over parts of the shell or the parts that were unsuitable for export were ground into shell-flour for the poultry farms.²⁸³

The revolution within the Ethiopian fishing industry displayed what one Israeli advisor, with a small team of locals, was able to do with a willing population who were open to adaptation and prepared to take risks in order to better their livelihoods. Israel benefited from Ethiopia having been an established state with a monarchy that was restored during World War II and which was relatively stable with a population who were unified around the nation. Therefore, the common cause of improving the nation and improving their wellbeing as a community was well established. For Israel, Moshe Dayan also informed Selassie in September 1960 that Israel was to operate five fishing vessels in Ethiopian waters, sailing under the

²⁸³ Moshe Decter, *To Serve, To Teach, To Leave: The Story of Israel's Development Assistance Program in Black Africa*, New York: American Jewish Congress, pp. 46-49.

Ethiopian flag.²⁸⁴ Israel's diplomatic relationship with Ethiopia had therefore not only improved Ethiopian fishing, but also Israel's fishing industry.

It was not only the transportation of coffee beans and fish that Israel assisted with in Ethiopia, they also assisted with the movement of people. As mentioned in the previous paragraphs, between 1961 and 1964 *Egged*, Israel's cooperative bus movement, seconded to the General Ethiopian Transport Share Company a General Manager and a Technical Manager who worked to modernise and reorganise transportation in Addis Ababa. The two Israelis proved successful and from close to bankruptcy in 1960, the Ethiopian transport company reported profits in 1964 and was even able to pay a dividend. More importantly for the population that the Israelis were there to assist, the bus services within Addis Ababa and interurban routes improved massively, and in 1964 the company transported approximately 22 million passengers in Addis Ababa, double that of 1961, and interurban services rose from 250,000 to 600,000 during the same period.²⁸⁵ This was another example of a relatively cheap Israeli aid programme, with only the expense of two experts and their families, that provided real change and real improvement for both the lives of Ethiopians and also the Ethiopian economy.

By the late 1960s and early 1970s, Israel's presence in Ethiopia was her second largest in the world, second only to New York. There were estimated to be 70 Israeli families living and working in Addis Ababa and another 10 in Asmara. Selassie's insistence that relations with Israel were kept low-key played out following the 1967 Six Day War between Israel and her Arab neighbours. Shortly after the war, the Eritrean Liberation Front started to connect themselves with the Palestinian struggle and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation announced that they were working to liberate Arab Eritrea from Ethiopian occupation, and thus had placed

²⁸⁴ Israel Consulate General in Addis Ababa to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 16 September 1960, in Israel State Archives, *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Volume 14, 1960, Jerusalem: Government Printer, 1997, p. 404.

²⁸⁵ Leopold Laufer, *Israel and the Developing Countries: New Approaches to Cooperation*, New York: Twentieth Century Fund, 1967, pp. 133-134.

Eritrea as an Arab state in the Middle East conflict.²⁸⁶ Nevertheless, Israel's relationship with Ethiopia remained strong and Selassie accommodated Israeli needs and her strategic interests on the Red Sea and within East Africa.

2.3.3 *Ethiopians in Israel*

Official visits by Ethiopians to Israel occurred frequently. One example was the visit by the Ethiopian Deputy Minister of the Interior and the Director-General of the Ethiopian Ministry of the Interior in June 1962. The week-long visit of the officials saw them take in the religious sites of Jerusalem, as well as the Yad Vashem Holocaust museum in the city, whilst they engaged in meetings with the District Commissioner of Jerusalem, the Deputy Director of the Israeli foreign aid programme, the Israeli Minister of the Interior, and the Minister of Health of Israel and the Director-General of his ministry. The delegation also visited the Hebrew University in Jerusalem to meet with Ethiopian students who were studying at the medical school. At the Lachish Development Area the Ethiopians saw Israeli development policies and expertise in action, and a trip to Eilat offered them the opportunity to see the progress being made in the desert city. Eilat was also the town where all of the maritime trade between Ethiopia and Israel originated. Interestingly, despite having no official visit in Nazareth, the visiting dignitaries included the city of Jesus' childhood on their itineraries, again a demonstration of the soft-sell diplomacy that Israel was able to take advantage of through the familiarity of Biblical places amongst sub-Saharan Africa.²⁸⁷

During 1961, dozens of students from Ethiopia received training in Israel and in terms of numbers, the Israeli academic programme to Ethiopia was its largest academic programme on the continent; in 1963 there were 14 Israelis on the faculty

²⁸⁶ Haggai Erlich, *Ethiopia and the Middle East*, London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994, pp. 154-169.

²⁸⁷ Programme of the Visit to Israel of H.E. The Deputy Minister of Interior of Ethiopia, 4 June 1962, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1903/10.

of the Haile Selassie I University.²⁸⁸ Whilst Israel provided the expertise, they also received from Ethiopia very open and visual displays of friendship. Further visits of Ethiopian dignitaries to Israel included the 1963 visit by the Ethiopian Deputy Minister of Health, who was accompanied on his tour by the Israeli Director of the Government Hospital at Hadera. The Deputy Minister began his tour of Israel with a trip to the Galilee and the holy sites of Nazareth, before he proceeded to visit government health centres in the north of Israel and then at the Hadassah-Hebrew University Medical Centre in Jerusalem.²⁸⁹ The visit also included a trip to Ashkelon and the new port at Ashdod. The itinerary of the Deputy Health Minister was similar to that of other dignitaries: often the trips included stops that were outside the remit of their Ministry like the visit to the port at Ashdod, and a meeting with the Foreign Minister, which was not customary in diplomatic protocol where Ministers would meet their counterparts only. The trip was also split evenly between official business and sightseeing of (Christian) holy sites within Israel.

The importance of Israel to Ethiopia from a religious aspect was also shown in July 1962 when the prize for the winner of a local Bible contest was a two-month trip to Israel paid for by the Ethiopian Government.²⁹⁰ The winner was interviewed in Israel, in Amharic, by the Israeli Broadcasting service.²⁹¹ Upon her return to Ethiopia, the student, Bogaletch Gabre, gave lectures in Ethiopian schools about her trip to Israel and her experiences during her two months touring the country.²⁹² This soft-sell diplomacy and positive publicity for the State of Israel was something that no other state in the world could achieve, as only Israel possessed the Biblical sites

²⁸⁸ Leopold Laufer, *Israel and the Developing Countries: New Approaches to Cooperation*, New York: Twentieth Century Fund, 1967, p. 135.

²⁸⁹ Programme of the Visit to Israel of H.E. The Deputy Minister of Health of Ethiopia, 30 August-6 September 1963, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1903/13.

²⁹⁰ Letter from the Director-General of Programme & Planning at the Imperial Ethiopian Government Ministry of Education & Fine Arts to the Embassy of Israel at Addis Ababa, 18 July 1962, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1903/10.

²⁹¹ Letter from the Second Secretary of the Embassy of Israel to the Director General of Radio Services at the Ethiopian Ministry of Information, 5 October 1962, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1903/11.

²⁹² Letter from the Director-General of Programme & Planning at the Imperial Ethiopian Government Ministry of Education & Fine Arts to H.E. Mr Smuel Divon at the Embassy of Israel at Addis Ababa, 4 December 1962, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1903/12.

of Christianity and Israel exploited them at every opportunity if it provided for friendship and cordial relations. The amount of press publicity that Miss Gabre received in the Israeli media was also unique, and her views and thoughts of her time in Israel were used to justify to the Israeli public the benefits of the Israeli aid programme, which the Israeli taxpayer partly funded.



President Zalman Shazar of Israel presenting a bronze medal to Miss Bogalech Gabre of Ethiopia at the conclusion of the Third International Bible contest in Jerusalem, 24 September 1964. Note, that the photograph is from 1964 at the Israeli bible contest, and the above paragraph refers to the Ethiopian Bible contest of 1962. Photo Credit: Pridan Moshe, Israeli Government Press Office.

2.3.4 Israel's Military Aid to Ethiopia

By the mid-1960s, Israeli arms sales to Ethiopia had begun to increase. It soon became apparent that not only were the arms sales important, but the number of Israeli military personnel in East Africa had also grown with the one-hundred Israeli military personnel in Ethiopia being second in size to only the United States.²⁹³ Israeli arms to Eastern Africa often held important strategic aims for Israel, and by the beginning

²⁹³ Olusola Ojo, *Africa and Israel: Relations in Perspective*, London: Westview Press, 1988, p. 21.

of the 1970s, there were still 45 Israeli advisers in Ethiopia in addition to dozens of short-term specialists. Although, ultimately, Israel sold Ethiopia little in the way of arms, they trained the Imperial Army, security services and the Emperor's Eritrean Emergency Police, with Israel's presence in Eritrea against the Muslim secessionists controversial and placed Israel in the middle of internal African affairs.²⁹⁴ In September 1971, Israel offered Ethiopia navy patrol boats, missile launchers, and a radar network for installation on its Red Sea coast. Strategically, ensuring the freedom of passage for Israeli shipping up the Red Sea into the southern Israeli port of Eilat was considered a crucial Israeli aim of relations with Ethiopia and Israel was prepared to offer Ethiopia whatever military means necessary to ensure the movement of Israeli shipping in the region.²⁹⁵ The arms sales to Ethiopia were like most Israeli arms sales to Africa, and that was that they were ultimately used to maintain the current regime. Emperor Selassie's regime was unstable, and the eastern African state held significant security needs for both Israel and Ethiopia. Emperor Selassie was worried about potential coups against his rule and close relations that focused on military intelligence were maintained.²⁹⁶ Israeli intelligence would ultimately prove invaluable to the Emperor and his monarchy.

²⁹⁴ Zach Levey, Israel's Strategy in Africa, 1961-1967, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (Feb., 2004), p 77.

²⁹⁵ Israel Said to Offer Ethiopia Arms Aid, *The Washington Post*, 16 September 1971.

²⁹⁶ Zach Levey, Israel's Strategy in Africa, 1961-1967, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (Feb., 2004), pp. 76-77.



Israeli Motor Vessel “Queen of Sheba” calling at Sharm el Sheikh on the way from Massawa to Eilat, 15 November 1956. Photo Credit: Photographer Unknown, Israeli Government Press Office.

2.3.5 Ethiopia’s Multi-Lateral Relationships and their impact on ties with Israel

The catalyst that pushed Selassie towards Israel was Egypt’s decision to dam the River Nile without consultation with Ethiopia. Israel provided intelligence to Selassie regarding Egypt’s activities in Ethiopia and the Israeli intelligence service, the Mossad, and the Israeli military intelligence division travelled to Ethiopia to draw up plans to disrupt Egypt’s dam. Such was the importance of Ethiopia that despite only two-hundred Israelis residing in the county in 1961, just twelve months later in 1962, Ethiopia hosted three future Israeli Prime Ministers: then-Foreign Minister Golda Meir, then-Deputy Defence Minister Shimon Peres, and Yitzhak Rabin who then commanded the IDF’s Operations Directorate.²⁹⁷

²⁹⁷ Zach Levey, *Israel in Africa, 1956-1976*, Dordrecht: Republic of Letters Publishing, 2012, pp. 47-52.

Ethiopia's battle with Eritrean separatists and the instability of Selassie's monarchy forced relations with Israel to remain at the Consular level and for Selassie to proceed cautiously with his ties to Israel, while Selassie also needed to keep Cairo and Moscow on-side, as he relied on their aid as well. The conflict with Eritrea pushed Selassie to seek Israeli intelligence and training for his forces in the province, especially following Nasser's decision in 1955 to encourage the Eritrean exiles in Cairo to form an anti-Ethiopian community. Whilst Nasser did not seek warfare with Selassie, he saw him as an enemy. Selassie, meanwhile, helped anti-Egyptian forces in the Sudan.²⁹⁸ Such was the precariousness of the Ethiopian-Egyptian relationship, that when Selassie did establish relations with Israel and the Ethiopian media "mocked" Nasser's efforts against Israel, the Eritrean Liberation Front, supported by Nasser, began its armed struggle as the Israeli diplomat was departing Tel Aviv for Addis Ababa.²⁹⁹ A further complication for the Emperor was the support of Colonel Qadhafi of Libya for Eritreans as Qadhafi directly linked Ethiopian friendship with Israel and his support of the Eritrean separatists.³⁰⁰ Israel needed access to the Red Sea, and so relations between the two nations were conducted at a high level, despite the lack of official Ambassador. Selassie's love of Jerusalem and respect for the city may explain why he placed the Ethiopian Consul-General in Jerusalem with the rank of Minister and appointed his widely respected Minister of Education as his Consul-General, despite his cautious approach due to a fear of Nasser's reaction.³⁰¹

Israel promoted her African aid programme to the United States and Western Europe as a means to ensure that the Arabs and the Soviets did not gain a foothold in the newly decolonised nations and thus, to prevent them from siding with the Soviet Union in the Cold War battle. However, at the end of December 1961, Emperor Selassie laid the foundation stone of the technical school donated by the Soviet Union

²⁹⁸ Haggai Erlich, *Ethiopia and the Middle East*, London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994, p. 130.

²⁹⁹ Haggai Erlich, *Ethiopia and the Middle East*, London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994, p. 138.

³⁰⁰ Joel Peters, *Israel and Africa: The Problematic Friendship*, London: British Academic Press, 1992, p. 46.

³⁰¹ Meeting in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 29 February 1960, in Israel State Archives, in Israel State Archives, *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*, Volume 14, 1960, Jerusalem: Government Printer, 1997, p. 397.

at Bahir Dar, as discussed in the previous subchapter.³⁰² Ethiopia could not afford to lose neither Soviet nor Arab support, and not only because of concern over the oil prices. Israel was dealt a massive blow when on 23 October 1973 Ethiopia announced that it had broken off diplomatic relations “until Israel withdraws from Arab territories she occupied in the 1967 war.”³⁰³ The timing of Selassie’s move is interesting as he did not break ties in the six years between the end of the 1967 War and the 1973 Yom Kippur War, and Selassie respected the relations between the two countries that had been established for many generations. Selassie, under pressure from the Eritrean province with its large Muslim population was left with little choice but to break ties with Israel. With the rupture in relations, Israel lost nothing as Selassie did not harbour resentment or dislike towards Israel, and Israel’s access to the Red Sea did not change. Therefore, it can be argued that Israel’s relationship with Ethiopia was successful in securing Israel’s access to the Red Sea, post-Suez, and that the rupture with Addis Ababa did not have much of an impact on Israel but was rather more damaging to Selassie and the Imperial family, who lost access to Israeli intelligence that had played a key role in sustaining stability in Eritrea, and Selassie’s regime.

2.4 *Uganda*

Israel’s relationship with Uganda commenced as early as 1962 when on the eve of Uganda’s independence Milton Obote, Uganda’s first Prime Minister, visited Jerusalem. Within one month of Uganda’s independence Israel was the first country to open an Embassy at Kampala. On the occasion of independence, Israel presented to the new government a gift of 150 scholarships to be used to train Ugandans in the military and technical fields in Israel, and so began Israel’s relationship with the East African nation. Israel’s relationship with Uganda was very much one of military aid, with civilian aid playing a secondary role. Indeed, such was the importance of the

³⁰² Soviet Press Bulletin Supplement from the Embassy of the USSR, Addis Ababa, 2 January 1962, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1903/10.

³⁰³ Ethiopia Wields Heaviest Blow as War Loosens Israel’s Africa Ties, *Los Angeles Times*, 18 November 1973.

military aid to Uganda that on an official visit to the country in June 1966, Israeli Prime Minister Levi Eshkol toured the Ugandan Army Barracks as a guest of the then-Ugandan Chief of Staff, Colonel Idi Amin.³⁰⁴ The central role that Idi Amin would play in Ugandan politics shortly after Eshkol's visit is well documented, but what is important about Eshkol's visit to the army barracks was the recognition by Israeli politicians of the instability of civilian governments in Africa and the need to engage with military leaders. Israel realised early on in her aid programme that more often than not it was the military leadership who led the coup d'états and overthrows of civilian leaders. There was an assumption made by the Israeli political elite that many of the newly independent African nations would eventually fall under military control, and so ties with military leaders were always initiated, in addition to the relationships formed with the civilian governments. The Israeli analysis proved accurate and by 1966, 26 of the 35 African states had experienced some form of military intervention, with Amin's role in Uganda being the most prominent.³⁰⁵

In the mid-1970s, the retired Israeli Colonel Baruch Bar-Lev, who had served as the head of the Israeli military mission at Kampala, stated that in the early 1970s he had become Idi Amin's personal confidant and that his family had become close friends with Amin's family. Bar-Lev asserted that Israel had supported Amin against President Milton Obote because Obote was seen as hostile towards Israel and there were rumours circulating that he had planned to expel Israeli forces from Uganda. According to Bar-Lev, Amin was concerned that he had little support in the capital and Obote's forces would have been able to arrest him before he reached Kampala. On Bar-Lev's advice, Amin had stationed a military force from his own tribe that had been trained by the Israelis and that included paratroopers, armour, and jeeps in the capital Kampala and succeeded in preventing Obote's attempt to oust him.³⁰⁶ Israel's efforts to furnish relationships with military personnel paid off with Amin, at least initially. Amin's first state visit outside of Uganda following his coup was to Britain,

³⁰⁴ Amii Omara-Otunnu, *Politics and the Military in Uganda, 1980-1985*, Oxford: Macmillan Press, 1987, pp. 66-67.

³⁰⁵ Abel Jacob, Israel's Military Aid to Africa, 1960-66, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (Aug., 1971), p. 169.

³⁰⁶ Israeli Asserts He Helped Amin Achieve Rule in '71, *New York Times*, 17 July 1976.

but he stopped off *en route* in Israel, and his foreign policy during his first year in power was considered anti-Arab.³⁰⁷



On the left: Mrs Miriam Eshkol, wife of the Israeli Prime Minister, joining Ugandan Foreign Minister Sam Odaka (on left) and Chief of Staff Idi Amin in a tribal dancing party at Jinja Military Camp.

Below: Israeli Prime Minister Levi Eshkol flanked by Chief of Staff Idi Amin and Vice President Babiha walking to the saluting stand at Entebbe Airport. Both photographs taken 13 June 1966. Photo Credit: Pridan Moshe, Israeli Government Press Office.



In April 1963, Israel and Uganda signed a defence agreement in which Israel trained a battalion of men and Uganda agreed to buy £1 million of hardware. At the time of the agreement, the Ugandan army consisted of one battalion of 700 men, and the Israelis trained the second battalion, as well as the Air Force and a Special Forces unit.³⁰⁸ During the mid-1960s, the Israeli mission to Uganda was considered to be the most important and was active in training the Ugandan intelligence service, police officers, and military with training conducted in both Uganda and Israel.³⁰⁹ In July 1964, Uganda dismissed the British personnel training their military forces and instead turned to Israeli trainers. Zach Levey noted that Israel achieved this through a £25,000 bribe to Uganda's Minister of the Interior and the distribution of personal weapons and clothing to Ugandan officers and government ministers. Israel would spend one-million dollars annually on training the Ugandan army in order to maintain

³⁰⁷ Amii Omara-Otunnu, *Politics and the Military in Uganda, 1980-1985*, Oxford: Macmillan Press, 1987, p. 100.

³⁰⁸ Zach Levey, *Israel in Africa, 1956-1976*, Dordrecht: Republic of Letters Publishing B.V., 2012, p. 117.

³⁰⁹ Olusola Ojo, *Africa and Israel: Relations in Perspective*, London: Westview Press, 1988, p. 22.

their influence.³¹⁰ The Israeli military also bribed the Ugandan defence establishment when Israel's Ministry of Defence transferred large sums of cash and built villas for military officers, against the wishes of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, in order to keep Amin on side.³¹¹ The Ugandan military also sought Israeli arms in their attempt to rely less on the British for their military needs. By 1969, the Ugandan military had purchased \$25 million of arms and military equipment from Israel.³¹² Uganda had thus become an important trade partner for Israel's defence establishment.

A follow-up trip to Britain in July 1971 also included a stop in Israel where Amin publicly declared his support for Israel's political positions and told the attending journalists that he had gone to Israel to discuss military aid to bolster the Ugandan military forces. The Israeli Cabinet agreed to assist Amin and provided Uganda with 600 command cars and pledged further training of both the Ugandan Air Force and the Army. In return, Amin pledged to open the Ugandan Embassy in Jerusalem and invited General Dayan, then Israel's Minister of Defence, and Lieutenant General Chaim Bar-Lev, the Chief of the General Staff, to visit Uganda.³¹³

³¹⁰ Zach Levey, Israel's Strategy in Africa, 1961-1967, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (Feb., 2004), pp. 77-80.

³¹¹ Zach Levey, *Israel in Africa, 1956-1976*, Dordrecht: Republic of Letters Publishing B.V., 2012, p. 128.

³¹² Zach Levey, *Israel in Africa, 1956-1976*, Dordrecht: Republic of Letters Publishing B.V., 2012, p. 131.

³¹³ Amii Omara-Otunnu, *Politics and the Military in Uganda, 1980-1985*, Oxford: Macmillan Press, 1987, p. 109.



Uganda President Idi Amin (centre) saluting during the playing of national anthems, in front of a Uganda Air Force Commodore jet, at Lod Airport, Israel. 11 July 1971. Photo Credit: Cohen Fritz, Israeli Government Press Office.

Israel's intelligence gathering operations at times caused concern in Uganda and led to the bilateral relationship being strained and ultimately, contributed to the severing of diplomatic ties between the two states. Widely considered at the time to have been responsible for the coup that brought Idi Amin to power, it was the same Israeli intelligence services that would help secure Amin's removal from power. In February 1972, Amin spoke with the Israeli Ambassador at Kampala and warned the Ambassador that Amin had received reports that Israeli personnel were spreading rumours against his government and had attempted to contact the ousted President Obote in Tanzania. Amin threatened to close the Israeli embassy if such information proved correct and two-weeks later Amin cancelled a trip to Egypt for fear of a coup d'état whilst he was out of the country. On 23 March 1972, Amin ordered the removal of all Israeli military personnel within 72 hours and limited the Israeli Embassy to four personnel. Amin also ordered that the Ugandan radio broadcast a statement that accused Israelis of subversive activities and announced that five Israelis had been

arrested in a forest in north-western Uganda.³¹⁴ On 28 March 1972, Amin went further and ordered the Israeli Ambassador to immediately arrange the repatriation of all Israeli citizens in Uganda, some 700 persons.³¹⁵

The break with Uganda was costly to Israel: expelled with little notice, the Israelis had to leave behind investments, assets, and loans worth \$30 million.³¹⁶ In August 1972, Idi Amin then ordered all 55,000 Asians in Uganda to leave, and one-month later he wrote a letter to the Secretary General of the United Nations and to Prime Minister Golda Meir in which he claimed that Adolf Hitler had burned six million Jews alive because Israelis were not people who were working in the interest of the people of the world. Amin called for Israelis to be removed from the Middle East and taken to the United Kingdom, whom Amin said was responsible for taking Jews to Palestine. Such an outburst from Amin, who at this stage was unstable and unpredictable and had moved towards the Arab states for support, resulted in the Nixon Administration refusing to sign a \$3 million loan that had been negotiated between the United States and Uganda.³¹⁷

The rupture in relations will be dealt with in the final chapter, but Uganda's inclusion in the narrative of Israel's aid programme is important as it was a prime example of Israel being prepared to use her military apparatus and intelligence services to assist African leaders in attempted coup d'états, and in Amin's case to successfully take control of Uganda to further Israeli needs and influence in East Africa. Israel's use of bribery, of openly supporting Amin and of the huge concentration of military aid to Uganda, with a relative lack of civilian aid, demonstrates the military capabilities of Israel and what Israel could offer to African leaders who sought her military assistance.

³¹⁴ Israel's Africa Policy Runs Into Rare Failure in Uganda Ouster, *The Washington Post*, 25 March 1972.

³¹⁵ Uganda Tells All Israelis To Leave, *The Washington Post*, 28 March 1972.

³¹⁶ An Arab Campaign Is Damaging Israel's Standing in Black Africa, *New York Times*, 12 January 1973.

³¹⁷ US halts \$3m loan after Uganda assails Israel, *Boston Globe*, 15 September 1972.

2.5 *Other Programmes in sub-Saharan Africa*

Whilst the above four countries displayed the variety and broadness of the Israeli aid programme to Africa, it is important to note several other projects that had a lasting impact. These projects allow for an understanding of the spread of Israeli personnel on the continent, and the sheer number and variety of projects that the Israeli experts were involved in as part of Israel's aid programme. Most experts travelled with their families for their assignment, and there was a large number of Israeli families living amongst the rural and urban communities of sub-Saharan Africa during this period. This subchapter will explore the broadness and variety of the Israeli aid programmes and in doing so will show just how wide and far the Israeli epistemic community was spread throughout the continent. Israel believed that through contact with Israeli experts, who spoke with the Africans they came into contact with about their home, their kibbutz or moshav, and their country, goodwill for their state would increase and that would serve Israel well diplomatically. The modern Israeli term for such public diplomacy would be *hasbara*, the Israeli public-relations effort to share positive facts and information about the State of Israel, and its actions, to those living outside its borders with particular focus on those Israel believes attempts to delegitimise the state.

In Botswana, Israel initiated a medical aid programme that saw a five-year plan implemented to eradicate tuberculosis, as well as a separate programme that worked on eye diseases and the improvement of eyesight amongst Botswanans. In Cameroun there was an effort to improve the livelihoods of the youth and place them in training and occupations that allowed them to be an active part of the economy.³¹⁸ In the Central African Republic, the Israelis built an industrial centre, organised a youth movement for 3,000 boys and developed six farm settlements. One of the Israeli aid programme's strengths was that the experts were good at devising smaller projects that made a real change on the ground at the local level, and which saw

³¹⁸ Y. J. Traub, Secretary General of the Bank of Israel to Mr M. P. Benjenk of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 2 November 1971, in World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1855661 – A1995 – 172 Other # 2 Box # 182571B – Israel – General Negotiations – 1969 / 1971 Correspondence – Volume 2.

success compared to the larger more overarching projects of other donor nations, such as the programmes in the Central African Republic.³¹⁹ In Dahomey (located in what is now Benin), the Israeli expertise on youth training continued, as well as inter-governmental advice on an information and broadcasting service. Israeli experts also helped to set up Dahomey's state lottery and an experimental citrus farm. In the Gabon, Israel set up a civic, rural, and professional training centre, as well as civic physical education and handicraft schools, drawing on their experience of vocation schooling in Israel. In the Gambia there was advice on agricultural techniques as well as a course on agricultural extension services.

In the Ivory Coast there was a joint cooperation that dealt with heavy equipment and farm machinery; a countrywide pioneer training programme of 6,500 men and women; and a pioneer training centre at Bouake, along with twenty pioneer youth centres. In August 1962, the President of the Ivory Coast and his wife arrived in Israel for an official ten-day state visit that concluded with a treaty of friendship, a cultural pact and a technical cooperation agreement. As part of the President's visit, a Haifa street was named after the Ivory Coast, whilst the president and his wife gifted Israel a 10,000-tree pine forest near Jerusalem, with the presidents of the two states being the first to plant two trees to inaugurate the forest.³²⁰ Throughout the period, the Ivory Coast, and in particular President Houphouet-Boigny, was considered close to Israel and a solid ally in the region. The Ivory Coast made Israel's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Abba Eban, a Grand Officer of the National Order and President Houphouet-Boigny often referenced the history of the Jewish people and the history of Africa whose plight against slavery and discrimination he considered to have had been similar.³²¹ Not only had Israel received the diplomatic legitimacy from the Ivory Coast through their bilateral relations, but now there were two very visible signs of Israel's acceptance in the international community through the street in Haifa named after the Ivory Coast and the forest in Jerusalem.

³¹⁹ Israel Gets Mixed Results from Aid to Black Africa, *The Washington Post*, 7 May 1969.

³²⁰ Israel, Ivory Coast In Pact-Signing Ceremonies, *Chicago Daily Defender*, 14 August 1962.

³²¹ Israel Minister Made Officer of African Order, *News Pittsburgh Courier*, 12 October 1968.

The centrality of the Ivory Coast to Israel's aid programme, and the open friendliness of Houphouet-Boigny towards Israel is visible in the four images displayed below, which are from the 10-day state visit the president and his wife made to Israel in July 1962. The first image is of the President and Mrs Houphouet-Boigny, with Foreign Minister Golda Meir, at Haifa port as the two national anthems were played at the start of their visit on the 17 July 1962. The second was taken on 23 July and shows the President planting a sapling at the forest near Jerusalem. The two images show both the friendliness of some African leaders towards the State of Israel, and their willingness to provide very visible displays of friendship through their participation in formal arrival ceremonies, but also permanent displays of friendship like through the planting of the forest. The third image portrays the importance of Jerusalem and the status of Jerusalem to Israel. For Israel, true allies and loyal friends were expected to acquiesce to Israeli demands that their embassies were situated at Jerusalem, and the image shows President Houphouet-Boigny opening his nation's embassy in the city on 17 July 1962. The final image is a visual display of Israel's ability to exploit the Holy land and the access that Israel had over Biblical places and is a photograph of Houphouet-Boigny emerging from the River Jordan, the baptismal place of Jesus, in July 1962.³²²

³²² The photographer is unknown for all four photographs. All photographs are credit to the Israeli Government Press Office.







Further projects in Africa saw Israeli lecturers employed in Kenyan universities, Lesotho received advice on youth programmes and soil conservation techniques, and Liberia had an urban youth club programme and a training farm at Harrisburg. The Malagasy Republic saw a multi-year citrus programme initiated, the establishment of an agricultural training centre and regional settlement scheme, and advice on women's organisations. Malawi also had youth training programmes and a school for youth instructors, as well as Israeli experts directing an eye clinic. Mauritius, like Malawi and the majority of sub-Saharan countries, also had agricultural instruction and a programme for young farmers.³²³ In November 1960 Israel concluded a treaty with Mali that covered a broad range of technical and cultural programmes. The treaties promised "... the Mali Republic extensive assistance from Israel in agriculture, public health, transport, technical education and the development of natural resources." The agreement also gave Israel the overfly rights for transport planes and landing rights at Malian airports.³²⁴

In 1967, Israel established relations with Lesotho and the King of Lesotho wrote to the Israeli government and recalled fondly his visit to Israel four years prior. This added to the Israeli belief that those who visited Israel remained friendly to Israel for years to come. In July 1967, Israel expressed hope that Lesotho would vote with Israel at the United Nations' General Assembly on matters that concerned the Middle East and in return Israel would positively consider the Lesotho request for a Mosotho doctor to be sent to Israel for the provision of training and medical expertise.³²⁵ Rwanda had Israelis direct their ophthalmic service and manage a school of nursing and a dental clinic, as well as a youth training programme. Israel also provided small-scale training that made a real difference. Instead of training only medical doctors for Nigerian hospitals there was a team of first aiders who went from village to village in Nigeria and taught the basics of first aid, a critical skill to have in remote locations

³²³ Y. J. Traub, Secretary General of the Bank of Israel to Mr M. P. Benjenk of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 2 November 1971, in World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1855661 – A1995 – 172 Other # 2 Box # 182571B – Israel – General Negotiations – 1969 / 1971 Correspondence – Volume 2.

³²⁴ Israel Signs Pacts to Give Aid to Mali, *New York Times*, 25 November 1960.

³²⁵ Prepared Remarks by the King of Lesotho, 24 May 1967, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1903/5.

where access to healthcare or immediate hospital treatment was not an option.³²⁶ In Nigeria, Israel also assisted with the issue of fresh water and the transportation of potable water to the smaller towns and villages in the vast country. Within four months during 1962/3, Israeli experts completed 66 miles of water pipeline and had trained dozens of Nigerians in the techniques to continue the work; plans were also made for another 600 miles to be laid by the Nigerians.³²⁷

The Senegal had a bee-raising programme and youth organisation assistance, amongst other projects. In Sierra Leone, Israeli engineers provided advice on electrical engineering and established an experimental farm at the University of Agriculture at Njala.³²⁸ In Tanzania, Israel helped with a cooperative farming scheme that saw the number of Tanzanian families benefiting from the scheme grow from 20 in 1962 to 1,100 in 1965. The Israeli approach in Tanzania, a country that was 90% agricultural, was to concentrate on areas where mechanical ploughs could be used. The success was quick and lifechanging for the farmers who went from making \$40 cash per year from a plot of cotton and some cattle to a situation where with Israeli assistance they netted ten-times that figure.³²⁹ In Tanzania there was also the Mwanza Project where Israel assisted in the development of 20,000 acres of rural settlement on the shores of Lake Victoria over a five-year period. In Kenya, Israel planned a similar project in an area 60 miles southwest of Nairobi.³³⁰

³²⁶ Y. J. Traub, Secretary General of the Bank of Israel to Mr M. P. Benjenk of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 2 November 1971, in World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1855661 – A1995 – 172 Other # 2 Box # 182571B – Israel – General Negotiations – 1969 / 1971 Correspondence – Volume 2. For the first aid programme to Nigeria, see: Foreign Aid That Works, *The Boston Globe*, 2 May 1966.

³²⁷ Africans Find A New, Valuable Friend in Israel, *Chicago Daily Defender*, 5 March 1963.

³²⁸ Y. J. Traub, Secretary General of the Bank of Israel to Mr M. P. Benjenk of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 2 November 1971, in World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1855661 – A1995 – 172 Other # 2 Box # 182571B – Israel – General Negotiations – 1969 / 1971 Correspondence – Volume 2.

³²⁹ Israel Helps Tanzania, *The Atlanta Journal and the Atlanta Constitution*, 15 August 1965.

³³⁰ For the Files from Jose Dumoulin, Visit of Israel Technical Assistants to the Agriculture Division, 16 June 1965, in World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1855658 – A1995-172 Other # 2 Box # 182571B – Israel – General Negotiations – Correspondence 01.

In the Togo there was advice to the government on youth delinquency and a training centre for youth pioneers in Glidji. The Togo also had assistance in pineapple growing, a vital source of nutrition for the local diet, and for exports. There were also 450 young pioneers that cultivated more than 500 acres. Upper Volta received medical assistance with the management of the paediatrics department at Ouagadougou Hospital, advice on a state lottery, and Israeli assistance and expertise in a polyvalent farm at Maturkos. Finally, in the Zambia there was a comprehensive development scheme in Kafubu and Kafulafuth and a survey for another comprehensive development scheme in the Western Province.³³¹ The benefits to the African nations of the Israeli aid programme was also economic. At 1961 costs, it cost approximately \$800 a month to pay the living expenses, travel, and books of one trainee in Israel, and approximately \$550 a month to send an Israeli expert abroad, which was half the cost of an American expert.³³²

2.5.1 Israeli Aid and the Cold War

In order to maintain the level of aid that Israel had been providing, the government of Israel requested \$5 million per year from Washington for her foreign aid programme. Israel was aware that the United States' position was not to provide funding for Israel to use in Africa as part of their policy to remain outside of the Middle East conflict and to protect their interests with the Arab states in regards to their strategic and oil needs in the region. To illustrate the importance of Israeli projects in the Cold War battle, President Kennedy's Deputy Special Counsel, in a memorandum to the president, outlined Israel's programme in the Central African Republic. In the summer of 1961, the Deputy Special Counsel wrote that Ehud Avriel, then the Deputy Director General of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs had visited

³³¹ Y. J. Traub, Secretary General of the Bank of Israel to Mr M. P. Benjenk of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 2 November 1971, in World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1855661 – A1995 – 172 Other # 2 Box # 182571B – Israel – General Negotiations – 1969 / 1971 Correspondence – Volume 2.

³³² Memorandum From the President's Deputy Special Counsel (Feldman) to President Kennedy, 21 November 1961, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Volume XVII, Near East, 1961-1962, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v17/d142>, [accessed 23 June 2021].

the CAR for discussions with President Dacko. At that moment in the CAR's history, there was widespread belief that Dacko was leaning towards the Soviet Union and joining the Soviet sphere of influence due to his conflict with the French post-decolonisation, and due to the attention Bangui had received from the Soviet delegations who had visited numerous times since the Republic's independence. For Washington, this was of concern as the CAR was an important asset geographically, positioned between Chad and the Congo. President Dacko had requested 15 advisors from Israel as well as the training of 57 CAR citizens who he wanted Israel to train to be supervisors of the various government institutions and programmes in the CAR; Dacko also asked for 3 Israelis to serve as personal advisors to himself and another 9 to serve as regional development officials. The Israeli Deputy Director General agreed to the request of the president after Dacko outlined what he saw as the Central African Republic's three options: to turn to the Soviet-Chinese bloc, but risk domination by them; rely on Western powers who he felt were more interested in the continuation of the current status quo and would stifle Dacko's revolutionary plans; or base the CAR on the Israeli model due to Israel's small size and lack of colonialist past with an original social structure.

The president's assistant, Feldman, also outlined Israel's programme in Tanzania where the Israelis had trained 91 Tanzanians in Israel in various fields and amongst the students were people who had been designated to serve as permanent secretaries of various government ministries. Israel also provided a director of rural training to establish a youth leadership and training project that Feldman brought to Kennedy's attention. The missive from Myer had the desired effect and Kennedy told his advisors that he wanted to ensure that Israel received the same level of aid as they had under Eisenhower, and there was general agreement that Israel would receive some American assistance for their aid programme.³³³ The breadth and range of Israel's aid programme had met Israeli aims to be independent enough in the diplomatic community that Israel was no longer viewed as a liability, but rather as a partner by the United States when it came to the development of sub-Saharan Africa.

³³³ Memorandum From the President's Deputy Special Counsel (Feldman) to President Kennedy, 21 November 1961, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Volume XVII, Near East, 1961-1962, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v17/d142>, [accessed 23 June 2021].

Feldman's note to Kennedy also called attention to the impact that the Israeli advisors had at the very centre of African governance. That Israelis served as personal advisors to presidents, to regional secretaries, and advised senior civil servants underlined the comprehensiveness of Israel's aid programme, and the means at which Israel was able to achieve both goodwill but also influence on the African continent both to the benefit of Israel but also as a means to ensure African leaders remained within the American sphere of influence through offers of Israeli assistance with their relationships with Washington.

2.6 *Joint Commercial Companies*

Joint commercial companies were ventures that were majority owed by an African state and in which Israel maintained a smaller shareholding for a set period of time, before full ownership was transferred over to the African state. Joint companies attracted little criticism but provided an array of benefits not just for Ghana with the Black Star Line, but for several African nations. During Golda Meir's second visit to Africa in January 1960, she was invited to attend a Cabinet meeting in Sierra Leone, then still under British rule, where agreement was reached to set up a joint company to conduct water drilling and construction projects.³³⁴ In August 1960 a delegation from Sierra Leone, headed by the Minister of Construction and Development, visited Israel and signed a memorandum for the construction of the parliament building by the joint company, financed through the use of Israeli credit.³³⁵ In total, more than thirty Afro-Israeli joint stock companies were formed.³³⁶

³³⁴ Meeting in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 24 February 1960, in State of Israel, *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel: State of Israel*, Volume 14, 1960, Jerusalem: Government Printer, 1997, pp. 395-396.

³³⁵ Meeting of the Economic Ministers and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, 25 July 1960, in State of Israel, *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel: State of Israel*, Volume 14, 1960, Jerusalem: Government Printer, 1997, pp. 402-403.

³³⁶ Samuel Decalo, *Israel and Africa: Forty Years, 1956-1996*, London: Florida Academic Press Books, 1998, p. 50.

In 1962, the Israeli company Amiran joined with the Tanzanian government to establish supermarkets and department stores, and a further joint venture saw the construction of a new hotel run by African personnel trained in Israel. Through the establishment of jointly owned Israeli-African companies, the Israelis were able to develop an African market for their manufactured goods: these joint companies sourced their raw materials from Africa, and the Israeli experts working in Africa favoured Israeli made products, which in turn increased Israel's exports to Africa.³³⁷ One particularly successful company that spurned requests for further companies was Motoragri in the Ivory Coast. Formed in 1966, Motoragri's expertise and focus was on the mechanised clearing of bush and forest land, with Samuel Decalo noting that "this large company, set up in 1966, engages in mechanised clearing of bush and forest land contracted by the central government, local authorities or private landowners who wish to open up new land for agricultural production."³³⁸ Thus, not only did the joint company enjoy financial success, but it also assisted in the agricultural development of the Ivory Coast.

In the November 1961 memorandum for President Kennedy written by his Deputy Special Counsel Myer Feldman, it was noted that Israel had established joint enterprises for training purposes. One of the joint construction companies that was established by Israel employed 5,000 local people with an Israeli force of fifty.³³⁹ The advantages of a joint enterprise with the Israeli government or the Israeli trade union, the Histadrut, was not just economic in trade terms, or in completed construction projects, but they also provided employment for tens of thousands of Africans who otherwise would have been without an income and means to support their families.

Not only were the Israeli experts cheaper than their American or European counterparts, but the majority of them were also assigned or seconded to joint companies, usually through a semi-public Israeli company linked to the Histadrut. As

³³⁷ Israel Sets Africa Ties, *The Baltimore Sun*, 19 May 1962.

³³⁸ Samuel Decalo, *Israel and Africa: Forty Years, 1956-1996*, London: Florida Academic Press Books, 1998, p. 69.

³³⁹ Memorandum From the President's Deputy Special Counsel (Feldman) to President Kennedy, November 21, 1961, *FRUS*, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v17/d142>, [accessed 23 November 2020].

Mordechai E. Kreinin noted, by the autumn of 1962 the joint Israeli-African construction companies had a combined turnover of \$40 million with a workforce of 33,000 local workers and 350 Israeli engineers and foreman. The projects undertaken by these joint companies included projects of national importance, such as the completion of Sierra Leone's parliament building in just ten months to ensure it was ready for Independence Day, and the Black Star Square in Accra completed in time for a visit by HM Queen Elizabeth II, in addition to hotels, dams, fishing harbours, airports and other construction projects that provided crucial infrastructure to the newly independent nations.³⁴⁰ These projects, in particular the projects of national importance, played a significant role not just in improving the lives of thousands of locals and installing a sense of pride and a morale boost at being involved in the building of their nation state, but economically, it provided employment for thousands of persons during a time of economic upheaval and uncertainty. The tens of thousands of employed persons were paying into the state, rather than taking from the state and that benefited the economies of the new nation states.



Modern suburb of Abidjan (Ivory Coast) built by local workers under supervision and according to plans of the Israeli Solel Boneh construction company, 10 June 1966. Photo Credit: Pridan Moshe, Israeli Government Press Office.

³⁴⁰ Mordechai E. Kreinin, *Israel and Africa: A Study in Technical Cooperation*, London: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964, p. 133-135.

Joint companies also enabled Israel to open up to new markets and to gain a foothold in Africa with relatively little capital investment and with the protection of the developing countries' host government, who maintained the controlling stake. Through joint companies and the aid programme, Israel also found an outlet for its labour excess within the domestic market. Once large Israeli projects had been completed or a major development project had reached fruition, there was an excess of knowledge and manpower in Israel that needed a market for their skills, which was then taken up by the joint companies.³⁴¹ Histadrut's Solel Boneh formed five construction companies with African capital: the Ghanaian National Construction Company in Ghana; Nigersol in Western Nigeria; the Eastern Nigerian Construction Company of Eastern Nigeria; the National Construction Company of Sierra Leone, and Sonitra of the Ivory Coast, with \$107 million dollars of works undertaken and executed up to 1973. By 1974, all but Sonitra had been turned over to full African ownership.³⁴²

There were however minor issues with the joint companies that Israel had to resolve. The African Continental Bank based in Lagos wrote to the Israeli Ambassador to Nigeria in December 1961 and informed the Ambassador that there was a growing sense of resentment against Israelis in Enugu, a state in south-eastern Nigeria. The resentment had built from the activities of the Eastern Nigeria Furniture and Construction Company, a joint enterprise between the Eastern Nigeria Development Cooperation, who held 51% and Solel Boneh, who held the remaining 49% of shares. Nigerian contractors bemoaned the lack of Nigerian personnel employed in key posts by the joint company and there was a belief amongst Nigerian tradesmen that the company existed purely for the benefits that it offered Israel and was not for the greater good of Nigeria. F. S. McEwen of the Bank suggested that the Construction company should limit its activities to those projects in excess of £200,000 to provide the local tradespersons in Nigeria with the possibility to compete

³⁴¹ Leopold Laufer, *Israel and the Developing Countries: New Approaches to Cooperation*, New York: The Twentieth Century Fund, 1967, p. 148.

³⁴² Samuel Decalo, Afro-Israeli Technical Cooperation: Patterns of Setbacks and Successes, in Michael Curtis and Susan Aurelia Gitelson (eds.), *Israel in the Third World*, New Jersey: Transaction Books, pp. 92-94.

for the smaller contracts, in addition to the suggestion that the Company advertise for Nigerians to take Deputy or Assistant positions to every Executive post held by an Israeli in order that they would be trained up and ready to take over the company in the shortest time possible.³⁴³ This was a common complaint amongst the joint companies, and there did appear to be a need to speed up the training of local personnel to take over the roles held by the Israeli advisors. Only through the local personnel being fully trained was there the likelihood of the continued success of the company once the Israeli experts returned home.

2.7 *Israel's Youth Programmes: Gadna and Nahal*

Several African nations modelled their youth programmes on the Israeli *gadna* and *nahal* programmes or adapted aspects of Israel's highly successful programmes as a means to tackle youth unemployment and prevent youth disobedience through lack of purpose. African leaders needed to find a way to occupy their large youthful populations, especially in the sub-Saharan nations where as many as 55% of the population was under the age of 20, and their useful employment and activation into the economy was absolutely crucial to any successful development programme.³⁴⁴ Israel's *gadna* (*gedouday noar* or youth battalions) programme is "for boys and girls aged 14 to 18, [and] offers sports, hiking, camping, crafts, group discussions and cultural activities, as well as physical work and some premilitary training." Israel's *nahal* programme (*noar haluzi lochem* or fighting pioneer youth) "which takes up where *gadna* leaves off, is for young men and women of military age and includes paratroop[er] or regular military training, followed by agricultural settlement in difficult or dangerous places."³⁴⁵ Israel's insecure border regions and hostile neighbours led to the formation of *nahal* settlements in border regions, and members of *nahal* were assigned a *gar'in*, which ensured the separation of the civilian and

³⁴³ Letter from F. S. McEwen of the African Continental Bank in Lagos, to Mr H. Yavor, the Ambassador of Israel, Lagos, 12 December 1961, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1903/5.

³⁴⁴ For the statistic on Africa's youth population, see: Shimeon Amir, *Israel's Development Cooperation with Africa, Asia, and Latin America*, London: Praeger, 1974, p. 36.

³⁴⁵ Leopold Laufer, *Israel and the Developing Countries: New Approaches to Cooperation*, New York: The Twentieth Century Fund, 1967, p. 110.

military personnel of *nahal* within a settlement, with *gar'in* personnel sleeping in separate quarters from the rest of the village. The *gar'in* members were first given basic military training before they were sent to an existing settlement to undergo one year of agricultural training that accustomed the soldier with agricultural labour before those who were eligible were sent for paratrooper training. Those not fit enough for a combat role were sent to the border settlements to reinforce the defence of the state whilst also contributing to the agricultural output. At the end of the paratrooper training, the paratroopers would be sent back to the settlements to join their *gar'in* until they were needed in the event of war or further training.

Through their *gadna* training and then eventual graduation into the *nahal* programme for their military service, the *nahal* recruits had a strong sense of loyalty to their state and a desire to go through the struggles of agricultural settlement in order to improve their country. Most of the participants of the *nahal* programmes in Africa came from the urban unemployed youth and the disgruntled rural youth. There was an urgent need to instil into the young Africans' mindset, especially amongst the aforementioned youth, the virtue of agricultural work and the need to come together for one national good, to infuse patriotism and a desire to work for their newly independent country rather than simply drift toward the urban centre in the hope of a better life through clerical work. The African leaders also envisioned that these youth could act as loyal supporters to the regime to counter the instability of potentially disloyal military and police forces that had attempted several coups on the continent. Such was the importance that some African leaders placed on these ideals that in Togo, for example, the majority of primary schools included five hours per week of *gadna* activities as part of its national curriculum, with the lessons provided by teachers trained in Israel, whilst centres for unemployed youth were created in the Ivory Coast, Central African Republic, Dahomey and Tanzania, amongst other nations.³⁴⁶

Leopold Laufer discussed the programme in the Central African Republic where a rural youth programme saw fifty young people sent to Israel for *gadna*

³⁴⁶ See: Abel Jacob, Israel's Military Aid to Africa, 1960-1966, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (Aug., 1971), pp. 181-184.

training to become the first batch for the Central African Republic's new youth movement, the National Pioneer Youth. They were trained by Israeli *gadna* officers with *gadna* activities becoming part of the curriculum in both primary and secondary schools for eight hours per week. Within the CAR there were six villages settled by the youth movement with collective production, but not consumption, in a hybrid version of the Israeli kibbutz.³⁴⁷ By 1967, the CAR's *gadna* movement had a membership of over 4,000 who were taught literacy and agricultural training in eight *gadna*-style clubs. In Malawi, six Israeli *gadna* advisors trained in two years one-thousand young boys and girls to be youth leaders at 10 training centres. These 1,000 young people were posted all over the country to instruct the organisation's 40,000 community club members in civics, literacy, and agriculture.³⁴⁸

The *gadna* and *nahal* programmes of Africa did not produce the same results that the programmes had in Israel, and there were several reasons for this. Firstly, it must be noted that the programmes in Africa sought to work with those African youth who had already migrated to the urban districts, or who had become disillusioned with rural life and were largely unproductive members of the economic system. These youth had little incentive to return to their rural villages or to settle border regions that were at risk of warfare when the option existed for them to continue to try to make a living in the urban cities, and there was some encouragement needed to entice the youth to participate in these programmes. In Israel the programmes were entirely voluntarily and the Zionist drive and pioneering spirit of many of the younger generations of migrants who moved to Israel saw the security of their border regions as a national duty and therefore sought out *gadna* and *nahal* training as it was embedded in the Israeli way of life. Further differences between the Israeli and African youth that impacted on the programme was the vision of the programme. Whilst in Israel there was a clear threat to the integrity of the state's borders, there was no such vivid threat for the youth of Africa, whose loyalties mostly laid with their community groups, rather than to a state. In Africa, there were also issues with the

³⁴⁷ Leopold Laufer, *Israel and the Developing Countries: New Approaches to Cooperation*, New York: The Twentieth Century Fund, 1967, p. 113.

³⁴⁸ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Israel's Programme of International Cooperation*, Jerusalem: Government Printer, 1967, p. 49.

idea of a state, and for many Africans, the notion of a state came with negative reminders of the power of a state. Thus, there was a need to encourage African societies that they had a duty to give back to their state, and not just take from the state. This of course was more difficult when vast swathes of the population lived in poverty and struggled to sustain their families and therefore tended to be more risk-averse to new ideas.³⁴⁹

The goal of the Israeli programme of both *gadna* and *nahal* was always military and the border security of the State of Israel's land borders with her Arab neighbours. The African aim of the programmes was the resettlement of urban youth through education and re-education to provide them with agricultural work that would yield results, and it was very much a job-retraining programme rather than a nationalistic attempt at unifying a people around a common cause or a common enemy. Furthermore, Abel Jacob gives the example of Tanzania where the aim of the programme was changed mid-course when the Israelis, who had agreed to train the Tanzanian youth under the *nahal* framework for solely non-military purposes, discovered that President Nyerere had decided that he would rather use the *nahal*-trained members for internal security without prior consultation with the Israeli instructors or any consideration of whether the youth were trained for such a role.³⁵⁰ The National Service programme of Tanzania thus became an important route for entrance into the police or military forces of Tanzania.³⁵¹ The use of the youth programmes for military purposes, against Israel's initial aims, would later cause further complications in Israel's relationship with Africa due to the internal unrest most African nations experienced and the unwise positions that Israel took in several of the civil conflicts that saw Israel on the wrong side.

Despite seventeen African states (Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Dahomey, Gabon, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Niger,

³⁴⁹ For the idea of the nation state within African communities, see: Jehudi J. Kanarek, *Israeli Technical Assistance to African Countries*, Geneva: Geneva-African Institute, 1969, p. 40.

³⁵⁰ Abel Jacob, Israel's Military Aid to Africa, 1960-66, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (Aug., 1971), p. 173.

³⁵¹ Jehudi J. Kanarek, *Israeli Technical Assistance to African Countries*, Geneva: Geneva-African Institute, 1969, p. 41.

Senegal, Tanzania, Togo, Upper Volta and Zambia) implementing some form of *gadna* or *nahal* programme, there was very little success and the Israeli aim of preventing African youth from drifting from their villages to urban centres was a failure partly due to the reasons mentioned above.³⁵² Whilst Israel's programmes for youth proved largely unsuccessful in Africa, Israel did succeed in the education of women in order to make them an even more productive part of Africa's economies and to assist in raising the nutritional and health standards of both children and women in sub-Saharan Africa.

2.8 *The role of women*

In Israel's own development women have played a key role in all aspects of life, whether it was working in the fields of the agricultural settlements, in animal husbandry, or through political leadership, women played central and important roles throughout Israel's history. Golda Meir, Israel's only female prime minister, was Israel's Minister in Moscow immediately following Israel's independence in 1948, and then served as a senior cabinet minister until her retirement from politics at the end of her premiership. Africa never saw a female prime minister, or senior positions filled by women. One of the reasons for this was that "politics in the 1950s became more of a male domain as it became an open, public one. Because men were predominant in formal employment, trade union leadership was virtually all male. Party politics might present certain roles for women, but in no case at the time were women the top leaders, and in some cases as African men entered formal hierarchies in the civil service or in politics, they saw their own status in relation to how "their" women maintained a respectable and deferential position."³⁵³ The importance of women in Israel's development programme was given just as much attention as that of the men, and it was believed amongst the Israeli experts that development would only be successful if all members of the society were included equally, and if women

³⁵² For the list of the seventeen African states, see: Abel Jacob, Israel's Military Aid for Africa, 1960-66, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (Aug., 1971), p. 166.

³⁵³ Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940, The Past of the Present*, 2nd Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019, p. 183.

were given a central role, and that included military service which is compulsory for both sexes.

Whilst women never played a prominent role in formal politics, they played equally as important roles in Africa's development. Frederick Cooper discussed the important roles that women played in "African agricultural during the colonial period. Women played important roles in crop production and were often responsible for the marketing of the family crops. The West African "'market women' exercised considerable autonomy in her business and usually in her household."³⁵⁴ Furthermore, "African peasants were able to survive periods of low world prices because they engaged in "self-exploitation," making use of the unpaid labour of women and children to maintain production even when sales prices could not have justified paying hired labour a market wage."³⁵⁵

Building on the role that women had within the economic sphere, in several African countries programmes were initiated for women, like the Israeli schools that were set up in the early 1960s in the Ivory Coast to teach women community leadership, history, and that attempted to improve the literacy rate amongst the female population. In Kenya there was a similar programme that taught Kenyan women in an on-the-spot three-month course in weaving and cooperative marketing. The two Israeli instructors who went to Kenya trained women to enable them to further teach other women how to make clothes for their families, but also to sell for profit at markets, thus placing the women in the economic life of the family and improving the lives of their families through their skills.³⁵⁶ In 1960, a United Nations conference held at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, focused on the issue of the women's role in developing countries and how women should be included into the development sphere as full partners, with the importance of literacy being highlighted. Israel was seen as

³⁵⁴ Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940, The Past of the Present*, 2nd Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019, p. 29.

³⁵⁵ Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940, The Past of the Present*, 2nd Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019, p. 137.

³⁵⁶ Jehudi J. Kanarek, *Israeli Technical Assistance to African Countries*, Geneva: Geneva-African Institute, 1969, p. 55.

experienced in female literacy and therefore a follow-up seminar was planned.³⁵⁷ By 1961, as Richard Easterlin observed, Israel was fortunate to have a population whose education standards were amongst the highest in the world, with Israeli males first in the world in terms of higher education and Israeli females second only to American females. Israel's education levels in 1948, at independence, "was close to the highest in the world." Israel greatly benefited from the education attainments of her population, and possibly unique to Israel during this period was the high level of uniformity in the education levels, with high education standards found not just amongst the youth, but amongst all age groups, and whilst the migrants from North Africa and the Arab world lowered the statistics, there is no doubt that Israel was developed by some of the most highly educated people in the world at that time, both male and female.³⁵⁸

During the spring of 1961, the follow-up international seminar was held at Haifa and focused on the role of woman in developing societies. The Haifa conference saw the establishment in 1962 of a training centre on Mount Carmel at Haifa that was to focus solely on the role and needs of the community and the family unit in a developing society. Although it became renowned for its education of women, the centre was open to students of both sexes. The Centre, founded by Foreign Minister Golda Meir, the Swedish Ambassador to Israel, Mrs Inga Thorrson, and Mina Ben Zvi, the former Israeli Consul in Finland, offered Israeli-funded scholarships that covered the students' room and board, health insurance, tuition and provided for limited funds for pocket money. The municipality of Haifa provided a three-storey building to act as the Centre's base with the two upper floors used to accommodate forty-five students, with classrooms, a dining room and a library with reading room all available to them. The courses were given in either English or French and lasted anywhere from 4 to 6 months, with a prerequisite that all students had completed ten years of formal education, and at least two years of practical work experience in their fields. The focus of the centre was on those who were educated to

³⁵⁷ Shimeon Amir, *Israel's Development Cooperation with Africa, Asia, and Latin America*, London: Praeger, 1974, p. 43.

³⁵⁸ Richard A Easterlin, Israel's Development: Past Accomplishments and Future Problems, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol. 75, No. 1 (Feb., 1961), pp. 70-76.

be teachers, nurses, or social workers.³⁵⁹ There were also courses that centred around “the social obligations and rights of women” and included “elementary problems of family planning.” The Mount Carmel Centre quickly gained a reputation as being a good place to further the education and the contribution of women to African society, with even Mrs Nyerere, the wife of the Tanzanian president, having attended courses at the centre.³⁶⁰ During the ten years to 1971, the Mount Carmel centre saw more than 1,500 students participate in courses, mostly middle-level personnel who would go on to supervise and further teach the methods they learned in their home countries.³⁶¹ By 1978, the impact of the centre had grown with more than 2,000 women having been trained at the centre to play an active role in the economic development of their homelands.³⁶²



Noah Lebovitz (centre) instructing African students in handicraft at the Mount Carmel Centre in Haifa. Left to right are Mary Koinange from Kenya, Myang Efrong from Nigeria, and Rose Vincent (standing) from Liberia, 16 February 1964. Photo Credit: Pridan Moshe, Israeli Government Press Office.

³⁵⁹ For the Mount Carmel centre, see: Jehudi J. Kanarek, *Israeli Technical Assistance to African Countries*, Geneva: Geneva-African Institute, 1969, pp. 53-54.

³⁶⁰ Israel's Aid Programmes, undated, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1950/14.

³⁶¹ Shimeon Amir, *Israel's Development Cooperation with Africa, Asia, and Latin America*, London: Praeger, 1974, p. 44.

³⁶² Africans study Israel teaching despite breakoff, *The New York Jewish Week*, 6 August 1978.

Israel also established training centres in Africa, such as the Kenya-Israel School for Social Work, directed by an Israeli, that was established at Machakos in 1962 and trained young Kenyan women to become community and social workers. Follow up with the students revealed that the Israeli courses, as with most of Israel's education programmes, were successful and left a meaningful legacy that produced an output that had a positive impact on African communities. A 1966 follow up of the Kenyan school revealed that of the two-thirds of students that the school was able to contact, 65% were active in the field that they had studied in, and most had also applied the methods that they were taught by the Israeli experts. The most successful course of the school was the kindergarten courses, with 13 of the 24 students placed as supervisors or instructors at various kindergartens in Kenya. In Uganda, Israel also trained women in secretarial work in an on-the-spot course.³⁶³

Further on-the-spot courses that Israel was involved in included, in 1964, a Colonel and three Captains from the Israeli Defence Forces being dispatched to set up a 'service civique' camp at Bouake in the Ivory Coast. 300 girls from rural villages were trained to march in unison and live-in barracks with girls from different groups. The girls studied a variety of subjects that included "French, history, hygiene, home economics and food diets, gardening, sewing and handicrafts. 75 girls were then chosen for a supplementary course in teaching children, first aid and midwifery." The President of the Ivory Coast, a keen supporter and friend of Israel, described the Israeli colonel and captains as "creating the motherhood of a Muslim country." The course was seen as a success, with 280 of the 350 initial participants completing the course with girls from 16 different groups having been taught to work together for the greater good, with eighteen of the graduates remaining at the Camp after graduation to assist with the second class.³⁶⁴

Whilst there were great successes in the education of women, it is inaccurate to describe the Israeli aid programme's focus on women as entirely successful, as

³⁶³ Jehudi J. Kanarek, *Israeli Technical Assistance to African Countries*, Geneva: Geneva-African Institute, 1969, pp. 55-57.

³⁶⁴ Jehudi J. Kanarek, *Israeli Technical Assistance to African Countries*, Geneva: Geneva-African Institute, 1969, p. 47.

there are examples amongst the archives and from reports, of the problems that the Israeli courses experienced and examples of where the expenditure for the training of the women went unfulfilled. An example presented in the 1960s included that of an African party official's wife who had spent three months in Israel studying home economics, but who upon arrival back at home immediately returned to her domestic duties and her previous way of life, with the knowledge she had acquired wasted and no benefit being gained from her scholarship and time in Haifa.³⁶⁵ Israel had some experience with the problems of integration of women into society, in particular with the Jewish women who migrated at the time of independence from North Africa. There was frequent conflict and unrest when Israeli social workers attempted to bring these women out of the home and place them in a role that would benefit the community and be part of the economic life of Israel.³⁶⁶ Within Africa, Israel at times experienced similar problems when the family elders, or the male relatives of the women, objected to their education or training courses and prevented their female relatives' participation.

The Israeli projects were planned to achieve meaningful domestic development that included women and children and included female and childhood literacy at the forefront of all Israel's development efforts with the driving force being the belief that the placement of women in the labour force through education was essential. The Israeli method of strengthening the areas in which women traditionally had spheres of influence within their communities, like handicrafts, child-rearing, nutrition, and social welfare, attempted both to work within the framework of the family structure of the Jewish immigrants of North Africa, as well as the family structure of the African communities Israel sought to assist. The structure of rural African communities made the importance of women even more prominent as their place in society was very much a child-rearing one and they were responsible for the early education of children and had the greatest influence on the nutrition, health,

³⁶⁵ Leopold Laufer, *Israel and the Developing Countries: New Approaches to Cooperation*, New York: The Twentieth Century Fund, 1967, p. 182.

³⁶⁶ Ralph M. Kramer, *Community Development in Israel and The Netherlands: A Comparative Analysis*, California: University of California, 1970, ch. 2.

wellbeing, and education of not only their children, but also the children in their community.³⁶⁷

The means of educating the women of Africa had to be adapted to meet the realities of the lives of the African women, who usually married young, and the majority of whom had children that needed to be cared for, preventing the women from undertaking long excursions to Israel for specialised training. Israel's on-the-spot courses held in Africa prevented the need for the women to leave their communities and allowed for the continued care of their children, as well as allowed the women to continue with their responsibilities within their villages whilst undertaking the training and gaining the important experience and knowledge. Through on-the-spot training, tension between male village elders and husbands was also negated as they knew where their wives and the females of their communities were, and who they were being taught by. An added benefit of Israel's aid programme was the willingness of the Israeli experts to stay in the communities they were assisting rather than commute to and from the urban district as other nations' experts did, and this allowed the experts to 'get a feel' for the community and tailor their aid programme to accommodate the needs and any idiosyncrasies particular to that village. This made for a more successful programme that benefited at the grass-roots level rather than satisfied checklists or aims that were formulated back in the donor nation.

For those women that were able to spend an extended period of time abroad, Israel's medical training was highly sought after and regarded by African nations as one of the best opportunities to advance their medical sector and improve the health of their rural population. Consequently, better health led to an increased output of the agricultural sector through healthier farmers and a more productive family unit. In 1962, the first African woman went to Jerusalem to begin her medical studies at the Hebrew University's Hadassah Medical School, one of Israel's leading medical

³⁶⁷ See: Shimeon Amir, *Israel's Development Cooperation with Africa, Asia, and Latin America*, London: Praeger, 1974, p. 42 and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Israel's Programme of International Cooperation*, Jerusalem: Government Printer, 1967, p. 65.

schools.³⁶⁸ In July 1962, an agreement of cooperation and assistance between Ghana and Israel was signed with six nurses selected for training in Israel in theatre work and a further six for training in Israel on tuberculosis treatment. The Israeli government also sent two public health nurse tutors and one practical nursing tutor to Ghana along with two paediatricians and two pathologists. In addition to the twelve nurses sent to Israel, a senior official of the Ghanaian Ministry of Health was also invited to Israel for a 14-day trip to observe the facilities available for the trainees and to further advance the technical cooperation.³⁶⁹ Israel also initiated a programme of studies for nurses from various countries in Africa that were taught in English and that lasted for a period of 10 to 12 months. The exhaustive courses focused on midwifery, operating room techniques, public health and ward administration and was formulated to provide an overview of all the crucial aspects of hospital management. The midwifery course emphasised the midwife's role in nursing, physiology, the pathology of pregnancy, delivery, obstetrics, gynaecology and the care of the new-born, to give the midwife a rounded education of all aspects of childbirth that was broader than the narrow focus of labour. The students in the midwifery courses gained practical experience in obstetrics and gynaecology wards and theatres, as well as mother and child centres and community facilities that were provided for pregnant women. For the operating room courses, the focus was on modern operating room equipment, their maintenance, the sterilisation of operating tools and equipment, the care of patients in theatre, both pre- and post-surgery, as well as the importance of recognising sepsis and other complications that may occur during routine surgery that a surgery nurse would be expected to know. For the public health training, the course covered all aspects of community health, including psychology and mental health, as well as health education, family health, chronic illnesses and their management and rehabilitation. The public health courses incorporated nutrition and sanitation, two aspects of Israel's civilian aid programme that were extremely successful.³⁷⁰ The benefits of training medical staff was two-fold:

³⁶⁸ Israel Giving Strong Helping Hand to Many African Nations, *New Pittsburgh Courier*, 5 May 1962.

³⁶⁹ Technical Co-operation with and assistance from Israeli Government, 1 July 1962, in Israel State Archives Folder 1903/14.

³⁷⁰ Jehudi J. Kanarek, *Israeli Technical Assistance to African Countries*, Geneva: Geneva-African Institute, 1969, p. 115.

it improved the health and lives of Africans, expanded the knowledge of African medical teams, but it also provided an unmeasurable amount of goodwill towards the State of Israel, as the highly educated professionals took with them the memories of the high-level of education they had received from Israeli instructors and the positive experiences they had during their meetings with their Israeli experts, and it was this goodwill that sustained Israel in the post-rupture period.

To fund these courses, throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Israeli Ministers and politicians visited the United States on fundraising tours and engaged with the American Jewish community to promote Israeli interests and to exert pressure on American politicians for Israel's voice to be heard and for funding to be provided. One such November 1960 visit by the Israeli Minister of Social Welfare saw the Minister discuss with the assembled Jewish audience in Atlantic City the establishment of a modern school of social work in Israel that acquainted African and Asian students with the most advanced techniques of development in social work. The school was organised under the guidance of American professors. Dr Joseph Burg told his audience at the National Convention of the Religious Zionists of America that Israel had "...assumed a deep moral obligation to become an intellectual and moral pilot plant and that it was motivated primarily by a desire to obtain more cordial and lasting relations with all nations."³⁷¹ American Diaspora funding, as well as funds from the United States' Government were sought and often Israel promoted their aid programme, and their aid programme for African women, in order to encourage further fundraising attempts for the State of Israel. Overall, Israel's civilian aid programme that was targeted towards women was extremely successful, and Israel managed to transfer knowledge and skills to the female populations that allowed them to play an active role in the development of their nation.

2.9 *The education and training of African students in Israel*

Israel's aid programme included extensive training on-the-spot in Africa, but also a well-planned and elaborate programme of seminars, lectures, study tours and

³⁷¹ Israel to Step Up Aid to Neighbours, *New York Times*, 20 November 1960.

extended degrees at Israeli universities for students from Asia, Africa and Latin America. These students would become goodwill ambassadors for Israel when they returned to their home nations with a wealth of new information and education on how to better the lives of their communities. In 1960, as the African independence movement gained real momentum, Israel's trade union movement, the Histadrut, opened the Afro-Asian Institute in Tel Aviv to provide instruction to African and Asian trade unionists on all aspects of the cooperative movement. A total of \$180,000 per annum from the American trade unions provided for half of the funding costs of the Institute, which offered in the first year 134 students 300 hours of lectures and 400 hours of practical experience.³⁷² One of the founding principles of the Institute was that "independence is not a goal by itself; that new countries must develop social, economic, cultural and spiritual content." The programme of the course included three months at the Worker's College for theoretical studies, followed by a period of time on kibbutzim and moshavim, and then an assignment in an office that was engaged in the specialisation of the student. The involvement of the United States trade union federations was evident throughout, as not only did they provide funding but the former Israeli Ambassador to Washington, Eliahu Elath, and George Meany, president of the American Federation of Labour and Congress of Industrial Organisations, served as co-chairmen of the institute.³⁷³ Israel also offered study tours of their country for African labour leaders, such as the three-week tour by four Guinean labour leaders, and the follow-up visit of ten trade unionists from Guinea who spent seven months in Israel studying the trade union and cooperative movement.³⁷⁴ Israel's education programme in 1960 came at a cost of \$1.7 million for the training of one-thousand students.³⁷⁵ In 1963, Israel, which prior to the 1967 War was about the size of the state of Massachusetts, offered 150 scholarships for

³⁷² Bernard Reich, Israel's Policy in Africa, *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (Winter, 1964), p. 24.

³⁷³ See: International Institute for Labour, Development and Cooperative Studies (ILDEC), <https://uia.org/s/or/en/1100044811> [accessed 11 June 2021] and A Labor School Opens in Israel, *New York Times*, 19 October 1960.

³⁷⁴ Mordechai E. Kreinin, *Israel and Africa: A Study of Technical Cooperation*, London: Praeger, 1964, p. 31.

³⁷⁵ Zach Levey, Israel's Entry to Africa, 1956-1961, *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (September 2001), pp. 107-108.

Ugandan students to study in Israel³⁷⁶ and in 1971 there were 757 African students in Israel.³⁷⁷



Gwao Abdulrahman, Secretary-General of the Tanganyika African Local Government Workers' Union, a student at the Afro-Asian Institute, Tel Aviv, with Y. Saadia, Trade Union Study Group, 26 March 1962. Photo Credit: Unknown, Israeli Government Press Office.

The importance of the training programme to Israel is therefore evident through the amount of money that Israel was prepared to spend, at a period of time when Israel was still in the process of absorbing the Jewish immigrants who had arrived since independence. The speed with which Israel offered aid was also rapid and immediate, one example being with Upper Volta, which on the very same day

³⁷⁶ Africans Find a New, Valuable Friend in Israel, *Chicago Daily Defender*, 5 March 1963.

³⁷⁷ Israelis Say Black Africans Begin to Regret Breaking Ties, *New York Times*, 17 February 1974.

that they declared independence received from the Israeli president, Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, a letter that congratulated the people on their independence and offered to establish full diplomatic relations, and guaranteed scholarships for 15 Voltan students.³⁷⁸ During the period of this dissertation, thousands of African students travelled to Israel as part of Israel's aid programme.

2.9.1 *The African Student Magazine: An Analysis*

Mordechai E. Kreinin's accepted criterion to measure success in technical assistance was based on the following statement: "A successful technical assistance project is one which introduces a new product or brings about improved methods of producing existing products, coupled with an attitudinal and/or social change – and is one in which these changes survive the withdrawal of foreign technicians."³⁷⁹ Thus, in order to be considered as successful, the technical assistance programmes must survive the withdrawal of the foreign technicians and flourish without any external assistance. The training of African students in Israel was a resounding success, and written accounts from African students were full of praise for the relationships that they were able to form with their professors and instructors. The feeling of goodwill and the positive impression that the Israeli academics left on their African students resonated at the political level. Those who had trained in Israel or studied in Israel under Israeli instructors were considered to be pro-Israeli and a strong proponent of Israel once back in their home country. *The African Student*, a magazine published by the African students in Israel noted in December 1964 that "Politically, the ex-Israeli trained officers are the best sympathisers of the state and these, on going back to their respective countries, promote better understanding between the two

³⁷⁸ Research Study RAAS-1 Prepared in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, 26 January 1973, *FRUS*, 1969–1976, Volume E-6, Documents on Africa 1973–1976, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76ve06/d2> [accessed 12 June 2021].

³⁷⁹ Mordechai E. Kreinin, *Israel and Africa: A Study of Technical Cooperation*, Praeger: London, 1964, p. 16.

countries.”³⁸⁰ The magazine was self-published and became an outlet for African students to share news and offer articles that discussed their lives in Israel, their successes and concerns, as well as share news from Africa. The cultural exchange was two directional, and the African students also attempted to promote their nations and provide their Israeli hosts with a glimpse of their lives and their cultural background. To measure the goodwill of a government, or even a population, is not easy. Therefore, a useful analytical tool to measure goodwill and the general impression that Israel projected during her foreign aid programme is through the testimonies of the African students who studied in Israel or were taught by Israelis in their home countries as to what their memories and feelings toward Israel were. Such sentiments are important when looking at the Israeli aims of the programme, which were to garnish friendship and international support for Israel’s existence, for the Israeli psyche, and for support in international forums, and the goodwill of the students that Israel taught was a central component of that. No secondary literature has yet analysed *The African Student* magazine, which is analysed below in order to examine how successful Israel was at creating the goodwill amongst the African students whilst they were in Israel.

The training of the African students was comprehensive, especially the programmes of study that students took at Israeli universities. In 1962, the first cohort of African students enrolled at the Technion University in Haifa in an English-language agricultural engineering course.³⁸¹ Between 1958 and the end of 1967, Israel had trained over nine thousand students in courses that ranged from poultry farming to medicine and sent over seventeen hundred experts to more than sixty-two countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America.³⁸² During the 1958-1959 academic year, the Israel-African Friendship Association was formed. The Association sought to “... create an atmosphere of home around the African students ... form closer relations

³⁸⁰ Israel and her Foreign Students, *The African Student*, number 6, December 1964, pp. 40-42, in General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 4937, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

³⁸¹ A Word, *The African Student*, number 12, May 1969, p. 14, in General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 4937, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

³⁸² Editorial, *The African Student*, number 10, December 1967, p. 6, in General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 4937, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

between the students and Israeli families, and the opening of Israel-African clubs.” The Association also tried “... to sell the African Conscience by supplying information on matters relating to African peoples, their political, cultural, and economic life, organising meetings between personalities from Africa visiting Israel, and the Israeli public, and also by public lectures by African dignitaries.”³⁸³

An example of courses planned in Israel for 1962 included seven courses, 4 months each, of 25 students each in the agricultural sector; within the family and community sector, there were five courses that lasted up to six-months for 25 students each, and a 3-year nursing course; there were three courses of up to 3.5 months in duration for 50 students each that dealt with cooperation and labour; seven courses lasting from 4 months to 2 years trained 320 students in education and vocational studies; government administration courses trained 110 students, and 16 students spent six-years completing a medical degree in Israel, whilst 40 agricultural engineers completed a four-year degree in Israel. A special feature of the Israeli aid programme was that African students who attend training were also sometimes put to more practical use. There were special officers in various Israeli departments and ministries, including the Ministry of Police, the Ministry of Communication, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Ministry of Health. Within those Ministries, trainees from abroad would partake in courses, at the conclusion of which the trainee would be put to practical work. One example of this was a course for African trainees at the Israeli Police Training Base. The African trainees undertook the same courses as regular Israeli police trainees and had to pass all the same assessments at the end of which the newly qualified trainees were given practical tasks to perform in Israel before they returned home.³⁸⁴

The Foreign Students’ Advisor at the Technion in Haifa wrote in the *African Student* magazine of the first African students who were enrolled in October 1962

³⁸³ The Israel-Africa Friendship Association and Cooperation with the Peoples of Africa, *The African Student*, number 9, September 1966, pp. 25-30, in General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 4937, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

³⁸⁴ International Cooperation between Israel and other Developing Countries, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1950/14.

and whose skillset was high enough to result in a cohort of students that not only passed their studies, but often did so with distinction. Aryeh Freeman went on to prophesise that the Israelis' contribution to the African students has been their education and the technical skills they were taught and that the Africans' contribution to the Israelis was to make them aware that different peoples can exist in a healthy society without conflict or issue.³⁸⁵ This knowledge of African affairs transitioned over into everyday Israeli life and the positive experiences that African students in Israel had.

In Europe, Russia, and the United States many African students reported racist acts towards them and segregation from mainstream society and life. In Israel, African students “whether they are in Israel for weeks, months or years, they are made to feel a part of the community—and the success of the Israeli training schemes stems not only from their severe practicality and relevance to African problems but from the way Africans [were] genuinely welcomed.”³⁸⁶ Throughout the 1960s, African students were present in all sectors of Israeli life and came into daily contact with the Israeli population whether it was on the street, in a supermarket, at universities, collective settlements or even at army or paramilitary training centres, and the vast majority of these contacts were highly positive; new immigrants to Israel also at times shared Hebrew language courses, known as *Ulpan*, with African students.³⁸⁷ There were even examples of Israeli females marrying African men, at a time when interracial marriage was extremely frowned upon in the United States, and where in most of Western Europe it was a rare occurrence.³⁸⁸

African students who travelled to Arab states for training or university often also experienced overt racism that led to some of the students terminating their studies and returning home. In terms of attitudes towards race within Arab society, Black

³⁸⁵ A Word, *The African Student*, number 12, May 1969, pp. 14-15, in General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 4937, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

³⁸⁶ Israel's help to African States, *The Guardian*, 20 June 1962.

³⁸⁷ Africans in Israel Seek Methods To Solve Common Problems of Both, *News Pittsburgh Courier*, 8 September 1962.

³⁸⁸ Marriages, *The African Student*, number 8, March 1966, p. 22, in General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 4937, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

American journalists who worked in the Arab states also complained of racism in every country they visited, except Jordan. African employees who chose to work in the Arab countries on construction projects and other projects involving manual labour were kept working in what they considered to be 'slave-like' conditions in exchange for a 'slave wage'.³⁸⁹ The experiences both in the Arab world and the United States only reinforced Israel's image as a non-colonialist, non-racist, developing nation that sought live up to the words of Theodore Herzl and to assist in the development of Africa. This comparative approach to the experiences of African diplomats and students is intended to reinforce the positive goodwill that Africans had when they experienced Israeli life and culture, largely free of racism. This had a lasting impact on their emotional connection to Israel and the goodwill that they returned home with, when compared to the experiences of their peers who had travelled to the Arab world, Europe or the United States.



Hebrew teacher Nehama Meyuchass with Augustine Adje from the Ivory Coast, Razzan Nahum from Turkey and Muhammed El Zaubi from Nazareth during a Hebrew lesson at Ulpan Akiva, 22 July 1963. Photo Credit: Pridan Moshe, Israeli Government Press Office.

³⁸⁹ Arye Oded, *Africa and the Middle East Conflict*, London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1987, pp. 86-87.

However, at times, interaction between Israeli and African students was tense. In a December 1963 issue of *The African Student* magazine, there were complaints about the “unfriendly” host students at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and it was surmised that “... unfriendliness and coldness of heart is an inherent weakness of the Israeli student which he should discard, especially at a time when the number of African students in Israel is growing.”³⁹⁰ Tensions between the Israeli and African students was in part due to the racism that African students experienced from some of the Israeli students they studied with, and from some of the Israeli population. Whilst, overall, it was considered that African students in Israel did not experience racism to the level experienced in the United States, they did experience racism and had to overcome challenges in their daily life due to such racism, and that included when it came to accommodation and having to negotiate against price increases imposed by landlords when renting to African students.³⁹¹ The most concerning instance of racism for the Africans was the use of the word “*kushi*” which was the Hebrew name for the Black people of Ethiopia. The *Jerusalem Post* English-language Israeli paper referred to the African students in Jerusalem as “*kushis*” in an article that dealt with the complaints of African students experience of racism. University professors, lecturers, and teachers in the field were also accused of using the derogatory term in a manner than distressed the African students and with little regard for their feelings nor any attempt to reduce the usage of it.³⁹² There were also reported instances of the Israeli Hebrew language press printing articles with “...ludicrously false and damaging stories about the African students in Israel.”³⁹³ Whilst there were numerous reports and complaints of the word *kushi* being used against the African

³⁹⁰ The African in Israel, *The African Student*, number 3, December 1963, p. 4, in General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 4937, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

³⁹¹ Spitfire: Downtown Jerusalem, *The African Student*, number 3, December 1963, pp. 16-17, in General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 4937, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

³⁹² Kushi, *The African Student*, number 3, December 1963, pp. 30-32, in General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 4937, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

³⁹³ Editorial: The African Student and the Press, *The African Student*, number 4, June 1964, p. 4, in General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 4937, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

students, there were also reports from students that spoke of the “absence of a colour line” with a Nigerian trainee commenting that “everyone moves freely irrespective of colour or race ... I hired a jeep for two days and travelled with it to various places, and in each place I went I met with the same hospitality.”³⁹⁴

Furthermore, there were some instances of sensitivities of both sides being a little high and misunderstandings that caused some negative feeling. Once again, Mordechai E. Kreinin in his primary study noted several such instances, including during a Hebrew class when the African students were offended when the teacher put her hand to her mouth to demonstrate the word ‘food’. As Kreinin recorded, “the students felt that she [the teacher] was implying that Africans did not know about table utensils, were offended, and refused to continue the class.” Kreinin continued that “often the trainees complain of discrimination when there was none at all, ‘the bus of the other group is better,’ ‘the food served to the other contingent is superior’” were complaints that Kreinin witnessed during his time in Israel.³⁹⁵

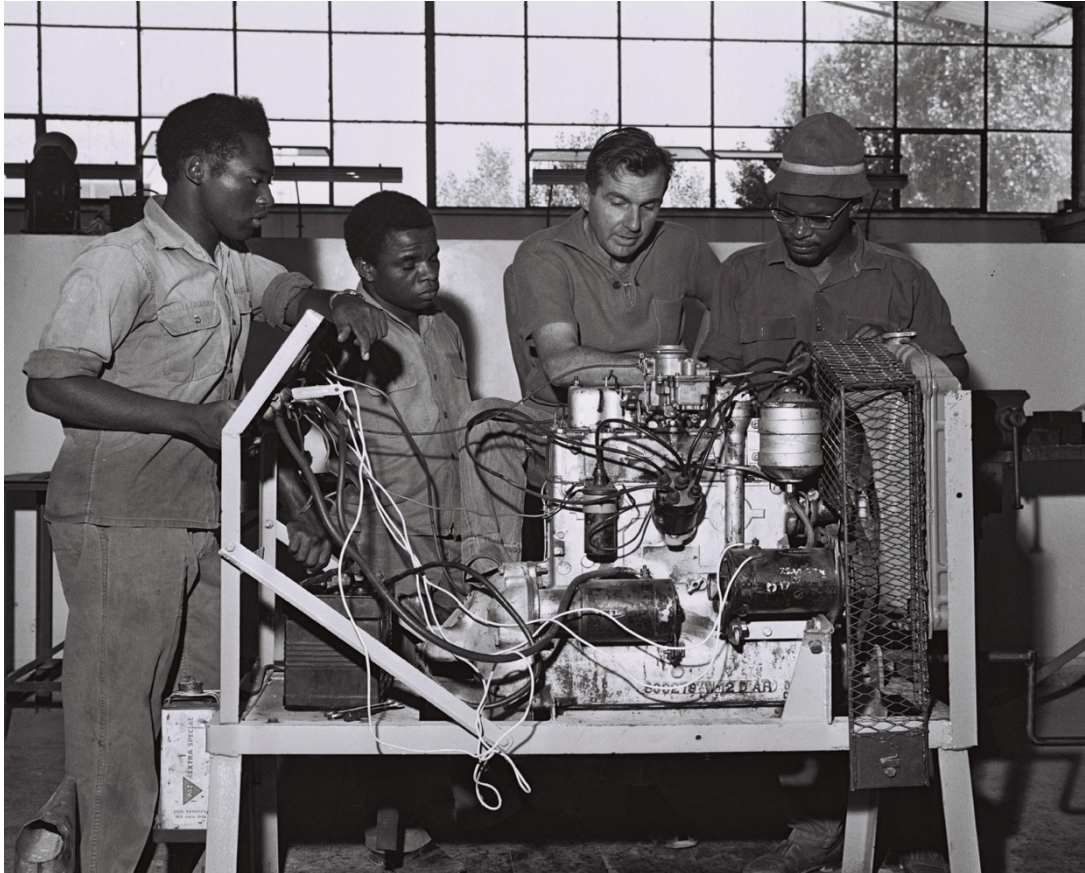
It would be wrong to ignore the other issues that African students did face, unrelated to racism, whilst they were studying in Israel, and it warrants discussion. In December of 1963, African students at the ORT school in Netanya went on a hunger strike, with four complaints: that the study subjects for which the students had been brought to Israel were not being followed with some students having had to study a completely different topic; that their monthly stipend of IL£45 was not enough to meet basic needs; of inadequate textbooks and the failure to provide the promised new textbooks to the students; and the lack of variety in the food provided, with the African students complaining that they were fed rice all of the time.³⁹⁶ Golda Meir, then Israel’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, took the allegations so seriously that she met with the Association of African Students to have an open discussion on the

³⁹⁴ Mordechai E. Kreinin, *Israel and Africa: A Study in Technical Cooperation*, London: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964, p. 159.

³⁹⁵ Mordechai E. Kreinin, *Israel and Africa: A Study in Technical Cooperation*, London: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964, p. 161.

³⁹⁶ African Students in ORT Vocational School, *The African Student*, number 3, December 1963, pp. 54-56, in General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 4937, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

problems facing them in Israel.³⁹⁷ Meir had a passion for, and took a very strong interest in, the African students' experience in Israel, and she took a personal lead to resolve the issues.



Instructor Chaim Baer (centre), explaining to J. Ragdi from Kenya, Smart Ikemba from Nigeria, and Ephraim from Malawi, the operation of a petrol engine at the ORT school in Netanya, 31 August 1964. Photo Credit: Cohen Fritz, Israeli Government Press Office.

The importance to Israel of her aid programme is demonstrated vividly when one considers the size of Israel's training programme, which was wide-ranging and substantial. According to World Bank figures in November 1968, Israel was training 10,000 foreigners, with 2,500 Israelis sent abroad between 1966-1968 as instructors and experts.³⁹⁸ Amongst the 13,000 students from the one-hundred nations who

³⁹⁷ Recent Activities and Events from the Desk of the Publicity Secretary, *The African Student*, number 6, December 1964, pp. 13-14, in General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 4937, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

³⁹⁸ Memorandum for the Record from Maurice P. Bart, ISRAEL – Meeting Between Governor Horowitz and Mr McNamara, 14 November 1968, in World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C.,

participated in labour programmes and studies run by the Histadrut and the State of Israel, by 1985 the programme alumni included 37 secretaries-general of union federations, 300 chairpersons of individual unions, and over 150 members of parliaments, several dozen ministers, and three prime ministers.³⁹⁹ In total, there were more than forty-thousand alumni of Israeli training programmes by 1991, and whilst this figure is some two-decades after the end of the period under consideration, a substantial number of those alumni were trained during Israel's ties with sub-Saharan Africa.⁴⁰⁰ The alumni of Israeli training courses formed networks of *Shalom* clubs through which they kept acquainted. The African students who were trained by Israelis, both in Africa and Israel, frequently kept in contact with their former instructors and professors, who provided advice and guidance well after their courses had finished and the students or Israeli experts had returned home.⁴⁰¹

2.9.2 *Training of African Students: A Critique*

The attempt to educate as many people as possible also caused teething problems and issues that needed to be sorted out in order to improve the programme. There were courses where there was too high a ratio of participants to teachers and that inhibited the ability of students to ask as many questions as they may have liked for fear of delaying the course. It also caused a simple lack of close personal contact with the instructors and this lack of time was a common complaint of the participants, staff and teachers alike. When the participants and teachers did interact on a personnel level there was the issue of whether or not the teachers were giving a 'hard sell' or 'soft sell' to the participants present. Whilst reports of the lectures recorded that most of the instructors repeated often to their students that they should not expect Israeli methods and programmes to be easily transplanted into their own communities, and

Folder No: 1855659 – A1995-172 Other # 2 Box # 182571B – Israel – General Negotiations – Correspondence 02.

³⁹⁹ Unveiling Israel's Third World cooperation program, *The New York Jewish Week*, 26 July 1985.

⁴⁰⁰ Duncan L. Clarke, US-Israeli Cooperative Development Programs: The Bergman Amendment, *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 45, No. 2 (Spring, 1991), p. 271.

⁴⁰¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Israel's Programme of International Cooperation*, Jerusalem: Government Printer, 1967, p. 74.

that what they were taught would need to be adjusted and adapted to suit their particular conditions, there were concerns that the Israeli instructors presented only the good of their programme and rarely dealt with mistakes or issues that they had learned from their experiences with Israel's own development.

Another critique that Mordechai E. Kreinin had of the study programmes that were offered in Israel were related to the Histadrut's Afro-Asian Institute in Tel Aviv. For Kreinin, part of the issue was that the aim of the Institute to achieve university status from the Israeli Ministry of Education had led to the lectures being too advanced for many of the students, many of whom had only just completed primary education. Likewise, many of the Institute's lecturers were outside guests in order to reach the university-level the Institute aspired to, and Kreinin's critique that you cannot run a training centre that relied permanently on guest lecturers is valid. Furthermore, from his field-work several African leaders had complained that the students who returned from Africa "...were useless at home and could not do a thing because they were always thinking in terms of a structure that does not exist [in Africa]." Kreinin also observed that despite the practical part of the course being highly praised, there were instances when the weekend excursions as part of their practical studies became more of a sightseeing tour of Israel, as students chose things that interested them rather than what was connected to their studies, like visiting a fire brigade during agricultural training. The need for instructors in Israel to be hired who had both extensive knowledge of, and had spent time in, Africa was again reinforced.⁴⁰²

It was not only the practical excursions being used for sightseeing that were observed by Kreinin, but he also noted issues with water shortage and chicken rearing. In Israel there was a severe shortage of water and so the Israeli experts used as little water as possible, whereas in Africa there were locations that had enough water and where the trainees should have been taught to use more water in order to maximise results. When it came to poultry rearing, Africa's dryer and more humid temperatures, as well as the higher minimum temperatures, "required more

⁴⁰² Mordechai E. Kreinin, *Israel and Africa: A Study in Technical Cooperation*, London: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964, pp. 129-132.

ventilation in the cages, dryer litter, and feed furnishing less energy, than is needed in Israel.”⁴⁰³ Such knowledge of Africa’s needs was essential to maximise the success of all aspects of Israel’s aid programme, but unfortunately even amongst the most experienced of experts there were often gaps in knowledge that led to the issues described.

There were also issues with ensuring that the African students were motivated to work in agriculture, and this became the most prominent issue that faced the Israeli instructors, both in Africa and in Israel. In the summer of 1959, during one of the first courses held in Israel, five African students from a French school for cooperation arrived in Israel for a month-long study programme. Despite the students understanding the importance of manual labour and the essential part of the course that involved working in the field and toiling the land, of those five African students, most “balked” at the thought of having had to travel to Israel to engage in manual labour, something they would not have ever done at home.⁴⁰⁴

One further problem that arose during the training of the African students in Israel was the problem of expectations and managing the expectations of the students once they returned home. In Israel they had been taught the most modern techniques and been exposed to modern methods and equipment, high-quality seeds, and well-bred animals, and it was unrealistic to expect that those would also be available to them when they returned home. The comforts within which some of the students lived would also have been very different to back home where villages would have lacked running water and electricity and where life would have been harder for the students. The lack of modern comforts that they had experienced in Israel took some adjusting to when the students returned to their villages and may explain why some preferred to rather move to the urban district where electricity and running water may have been more readily available.

⁴⁰³ Mordechai E. Kreinin, *Israel and Africa: A Study in Technical Cooperation*, London: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964, p. 80.

⁴⁰⁴ Mordechai E. Kreinin, *Israel and Africa: A Study in Technical Cooperation*, London: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964, p. 33.

One of the major shortcomings of the aid programme from the African side was the failure to recognise that the students needed jobs to go home to that matched with their training. The provision of such jobs allowed the nation to extract all it possibly could from the knowledge and expertise the students had gathered whilst training in Israel. Agricultural jobs that provided for the African students on their return would have stifled the urbanisation process and assisted the economies. From the Israeli side there needed to be more knowledge of the students they were training, their education levels, and what their roles would be when they returned home, so that Israel could offer more of a tailored programme to a core group of students. However, what most often occurred was a very general programme to the masses that did not have as great of an impact as it should have had. Nevertheless, this critique does not take away the overall success of the programme.

The Africans who attended the courses in Israel would also have been exposed to anti-Israeli propaganda back in their home nations either from Arab sources or from their own national print media, or even their parliamentarians. There were also cases of anti-Israeli and anti-Jewish sentiments from Christian ministers, priests and preachers. The Israelis refusal to admit their own mistakes or to discuss the injustices of their own development programmes, whether that is the depopulation of Arab towns or the forced relocation of new immigrants, was viewed negatively by some participants.⁴⁰⁵ The programmes that the students were taken on and their experiences in Israel were positive, but they were also very much aware of the criticism of Israel that they had been exposed to, and an attempt by Israel to counter this in a more direct manner may have assisted in removing from the students some of the scepticism regarding Israeli development, on for example, Arab land.

There were opportunities for Israel to remedy the criticisms outlined, but there was often a lack of understanding that the gap in knowledge amongst the Israeli experts existed, and a lack of appreciation that a better understanding of both Africa and their students would have yielded better results. Many of the students from Central and East Africa who studied in Israel travelled by boat from Dar-es-Salaam

⁴⁰⁵ Letter from Bill Sutherland on East African Study Group on Trade Union and Cooperatives in Israel, October-November 1961, in Israel State Archives 1903/14.

to Eilat on a journey that took about ten-days. During those ten-days, the African students had time to familiarise themselves with each other, but also the Israeli instructors who would travel with them. With ten-days at sea, the African students had the study programmes explained to them, were given guidance and instruction on Israel, Israeli customs and the Israeli way of life and by the time they reached Eilat the students were integrated as a group and had knowledge of the host country. Unfortunately, it appeared that even after ten-days at sea, the instructors lacked enough of an in-depth knowledge of their students, especially when one considers that for some courses the Israeli teams never had the choice of who was sent on the courses, but rather was given a student list by the recipient nation.⁴⁰⁶ This was a missed opportunity for the Israeli instructors to question and understand the roles these students would play in their own country's development.

The Israeli instructors had a duty to ensure the longevity of their aid and expertise, and there were two components that were not always prioritised or were not recognised early enough when it came to training Africans. There was often an unacceptable delay in the length of time it took the Israelis to identify either what the major stumbling block would be to the continued aid after the expertise was withdrawn, or to ensure that there was a local person that had received a high enough level of training in order to continue once the Israeli experts had departed. When Africans were trained in Israel there was often a lack of awareness of the fact that these Africans when they returned home would not have the social standing or hold an office high enough in order to be able to effect real change in any governmental policy. Those that returned to the rural environment oftentimes lacked the skills to adapt and transfer the theoretical and practical skills they learned in Israel to the real-time needs in their villages. This relates back to the need for the instructors in Israel to have had experience in Africa in order that they could have maximised the outcome and understood the specific needs of the students and their nations.

Nevertheless, the Israeli study programmes received wide praise at the time from both the African students, the African leadership, and also the United Nations. The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations commented that “the

⁴⁰⁶ Israel's Aid Programmes, 22 August 1962, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1950/14.

courses in Israel are excellent because they are practical and able to document points under conditions similar to Africa. They do not give you arguments and counterarguments but go right to the main point and demonstrate its practicality. With the exception of Norway, most European institutions are more similar to universities.”⁴⁰⁷ Much of the focus of the Israeli programmes was on practical experience and learning through seeing with the classroom-based theory work used as reinforcement for what the students had witnessed. There is also evidence that students who travelled to another developing country to study had a far higher likelihood of returning back home to become productive members of their home society. Those who went to an economically advanced country were more likely to try to seek to remain in the advanced society to reap the benefits of the social advancements they had experienced, rather than returning home.⁴⁰⁸ Therefore, the percentage of students who returned to Africa after studying in Israel was higher than their fellow countrymen and women who may have travelled to western Europe or the United States for their studies, thus the Israeli aid prevented the ‘brain drain’ of developing economies. But during the recession of 1966-1967, Israel also never experienced a brain-drain with almost all Israeli students who went abroad to study during this period returning to Israel to put into practice the new skills and education they had picked up abroad.⁴⁰⁹ Israel recognised that they had benefited greatly from ensuring that their students who travelled abroad returned to Israel at the end of their studies, and Israel wanted to ensure the same was true of the African students, with there being virtually no possibility for African students to be granted visas to remain in Israel after their studies.

Overall, to conclude, through an analysis of *The African Student* magazine and testimonies of the students who were trained in Israel, there is clear evidence that Israel’s programme of training Africans in Israel created a huge amount of goodwill for the country and supported Israel’s aim of gaining international legitimacy from

⁴⁰⁷ Mordechai E. Kreinin, *Israel and Africa: A Study of Technical Cooperation*, London: Praeger, 1964, p. 74.

⁴⁰⁸ Leopold Laufer, *Israel and the Developing Countries: New Approaches to Cooperation*, New York: The Twentieth Century Fund, 1967, p. 7.

⁴⁰⁹ E. Kanovsky, Can Israel Serve As A Model For Developing Countries? in Michael Curtis and Susan Aurelia Gitelson (eds.), *Israel in the Third World*, New Jersey: Transaction Books, 1976, p. 47.

the aid programme. However, by the mid-1960s, the massive size of the operation of Israel's foreign aid programme had led Israel to over-commit itself to sub-Saharan Africa. Sixty percent of Israel's foreign aid budget was spent on Africa, with the Foreign Ministry spending \$4.2 million, the Defence Ministry \$1.2 million, and the Mossad spending \$417,000. There eventually was a consensus amongst the Israeli civil servants and defence personnel that costly programmes in Africa, such as the paramilitary training and most of the courses for African students in Israel, would need to be stopped. Loans and grants, of which Israel made very few, were also stopped and Israel did not make any further loans to Africa; the only technical cooperation agreement signed with Africa post-1967, was the 1968 technical cooperation agreement with Malawi.⁴¹⁰ The economic implications of the foreign aid programme had become unsustainable. The cost of training the students was often met by Israel, and whilst their transport and allowances were often paid by their home countries, Israel often stepped in to fund all their expenses at considerable cost to the Israeli government. There was an economic offset by the African students, who numbered in their thousands, and brought in a steady inflow of foreign currency. They also added to the Israeli economy through their buying of Israeli goods from Israeli markets for their daily sustenance, but this did not offset the cost of the aid programme enough for it to remain feasible at the same level as it had been for Israel pre-1967.⁴¹¹

2.10 *The Young Population and Development Opportunities*

Whilst the kibbutzim ideal did not flourish in Africa, the kibbutzim and moshavim were used as a vehicle to teach the African students the importance of manual labour. The cooperative settlements demonstrated that to be a farmer was a position of respect that could have both provided and sustained a family's needs, and

⁴¹⁰ Zach Levey, Israel's Strategy in Africa, 1961-1967, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (Feb., 2004) pp. 80-81.

⁴¹¹ Israel and her Foreign Students, *The African Student*, number 6, December 1964, pp. 39-40, in General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 4937, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

also provided a good livelihood for the members of the settlements. The importance and prestige with which manual labour was held was further reinforced when African students visited Israeli cooperative farms. To encourage a positive attitude towards the cooperative lifestyle, often after a day working the land the Israeli teacher or guide would invite the African student to their quarters where they would see shelves of books, artwork and engage in intelligent and informed conversation that would demonstrate to the African students that those who worked the land in Israel were educated and intelligent people who chose to work in the field to develop their nation, and not because their level of education prevented them from doing anything else.⁴¹² However, the cooperative ideals were not enough to encourage the educated to enter the agricultural industry. Africa had a very young population, and as education levels increased with improved schooling and an expansion to schooling, there were even fewer young able-bodied men who wanted to take up farming. If we take the example of Western Nigeria between 1954 and 1960, the start of compulsory education saw the number of students who had completed six grades of education rise from 70,000 to 180,000. If those educated students went into farming, they would have expected to earn \$50 per year whereas if they entered the urban environment and took on even the lowest pay-grade office role, they would earn nearly \$17 per month. The lack of office work and government jobs, and with industrialisation unable to keep up with the supply of qualified persons, many of the educated students moved to the urban areas and found themselves unemployed and delinquent, and therefore a burden on the government.⁴¹³ If we look at East Africa and the urbanisation that took place there, the population of Addis Ababa “jumped from 560,000 in the mid-1960s to over a million in 1974, a growth rate of about 7 per cent per annum. The comparable figures for Mogadishu and Asmara were 141,000 in 1965 rising to over 250,000 in 1974 for the former and 132,000 rising to 296,000 for the latter in the same time period. What was particularly striking about urban growth in African states was that growth occurred in states which were least capable of dealing with the multitude of problems

⁴¹² Leopold Laufer, *Israel and the Developing Countries: New Approaches to Cooperation*, New York: Twentieth Century Fund, 1967, p. 165-166.

⁴¹³ Mordechai E. Kreinin, *Israel and Africa: A Study in Technical Cooperation*, London: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964, pp. 58-59.

associated with urbanisation.”⁴¹⁴ Total population growth in the larger African cities was 5 to 10% per annum during the 1960s and 1970s, much faster than the total population growth rate.⁴¹⁵

2.11 *The Israeli Experts and Their Experiences in Africa*

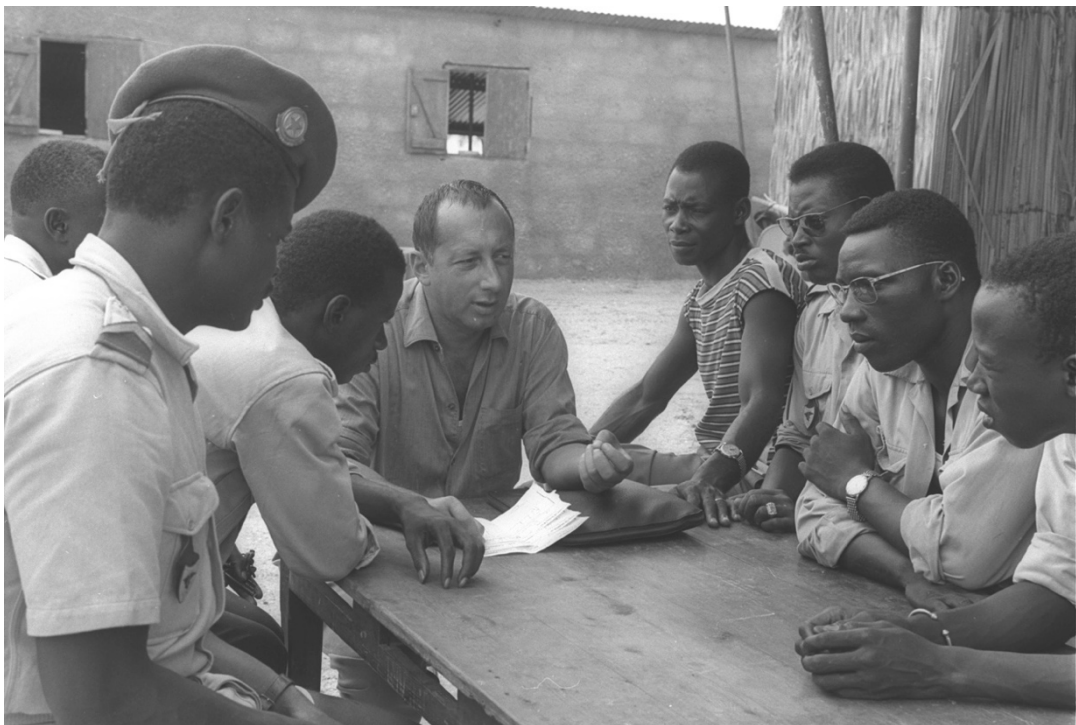
Post-1967 there was a change in Israeli attitudes both towards Africa but also in their abilities to provide aid. Inflation, and the cost of the 1967 Six Day War, as well as the need to develop the Occupied Territories reduced the number of Israeli experts available to work abroad. The big attraction to working overseas was the senior positions and responsibilities that an expert took on, and the ability to work independently and make decisions on-the-spot, as well as a higher salary. Whilst the higher salaries were attractive, the contracts offered to the Israeli experts had an impact on the willingness of the experts to move to Africa, where often they had to move their families with them to rural localities, where the education system for their children was of a lower standard than that in Israel. A Hebrew education was impossible for most, bar for the small number of schools set up by the wives of experts in some localities.

Additionally, Israeli engineers and foremen were, generally, sent on two-year contracts that had the option to be renewed only once, for a total of four years. At the end of the contract, neither the Israeli government nor the African government had any commitment to the Israeli experts who faced the reality of returning to Israel and having to find employment unaided in a difficult and saturated market. There was also the added disadvantage that the work in Africa was, in most cases, more difficult and done under more challenging circumstances for the expert and their family than a similar role in Israel would have entailed. The attraction to working in Africa was, therefore, mostly financial. The salaries in Africa were double that of Israel and after two years abroad the experts could purchase durable consumer goods free of duty,

⁴¹⁴ Billy J. Dudley, Decolonisation and the Problems of Independence, in Michael Crowder, *The Cambridge History of Africa*, Vol. 8, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984, p. 77.

⁴¹⁵ Bill Freund, *The African City: A History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 143.

saving the experts up to a one-hundred percent in taxes compared to if they had purchased the goods in Israel.⁴¹⁶ For experts struggling to find well-paid employment in Israel, a two-year stint in Africa at double the salary and a custom-free allowance on return proved highly attractive, despite the drawbacks with the lack of schools and social interaction for the experts and their families. But it also meant that Israel was sending to Africa experts who no longer had the Zionist zeal and drive to pioneer and develop, nor the communal kibbutzim background, but who rather were working a salaried job whose primary motivation was to earn a living.



Zigui Daniel, Israeli expert on youth leadership, with some of his trainees at the *Camerene Chantier Ecole Pilote* in the Senegal, 15 September 1962. Photo Credit: Eldan David, Israeli Government Press Office.

Further benefits that Israel's aid programme offered was valuable experience for the experts. Many of the younger experts who went to Africa for the higher salaries and new opportunities gained valuable experiences that were then used when they returned home to Israel, especially after Israel occupied the territories captured during the Six Day War. Post-1967, there was a plethora of available work for these

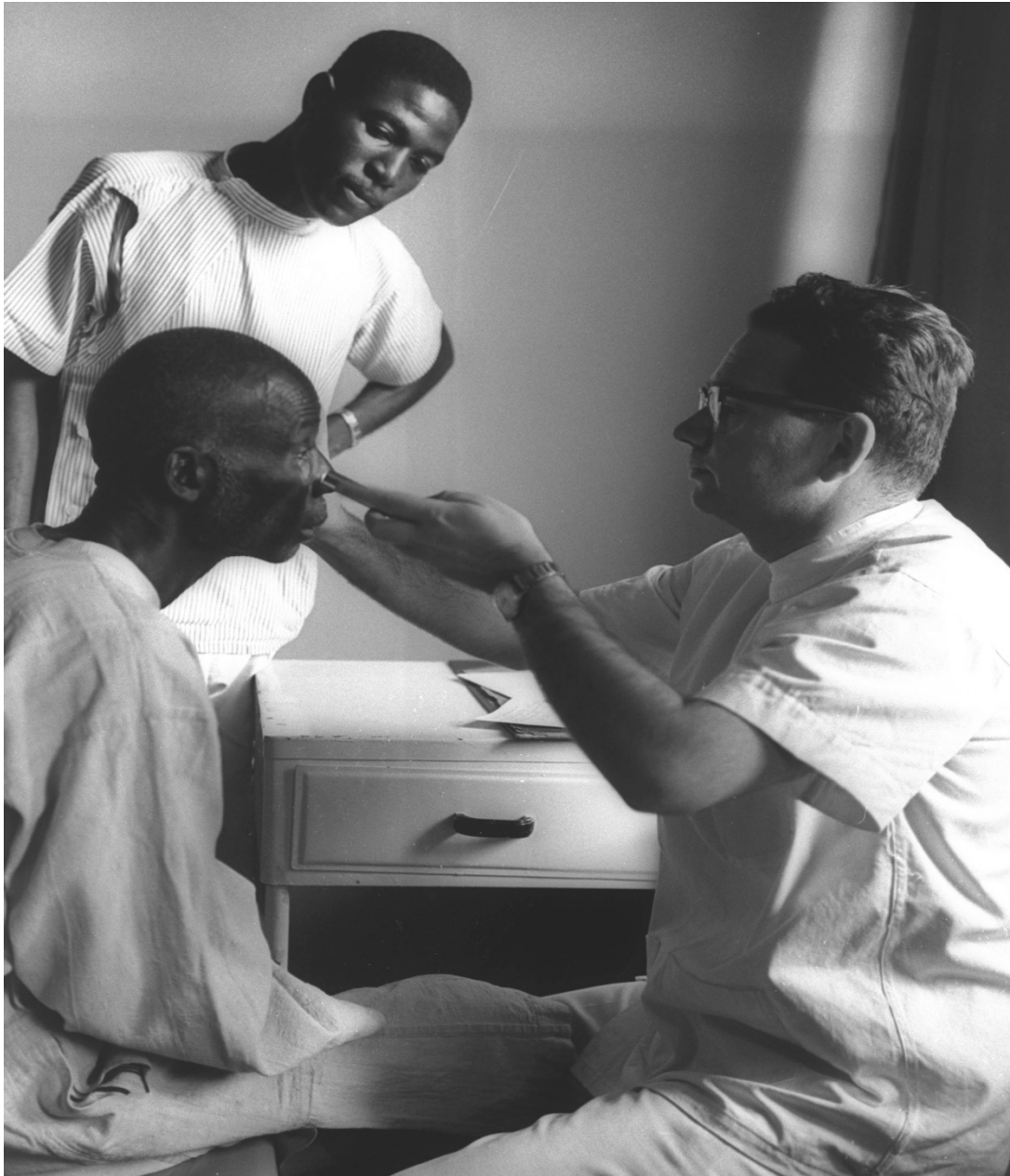
⁴¹⁶ Mordechai E. Kreinin, *Israel and Africa: A Study in Technical Cooperation*, London: Frederick A. Praeger, pp. 139-141.

experts within Israel and the Occupied Territories, and with the retirement of many of the original experts who had a strong Zionist zeal and desire to help Africa, there was a need for experienced new experts. The new experts that were rising through the ranks lacked both that strong desire to assist, but more importantly they lacked the experience. Whilst they were mostly university educated, their time in Africa provided valuable field experience which they then put to use in the Occupied Territories on their return. The uniqueness of the Israeli experts had therefore evaporated, and the university educated experts of the late 1960s were no different to the experts from Western Europe or the United States. Whilst this had little-to-no impact on Israel's standing diplomatically, as that was overtaken by the bigger issue of Israel's occupation of African territory in the Sinai, it does provide one explanation as to why during the late 1960s Israel's aid programme began to dwindle and there was a mutual decline in interest from both sides.

Economically, Israeli advisors being sent abroad was also good for Israel. The experts would use Israeli products, regardless of cost, as that is what they were familiar with. Much of the equipment and products they ordered from Israel were made domestically in Israel for the domestic market, and so the export of those products was a net benefit to the Israeli economy. The Israeli economy benefited not only through the direct sale of the items, but also through the transportation costs and export customs duties. As Kreinin noted, officials at the Dizengoff West African Company estimated that about 15% of Israel's exports to Africa were related to the activities of the joint companies, and a further 10% were orders from individual Israeli advisors.⁴¹⁷ One example of this is the often lauded ophthalmological centre in Monrovia that Israel managed to build and set up for \$40,000 as opposed to the United States quote of \$300,000, and thus provided a massive saving to Liberia's treasury, but it also boosted the Israeli treasury as all frames and optical glasses were ordered from Israel.⁴¹⁸

⁴¹⁷ Mordechai E. Kreinin, *Israel and Africa: A Study in Technical Cooperation*, London: Frederick A. Praeger, p. 174.

⁴¹⁸ Jehudi J. Kanarek, *Israeli Technical Assistance to African Countries*, Geneva: Geneva-African Institute, 1969, p. 4.



Dr Gambosh of Israel examining a patient at the Monrovia Hospital Eye Clinic with one of his students looking on, 20 August 1962. Photo Credit: Eldan David, Israeli Government Press Office.

Within African societies, there was a strong connection to the family group and social hierarchies were absolutely respected and oftentimes took precedence over knowledge. When we look at Israel's development, there was no such hierarchical structure, either because it was not culturally present in the western immigrants, or because many of the youth that migrated to Israel from Europe and the United States came as lone pioneers. Those migrants from North Africa and the Arab countries did have some semblance of hierarchy, but there was also very much an 'Israelisation' process that all able men and unmarried women went through when they were

conscripted into the military, which for many broke down any hierarchical societal conditioning. Within moshavim, which did not succeed in Africa, the family unit was more concerned with survival and development of their family enterprise than hierarchical positions, and within kibbutzim there was, technically, no hierarchies at all as each member performed the duties they could according to their abilities. The Israeli experts therefore had little experience with the practical realities of social hierarchies and what they could mean for development and the transfer of knowledge.

Amongst African subsistence farmers their primary concern was the feeding of their families. Many of the African farmers that Israel attempted to assist were barely producing enough crops and meat to meet their needs and were reluctant to take risks that they feared would not pay off and could threaten their ability to survive. For the African farmer, the failure of a cooperative settlement or restructuring of their farmstead could have dire consequences and lead to starvation; no such risk was attached to Israeli cooperative settlements. This caused conflict and tension between the Africans and Israelis in Africa, in part due to the lack of sensitivity by the Israeli experts regarding the concerns and cultural norms that were of utmost importance to the African society.

The failure of the co-operative movement in Africa requires further analysis and it is important to note here the Israeli experience when they attempted to bring the co-operative villages to Africa. In order to understand the reasons for the lack of success, the Israeli Moshav in Nigeria is an interesting case-study. The Nigerian Farm Resettlement Programme was the largest single agricultural outlay contained within the 1962-1968 National Plan, with capital funding to the tune of £5.5 million. The programme saw investment in the production of crops and livestock with the experimental training of farmers and their resettlement under new land tenures with the introduction of new techniques and patterns of cropping. The programme envisaged 13 settlements of between 100 and 200 farm families established on surplus lands that were acquired from local chiefs or tribal authorities. Each of the families were provided with a unit that varied in acreage from 15 to 50 acres, with several cash crops, a plot for garden vegetables, and livestock. As in the Israeli co-operative schemes, there was a central pool of machinery and marketing for each new settlement and housing, access roads, and a variety of necessary community facilities

were provided for the new farmers and their families. However, as Jerome C. Wells noted “the tentative judgment which might be drawn ... is that the Moshav has been imported to Western Nigeria more as a form of organisation structure ... [there] do not appear [to be] dramatic increases in productivity which would clearly justify the social-overhead component of the investment or which would attract widespread emulation of the form of organisation and producing techniques by other farmers.”⁴¹⁹ Thus, the end result of the co-operative way of life in Western Nigeria was not worth the social upheaval and the initial investment of the farmers.

Raanan Weitz made an interesting argument in 1965 when discussing Israel’s rural aid development policies. Weitz argued that the main difficulty arose from the actual agricultural planning itself, in particular at the national level, where the planning tended to be based more on economic needs and possible economic output from the agricultural sector. The issue with this was that agriculture is not merely a means of livelihood, it is not just a job, but rather the farming community is a unique way of life as both a basic unit of production within the individual farm, but also the social structure that emerges within rural communities. When analysing the agricultural planning of African nations, there was often detailed planning at the individual farming level, but the community and rural society often was left unplanned, or ignored, and that oftentimes led to issues with firmly establishing successful farming communities, whether they be new agricultural development or co-operative societies based on kibbutzim and moshavim ideals. Within Africa, there was also the concern amongst the young rural dwellers who sought to migrate to the urban districts for employment that they would not be able to earn a good enough living in agriculture, and that manual labour was something that was looked down upon negatively. The Israeli expert in Africa often came up against this mindset and struggled to prevent the young Africans from migrating to the cities. One way to deal with this was through the Israeli policy of ensuring that an agricultural worker earned a wage that was similar to that of an industrial worker during the early years of the state. Through equality in wage, it allowed those who did not have the education or skills required to work in the industrial sector to attain a similar standard of living

⁴¹⁹ Jerome C. Well, The Israeli Moshav in Nigeria: An Estimate of Returns, *Journal of Farm Economics*, Vol. 48, No. 2 May 1966, pp. 279-294.

through farm work.⁴²⁰ The problems arose when the African nations did not guarantee that the newly educated students would have a wage comparable to that of an urban clerk, and the young educated farmers simply drifted to the urban districts.

Raanan Weitz and Avshalom Rokach argued that “Experience in Israel has shown that by maintaining group cohesion, upsetting customs as little as possible, and by providing adequate guidance through extension personnel, it has been possible to gradually introduce the complicated methods of modern agricultural technology to people of a non-modern or traditional background.”⁴²¹ When Israeli experts were sent to Africa they faced the problem of having to transplant knowledge into the community in a strict timeframe that did not always correspond with the pace at which the community they were attempting to assist wanted to move at. Societal hierarchies and long-standing social structures took time to break down and it took encouragement to convince the elders that the new methods of farming would provide for their community a better lifestyle than the previous methods. The Israeli experts did not always have the time for this process to take place and therefore often battled against strong resistance that impeded their work. There were also Israeli experts who failed to recognise the importance of the tribal structure and assumed that the African man had the same history behind him and the same desire to develop his nation as the Israeli pioneers had, and this was a flaw in the development thinking.

To conclude, and with all of the above factors taken into consideration, it must be argued that Israel’s development aid programme to Africa and the success that the Israeli experts managed to achieve, was a success for both Africa and Israel. The education programme provided top-class education to thousands of Africans and improved the health, diets, nutrition, agricultural output and education attainment of large swathes of the sub-Saharan continent. There were issues with the programmes, some more serious than others, but the overall end result was one of success. For Israel, the same can be argued, whether it was the aim to live up to the words of

⁴²⁰ See: Raanan Weitz, Rural Development through Regional Planning in Israel, *Journal of Farm Economics*, Vol. 47, No. 3 (Aug., 1965), pp. 634-651.

⁴²¹ Raanan Weitz and Avshalom Rokach, *Agricultural Development: Planning and Implementation, Israel Case Study*, Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Co., 1968, p. 28-29.

Theodore Herzl and assist Africa's development, or whether it was to escape the encirclement of the Arab nations that had hindered Israel's progression in the diplomatic community and denied her the international legitimacy she sought, there is no doubt that Israel's aid programme both provided international legitimacy and freed Israel from the psychological isolation and encirclement of the Arab nations. The following chapter will provide an analysis of the impact of Israel's aid programme on her diplomatic position within the world and at international organisations, with a particular focus on the United Nations and Organisation of African Unity.

Chapter Three

3 Development aid for diplomatic relations?

International legitimacy and recognition came to be one of the primary aims of Israel following Arab attempts to deny her the right to exist, and the continued state of war that persisted with her neighbouring states. This was both important for the Israeli psyche and also for Israel's standing within Europe and the United States. Israel believed Washington and the powers in Europe would be more willing to provide assistance and support to the Israeli government if Israel was also independently respected with her own allies and networks in the diplomatic world. Foreign aid as a diplomatic tool is not a new concept and throughout history there are examples of donor nations who provided recipient nations with aid or resources in order to achieve diplomatic support and/or to ensure that the recipient nation aligned with the donor on issues that were of importance to the donor state. For Israel, the issue was international legitimacy to be achieved through recognition of Israel's existence as a sovereign state and the exchange of contact, but also Israel sought support in international forums and looked for allies who would block or abstain from votes that Israel considered anti-Israeli.

The focus of the Israeli government was on the United Nations, the international organisation formed after the destruction of World War II, and the organisation responsible for the vote on the partition of the British Mandate of Palestine that allowed David Ben-Gurion and his fellow Zionists to declare Israel's independence in May 1948. Israel's relationship with the United Nations has been strained since 1948, with Israel believing that the organisation that provided for its independence is also biased against, and unfair towards, the State of Israel. The use of aid for United Nations support was not unique to Israel, and in 1980 the political scientist, Kul B. Rai examined foreign aid and the voting patterns of recipient states at the United Nations General Assembly. Whilst Rai's study focused on the period of 1967-1976, at the tail-end of this dissertation's focus, Rai's findings deserve discussion as they relate closely to the topic. Rai's opening argument is that the "use of foreign aid (the term 'foreign aid' is used for economic assistance...) as an instrument of political influence for promoting national interest is considered one of

the more important objectives by political leaders as well as by the academic experts.” Whilst Israeli aid had only a small economic component, the same argument could be applied to Israel’s civil and military aid as a means to promote Israel’s national and international interests. Rai’s study found that American aid was much more successful as an inducement to follow the American position in United Nations’ votes, whilst the Soviet aid was used more as a reward or punishment for those countries who agreed or disagreed with the Soviet voting position.⁴²² Voting patterns at the United Nations were closely monitored by the Israeli government and there was a belief that the provision of aid and the personal relationships of African leaders to Israel would lead to automatic support at the United Nations, and thus decrease the power of the Arab voting bloc. The number of African states, who post-independence constituted a large bloc of votes, had the ability to cast the deciding votes on various resolutions. Israel misunderstood and underestimated the independence of the African diplomats who were sent to New York and failed to grasp that for many of them they acted independently of their home government and often followed the voting pattern of their neighbouring states, or decided themselves, which way to vote without any great consideration for their nation’s wider foreign policy objectives.⁴²³

When David Ben-Gurion and Golda Meir were looking at Israel’s foreign policy strategy, their natural leaning was towards Western Europe and the United States of America for their economic and military support, and to the non-aligned nations for diplomatic support and alignment with the Global South nations. Asia, which did not have a large Jewish community or a history of anti-Semitism nor a history of Christianity, lacked an understanding of Jewish claims to the land of Israel. India, the largest Asian state and newly independent from the British Empire did not immediately recognise Israel in part due to her significant Muslim minority and New Delhi’s nervousness regarding United Nations votes that dealt with the Kashmir

⁴²² Kul B. Rai, Foreign Aid and Voting in the UN General Assembly, 1967-1976, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol 17, No 3 (1980), p. 269.

⁴²³ Samuel Decalo, *Israel and Africa: Forty Years, 1956-1996*, London: Florida Academic Press, 1998, pp. 53-55.

issue. India also sought to ensure support from the Arab voting bloc.⁴²⁴ Israel's relationship with Asia, in more general terms, was beset with issues. The 1962 Asian Games is a good example of the issues that Israel encountered when contact with Asia was sought. The Games, held at Jakarta, Indonesia, were a vivid reminder to Israel that she was not welcome amongst all Global South nations. Despite assurances given that there would be no political interference, Indonesia refused to send visas for the competing Israeli athletes, and rather advised Israel to obtain Indonesian visas in Cairo or Beirut, two cities impossible for Israelis to enter due to the state of war.⁴²⁵ Indonesia was well aware that whilst offering the Cairo or Beirut solution may have allowed the Asian Games to proceed with no explicit expulsion of any nation, the act had the practical implication of the exclusion of the Israeli athletes from the Games.

Whilst Asia knew little about Judaism and the Zionist movement, Africa had a large Christian population who knew of the Holy Land, as well as the names of Israeli cities from the Bible: Jerusalem, Nazareth and the Sea of Galilee were places of Biblical importance and African students who later studied in Israel or undertook field work would, as discussed in previous chapters, often visit these important Christian towns. Israel's relationship with the Christian African diplomats who were sent to represent their nations at the United Nations started off friendly, and in 1960, fifteen of them attended a dinner party hosted by Golda Meir during the United Nations General Assembly. Meir hosted not just United Nations' representatives but also the Deputy Prime Minister of the Ivory Coast and the ministerial secretary at the Ghanaian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as a further eight Cabinet rank African leaders; also, in attendance were the President of the General Assembly and the Under Secretary General of the United Nations. The success in building friendships early on was evident in the statement of Deputy Prime Minister Mamadou Coulibaly of the Ivory Coast who commented at the dinner party that "one view held by the African countries in common is the respect they have for Israel and her achievements."⁴²⁶ The

⁴²⁴ Y. Leo Kohn, Israel and the New Nation States of Asia and Africa, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 324, Resolving the Russian-American Deadlock (Jul., 1959), p. 98.

⁴²⁵ Israel to Claim Games Expenses, *Daily Telegraph*, 20 August 1962.

⁴²⁶ 15 Africa Nations Laud Israeli Aid, *New York Times*, 9 October 1960.

importance of the meeting with the African leaders and Meir was to cement the personal relationships and encourage further support for Israel at the United Nations. The benefit to Israel was not solely in African votes, but Israel was also aware of the need for positive publicity in the mainstream press media, especially the media that was consumed by the large Diaspora community in the United States, such as the *New York Times*. Israel was keen that media reporting projected Israel in a positive light to the American Diaspora and wider public, from whom Israel also sought political support, donations, and economic funding throughout the period.

However, despite this public display of support for Golda Meir in October 1960, there remained early signs of the independence of the African nations when it came to supporting Israel at the UN. Two years prior to the meeting where Meir and Israel were lauded, in a November 1958 debate on Palestinian refugees, the Ghanaian delegation voted against Israel to Meir's outrage. The April 1959 official UN Africa Day celebrations at the United Nations went ahead with only the Israeli delegation excluded, and in October of the same year a Ghanaian parliamentary debate on the Israel and Ghana trade bill ended in anti-Semitic outbursts. This led Foreign Minister Golda Meir to move towards Israel taking a much more business-like approach in their dealings with Africa, dropping the Messianic connotations and presenting the aid programme to the Israeli public on much more level terms that respected the reality of African politics and the unpredictability of the African leaders. To this end, in October 1959, Ehud Avriel cabled Meir from Africa that "... our relations with Ghana are normal ties between sovereign states and not a dramatic episode of a romantic tryst between two young countries."⁴²⁷ The Israeli newspapers likewise called for more rational approaches and warned the Israeli public that the successes that Israel had enjoyed with her own development programme were not necessarily going to be exported to Africa nor would Africa achieve the same level of success as they had in Israel.

Israel also faced issues with her own votes at the United Nations and was caught between a balancing act of supporting her arms suppliers of Western Europe,

⁴²⁷ See: Zach Levey, Israel's Entry to Africa, 1956-1961, *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (September 2001), pp. 97-106.

who were also colonial powers, and supporting African resolutions that were often targeted at those very same allies of Israel. When, in February 1960, France tested an atomic bomb in the Sahara, Ghana's Prime Minister Nkrumah presented a resolution of condemnation against France, something that Israel was unable to support due to Israel's reliance on French military support. The Arabs, however, were able to provide support to Africa in the United Nations as they did not need to consider the West's position.⁴²⁸

Israel's diplomatic relationships during the first half of the period of this dissertation was therefore one of moments of success, but followed by failure, if we take the position that success and failure were determined solely by the voting patterns of the African states' *vis a vis* Israel's position. Meir's New York dinner party may have been well attended, but it must be remembered that during the 1960s Africa was very conscious of any attempts to impose upon them pressure to vote a certain way as they saw that as an attack on their sovereignty as independent nations and were very sensitive to any such attempts from both Israel and the Arab states.

At the United Nations General Assembly of 1960, in her speech in the General Assembly Hall, Golda Meir invoked the Jewish memory of an "ancient people whose past for thousands of years has been full of tragedy, racial discrimination and humiliation." Meir then discussed Israel's own development, and the wider global development that saw "in parts of the world the standard of living and development has reached fantastic heights." Then, with a speech authored to appeal to the independence leaders in Africa that were angered by Israel's support of France's atomic testing in the Sahara, Meir opined that "You cannot expect the mother in an African village to be elated over the advance of medicine in the world when she sees her children suffering from trachoma, tuberculosis and malaria." Meir spoke of the importance of medical advancement for the African states and the need for there to be an ambitious programme of development for "we [new states] should not be told to go slow in our development ... we must develop quickly." Meir recalled a Kenyan who had visited Israel and had rhetorically asked her "Must I walk in an age of jet

⁴²⁸ See: Zach Levey, Israel's Entry to Africa, 1956-1961, *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (September 2001), pp. 97-106.

planes because those that now have jets were walking generations ago [?]" For Meir, the sharing of food through the transfer of surplus to the hungry was what she called "first-aid" with developing nations never having had the opportunity to be truly free as long as their children were fed by others. Invoking the need to improve worldwide education standards, Meir told the assembled dignitaries from around the world that "the inequality in the world today is not only in the gap of material things, but what is even more frightening is the gap between those that literally reach for the moon and those that know not how to reach efficiently into their own soil to produce their daily needs."⁴²⁹ Meir's reasoning that the developing nations should not have to rely on others in order to be free, and therefore should aspire to true independence through equalling the achievement of the developed nations, can also be seen as an attempt to explain Israel's desire for an atomic weapon, and therefore support for France's atomic explosion in the Sahara. If the developed nations of the world used atomic energy and had an atomic bomb, then there was an argument to be made that so should Israel's development programme include both domestic atomic energy with the development of an atomic weapon controlled by Israel independently of any atomic superpower. Regardless, Meir's speech did little to contain African anger over Israel's own United Nations voting record.

The year prior to Meir's speech at the General Assembly in which she appealed for the African nations to be educated, the *Africa Weekly* declared in May 1959 that 'Israel and Africa: The Honeymoon is Over' and referenced Israel's voting record at the United Nations which the newspaper concluded was mostly anti-African and pro-French. Listing Israel's voting record, the paper started in 1952 when Israel voted against Tunisia's independence; in 1953 Israel voted against Tunisian and Moroccan independence; in 1954 Israel again voted against Moroccan independence; in 1956, 1957 and 1958, Israel voted against Algerian independence, and in March 1959 Israel voted against free elections held under UN supervision in the French Cameroons. Three other UN votes were highlighted with the comment that Israel's vote would have been decisive if she had voted with Africa, or simply abstained: in 1955 when Israel's vote assisted in the abolition of the UN Commission on Racial

⁴²⁹ Fifteenth General Assembly of the UN, Mrs Golda Meir's Statement, 10 October 1960, in Israel State Archives, Folder 6016/5.

Discrimination in South Africa; in a 1957 procedural vote, supported by Israel, that resulted in the two-thirds voting rule instead of a simple majority, and consequently led to a defeat for the Africans on the issue of the Portuguese colonies; and finally in 1955, when Israel voted with the French over the Algerian question and thus also voted with South Africa to oppose an independent organisation of African states.⁴³⁰ Whilst the article is one-sided and written from one perspective, it is important to understand Africa's thoughts on Israel's own voting record, as the perceived lack of loyalty from Israel at the United Nations had a twofold effect on Israel, the first being Africa's lack of reciprocation on votes. Moreover, it also provided anti-Israel propaganda for the Arab states to use when they sought to oust Israel from Africa. Israel would have argued that when it came to Tunisian and Moroccan independence the importance of France to Israel's military could not be ignored, as France was a crucial military supplier to the Israeli Defence Forces and Israel had to remain on the side of the French for the continual supply of their arms. In regard to the three UN votes, for the article to blame Israel's vote for the abolition of the UN Commission on Racial Discrimination is inaccurate as it was not just Israel's vote, but rather the votes of all nations that voted the same way Israel did, and on point three of the Algerian question, France's arms once again explained Israel's position, and whilst that does not mean that Israel's position is to be excused, it does explain the politics behind Israel's United Nations votes. A lack of foresight from Israel on their voting record at the United Nations and the impact that had on their relationship with Africa, and on the reciprocity that Israel expected but never always received, is in part due to Israel's realisation early on that it was the Israeli Defence Forces that would be central to Israel's survival and not votes at the United Nations. That does not mean that Israel did not place huge importance on the passage of United Nations resolutions friendly to Israel, but it did mean that Israel's military needs would always be prioritised over United Nations support.

The *Africa Weekly* article also gave its analysis for the reasons of Israeli aid to Africa and quoted Shimon Peres, then Israel's Director-General of the Defence Ministry as saying that "Israel is becoming aware of the existence of a ring

⁴³⁰ Israel and Africa: The Honeymoon Is Over, *Africa Weekly*, Vol. V, No. 19, 8 May 1959 in Israel State Archives, Folder 3101/10.

of friendly countries which surround the hostile Arab neighbours that ring us”, the article then went on to continue quoting Peres as saying that many of the newly-emerging African nations “seek us [Israel] as a friend because they want to learn from Israel how to build a free country”, invoking the emotion of freedom that was so important to African citizens and leaders alike. However, Israel’s influence in sub-Saharan Africa was by then under pressure from the Arab states and Israel had been snubbed from two key African social events in the United States, the summer 1958 reception in Washington, D.C. for Ghanaian Prime Minister Nkrumah, and the April 1959 reception at New York’s Waldorf Astoria for Africa Freedom Day. Intriguingly, the newspaper article concluded that unless Israel changed her voting pattern at the United Nations, relationships with Africa would be “impaired ... for it is the feeling of the African states that by the simple act of trading with Israel they are already reciprocating her friendship.”⁴³¹ Israel’s difficulties at the United Nations were therefore publicised, as were the points of tension between Israel and Africa at New York.

Another example of Africa’s independence and policy regarding their United Nations’ votes was the policy of Joseph Mobutu in the Congo. Mobutu showed absolutely no concern for the consequences of his votes in regard to his relationship with both Israel and the United States, and he was considered a “difficult client” who would demand training from Israel and advice but would accept it only when it suited his needs. Mobutu had expressed to Israel on several occasions that Israel’s military assistance to the Congo did not obligate him or the Congo to Israel in any diplomatic arena, and Mobutu’s representative at the United Nations voted against Israel, whilst simultaneously Mobutu accepted Israeli military training and aid.⁴³² The disjointed understanding described above placed power in the recipient nations and challenged

⁴³¹ For the newspaper article, see: Israel and Africa: The Honeymoon Is Over, *Africa Weekly*, Vol. V, No. 19, 8 May 1959 in Israel State Archives, Folder 3101/10. For Israel’s United Nations voting record on Apartheid South Africa, see: Olusola Ojo, *Africa and Israel: Relations in Perspective*, London: Westview Press, 1988, p. 114.

⁴³² Zach Levey, Israel’s Involvement in the Congo, 1958-1968: Civilian and Military Dimensions, *Civil Wars*, Vol 6, No 4 (Winter 2003), pp. 27-30.

the conventional hypothesis that recipient nations supported their donor nations at international organisations.

In December 1965, Israel's aid programme to Africa was well-established and there were Israelis working throughout the continent whilst thousands of Africans had studied in Israel. The Israelis had therefore expected strong support at the United Nations, but by 1965 the Israelis had believed that the little support there was for Israel had visibly dwindled. United Nations Resolution 2052 that called for compensation or repatriation of Palestinian refugees, something Israel was absolutely against, passed in December of 1965 with the support of all sub-Saharan African states except Madagascar and Sierra Leone, who both abstained.⁴³³ Israel had thus failed to ensure that the African states at least took a neutral view with abstentions, despite the influx of arms and the support Israel gave to African leaders whose regimes often relied on Israeli intelligence to quash opposition.

As Israel struggled to gain support at the United Nations on resolutions that dealt with Palestine and the Palestinians, Africa did support Israel after the 1967 Six Day War. At the United Nations General Assembly debate that immediately followed the Six Day War, 12 African states voted against Israel but 16 voted for, with 5 abstentions. Therefore, nearly double the number of African states supported Israel as voted against.⁴³⁴ Indeed, Abba Eban, then Israel's Foreign Minister, commented in 1968 that Israel would have been "...overwhelmed in the political assault in the United Nations after the June war [Six Day War] had it not been for the support of ... non-Arab African states." Eban went on to state that the reason for African support at the UN "...was the fruit of toil and perseverance of foreign policy over an entire decade."⁴³⁵ When analysing the African voting records on votes that they did not believe held much influence or would change the status quo, African states often voted with the Palestinians and their North African Arab neighbours. On votes that

⁴³³ Reports of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East: resolution / adopted by the General Assembly, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/661368?ln=en>, [accessed 26 January 2021].

⁴³⁴ Guy Arnold, *Africa: A Modern History*, London: Atlantic Books, 2005, p. 424.

⁴³⁵ Israel to Boost Its African Aid, *The Baltimore Sun*, 27 February 1968.

involved issues of war and attempts at delegitimation, at least in the immediate period after the 1967 Six Day War, the African nations voted with Israel or abstained. Whilst support was not guaranteed nor automatic, and the perception in Israel was that Africa had not provided the support it had hoped for, the voting pattern up to 1967 was pro-Israel at the United Nations. An analysis of 266 votes cast by sub-Saharan African states at the United Nations on the Middle East conflict, between independence and 1967, show that 46 votes were pro-Arab, 110 were pro-Israel and a further 110 were abstentions, which in most cases were considered to be pro-Israel.⁴³⁶

As the 1960s came to an end, Israel's policies in the Occupied Territories that were occupied in the 1967 War, including the Sinai, continued to anger Africa and provided the Arab states with propaganda material with which to unite the African caucus to their side of the Middle East conflict. Israel's declining influence in Africa and realisation that support at the United Nations was no longer a realistic expectation was shown in a vote at the United Nations General Assembly on 8 December 1972. During the General Assembly, a resolution was passed that "*Calls upon* all States not to recognize any such changes and measures carried out by Israel in the occupied Arab territories and invites them to avoid actions, including actions in the field of aid, that could constitute recognition of that occupation;" and furthermore, "Recognizes that respect for the rights of the Palestinians is an indispensable element in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East."⁴³⁷ The vote was approved 86 to 7 with 31 abstentions. One of the nations to abstain was the United States, whose UN Permanent Representative George H. W. Bush commented that it was a regrettable outcome. Despite Bush's comments, the United States did not offer any form of public support to Israel by voting against the resolution. Of the 7 nations

⁴³⁶ Olusola Ojo, *Africa and Israel: Relations in Perspective*, London: Westview Press, 1988, p. 26.

⁴³⁷ United Nations General Assembly, A/RES/2948 (XXVII), 8 December 1972, <https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/0/C219466CC3B43959852560DE0069AE27>, [accessed 30 May 2021].

that voted against, all six other nations that joined Israel were Latin American: Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and Uruguay.⁴³⁸

The votes against Israel at the United Nations during the early 1970s did not concern Israeli ministers a great deal, and there was still a belief as 1973 broke that it was merely the Libyan and the Saudi Arabian oil wealth that had exerted pressure and attempted to persuade African governments to break ties with Israel in exchange for Arab aid. Israeli ministers did not believe that there was any genuine desire by the African leaders themselves to unilaterally break ties. Around the world, Israeli diplomats also did not foresee that Arab pressure was to lead to the total breakdown of relations. In January 1973, Israel still had good relations with Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa, and the country with the second most Muslims on the continent, after Egypt. For the Africa experts amongst the Israeli government, at the beginning of 1973 the break with Uganda, Chad and Niger were due to reasons that were unique to each nation and not a forewarning to a wider rupture. For Israel, Chad broke relations in order to stop the supply of Libyan weapons to Libyan-backed guerrillas raging a civil war, and for Niger, Israel saw it as more about the Arab oil money promised for the desperately poor and landlocked nation.⁴³⁹ In addition, President Tombalbaye was unable to pay his civil service payroll and when both Israel and France rejected his appeal for financial help, the president visited Qadhafi in Libya and returned home with a promise of a Libyan loan of \$91 million,⁴⁴⁰ considerably more than Chad's annual budget of \$57 million.⁴⁴¹

Israel was convinced that it could weather the storm and amongst some of the Israeli pundits and public it was a case of "good riddance" to nations that had benefited and accepted Israeli aid and assistance but had voted against Israel at the United Nations and Organisation of African Unity. Eban, the Israeli Foreign Minister, commented that the setbacks were "not tragic" and that it was not "[Israel's] collapse

⁴³⁸ U.N. Asks Partial Ban on Aid to Israel, *New York Times*, 9 December 1972.

⁴³⁹ See: Israel Faces Growing Arab Political Campaign in Black Africa, *The Washington Post*, 5 January 1973 and Setbacks in Africa Don't Faze Israel, *The Washington Post*, 7 January 1973.

⁴⁴⁰ An Arab Campaign Is Damaging Israel's Standing in Black Africa, *New York Times*, 12 January 1973.

⁴⁴¹ Libya Halts Aid to Chad Rebels, *New York Times*, 8 April 1973.

in Africa.” For Hanan Yavor, a former Israeli Ambassador to Ghana, Liberia, and Nigeria, Israel’s investment had already paid much better dividends than was initially envisaged.⁴⁴² But, by mid-January 1973 there were those in the diplomatic corps of Israel who had briefed the print media that the breakdown of relations between Israel and African states was already “...a snowball; we [Israel] want to stop it before it becomes an avalanche.”⁴⁴³ Despite the lack of support during voting at the United Nations throughout 1973, conversely, when relations between Israel and Africa were mid-rupture, Israel maintained contacts with African Representatives to the United Nations in New York as they were seen as important sources of intelligence on Arab activities.⁴⁴⁴

Therefore, Israel’s relationship with the United Nations had always been a fraught one, one that soured very quickly after the November 1947 vote to partition the British Mandate of Palestine, and one in which Israel fought against the much larger Arab bloc of nations on every vote that involved the Middle East. It must be recognised that it was not just the oil wealth or the idiosyncrasy of particular African leaders that was to blame for the break down in support for Israel. What must also be kept in mind were Israeli policies both pre- and post-1967, with particular emphasis on Israel’s actions within the Occupied Territories after the 1967 War. Israel’s support for French atomic tests on African land, as discussed, displayed a double-standard in Israel’s expectations when it came to United Nations votes. Israel expected complete loyalty to her position on the Middle East, but also expected full understanding from the African nations as to why Israel could not support resolutions against France’s atomic testing, nor France’s actions in her North African colonies, and consequently refusal of Israel to support independence votes. Furthermore, post 1967, Israel’s refusal to withdraw from and its decision to rather apply martial law to the Occupied Territories rattled African sensitivities over colonialism and occupation; no longer was Israel an underdog surrounded by enemy states. For

⁴⁴² Setbacks in Africa Don’t Faze Israel, *The Washington Post*, 7 January 1973.

⁴⁴³ An Arab Campaign Is Damaging Israel’s Standing in Black Africa, *New York Times*, 12 January 1973.

⁴⁴⁴ Zach Levey, Israel’s Exit from Africa, 1973: The Road to Diplomatic Isolation, Levey, *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, August 2008, 35(2), 2008, p. 222.

Africa, Israel's action in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Golan Heights, and the Sinai placed Israel on a par with Africa's white-dominated regimes and they saw the suppression of the Arab Palestinians in the Occupied Territories as comparable to that of their fellow African citizens living under colonial regimes and Apartheid. That Israel also occupied the Sinai Peninsula made Israel an occupier of Egyptian territory and this was exploited by the Arab states when it came to Israel's relationship with Africa. Egypt is a part of the African continent, and therefore the Israeli occupation of the Sinai was seen as an occupation of African territory. The anger of the African leaders meant that they saw no need to support Israel's cause in international forums for as long as Israel's actions went against their cause. The African leaders ceased to accept Israel's new borders and Israel's attempts to occupy the Palestinian territories. On balance, that diminished Israel's overall standing in the world and Israel's actions came to be seen as that of a settler nation, just as the Europeans had settled Africa. It is important to note that despite this, it did not diminish Israel's standing enough for Israel's legitimacy and right to exist within her pre-1967 borders to be questioned by any sub-Saharan African government.

The September 1973 Summit Conference of Heads of State of the Non-Aligned Movement did not let up in criticism from the Global South of Israel. The final political declaration issued at the summit's conclusion pledged the Non-Aligned Movement to assist Egypt, Syria, and Jordan in liberating their occupied territories "by every means." The Heads of State further went on to declare that "... the restoration of the national rights of the Palestinian people is a basic prerequisite for the establishment of an equitable and lasting peace in the area. The struggle of the Palestinian people ... is an integral part of the struggle of all peoples against colonialism and racial discrimination and for self-determination." In this vein, the Movement called for all States, with particular reference made to the United States of America, to stop the supply of arms to Israel, as well as all political, financial, and any economic support to Israel "... which may enable it to continue its aggressive and expansionist policy." Israel's policies toward the Palestinians were also linked with Apartheid South Africa when they declared that they had decided "... to do everything in their power to isolate the colonialist, racist and apartheid regimes, inter alia by: severance or suspension or freezing of all relations with Portugal, South Africa, Rhodesia and Israel." The criticism of Israel continued with a pledge for "...

their support of the Arab people of Palestine in their struggle against Zionist racist and colonialist settlements for the recovery of their full national rights... and declares its recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organization as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and of their just struggle.”⁴⁴⁵ The summit resolution, whilst critical of Israel, was more focused on support for the Palestinian cause than about the removal of Israel from international organisations or the world stage, and that can be considered as a positive outcome for Israel. There was never any doubt that the summit was to result in a statement that was critical of Israeli policies, the only variable was the scale of the criticism. Again, Israel’s aid programme and the goodwill generated through the programme assisted as the African nations knew of Israel and its people, and whilst they disagreed on Palestine, they were not prepared to support the Arab states and delegitimise the State of Israel at the September 1973 Summit.

However, at that same Heads of State meeting of non-aligned nations were 76 Heads of State, including Yasser Arafat of the Palestine Liberation Organisation. According to the United States’ intelligence agencies, it was also believed to be the place where the Arab leaders planned the Yom Kippur War. Immediately following Algiers, most of the leaders began their journey to New York for the United Nations General Assembly where the African states began to slowly start breaking relations with Israel. On the 4 October 1973 at the United Nations, President Mobutu declared to the gathered dignitaries that the Africans had to make the choice between their ‘brothers’ in Egypt or their ‘friends’ in Israel; two days later Israel was attacked by the neighbouring Arab states at the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War.⁴⁴⁶

The rupture of relations during the Yom Kippur War will be discussed, but there was one United Nations vote that Israel rejected outright and felt was a grossly

⁴⁴⁵ 4th Summit Conference of Heads of States or Government of the Non-Aligned Movement, Algiers, Algeria, 5-9 September 1973, http://cns.miis.edu/nam/documents/Official_Document/4th_Summit_FD_Algers_Declaration_1973_Whole.pdf [accessed 31 May 2021].

⁴⁴⁶ Susan Aurelia Gitelson, Israel’s African Setback in Perspective, in Michael Curtis and Susan Aurelia Gitelson (eds) *Israel in the Third World*, New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1976, pp. 191-193.

unfair attempt to tarnish the nation, and a betrayal of the African states, and that was the vote in which Zionism was equated with racism. The vote took place in 1975, the year after the period of this dissertation, but so significant was the vote that it must be discussed to understand Israel's relationship with the United Nations and the impact her aid programme had on preventing such votes during the period of this dissertation. Not only was this one resolution important, but in order to appreciate the success that Israel had in maintaining the vast diplomatic network in sub-Saharan Africa, we must also understand her relationship with South Africa, and that will be discussed in the following pages, before an in-depth analysis of the rupture in relations and Israel's future relationship with Africa.

3.1 *Zionism is Racism: Israel's Relationship with South Africa*

On 10 November 1975, United Nations General Assembly Resolution 3379 was passed by a vote of 72 to 35, and even with 32 abstentions the Resolution passed with a clear majority. The Resolution recalled that "in its resolution 3151 (XXVIII) of 14 December 1973 [vote against Apartheid South Africa], the General Assembly condemned, *inter alia*, the unholy alliance between South African racism and Zionism" and continued that the Assembly had taken note that "international co-operation and peace require the achievement of national liberation and independence, the elimination of colonialism and neo-colonialism, foreign occupation, Zionism, apartheid and racial discrimination in all its forms, as well as the recognition of the dignity of peoples and their right to self-determination." The resolution took note also "that the racist regime in occupied Palestine and the racist regimes in Zimbabwe and South Africa have a common imperialist origin, forming a whole and having the same racist structure and being organically linked in their policy aimed at repression of the dignity and integrity of the human being" and that "Zionism [is] a threat to world peace and security and called upon all countries to oppose this racist and imperialist ideology" and finally, the resolution determined that "Zionism is a form of racism

and racial discrimination.”⁴⁴⁷ The Resolution struck at the core of the Israeli ideology and was the biggest foreign policy blow to the Israeli state since independence. It also marked the end of any attempt by the State of Israel to engage with the United Nations or view the organisation as an unbiased forum to solve world issues.

Prior to the passage of UN Resolution 3379, the *New York Times* published an article at the end of July 1975 that reported on discussions that had taken place amongst African nations on how they were going to vote on the issue of Israel’s expulsion from the United Nations, with the decision taken that they would use Israel as a “bargaining chip” to squeeze from the Arab oil producing states oil-price concessions in exchange for support for the Arab and Palestinian cause and their bloc of votes against Israel.⁴⁴⁸ At the Organisation of African Unity summit held in Kampala in August 1975, Yasser Arafat spoke for an hour about the Palestinian issue and the Middle East conflict. Other Arab delegates pressured their African counterparts to pass a resolution that called for Israel’s expulsion from the United Nations, although they failed, and no resolution passed that called for such action.⁴⁴⁹ The importance of the events after the rupture in relations show the lasting impact of Israel’s aid programme to Africa and that despite the break Israel still had the goodwill of the African states. The lasting goodwill meant that the African nations were therefore unwilling to support the Arab cause wholeheartedly or take any action that had a lasting negative impact on the State of Israel. Thus, the Zionism is racism resolution that passed at the United Nations must be considered in the context of the discussions that were taking place at the time, specifically regarding Africa’s desire for support for their anti-Apartheid and ‘decade against racism’ campaign, and their need for Arab economic support in the face of oil price rises.

The issue of Apartheid was one that strained Israeli-African relations throughout the period of their friendship, and whilst Israel took a consistent anti-

⁴⁴⁷ Resolution Adopted by the General Assembly 3379 (XXX) Elimination of all forms of racial discrimination, <https://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/761C1063530766A7052566A2005B74D1> [accessed 31 May 2021].

⁴⁴⁸ Africans, Needing Oil, Weigh U.N Ban on Israel, *New York Times*, 31 July 1975.

⁴⁴⁹ Africa and Israel, *Chicago Defender*, 5 August 1975.

Apartheid stance at the United Nations, Israel's friendship with the Apartheid regime of South Africa was one that caused alarm amongst Africa. An examination of Israel's relationship with South Africa, and the reasons for the ties provides an understanding of Israel's balancing act between support for sub-Saharan Africa and a genuine anti-colonial stance, whilst Israel also had to shape her foreign policy with the large Jewish community in South Africa considered in all decisions. The South African Jewish community was the tenth largest in the world and was estimated to have sent to Israel between \$10 million and \$15 million each year between 1967 and 1971, with twice as much as that collected by the United Appeal, for a total of approximately \$45 million per annum. Currency limits were however, imposed on the amount that could be transferred to Israel per annum, and the amount deposited in Israel remained at between \$10 million and \$15 million per year prior to Israel's offer of a donation to the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), when the amount transferred dropped dramatically to almost zero due to the anger of both the South African Jewish community and the South African government.⁴⁵⁰

The South African Diaspora had mostly migrated from eastern Europe at the end of the nineteenth century and had become an important part of South Africa's financial, commercial, and intellectual elite, with good social standing and influence with some leading Jewish community figures having taken a strong stance against the Apartheid system. It must be noted here that the Jewish organisations of South Africa did not however, and they rather preferred to avoid taking any public position on the issue of Apartheid. Whilst the importance of the Diaspora in South Africa did not prevent Israel taking an anti-Apartheid stance at the United Nations when it voted in the majority, it did prevent Israel from taking concrete actions that may have harmed South African ties or risked the remittances and transfer of money from South African Jews to Israel.⁴⁵¹

Israel's relationship with South Africa predated independence, and the role of South African Jews in fighting in the War of Independence of 1948, the 1967 Six Day War and the 1973 Yom Kippur War showed the importance of the South African

⁴⁵⁰ Israel Backs Down on Aid to Africans: Vorster's Remark, *The Washington Post*, 18 July 1971.

⁴⁵¹ Israel Backs Down on Aid to Africans: Vorster's Remark, *The Washington Post*, 18 July 1971.

Diaspora. South Africa was quick to recognise the State of Israel and provided resources to Israel during the War of Independence that included much needed “food, medical supplies, money, arms, uniforms, and fighter aircraft.” In 1950, Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett made an official visit and in 1953 Prime Minister Daniel Malan became the first head of government to make an official visit to Israel.⁴⁵² Despite this, Israel’s record on condemnation of Apartheid was strong and in 1961 during the visit of President Yaméogo of Upper Volta, Prime Minister Ben-Gurion issued a joint communique that condemned racist discrimination and South Africa’s Apartheid policies. In November of the same year, Israel voted in favour of a United Nations General Assembly resolution that called for sanctions to be applied to South Africa, and Israel also supported a similar resolution in 1962. In 1966, Israel voted to terminate South Africa’s mandate over Namibia and when coupled with the assistance that Israel gave to the African independence movements, Israel’s record was as solid, if not more so, than the Arab states when it came to voting against Apartheid.⁴⁵³ Israel also withdrew all of its senior diplomats from South Africa in 1963. It was only in 1972, when relations with Africa had deteriorated, that Israel permitted South Africa to open a consulate at Tel Aviv, and only after the rupture did Israel permit the South Africans, in March 1974, to upgrade their legation to Ambassadorial level.⁴⁵⁴

In 1971, as Israel’s interest in sub-Saharan Africa continued to wane, Israel signed an agreement for South Africa to provide coal to power the three power stations that Israel had just converted from oil-burning electric plants to coal-burning, and thus South Africa became an essential trading partner for Israel’s energy needs; by 1979, Pretoria had agreed to export 23 million tons of coal annually to Israel.⁴⁵⁵ It was not just trade that Israel sought from its relationship with South Africa. Even

⁴⁵² Olusola Ojo, *Africa and Israel: Relations in Perspective*, London: Westview Press, 1988, p. 111.

⁴⁵³ Olusola Ojo, *Africa and Israel: Relations in Perspective*, London: Westview Press, 1988, pp. 114-121.

⁴⁵⁴ Joel Peters, *Israel and Africa: The Problematic Friendship*, London: British Academic Press, 1992, p. 149.

⁴⁵⁵ Olusola Ojo, *Africa and Israel: Relations in Perspective*, London: Westview Press, 1988, p. 123 and Joel Peters, *Israel and Africa: The Problematic Friendship*, London: British Academic Press, 1992, p. 153.

during time of warfare, Israel had a willing South African Diaspora ready and prepared to fight. The period of the 1967 Six Day War saw 7,215 volunteers from 41 countries arrive in Israel, and while most of those who arrived during the war to fight arrived too late to see action, thousands of men and women served Israel in non-combatant roles. Volunteers brought in the harvests on kibbutzim and moshavim to replace the farmers that had been called up to the army reserves and 255 medical professionals volunteered and worked in the hospitals where 2,500 Israeli soldiers were treated for their wounds sustained in the war. Of the 7,215 volunteers, 300 came from the United States; 1,940 from Great Britain; 1,782 from Western Europe; 1,288 from Latin America; 861 from South Africa; 236 from Canada; 190 from North Africa and Asia and the remaining 618 from the rest of the world. On top of the 7,215 there were also another 17,400 volunteers that registered to assist Israel in the war, but with the war being over so quickly, they were not required.⁴⁵⁶ Amongst the volunteers from South Africa were leading South African surgeons and medical personnel who enrolled in the Israeli Defence Force's medical corps and provided critical life-saving care for wounded IDF soldiers.⁴⁵⁷

It was also reported at the end of October 1973 that an unidentified Mirage jet downed by the Egyptian military over the Suez during the Yom Kippur War was South African and for the Arabs it offered proof that the South African government had sent a number of volunteer pilots and aircraft to support Israel in the war against the Arab states. It was further reported that the jets were also sent to gain valuable fighting experience for the South African Air Force, which up to then had lacked any battle experience with their fleet of 32 Mirage jets.⁴⁵⁸ The concern for the African states was that South Africa's Air Force would have operated primarily to support their Apartheid regime and to sustain other racist colonial states in sub-Saharan Africa, something that Israel would have been responsible for through their use of South African pilots that provided the experience and expertise that the South African

⁴⁵⁶ Volunteers From Many Nations Rushed to Aid Israel in War, *The Hartford Courant*, 1 January 1968.

⁴⁵⁷ Hari Sharan Chhabra, The Israeli Connection, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 111, No. 21 (22 May 1976), pp. 776-777.

⁴⁵⁸ S. Africa Jets Aided Israel, *The Daily Telegraph*, 31 October 1973.

Air Force lacked. A report in London's *Daily Telegraph* also insinuated that South Africa had sent several of her Mirages to fight for Israel, and that they had been sent via the Portuguese Atlantic islands, whilst the President of Zambia accused Israel of dispatching a senior Israeli Major-General to South Africa to provide counter-insurgency training to the South African military. Once again, most of South Africa's counter insurgency activities were against South African anti-Apartheid activists.⁴⁵⁹

Between the 1967 Six Day War and the 1973 Yom Kippur War, when South African Jews supported the Israeli defence forces, there was a blip in the diplomatic relations between the two nations. In July 1971, the State of Israel made an offer of \$2850 to the Organisation of African Unity that the Israeli Government said was a humanitarian gesture for tents, blankets, food, and medicines. The offer outraged the South African government, and a large segment of the 120,000 South African Jewish Diaspora, where the official label for the Black independence movements in Rhodesia and South Africa was 'terrorist movements.' South Africa's Prime Minister stated that he did not "...understand how Israel, which itself has a terrorist problem, can justify contributions to other terrorists". It was also widely reported in the media that Jewish South Africans had cancelled contributions to Israel in protest against the offer of the grant. South African Finance Minister Nico Diederichs went further and announced that the transfer of Diaspora funds to Israel would be suspended, bar small personal sums, until Israel had provided clarity on their policies regarding the Black independence movements. For Israel, the reaction amongst the African and Arab states was no better as the seven representatives of the Black liberation movements rejected the Israeli offer and suggested that the grant should rather be given to the Arab guerrilla groups, i.e., the Palestinians.⁴⁶⁰ In addition, the incident brought to the forefront of African minds' Israel's relationship with Apartheid South Africa.

The South African Diaspora's, and the government's, support for Israel during the three major wars that Israel faced in 1948, 1967 and 1973 project the complex relationship that Israel maintained with both Africa and the Apartheid

⁴⁵⁹ Hari Sharan Chhabra, The Israeli Connection, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 111, No. 21 (22 May 1976), pp. 776-777.

⁴⁶⁰ Israel's Offer to Aid Blacks Irks South Africa, *New York Times*, 5 July 1971.

regime, and the balancing act that Israel had to navigate throughout the period. The rupture in relations not only scored the Arab states a victory over Israel that led to a near total removal of Israeli aid personnel from sub-Saharan Africa, and strengthened the Arab's hand with the African states, but it also allowed Israel to expand her trade with other nations without consideration of her African ties. Israel immediately took advantage of this and expanded her relationship with South Africa. Africa's ability to negotiate with the Arabs diminished overnight once they had severed relations as there was nothing more that the African governments could offer the Arabs. Furthermore, it also stripped the African nations of Israeli support against Apartheid South Africa, demonstrated vividly when Israel appointed an Ambassador to South Africa in 1974 and Pretoria opened an Embassy at Tel Aviv in 1975.

In 1976, at the height of South Africa's ostracisation from world politics, South African Prime Minister, John Vorster, made a four-day official visit to Israel where a new economic pact was concluded. The Netherlands expressed official concern over the visit of the Apartheid Prime Minister, and western countries friendly to Israel questioned whether it was correct for Israel to host Vorster in light of the Zionism is racism resolution at the United Nations. There were also public reports that South Africa was to provide Israel with uranium and that Israel was to provide Kfir fighter jets to Pretoria, and that only hastened to worsen Israel's international standing.⁴⁶¹ Israel's rapid movement toward South Africa is telling both of the totality of the break with Africa, but also a continuation of Israel's policies that it was the military that would maintain Israel's security and borders, and not her diplomats, and Israel very much wanted access to South African uranium.

⁴⁶¹ Vorster Visit to Israel Arouses Criticism, *New York Times*, 18 April 1976.



Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin (second from right) with South African Prime Minister John Vorster, and their foreign ministers, at Ben-Gurion Airport, Israel, 8 April 1976. Photo Credit: Milner Moshe, Israeli Government Press Office.

Such dealings, and such close ties, would not have been possible for Israel to maintain if the rupture in relations with Africa had not occurred, and thus, Israel had the benefit of the legitimacy that African states had already provided, and then the benefits of renewed Jewish remittances from South Africa and renewed close ties, including for coal and enriched uranium, for Israel's energy and military needs. Israel's close ties with South Africa throughout the second half of the 1970s provided benefits to the State and was also seen as being necessary to provide protection for South Africa's Jews, who by 1976 numbered 250,000. Israel's relationship with South Africa strained ties with Washington and with the American Diaspora Jewry, particularly under the administration of Jimmy Carter.⁴⁶² By 1977, South Africa and Israel's arms relationship included the exchange of technological know-how. Israel had become the focus of South Africa's defence industry as it was one of a small number of nations that were prepared to ignore the United Nations weapons embargo

⁴⁶² See: Isolation Strengthens Friendship Between Israel, S. Africa, *The Washington Post*, 14 February 1978. For the Jewish population in South Africa in 1976, see: Hari Sharan Chhabra, The Israeli Connection, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 111, No. 21 (22 May 1976), pp. 776-777.

placed on South Africa's Apartheid regime and sell South Africa the arms it wanted. Israel was also prepared to sell her weapons at a price lower than other arms exporters. For Israel, which received \$1.5 billion in US military aid in 1977, the arms industry was an extremely valuable component of her defence industry, with Shimon Peres, then Minister of Defence, telling a journalist in 1977 that Israel's arms exports were worth \$400 million per annum.⁴⁶³

It was not only Israel that saw a growth in her trade relationship with South Africa. The Arab states, the very same Arab states that had pressured sub-Saharan Africa to break ties with Israel in part due to Israel's relationship with South Africa, maintained trade ties with South Africa and those also grew as the 1970s progressed. Close ties were maintained between several of the Arab nations and South Africa and they cooperated in a variety of fields including medical assistance, technical cooperation, and the purchase of South African gold, of which Saudi Arabia was the biggest customer with their purchase of one-third of all South African gold output. Jordan sold South Africa British made surface-to-air missiles and tanks, whilst the Gulf States supplied 90% of South Africa's oil needs.⁴⁶⁴ The African nations had lost access to Israeli aid and lost any bargaining tool they had with the Arab states, and in return both the Arab nations and Israel strengthened the Apartheid regime through increased trade and arms sales.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the Israeli and Jewish affairs activist Moshe Decter published an article in the *New York Times* in November 1976 where he outlined the relationship between Apartheid South Africa and 19 sub-Saharan African states. Decter reported that the economic worth of Africa's dealings with South Africa amounted to hundreds of millions of dollars annually, and vastly outweighed Israel's relationship.⁴⁶⁵ Moshe Decter's revelations would not have come as a surprise to the

⁴⁶³ Israel Selling Millions in Arms to South Africa, *Los Angeles Times*, 6 February 1977.

⁴⁶⁴ Arye Oded, *Africa and the Middle East Conflict*, London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1987, pp. 148-154.

⁴⁶⁵ See: Israel and South Africa, *New York Times*, 11 November 1976. The 19 African countries with ties with South Africa were Angola, Botswana, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Gabon, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Lesotho, Liberia, Malagasy Republic (Madagascar), Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, Swaziland, Zaire, and Zambia.

Israeli government, but his article does offer further evidence that the rupture in relations between Israel and the African states was due to Arab pressure and the need for Arab oil relief, as well as the Israeli occupation of the African Sinai, and not due to Israel's relationship with South Africa. Israel also attempted to explain her relationship with South Africa and deflect some of the controversy away from her friendship with the Apartheid regime and Israel's abstentions from anti-Apartheid votes at the United Nations. Israeli officials briefed the media that Israel should not have been judged for her relationship with Pretoria, and that such relations should not affect Israeli and African ties, but rather they should be considered as unrelated. African criticisms over Israel's abstentions at the United Nations were justified by the Israeli government who repeated frequently that it could not have supported such resolutions that saw racism equated to Zionism.⁴⁶⁶ The argument was not always well received and the growing anger over Israel's relationship with South Africa was a leading cause to the "almost unanimous" support that the African states gave to the Arab anti-Israeli resolutions at the 1976 and 1977 United Nations General Assembly.⁴⁶⁷

However, Israel's success and the international legitimacy she had achieved through her aid programme was evident throughout this period when no sub-Saharan African state attempted to delegitimise Israel or allowed the passage of any resolution that called for Israel's removal from the international diplomatic community. That the Arab nations only succeeded in passing major anti-Israeli resolutions post-1975, when Israeli and African ties had ruptured, and Africa sought both support for its anti-racism agenda and Arab concessions on oil prices, is testament to the success of Israel's foreign aid programme at cementing Israel's place in the diplomatic community.

Regardless of the rupture and public criticisms of Israel, as with most political manoeuvrings, *realpolitik* and the need for Israeli aid saw African officials engaged in informal meetings and dialogue with Israeli officials. In various capital cities around the world contact was maintained, as well as frequently on the side lines of

⁴⁶⁶ Israel's Uneasy Connections In Africa, *New York Times*, 27 February 1977.

⁴⁶⁷ Olusola Ojo, *Africa and Israel: Relations in Perspective*, London: Westview Press, 1988, p. 69.

the United Nations, including in the very same year that Zionism was equated with racism. There were also still dozens of African trainees from nations that no longer officially recognised Israel who remained in Israel to complete their studies after the rupture.⁴⁶⁸ Israel's aid programme to Africa had provided Israel with diplomatic legitimacy throughout the period of this dissertation, and with the rupture in relations post-1973, Africa also provided an opening for Israel to upgrade her relationship with South Africa. To put this into the context of time and to understand the narrative of the reasons why Israel and Africa's relationship suffered the drastic and rapid decline, it is necessary to place Israel's aid programme into the global political situation of the time and analyse the role of the Middle East conflict and Egypt's prominent role on the continent, as well as the influx of petro-dollars into Libya and Saudi Arabia. Prior to that, to complete the analysis of Israel's relationship with the United Nations, the following subchapter will review Israel's experience as a recipient of United Nations aid.

3.2 Israel as a United Nations aid recipient

The United Nations had completed the full circle of its relationship with Israel, from being one of the responsible parties for Israel's founding in 1948 to the strained relationship throughout the 1950s and 1960s both bilaterally, between the UN and Israel when the UN started to produce reports that were critical of Israeli policies, and multilaterally with African votes and anti-Israel resolutions. The harsh criticism that Israel experienced when Zionism was equated to racism, through to the late 1970s when the United Nations began to be a space where its founding principles were in a small way once again being enacted when contacts between Israel and Africa restarted and dialogue was once again used to create an understanding between the two sides.

To complete the narrative of Israel's relationship with the United Nations during this period it must be recognised that whilst Israel was providing experts to Africa, Latin America, and Asia, Israel was also a recipient of United Nations' aid

⁴⁶⁸ Black Africa Is of Several Minds About Jews, Israel, *New York Times*, 19 October 1975.

programmes. In the sixteen years from 1950, the United Nations Extended Programme of Technical Assistance (EPTA) provided Israel with almost £5.25 million in aid. The total contribution to Israel from the United Nations Development Programme, the UN Special Fund, and the EPTA, in money terms was worth a total of \$15.5 million. The funds represented the provision of 385 experts from nine different UN agencies who contributed 2,910 man-months of expert services for the benefit of Israel, alongside 731 fellowships totalling 4,084 months of studies overseas for Israeli citizens, together with the equipment necessary for the implementation of various UN sponsored projects in Israel. The United Nations Special Fund assisted Israel with larger projects that lasted three to five years each, many of which involved water and irrigation, including an experimental coastal groundwater collector project that ran along the seacoast of Israel, an underground water storage study that demonstrated the feasibility of storing large quantities of water in the sandstone and limestone aquifers of central Israel, and the electro dialysis of brackish water and desalination of water for use in agriculture. The United Nations also funded an Institute of Telecommunications that provided the Israeli Ministry of Communications with advanced telecommunications equipment to meet local requirements, and it also improved Israel's ability to compete on the international market in this field. Israel also provided telecommunication assistance to Africa, with some of the knowledge used having been taught to Israeli experts through the United Nations programme.⁴⁶⁹ Frederick Cooper highlighted the importance of communication in Africa. Newspapers, the radio and postal services provided key means of communication, regardless of the literacy level of the population. Newspapers could be read aloud, one radio could be listened to by an entire community, and the post services provided a means of communication not just for colonial officials, but also for the Africans who worked in the postal offices or telegraph stations who were able to acquire information through their work.⁴⁷⁰

⁴⁶⁹ United Nations Technical Assistance to Israel, 1950-1976, 24 October 1976, World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1401388 – A1994-023 Other # 171 Box # 191165B – Israel – General – 1975 / 1977 Correspondence – Volume 1.

⁴⁷⁰ Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940, The Past of the Present*, 2nd Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019, p. 34.

It was a United Nations Special Fund project that centralised Israel's meteorological institute at Beit Dagan in central Israel, with the Special Fund project also providing most of the equipment. The circle of development can be witnessed at Beit Dagan as those very experts who were trained by the UN programme later provided training and facilities to set up several of Africa's meteorological institutes as part of Israel's own foreign aid programme. As well as meteorological services, the United Nations funds also worked with Israeli farmers and scientists on strengthening the research and training required for the growth of high value crops in refrigerated greenhouses that allowed Israel to export out-of-season high value fruits, flowers and vegetables; the United Nations provided Israel with nine refrigerated greenhouses as part of the programme. As well as greenhouses and vegetables, the broadness of the United Nations programme included a ceramic and silicate institute that contributed to Israel's glass and ceramics industry; the plastics industry; metal and woodwork trades; quality control; and industrial paint and heat-treatment plants were also all recipients of UN assistance.⁴⁷¹

⁴⁷¹ United Nations Technical Assistance to Israel, 1950-1976, 24 October 1976, World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1401388 – A1994-023 Other # 171 Box # 191165B – Israel – General – 1975 / 1977 Correspondence – Volume 1.



M. O. Osifomuni, S. W. Nwachvicu and S. O. Ojo, students of meteorology from Nigeria, examining a thermograph, guided by Naomi Rosenblatt at the Meteorological Institute at Beit Dagon, 22 December 1964. Photo Credit: Pridan Moshe, Israeli Government Press Office.

Within the education sector, the United Nations worked in the field of science education and improved the training of science teachers and their classroom assistants in the fields of biology, chemistry, physics, and mathematics, with the UN Special Representative opining that the project revolutionised science teaching in Israel. The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) provided assistance in Israel for the treatment of mycosis, in mother and child health services, in the field of family nutrition, and also the training of social welfare workers and in the area of milk conservation.⁴⁷² The State of Israel would use these skills acquired,

⁴⁷² United Nations Technical Assistance to Israel, 1950-1976, 24 October 1976, World Bank Group

as well as the training that it received in social welfare and health care from the United Nations programme to improve the health and social conditions in African nations. Thus, Israel disseminated their knowledge to fellow developing countries and through this fulfilled the United Nations Development Programme aim to better the lives of citizens of developing countries through education and healthcare.

The full circle had been completed between Israel and the United Nation's relationship. The United Nations was the organisation that made David Ben-Gurion's declaration of independence possible, but it was also the United Nations that guided Israel to focus on her military might and strength, and not on her diplomats, in a policy that Israel has maintained until today due to the Israeli government's belief that the Organisation is inherently anti-Israel and unfit for purpose. The strong Israeli military presence increased Israel's international legitimacy, provided Israel with a means to entice African leaders and proved to the West that Israel was strong independently and able to demand respect in the international community without America, Europe, or indeed, the United Nations, approval.

3.3 *The Middle East Conflict and Egypt*

In 1947, the Jewish representatives of the British Mandate of Palestine were invited to the Asian Relations Conference that was held in March of that year at New Delhi, India. This first meeting of Afro-Asian national leaders from twenty-eight, most not yet independent, countries welcomed the Israeli delegation into the Afro-Asian family, with Egypt the only Arab nation present. For the Jewish leaders of Palestine, their hope and aspirations were to be a member of this gathering and to find a place within the regional community to which they belonged. Their hopes were short lived, and the Israelis had to come to realise very quickly that the Middle East conflict would impact their relationship with just about every other nation Israel sought any form of bilateral relationship with.

Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1401388 – A1994-023 Other # 171 Box # 191165B – Israel – General – 1975 / 1977 Correspondence – Volume 1.

Ran Kochan has outlined Israel's relationship with the non-aligned movements and traced Israel's participation at their international gatherings. The second meeting of the Asian Relations Conference was held in 1949 and Israel's invitation never arrived, and instead the Arab states all sent representatives. Within a year of her independence Israel had been snubbed by the Afro-Asian non-aligned nations. In January 1953, Israel was once again invited to be part of the group when she was represented at the Asian Socialist Conference held in Burma. Israel sent to Burma a delegation that represented both her socialist party but also the Israeli government. Whilst the delegation was made welcome and the conference was conducted in a constructive and friendly atmosphere, the Egyptian delegation refused to sit at the same table as the Israeli delegate and along with the Lebanese delegation left the conference room rather than be in the presence of the Israelis. Not unsurprising to Israel, this act once again made clear that the Middle East conflict would play a role in Israel's relationship with both the African continent and Asia.

Israel was once again invited to India in November 1956 when the second conference was held at Mumbai, but again the Arab states boycotted the conference due to Israel's attendance, and in the aftermath of the Suez crisis in which Israel occupied Egyptian territory. Despite there being no Arab attendees, Israel still faced some hostility, and a resolution was passed that expressed the delegates disapproval of "the encroachment and occupation by Israeli troops of Egyptian territory" and urged "the Israeli government to withdraw its troops within its borders." Israel's Mapai delegation succeeded in having a clause that expressed sympathy for Egypt removed from the final resolution, but nevertheless, the criticism of Israel was clear. Once again, Israel's relations with the Afro-Asian countries were to be affected by Israel's relationship with her Arab neighbours. Even without a large Arab delegation, criticism of Israel was still to be expected, and Israel had to navigate the reality that regardless of Israel's own actions, and irrespective of which states were or were not present, Israel's actions during the War of Independence, and her actions during Suez were widely condemned and would impact negatively her relationship not just with Washington, but also the non-aligned nations of which Israel believed she belonged to.

The real psychological blow to Israel was to be the Bandung Conference. Prior to Bandung, in April 1954 five Asian Prime Ministers met in Colombo, Sri Lanka, where the Pakistani Prime Minister forced a discussion on a resolution that criticised the creation of the State of Israel as a violation of the rights of the Arab people. The Indian and Burmese Prime Ministers refused to support such a resolution and when the Prime Ministers had a follow up meeting in Indonesia in December 1954 to decide the invitation list for Bandung, they had been forewarned by the Arab states that they would not attend if Israel was extended an invitation. The threat of the Arab states resulted in Israel excluded and isolated amongst the Asian nations, despite Burma's impassioned pleas for Israel to be invited to Indonesia. Israel's exclusion saw her castigated along with North and South Korea and Taiwan. The Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Movement, held in April 1955 right before Bandung, saw Israel invited and then uninvited due to Arab pressure.

With no Israeli delegation at Bandung, Egypt's Nasser and the other Arab leaders used their speeches to attack Israel and presented a united Arab front on the question of the Middle East conflict. To add to the barrage of claims against Israel, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, uninvited and unannounced, made his way to Bandung and was given the floor and chance to speak where he used the opportunity to claim that Israel sought Arab lands from the River Nile to the Euphrates.⁴⁷³ Egypt, Egyptian territory, and Egypt's presence as a North African Arab state would thereunto be present at all conferences and in most of Israel's dealings with both Africa, but also the superpowers who sought to ensure that the independence leaders entered their spheres of influence in the Cold War. The Soviet Union did this through the provision of arms and support for the Arab nations, for the United States this was through their aid programmes to Africa.

The international conferences were psychological blows that left Israel in no doubt that they were unwelcome. There are three further such instances that serve as

⁴⁷³ For Israel's relationship with the non-aligned nations, the quotations from the conference resolutions, and the timeline of the conferences, see: Ran Kochan, *Israel in the Third World Forums*, in Michael Curtis and Susan Aurelia Gitelson (eds), *Israel in the Third World*, New Jersey: Transaction Books, 1976, pp. 247-254.

examples of the impact of Egypt on Israel's international affairs and foreign policy before Israel had decided to pursue her aid programme in Africa. The first was in October 1954 when the French Foreign Ministry met with their Israeli counterparts and expressed concern over the Arab propaganda that had been released, mostly by the Egyptians, regarding the growing warmth between France and Israel and their strengthening bilateral ties. The French suggested to Israel that it would be better if the relationship and agreements between the two nations would be kept quiet and without publicity.⁴⁷⁴ This was a further psychological blow to Israel who had not only been isolated in her neighbourhood but had also now been seen to be a cause of potential embarrassment to the extent that an important arms supplier had asked for the relationship to be conducted without any press attention.

In June 1955, across the Channel in London the British Foreign Secretary Harold Macmillan informed Her Majesty's Cabinet that "there were some indications that the Israel Government might be contemplating an incursion into Egyptian territory near Gaza." Macmillan therefore took "... unobtrusive steps to delay the supply of military equipment to both Jews and Arabs."⁴⁷⁵ The willingness of London to stop agreed arms supplies to Israel, a nation which at this time in its history had no real domestic arms industry, left Israel vulnerable to the suspicions of the intelligence services of European nations, regardless as to whether such suspicions or intelligence were accurate.

In the diplomatic field, in December 1957 Israel made an informal enquiry to the Governor-General of Nigeria about the possibility of opening an Israeli Foreign Service post at Lagos. The Governor-General was against the idea and believed that if Israel was allowed to open a post at Lagos, Egypt would request likewise, something he did not want. The belief at the American Embassy in Nigeria was that during a visit to Israel by Chief Akran, then-Minister of Economic Planning in the

⁴⁷⁴ J. Tsur (Paris) to the West European Division, 26 October 1954, in State of Israel, *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel: State of Israel*, Volume 9, 1954, Jerusalem: Government Printer, 2004, p. 427.

⁴⁷⁵ Her Britannic Majesty's Government Cabinet Meeting C.M 14 (55), 14 June 1955, in The National Archives, CAB 128/29/14.

Western Region Government, who also served briefly as Acting Premier, concessions with the Israelis had been made and discussions had led to the Israeli request to open the post at Lagos.⁴⁷⁶

The June 1960 Conference of Independent Countries of Africa that took place at Addis Ababa was another example of Egyptian interference in sub-Saharan Africa's affairs, when Egypt managed to succeed in introducing in the final paragraph of the resolution an anti-Israeli statement regarding Palestine. The Israelis were later informed that this statement was in return for Egyptian agreement to paragraphs that called on African states to sever their relationships with South Africa and to support sanctions against the Apartheid regime. Interestingly, of all conference participants, only Egypt had any relationship with South Africa, but once again the Egyptian interests negatively impacted on Israel's bilateral relationships and international standing.⁴⁷⁷ A common theme throughout this period was Arab support for anti-Apartheid resolutions, whilst they simultaneously maintained vibrant trade agreements with the Apartheid regime and did little to reduce their economic relationship with South Africa, with no real meaningful solidarity with sub-Saharan Africa on the issue of Apartheid.

Egypt, the Arab states, and the Cold War were present throughout the formative years of Israel's aid programme to Africa, and by February 1960, Israel had determined that between 1955 and 1959 the Soviets had armed the Egyptians to such a degree that Egypt was in a position to pose a serious threat to Israel, and therefore Israel sought United States weaponry to counter that threat.⁴⁷⁸ David Ben-

⁴⁷⁶ Foreign Service Dispatch from the American Embassy at Lagos, Nigeria to the Department of State, Approach to Establish Israeli Foreign Service Post in Lagos, Desp. No 170, 11 December 1957, General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 2365, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

⁴⁷⁷ H. Bar-On (Addis Ababa) to the African Division, 25 June 1960, in State of Israel, *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel: State of Israel*, Volume 14, 1960, Jerusalem: Government Printer, 1997, pp. 401-402.

⁴⁷⁸ Memorandum of a Conversation, Department of State, Washington, February 16, 1960, 3p.m., *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Arab-Israeli Dispute, United Arab Republic, Northern Africa, Volume XIII, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1958-60v13/d123>, [accessed 20 June 2021].

Gurion, the Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, in March 1960 spoke with American Embassy officials about Egypt's superiority in equipment that Ben-Gurion put at a ratio of 3:1 over Israel. In the same discussion, Ben-Gurion touched on the issue of Israel's foreign aid programme and stressed that "... helping newly emergent countries and their leaders to meet the rising aspirations of their peoples for a better life in freedom is the central question of our time." The previous year, Ben-Gurion had also linked Israel's defence security with the foreign aid programme, telling the American Ambassador in Tel Aviv that "... if Israel could have some economic assistance on defensive armaments, he [Ben-Gurion] could take care of the financing of Israel's joint training and other endeavours with nations of Africa and Asia."⁴⁷⁹

On the subject of weapons and arms, Ben-Gurion spoke of the "grave danger" Israel was in with Egyptian forces positioned near the border to the west, and Syrian forces at the border with Israel's north. Ben-Gurion stressed to President Dwight D. Eisenhower Israel's concern over new Egyptian bombers from the Soviet Union that increased capacity of the Egyptian air force to that of bombers with the ability to carry 10 tons of bombs. Signifying Israel's reliance on Washington, Ben-Gurion ended with a reminder to Eisenhower that in his view "... the outcome of whether there would be war or peace in the area depends a great deal upon President Eisenhower's understanding and good will to their nation [Israel] in the days that lie ahead." The White House, and the president himself, understood Ben-Gurion's concerns about the danger that Israel faced but Eisenhower "... believed the nations of Western Europe – France, Great Britain, and even West Germany -- could better supply arms to Israel than could the United States." The President ended with the statement that he "... does not believe the security [of Israel] lies in arms." The President responded to Ben-Gurion in a way that would not have provided the satisfaction that Ben-Gurion and the Israeli government had sought when Ben-Gurion had departed Israel for his meeting with Eisenhower.

⁴⁷⁹ Telegram From the Embassy in Israel to the Department of State, 5 March 1960, *FRUS*, Arab-Israeli Dispute, United Arab Republic, Norther Africa, Volume XIII, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1958-60v13/d129>, [accessed 20 June 2021].

David Ben-Gurion had attempted during the meeting to link Israel's activities in Africa to the global Cold War battle and the prime minister informed the president that he believed that Africa was against Communism, but that "... it was not enough to be against Communism, the free world would have to give these nations something to be for." Ben-Gurion went on to describe the conversations he had had with African leaders where they expressed a realisation that it would not be possible for them to transform their countries into a France, or a United Kingdom, let alone a United States in a short period of time, but that many of the African leaders and their high-ranking ministers had visited Israel and studied Israeli methods of development. The Israeli settlements were comparatively small compared to Western settlement sizes, but for Africa they were more suited to their needs, and there was an insinuation that the United States should assist Israel's aid programme in Africa as part of their Cold War struggle against Moscow and the spread of the communist ideology.⁴⁸⁰ Ben-Gurion had thus linked the Soviet arming of Egypt to both Israel's relationship with the United States and her aid programme to Africa and the greater Cold War battle. Israel's aid programme was, according to Israeli thinking, to be viewed as at the forefront of preventing the Communist penetration into Africa, and in return, Israel attempted to use their aid programme and contacts with African nations as leverage in their requests for support from the White House and the Pentagon. However, the thinking in Washington was that if Israel sourced their weapons from European governments, the United States would have been able to act as a mediator for peace in the region without being seen as aligned with any one side in the Arab-Israeli conflict, and without becoming engaged in an indirect conflict with the Soviets via their Arab states in the Middle East and North Africa.

Michael Breacher described that by the late 1960s, the powerplay in the Middle East was that the Soviet Union equipped Egypt and Syria, France supplied Israel's Air Force, the United States and the United Kingdom armed Jordan, and the United States willingly exchanged Saudi oil dollars for military hardware. Added to Israel's armoury were the weapons she captured during the 1967 war: Jordan lost 150

⁴⁸⁰ Memorandum of a Conversation, White House, Washington, March 10, 1960, 11 a.m., *FRUS*, Arab-Israeli Dispute, United Arab Republic, Norther Africa, Volume XIII, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1958-60v13/d131>, [accessed 20 June 2021].

of its 250 tanks and all 21 fighter planes; Egypt lost 500 tanks, of which Israel captured 100 intact and working tanks; Egypt lost 340 planes and Syria lost somewhere between 50 and 80 of its aircraft.⁴⁸¹ The Israeli advantage was short-lived as the Soviet Union rapidly replenished the arms of the Arab states within months of the cessation of warfare. Israel's economy was also struggling under the huge burden defence expenditure had created, with 25% of Israel's GNP being spent on defence by 1970.⁴⁸²

Israel's military requirements *vis a vis* the Arab military capability was not the only role that Egypt played in Israel's military relationship with the international community. Military aid to Africa very quickly became an important aspect of aid, and as has been mentioned, African leaders requested more and more military aid throughout the 1960s. Israel usually provided the requested aid, as noted by Abel Jacob, there was a fear that if Israel refused a request for aid, another donor nation, in this case Israel feared Egypt, would have provided it. Israel would have then lost influence on the continent. This competition among rival donors led to the escalation of the African arms race.⁴⁸³

Further examples of Israel and Egypt's relationship having an impact on Israel's position within the international community can be seen with regards to Israel's occupation of Egyptian territory during the 1967 War. Between 1967 and 1971, the closure of the Suez Canal, which followed the Israeli occupation of the Suez region during the 1967 War, was estimated to have cost East Africa \$125 million in lost export trade. Following Israel's capture of the Canal, Egypt imposed a blockade and it remained closed to all shipping until 1975. African blame for the closure of the Canal was directed at Israel, with the Nigerian press reporting a "... hardening of sentiments..." against Israel in East Africa. Compounding the negativity directed

⁴⁸¹ For the arming of the Middle East and the figures on the Arab military hardware destroyed in the 1967 war, see: Michael Brecher, *The Foreign Policy System of Israel: Setting, Images, Process*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972, pp. 62-64.

⁴⁸² Michael Brecher, *The Foreign Policy System of Israel: Setting, Images, Process*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972, p. 83.

⁴⁸³ Abel Jacob, Israel's Military Aid to Africa, 1960-1966, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (Aug., 1971), pp. 174-5.

towards Israel for the Canal's closure was South Africa benefiting from the lack of passage through the Canal and the closure of the Canal having made East African states "...involuntary partners in the enrichment of South Africa."⁴⁸⁴ Israel's occupation of Arab Egyptian land as part of the Middle East conflict was seen as Israeli occupation of African territory during the 1967 War and was another factor that angered the African states. Libya and the Saudi leadership used this against Israel when pressuring African states to break relations; once again, Egypt became a partner in Israel's relationship with Africa.



The Yom Kippur War. In the photo, *Aluf* (General) Ariel Sharon near a bridge built by the Israeli Defence Forces on the Suez Canal, 31 October 1973. Photo Credit: Ron Ilan, Israeli Government Press Office.

3.4 *Post 1967: The Occupied Territories*

After the Six Day War of 1967, Israel had to administer the Sinai, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights, and the West Bank territory, including East Jerusalem, that

⁴⁸⁴ Olusola Ojo, *Africa and Israel: Relations in Perspective*, London: Westview Press, 1988, pp. 47-49.

it had militarily occupied during the hostilities. The administration of the territory and population put significant pressure on the Israeli economy and forced Israel to look elsewhere for trade in order to help support her economy. The option of providing loans or grants to Africa was simply impossible due to the economic strain of the war and the needs of the Occupied Territories. Israel was administering an area 3.3 times the size of Israel prior to the war, with a population of 942,000 persons, which amounted to an almost one-third increase on Israel's pre-1967 border population of 2.9 million (of which 400,000 were Arab). The total Arab population under Israeli control therefore grew from 400,000 to 1.3 million and the cost of the administration of the Occupied Territories and their population was handled by the military and absorbed into the defence budget.⁴⁸⁵

The number of Israeli technicians in Africa halved, and the number of experts in other parts of the world increased, partly due to Israel's desire for new markets as a means to balance their books and reduce their liabilities and the cost of their aid programme. It was clear that Israel's strategy had shifted to one of exploration of new avenues of friendship and trade possibilities, although Israel did still maintain a special interest in Africa, it was not as focused as it had been pre-1967.⁴⁸⁶ Regardless, Israel maintained her Embassies in Africa and operated full and busy Embassies in all African nations except Mauritania, Sudan and Somalia, putting Israel behind only the United Kingdom, France and the USA in terms of representation on the continent.⁴⁸⁷ Israel's international legitimacy and diplomatic prowess was maintained, despite Israel firing the first shot and occupying huge swathes of Egyptian and Arab territory in 1967, and that is testament to the strength of Israel's relationship with Africa that was formed through her foreign aid programme. The rupture in relations that were to follow were a blow, but the strength of the

⁴⁸⁵ Economic Committee EC/0/70 – 136: Israel, Country Programme Paper, 30 October 1970, in World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1855660 – A1995-172 Other # 2 Box # 182571B – Israel – General Negotiations – 1969 / 1971 – Correspondence – Volume 1.

⁴⁸⁶ Israel Gets Mixed Results from Aid to Black Africa, *The Washington Post*, 7 May 1969.

⁴⁸⁷ Israel Wins Friends With African Aid, *Los Angeles Times*, 11 May 1969.

relationship Israel had built in sub-Saharan Africa would endure and ensure that Israel's legitimacy amongst the African nations was secure.

3.5 *The Oil Dollars: Saudi Arabia and Libya*

Whilst Egypt's geographical location made it very much a player in the battle for Africa within the Cold War bipolarisation of the world, it was the discovery of oil and the use of oil wealth as a means of enticement that changed the status quo in Africa and presented serious challenges to Israel's diplomats on the continent. Oil was a crucial component of industrialisation and the building up of both light and heavy industry in Israel, in Africa, and the world. As early as the 1950s, Israel came to the realisation that oil would be an issue that would need to be confronted in her foreign policy. In August 1952, the Arab League instituted a formal economic boycott of Israel and sought to ensure that any businesses that had outlets, branches, assembly plants, or offices in Israel, or had prominent Zionists on their Board of Directors, were boycotted by all Arab states. Arab countries also denied normal facilities at their ports to any ship that called at an Israeli port during a voyage or carried contraband to Israel on any previous voyage; almost any type of cargo was labelled as contraband. This resulted in cargo ships having to make separate voyages to the ports of the eastern Mediterranean if they sought to stop at any Israeli ports, and that impacted on the cost of the transportation of goods, including oil. In 1948, the Arabs also prevented oil flowing through the pipeline at Haifa to the city's refinery with the result being the loss of 3 million tons of exportable products. In December 1955, the Arab Oil Committee recommended that Arab countries demand that both Shell and Socony, an American oil company, stop all commercial activities in Israel. Saudi Arabian pressure would lead to Socony's eventual withdrawal from Israel.⁴⁸⁸

⁴⁸⁸ Her Britannic Majesty's Government Notes by Officials C. (57) 204, Arab States' Boycott of Israel, 11 September 1957, in The National Archives, CAB 129/89/4.



Crude oil tanks and towers at the Haifa oil refineries, 17 December 1950. Photo Credit: Cohen Fritz, Israeli Government Press Office.

In July 1957, the Shell Oil Company and British Petroleum Company (BP) closed down their distribution network in Israel due to the Saudi Government's signals that the two companies would be denied facilities in Saudi Arabia if they continued their business in Israel. Shell and BP said as much to the Israeli government, to the chagrin of the British who assessed that the withdrawal from Israel was rather for commercial reasons and due to low profits.⁴⁸⁹ Nevertheless, the impression of the Israeli Government was that their oil supply network had been negatively impacted due to Arab pressure, and thus their energy security was not only uncertain, but at risk. There were the same issues when it came to weapons and military deals. The British government was concerned that the staging and overflying facilities that the British had enjoyed with the Sudan and Libya, and British relations with Kuwait, should not be damaged through any arm sales to Israel.⁴⁹⁰ Not only was

⁴⁸⁹ Her Britannic Majesty's Government Cabinet Meeting C.M 52 (57), 16 July 1957, in The National Archives, CAB 128/31/52.

⁴⁹⁰ Her Britannic Majesty's Government Circulation Paper C. 62, Supply of Defensive Missiles to Israel and Arab Countries, 2 October 1962, in The National Archives, CAB 129/110/50.

it Israel's energy needs, but also her prospective arms sales that were to be impacted by the Arab nations.

Israel was not initially as affected by the worldwide oil price increase due to her presence in the Sinai, and her ability to use oil extracted from the oilfields occupied during the 1967 War.⁴⁹¹ Until September 1973, Israel had enjoyed rapidly increasing levels of consumption, but the higher defence expenditures due to the Yom Kippur War and the increase in world commodity and oil prices caused inflation to skyrocket to 40% by 1974. This caused the loss of half of Israel's foreign exchange reserves, and the cost of the price of oil became a determining factor in Israel's economy.⁴⁹² As the United States had cautioned throughout this period, Arab oil supply was a key concern and was at the forefront of policy with regards to the Middle East conflict and the Cold War, and inextricably played into Israel's own relationship with Africa, and her status in the diplomatic arena. Oil was to be more important than ties with Israel. For Africa, the 1973 increase in oil prices "had a double effect on the externally oriented African economies: it increased (except for African oil exporters) their bills for fuel at a time when transport, agricultural machinery, and fledgling industries were becoming more energy intensive." Not only did it cause economic issues through the direct cost of purchasing oil, but it also "fostered a recession in the industrialized countries of Europe and North America, lowering demand for and prices of African agricultural and mineral products."⁴⁹³

In September 1973 there was a real risk of the Arab oil producing states embargoing oil to Europe and the United States, and at the White House President Nixon "...put the highest priority...toward making some progress toward the settlement of that [Middle East] dispute." Nixon also made clear that "Israel simply

⁴⁹¹ Current Economic Position and Prospects of Israel, 14 May 1975, in World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1401386 – A1994-023 Other # 171 Box # 191165B – Israel – Lending, Economy and Program [LEAP] – Agreement and Bank Reports [BR] – Volume 1.

⁴⁹² Israel: Annual Meeting Brief – IDF Division, 25 August 1977, in World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 30044600 – A1994-023 Other # 171 Box # 191165B – Israel – Lending, Economy and Program (LEAP) – General – 1975 / 1977 Correspondence – Volume 1.

⁴⁹³ Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940, The Past of the Present*, 2nd Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019, p. 118.

can't wait for the dust to settle and the Arabs can't wait for the dust to settle in the Mideast. Both sides are at fault. Both sides need to start negotiating ... we are not pro-Israel, and we are not pro-Arab ... we are pro-peace." Nixon further went on to say that Washington would use its influence in Israel, and what influence it had in the Arab world, to resume negotiations as "one of the dividends of having a successful negotiation will be to reduce the oil pressure."⁴⁹⁴ The press conference in Washington was the first time the Nixon administration had publicly linked Middle Eastern diplomacy to oil, and caused concern in Israel and amongst the American Jewish organisations that the United States may pull-back or reduce its open support for Israel out of concern for Arab oil. Specifically, it was Saudi oil output that Washington wanted increased from 9 million barrels a day to 20 million barrels, but which Saudi Arabia had threatened to maintain at 9 million unless the United States pressured Israel to a solution over the Occupied Territories.⁴⁹⁵

Whilst defence spending was Israel's biggest burden, for many of the African states it was the price of oil that had the biggest impact on their economic wellbeing. In the 1970s, the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) decided to raise the price of oil to increase their incomes and finance the development of their own countries with their newly discovered oil reserves. The price increase was also a means of leverage to entice African states that were friendly to Israel to switch alliances and support the Arab position in the Middle East in exchange for subsidised oil. However, whilst the African nations believed they would receive subsidised oil in exchange for breaking ties with Israel, it has been argued that the Arabs rather saw it as more a *quid pro quo* in the sense that African states broke ties with Israel and in return the Arab states ceased their commercial relations with South Africa, Rhodesia, and Portugal. Whilst the subsidised oil never became a reality, the threat of bankruptcy and severe economic recession due to any increase in the price of oil was a significant factor in the African states' decision to break ties with Israel. As Ernest Wilson noted,

⁴⁹⁴ The President's News Conference, 5 September 1973, Transcript available at: <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/the-presidents-news-conference-89>, [accessed 20 June 2021].

⁴⁹⁵ A MidEast Pledge: President Is Seeking a Settlement to End Oil Threats by Arabs, *New York Times*, 6 September 1973.

the African states' oil bill increased by over \$1 billion, whilst the original amount of the Arab aid was a mere \$200 million. The dissatisfaction the African nations felt when they realised that OPEC had no intention of subsidising oil or even providing aid equal to their increased oil bill was massive, and compounded Africa's already severe economic situation.⁴⁹⁶

The emergence of Colonel Qadhafi in Libya also must be appreciated, as must Qadhafi's infatuation with Gamal Nasser. Qadhafi's desire for control of the African continent was driven by strong determination and Libya's newly found oil wealth. One example of Libya's newfound wealth is that in 1951 Libya's total budget was less than \$20 million, in 1969 Libya spent \$1.1 billion on a single housing project.⁴⁹⁷ In order to encourage the African leaders to the Arab cause, Libya established Islamic centres in countries that had only very small Muslim populations and funded primary education that taught Arabic and about the Islamic faith. In 1969, Saudi Arabian oil money paid for the construction of the central mosque at Accra. Muslim universities were established in both Niger and Uganda, at a cost of \$60 million each, funds that Israel simply could not compete with.⁴⁹⁸ Following the break with Israel, Uganda announced \$18 million in aid from Libya and Saudi Arabia, as well as a \$15 million loan from the Saudis, in addition it was reported that \$16 million was destined for Amin's personal use.⁴⁹⁹ Idi Amin was a big supporter of Qadhafi, who in September 1972 attempted to send Amin five plane-loads of soldiers and arms, but Sudan, whose territory the planes were overflying without prior authorisation, grounded them and prevented the transfer of soldiers and weapons to the Ugandan dictator.⁵⁰⁰ Nevertheless, Qadhafi had established his presence on the continent, and his support for the Palestinian people and Palestinian statehood would be felt throughout Africa

⁴⁹⁶ Ernest J. Wilson III, Africa, the Energy Crisis, and the Triangular Relationship, in Dunstan M. Wai (ed.) *Interdependence in a World of Unequals: African-Arab-OECD Economic Cooperation for Development*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1982, pp. 125-126.

⁴⁹⁷ Samuel Decalo, *Israel and Africa: Forty Years, 1956-1996*, Florida: Florida Academic Press, 1998, pp. 95-96.

⁴⁹⁸ For more on the Arab's Islamic movements in Africa, see Chapter 3 in Arye Oded, *Africa and the Middle East Conflict*, London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, pp. 33-51.

⁴⁹⁹ Olusola Ojo, *Africa and Israel: Relations in Perspective*, London: Westview Press, 1988, p. 42.

⁵⁰⁰ General Amin's Assault on Uganda, *The Washington Post*, 24 September 1972.

at the expense of Israel's relationship on the continent. Qadhafi even went as far as taking out an advertisement in a Greek newspaper in June 1972 asking Arab citizens residing in Greece to report to the Libyan Embassy to register as "Arab brothers who wish to fight as volunteers for the liberation of occupied Palestine."⁵⁰¹ The announcement was picked up by Israeli newspapers and widely reported within Israel.⁵⁰² The impact on Israeli morale of the Arab citizens of a fellow Mediterranean country being called up to fight against Israel was a further blow that the Israeli populace had to face, and a precursor to the rupture that would occur the following year.

In November 1972, on the same day as Chad announced diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, Fort Lamy also announced that it had terminated diplomatic relations with Israel.⁵⁰³ In response, Israel's Deputy Prime Minister Yigal Allon, on departure for a fundraising trip in North and South America, announced that Israel would re-evaluate its relationship with Africa whilst appropriating blame for Chad's break in relations to Libya's use of oil-dollars as bribery to persuade nations to break ties with Israel. Abba Eban, Israel's Foreign Minister, had commented that Libya had put heavy pressure on Chad and promised financial aid in exchange for Chad's termination of relations with Israel.⁵⁰⁴ Within a week of Chad's announcement, Israel announced that in response it was to reinforce its presence in Africa with diplomatic posts and Embassies to be opened in Rwanda, Swaziland, and Botswana and a new campaign to combat Arab propaganda on Israel in Africa.⁵⁰⁵

But Israel was unable to compete with the Arab propaganda campaign, and even more so, Israel was unable to compete financially with the Arab nations who were prepared to use their oil wealth to remove Israel from Africa. In Senegal, for example, 75% of the population was Muslim in a country that relied on one peanut crop a year. With a visit by the King of Saudi Arabia came an \$800,000 gift to Muslim

⁵⁰¹ Announcement to the Arab Citizens in Greece, 17 June 1972, in Israel State Archives, Folder 5349/6.

⁵⁰² Explanations Should Be Given, 8 June 1972, in Israel State Archives, Folder 5349/6.

⁵⁰³ Israel-Chad, *The Washington Post*, 29 November 1972.

⁵⁰⁴ Israel to Reassess Its Policy in Africa, *The Washington Post*, 30 November 1972.

⁵⁰⁵ Israel-Africa, *The Washington Post*, 4 December 1972.

institutions and February 1973 saw the storefront office of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) opened in downtown Dakar. Whilst the opening of the PLO office was not exceptional, it did cause the Israeli Embassy at Dakar to increase their security precautions which suggests the Israeli mission to Dakar knew that their presence was not welcomed by all.⁵⁰⁶

The aid that the Arab states provided equated to less than one-percent of all international aid to Africa.⁵⁰⁷ The African nations were also angered by Arab attempts to Islamise the continent, as the Arab oil producers gave the majority of development aid to the Islamic African countries or, when African states needed food, water, and roads, Libya offered to build an Islamic cultural centre in Uganda and Saudi Arabia offered millions to get help for a project to wrestle the Old City of Jerusalem from Israeli control.⁵⁰⁸ Israeli aid on the other hand, came with none of these strings attached, and is one reason why the Africans turned back to Israel upon realisation that the Arab oil dollars would not provide the development nor the economic relief they had sought.

3.6 *Israeli Aid to Africa and the global context*

Israel sought to convince Washington, London, and Paris that Israel's aid programme to Africa was a counterweight to the Soviet and the Chinese influence amongst the independent nations of Africa. The Israeli leadership believed that they played a central role in the Cold War battle by keeping Africa within the western sphere of influence, and out of the hands of communism. Israel struggled to convince Washington that Israel's activities in Africa were good for the west, and in London the prevailing thought was that Israel's activities in Africa rather hampered British interests in the region. The Israelis repeatedly sought to point out that a primary

⁵⁰⁶ Arabs and Israel Vying in Senegal, *New York Times*, 19 March 1973.

⁵⁰⁷ Africa and Israel, *The New York Jewish Week*, 31 May 1975.

⁵⁰⁸ See: Africans, Needing Oil, Weigh U.N. Ban on Israel, *New York Times*, 31 July 1975 and African potentates get accustomed to Lehmann Orthodox observance, *The New York Jewish Week*, 30 July 1978.

reason for their aid programme was also to counter Chinese infiltration into Africa. Israeli diplomats pointed out the “effectiveness of Chinese communism in the political and economic vacuum which had developed, especially in Africa.” The Israelis made the argument that the African continent was in many places inhabited by Asian minority groups, a fact that the Israelis believed gave Chinese technicians “substantial” advantages. The fact that the Chinese were not white Europeans also prevented any accusations of colonialism being levied against them. There were also the differences in the way the Chinese went about their activities in Africa, and whilst Western and Soviet efforts were somewhat similar in their approach to African leaders, the Chinese approach to propaganda and the offering of their experts was “less bombastic and more personal ... this qualitative superiority helps to make the quantitatively not as imposing Chinese offensive an acute danger which is most often under-estimated in the West because of lacking information.” Israel thus saw herself as the third way, as a bridge to the west and a way to repel the Communist People’s Republic of China from gaining a foothold on the African continent within the global political sphere, something that Israel believed would also endear her to Washington.⁵⁰⁹

The Israeli argument had some validity, as China did provide significant amounts of aid to Africa. As Frederick Cooper highlighted “Mao’s China provided an alternative source of inspiration and a modest amount of material support to African countries that claimed to pursue a socialist pathway, including to varying degrees Guinea, Ghana, Mali, Tanzania, and Zambia.” This modest amount of material support that Cooper discussed included “construction of the Tazara Railway, a line of over 1,000 miles linking the port of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania to the inland country – with its copper mines – of Zambia. The project was intended to get around the stranglehold that Portugal and Rhodesia, still ruled by whites, had over Zambia’s links to the world economy.” Not only was China therefore providing aid, but the Communist state was directly assisting sub-Saharan Africa in their fight against the racist regimes of Africa. The project “was financed and planned by Chinese corporations and staffed by Chinese personnel – up to 40,000 of them – with Africans in the least skilled positions. The railroad was designed both for a political purpose

⁵⁰⁹ Israel Aids Developing Countries, 22 August 1962, in Israel State Archives, Folder 1950/14.

and to bring out raw materials that China needed.”⁵¹⁰ Israel’s activities on the continent and the epistemic transfer of knowledge were one means to counter China’s massive labour pool and the funds they had to construct major economic projects on the continent.

However, the administration of John F. Kennedy had grown frustrated with the constant demands for military aid and the obfuscation with permission for American inspectors to examine Israel’s activities at Dimona. Under President Lyndon Baines Johnson, Zach Levey argued, the White House used the curtailment of American support for Israel in Africa as a means to induce “good behaviour” from the Israelis when it came to the Middle East conflict. Lyndon Johnson was not going to compromise the American position *vis a vis* the Arabs in order to satisfy Israel.⁵¹¹ Before Ben-Gurion left office, and during the final weeks of Kennedy’s presidency, Ben-Gurion had repeatedly pressured Washington to sign a formal American-Israeli agreement on Israel’s security but Kennedy held firm and refused to do so.⁵¹² Johnson’s National Security Council were also unwilling to enter into a formal security guarantee with Israel, as they believed that doing so would have triggered Arab moves towards Moscow and would have increased the threat to Israel without any benefit to either Israel or the United States. The Arab infiltration into Israel’s bilateral relationships with third countries is once again displayed, and again justified Israel’s desire for a strong presence in Africa for stronger international legitimacy and to ensure Israel’s presence in world affairs.

A March 1964 document from the White House suggested that Israel had been provided with \$1 billion in aid between independence in 1948 and June 1963. Aid to the United Arab Republic (UAR) from Washington totalled \$880 million, but in per capita terms Israel had received \$413 per capita, whilst the figure for the UAR was

⁵¹⁰ Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940, The Past of the Present*, 2nd Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019, p. 150.

⁵¹¹ Zach Levey, Israel’s Strategy in Africa, 1961-1967, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (Feb., 2004), p. 83.

⁵¹² Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Israel, 2 October 1963, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Volume XVIII, Near East, 1961-1962, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v18/d332>, [accessed 21 June 2021].

just \$32 per capita.⁵¹³ The huge per capita figure does not take into account the donations from Jewish Diaspora or the sales of Israeli government bonds. Nevertheless, the Administration was very much aware that the Jewish lobby group in Washington were prepared to pile the pressure on President Johnson to provide Israel with the security guarantees they wanted. The Cold War battle and Israel's counterweight to communism in Africa was frequently mentioned by the lobby groups that supported Israel. The election year of 1964 was seen as a prime opportunity to place pressure on the young administration of Johnson, especially as Johnson was keen to prove his credentials and legitimacy as a president, having been placed in the Oval Office after the assassination of his predecessor.⁵¹⁴ Johnson sent his Deputy Special Counsel to Israel in May 1964 to tell Prime Minister Levi Eshkol direct that the United States would not be furnishing Israel with any further tanks. Washington was unwilling to provide Israel with American tanks, nor was Johnson prepared to provide financial support to Israel to purchase tanks from the United Kingdom or West Germany, especially as during this period Israel used her foreign exchange to purchase missiles from France.⁵¹⁵

Israel's attempts to place herself firmly in the Cold War battle for Africa highlighted the importance of geopolitics and the Cold War battle between East and West that continued to play out during the early 1970s. In May 1971, Egypt and the Soviet Union signed a 15-year treaty of friendship and cooperation that once again put the Middle East conflict within the Cold War setting and Israel's relationship with the African continent. In April 1972, the Soviet Union signed a similar 15-year treaty with Iraq, a country that had received Soviet arms for its 150,000-man army and air

⁵¹³ Memorandum From Robert W. Komer of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Deputy Special Counsel (Feldman), 23 March 1964, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, Volume XVIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1964-1967, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v18/d33>, [accessed 21 June 2021].

⁵¹⁴ Memorandum from the President's Deputy Special Counsel (Feldman) to President Johnson, 11 May 1964, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, Volume XVIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1964-1967, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v18/d53>, [accessed 21 June 2021].

⁵¹⁵ Memorandum from President Johnson to His Deputy Special Counsel (Feldman), *FRUS*, 1964-1968, Volume XVIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1964-1967, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v18/d55>, [accessed 21 June 2021].

force since 1959. Article 4 of their Treaty stated that the two nations would “...continue their determined struggle against imperialism and Zionism and for the total elimination of colonialism”, labelling Israel’s occupation of African territory as colonialism, an emotive word in Africa.⁵¹⁶ Israel sought arms from Washington and Europe to counter the Soviet arms that were offered to Egypt and Iraq. With regards to Israel’s diplomatic position during this period, Israel was discussed at most of the OAU meetings and Israel’s relationship with Africa would feature often as would the Middle East conflict.

3.6.1 Post 1967: International Conferences

Egypt had succeeded in forcing the west to take the viewpoints of the Arab nations into consideration in their relationships with Israel. The importance of the Arab reaction to Israeli actions, and the fear that Washington had of being aligned too closely to Israeli policies, is justified when one considers the actions of the African nations during international conferences. At the Organisation of African Unity Conference of February 1968 held at Addis Ababa, a resolution was passed that pledged the “...solidarity of Africa with the United Arab Republic, the victims of Zionist aggression, part of whose national territory, which constitutes an integral part of the African Continent, is still under military occupation.”⁵¹⁷ This led to the Israeli public to protest for, along with the Israeli press, a reduction of aid to those African states that had voted for the Resolution to pass at Addis Ababa. The OAU that met in September 1969 in Ethiopia also condemned Israeli aggression against Egypt. The OAU reaffirmed their solidarity with Cairo and called for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Arab territories occupied since 5 June 1967.⁵¹⁸ This was a

⁵¹⁶ Soviet and Iraq in 15-Year Pact, *New York Times*, 10 April 1972.

⁵¹⁷ Resolutions Adopted By The Tenth Ordinary Session Of The Council Of Ministers Held In Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, From 20 to 24 February 1968, accessible at: https://au.int/sites/default/files/decisions/9574-council_en_20_24_february_1968_council_ministers_tenth_ordinary_session.pdf, [accessed 24 June 2021].

⁵¹⁸ Organisation of African Unity, Resolutions Adopted by the Sixth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government Held in Addis Ababa from 6 to 10 September 1969, accessible at:

clear anti-Israel position, but not one that was of great concern to Israel with her relationship with the African states, as there was general consensus in international forums that Israel's occupation of Arab territory captured in 1967 would have to end, and that there was no possibility of such occupation being accepted.

The Third Conference of Non-Aligned States was held in Lusaka in September 1970. Again, the non-aligned states reaffirmed their support for the Arab states and declared that the continued Israeli occupation of Arab territories constituted a violation of United Nations principles and was a challenge to the aims of non-alignment as well as a grave threat to peace. The Conference furthermore declared that the full respect for the "...inalienable rights of the Arab people of Palestine is a prerequisite to peace in the Middle East" and called for the "... full restoration of the rights of the Arab people of Palestine in their usurped homeland and reaffirm[ed] their support in their struggle for national liberation and against colonialism and racism." To conclude the passage on the Middle East, the Non-Aligned states recommended that "... the UN ... take adequate measures against Israel if it continues to disregard UN efforts to establish peace based on justice..." as per UNSC Resolution 242 of 22 November 1967.⁵¹⁹ United Nations Security Resolution 242, adopted unanimously, called for Israel to withdraw armed forces from the territories occupied during the 1967 Six Day War. Despite these conference resolutions that had African support, the lack of wording that delegitimised or questioned Israel's sovereignty can be partly attributed to the warm relationship that Israel maintained with most African nations.

The Organisation of African Unity Heads of State Meeting held at Addis Ababa in May 1973 further castigated Israel and noted that "... the intransigence of Israel and its systematic refusal to abide by the will of the international community,

https://au.int/sites/default/files/decisions/9518-assembly_en_6_10_september_1969_assembly_heads_state_government_sixth_ordinary_session.pdf, [accessed 20 June 2021].

⁵¹⁹ Resolutions of the Third Conference of Non-Aligned States, Lusaka, September 1970, With Selected Conference Statements and Comments, https://media.africaportal.org/documents/SAIIA_RESOLUTIONS_OF_THE_THIRD_CONFERENCE_OF_NON-ALIGNED_STATES.pdf, [accessed 24 June 2021].

constitutes a threat to the security of the Continent.” The Meeting further strongly condemned “... the negative attitude of Israel...”, its acts of terrorism and its obstruction of all efforts aimed at a just and equitable solution of the problem, in accordance with UNSC Resolution 242. The Meeting also threatened Israel with economic and political measures being taken by African nations, either individually or collectively whilst the Heads of State also called for an arms and military equipment embargo on Israel.⁵²⁰ There were also frequent snubs against Israel at other minor conferences that would not have attracted much attention, but which nevertheless were reported in despatches back to Jerusalem and led to resentment amongst the Foreign Ministry staff. One such example was the Second Afro-Asian Solidary Conference held at Conakry in April 1960. The Israeli Ambassador to Guinea had been invited and attended the first day without incident but was asked to leave on the second day at the request of the Guinean Bureau Politique and Ismail Touré, the president’s brother who also chaired the conference. The Israeli Ambassador Shlomo Hillel cabled his superiors at the Foreign Ministry that he assumed his expulsion was because the Palestinian delegation’s speech to the conference was scheduled for the second day.⁵²¹ Israel’s bilateral relationships with Africa would be further impacted by support for the Palestinian cause post-1967 and would be a contributing factor in the rupture of relations between sub-Saharan Africa and Israel, as will be discussed in the following chapter.

⁵²⁰ Organisation of African Unity Assembly of Heads of State and Government, Tenth Ordinary Session, Addis Ababa, 27-28 May 1973, https://au.int/sites/default/files/decisions/9521-assembly_en_27_28_may_1973_assembly_heads_state_government_tenth_ordinary_session.pdf, [accessed 24 June 2021].

⁵²¹ Sh. Hillel (Conakry) to E. Ben-Horin and E. Elath, 13 April 1960, in State of Israel, *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel: State of Israel*, Volume 14, 1960, Jerusalem: Government Printer, 1997, p. 339.

Chapter Four

4 Misguided Expectations: Israel and Africa

In 1967 Israel launched a pre-emptive strike against her Arab neighbours in anticipation of an attack, and in 1973 Israel and her Arab neighbours engaged in a war after Israel was attacked on one of the holiest days in the Jewish calendar. The 1973 attack came on the day when television and radio broadcasts had shut down for the Jewish Day of Atonement, and the mobilisation of military reserves and dissemination of information to the public about the outbreak of war was complicated by the day-long fast and the suspension of broadcasting. Despite Israel being the first to strike in 1967, and seizing territory from Syria, Jordan, and Egypt, including the Sinai Peninsula, the African nations waited until the outbreak of the 1973 war to break relations with Israel due to Israeli occupation of African territory (the Sinai was occupied in 1967). For diplomatic historians, this paradox poses questions regarding Israel's diplomatic success with Africa, and whether one can assess that the rupture was due to the Israeli occupation of African territory, or whether Israel had simply lost the goodwill of the African people after her exhaustive and extensive aid programme had begun to decrease post-1967 when Israel focused on the development of the Occupied Territories. Especially in the field of medical aid, Israel's occupation of East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip had strained Israel's medical system with the influx of a large number of Arab residents of the Occupied Territories who sought medical treatment from Israeli doctors; one Israeli official complained to the World Bank in 1971 that 10% of Hadassah Hospital's facilities in Jerusalem were occupied by Arab East Jerusalem and West Bank residents.⁵²²

After Israel's occupation of Arab and African territory, Israel's status as the underdog surrounded by hostile Arab neighbours was no longer a reality. Israel had proved her military might, proved her ability to be victorious in a war fought with multiple states on all fronts, and had gained the respect of the African leaders who

⁵²² To Files, From Davy H. McCall, Report on visit to Israel, 18 November 1971, in World Bank Group Archives, Washington, D.C., Folder No: 1855661 – A1995 – 172 Other # 2 Box # 182571B – Israel – General Negotiations – 1969 / 1971 Correspondence – Volume 2.

were impressed with the military achievements. At the conclusion of the Six Day War, only twelve sub-Saharan African countries supported condemnation of Israel as an aggressor, sixteen supported Israel, and five were neutral. The shock of the break in 1973 was therefore even more painful for Israel, as the Israeli military did not fire the first shot or occupy territory anywhere near the size of land that Israel had seized during 1967. Media outlets reported that it was the programme of technical assistance that Israel provided to sub-Saharan Africa that had created the goodwill that resulted in African support for Israel following the 1967 War. By the 6 November 1973 the Israeli flag flew over only 5 diplomatic missions in sub-Saharan Africa, 26 less than had flown just eighteen months prior. Of the 25 resident Israeli ambassadors that lived and worked on the continent, there were just two remaining in November 1973.⁵²³

Midway through the period of this dissertation, Israel and Africa's honeymoon period ended. Realisation came from both sides that the aid programme to Africa was not going to produce the economic results that Israel had experienced, nor was it going to enable African development at the speed at which the new African leaders sought. Israel had a 1,200% increase in agricultural production over the first 25 years of her statehood,⁵²⁴ and such figures were unattainable in Africa due to the vast differences in the societal environment and the development needs. Whilst the Israeli aid programme transferred skills and knowledge and provided educational courses both in Israel and on the ground in Africa, the programme was not equipped to deal with the social challenges of Africa. The Israeli populace and the pioneers responsible for both Israeli agricultural development, but also Israeli governance, were during the period a very unified group of European Jews, with a high level of education who all believed deeply in the Zionist vision of a Jewish homeland within the borders of the State of Israel. The Israeli Defence Forces role in civilian nation-building must also be acknowledged, and it started from the very bottom when new immigrants were taught Hebrew and then enlisted into the military where they were assimilated into Israeli life. Even those with vastly different educational standards were moulded into Israelis who sought to serve their nation and build the Zionist reality within the State of Israel. In sub-Saharan Africa, such assimilation was more

⁵²³ Israel Isolated in Black Africa, *New York Times*, 6 November 1973.

⁵²⁴ Unveiling Israel's Third World cooperation program, *The New York Jewish Week*, 26 July 1985.

difficult due to the established community groups who were less willing to give up their traditions or their influence in order to culturally assimilate into the new nation states upon independence.

On the African continent, borders were drawn by colonial powers with very little regard for societal affiliations or even whether the population had any link or relationship to the new independent state. As Frederick Cooper has argued “that there was cultural diversity is true; that cultural specificity sometimes crystallized into a sense of being a distinct “people” is to an extent also true. But distinctiveness did not mean isolation, and it did not extinguish interconnection, relatedness, and mutual influence. The cultural map of Africa is marked by gradations of difference and lines of connection, not by a series of bounded spaces, each with “its” culture, “its” language, “its” sense of uniqueness.”⁵²⁵ This made nation building a very difficult task in Africa and the leaders had to find ways to bring together dozens of different groups into a people with a shared loyalty to the new nation state. Sacrifices for the better of the nation and in view of the larger project of development were commonplace in Israel, where the vision of a Jewish state always drove not just the farmers and rural population responsible for agricultural development, but also the urban dwellers and government officials who believed that a strong, unified country was priority over all else. For the African farmers, survival and subsistence for their families and village had to come first. Equally as important was respect for the village hierarchy and social structure that sometimes prevented newly qualified African students who had returned from Israel educated, but who did not possess the social status and power, from implementing any changes or being given the opportunity to teach their village elders new techniques. This was especially present if sceptical village elders did not believe in the changes.

As King Osafo, the General Secretary of the African Students Association wrote in December 1967, the borders of Africa were drawn up by colonialists with “... no consideration given to such economic variables as the major natural resource deposits ... they fostered tribal dissensions, inflamed tribal genocide and atrocities,

⁵²⁵ Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940, The Past of the Present*, 2nd Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019, p. 17.

sometimes participating in this sport themselves.” Leaving aside the emotive language, Osafo’s argument highlighted the issues the Africans faced when it came to development, and one of the reasons why the key aspects of the successful Israeli agricultural development programme were not exportable to Africa as many had hoped. Within Africa there was also a drive for nationalistic industries and self-sufficiency, often at the cost of sound economic planning. Osafo gave the example of cement plants in Africa, of which there were three in Nigeria, two in Ghana and one each in Niger, Dahomey, Togo, the Ivory Coast, and Liberia. Osafo questioned whether Africa needed such a number of cement plants and whether the domestic economies were able to exploit economies of scale. Regional co-ordination and a joined-up development plan in Africa would have allowed economics of scale to be exploited and, for example, the Ghanaian and Nigerian cement plants to supply the rest of West Africa at a cost lower than each state domestically starting cement industries.⁵²⁶

Tanzania provides another good example of disjointed aid that did not meet the promising outcomes due to lack of coordination and follow-through. Five-hundred Tanzanians were sent to Israel for training in different fields with police officers, army officers, and pilots being three of the professions trained in Israel. As a whole, Tanzania would become the third-largest recipient of Israeli military aid and as part of that aid, one hundred and twenty Tanzanian police officers completed a three-month parachute course which led to Tanzania having the first parachute police force in the world. Whilst this was considered a success, there was an oversight in that Tanzania did not have any aircraft for these police officers to jump from. Tanzania requested from Israel the aircraft needed, but Israel rather suggested that Tanzania should purchase the aircraft and at this point the negotiations ended. The West Germans stepped in to replace the Israelis, who in turn were replaced by the Canadians when President Nyerere accepted aid from the East Germans.⁵²⁷ This went

⁵²⁶ King Osafo, General Secretary of the African Students Association, *Africa Has a Great Diversity of Resources – Why is it so poor?*, *The African Student*, number 10, December 1967, p. 6, in General Records of the State Department, RG 59, Box 4937, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

⁵²⁷ Abel Jacob, *Israel’s Military Aid to Africa, 1960-1966*, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (Aug., 1971), pp. 178-182.

further than just cement or paratroopers when it came to aid in Africa, very little of which was coordinated with outside agencies or even inter-government with the result being waste, incomplete projects, and a failure of the donor nations to maximise the outcome of their aid efforts at the expense of the development of the recipient nation. The end result was disappointment and frustration on the part of the African leaders who struggled to grasp why the rapid development that they had seen in Israel, and which Israel had encouraged them to believe was possible, failed to materialise.

There should have been an improvement in the coordination of the different agencies providing aid, and especially between the United States and Israel. American reluctance to be associated with Israel's aid programme out of concern of the Arab reaction did subside by the end of the 1950s when in March 1959, the United States Department of State ordered American diplomats and experts in Africa to stop opposing the activities of Israeli diplomats and experts. Previously, the Americans had opposed the activities of the Israeli diplomats and there was very much the approach that the field in which an expert was active was his own private one, and it was not to be shared with any other experts or other nations.⁵²⁸ This was unbeneficial and, in many instances, detrimental to the recipient country as there was a multitude of agencies working towards the same development goals, but without consultation or understanding what the other was doing. With the American acceptance of Israel's aid programme, this should have ended, but what is evident from the archives is that this disjointed means of the provision of aid continued. These challenges are to be viewed as contributing factors to the rupture in relations as they were a cause of the disappointment that many African leaders felt with the Israeli aid programme. As the 1960s progressed frustration and disappointment grew at the pace of the development, whilst at the same time the African economies began to suffer due to increases in fuel prices, in particular that of oil.

The break in diplomatic relations with Africa started some ten months prior to the October 1973 war. The cause of the break was not the Occupied Territories that

⁵²⁸ Foreign Service Despatch: Embassy Monrovia to the Department of State, Washington, DC, Desp. No. 273, 5 March 1959, Recent Examples of Astute Israeli Diplomacy in Liberia, RG 59, Box 2365, 1955-1959 General Decimal File, National Archives of the United States at College Park, Maryland.

Israel had occupied for 5 years at that point, or any diplomatic manoeuvring of Israel that had caused the break. Rather the initial causes were a set of circumstances unique to each country, but which ultimately were rooted in disappointment at the progress of Israeli aid and the need for cheaper energy. The Arab nations of North Africa had pressured the African states by exploiting internal strife within their nations. In November 1972, Chad expelled Israeli diplomats, and at the end of December 1972, the Congo also expelled the Israeli delegation and ceased diplomatic relations with Israel. Foreseeing that former French colony Niger was also on the brink of breaking ties, Israel at the end of December 1972 downgraded relations to that of a non-resident ambassador for “budgetary and administration reasons”, just days prior to Niger’s government making pro-Arab declarations following which Niger broke all relations with Israel. At the time, Israeli officials did not foresee the impending domino effect of the rupture in relations, as each of the three African nations had a reason for ceasing relations. Chad was landlocked, with a Christian president at war with Libyan backed guerrillas, and it was Qadhafi’s offer to stop the supply of arms to the guerrillas that forced President Tombalbaye’s hand and led to the break in relations. The Congo broke relations following a year in which the Israeli resident Ambassador in the country had no contact at all with the government, and the end of relations came as no surprise to Israel’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Niger was landlocked and impoverished and desperately needed access to the Arab petro-dollars on offer to the African states that broke ties with Israel.⁵²⁹

Between the break with Niger in January 1973 and the start of the Yom Kippur War on 6 October 1973, Mali, Burundi, and Togo had also ended their diplomatic ties with Israel. The 1973 Algiers conference of states, where intelligence agencies believed the Yom Kippur War was planned, also called for “the other member countries to take steps to boycott Israel diplomatically, economically, militarily and culturally, as well as in the field of sea and air transport, in accordance

⁵²⁹ See: Research Study RAAS-1 Prepared in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, 26 January 1973, *FRUS*, 1969–1976, Volume E-6, Documents on Africa, 1973–1976, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76ve06/d2> [accessed 14 June 2021] and Israel Faces Growing Arab Political Campaign in Black Africa, *The Washington Post*, 5 January 1973.

with the provisions of Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.”⁵³⁰ Chapter VII of the United Nations’ charter relates to “action with respect to threats of peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression.”⁵³¹ Whilst the record of discussions of the Algiers conference are unknown, if, as discussed in the previous chapter, intelligence reports are correct and it was at Algiers that the Arab states planned the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War, then the African states would have been subjected to pressure and relentless demands for them to join in condemnation of Israel, and to re-evaluate their bilateral relationships. Such pressure, combined with the oil crisis and then the outbreak of the war, presented the African leaders with a difficult decision if they were to maintain ties with Israel. With Africa’s impatience over the pace of their development aid also an ever-present component, it is difficult to foresee what Israel could have done to prevent the rupture in such circumstances.

It was the speed of the rupture at the time Israel was under attack on all fronts that left a bitter taste in Israel. Starting with Zaire on the 8 October and ending with Ethiopia on the 24 October, during the war itself ten African nations broke ties: Zaire, Rwanda, Benin, Upper Volta, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Tanzania, Madagascar, the Central African Republic, and Ethiopia. By the end of 1973, eleven more countries had broken ties with Israel, with Nigeria breaking ties within 48 hours of the end of hostilities, followed by Gambia, Zambia, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Senegal, Gabon, Botswana, Liberia, Kenya, and the Ivory Coast being the last African nation to break ties in mid-November 1973.⁵³² Whilst sub-Saharan Africa was concerned with the rising price of oil and the need for economic relief from the crippling increases in the price, Israel also had economic concerns. With the break in relations and the disruption to trade agreements, such as Israel’s important diamond polishing industry that relied on the Central African Republic’s diamonds, and Israel’s

⁵³⁰ 4th Summit Conference of Heads of States or Government of the Non-Aligned Movement, Algiers, Algeria, 5-9 September 1973, http://cns.miis.edu/nam/documents/Official_Document/4th_Summit_FD_Algers_Declaration_1973_Whole.pdf [accessed 31 May 2021].

⁵³¹ For Chapter 7 of the United Nations’ Charter, see: <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/chapter-7> [accessed 14 June 2021].

⁵³² For the dates that African nations broke ties with Israel, see: Olusola Ojo, *Africa and Israel: Relations in Perspective*, London: Westview Press, 1988, p. 35.

construction industry that relied on Gabon's lumber, Israel's economy was also at risk from the rupture.⁵³³

Africa's break in relations also did not guarantee support from the Arabs in return. As early as December 1973, just weeks after the rupture in relations, the African nations immediately requested special oil concessions from the Arab oil producing states, but they received no more than guarantees that the oil they had been contracted to receive would be delivered. Africa was to suffer through the rise in oil prices due to the cut in production with Togo, one of the first of the major African countries to break ties, forced to survive on meagre reserves of oil, whilst Ghana, once the pinnacle of Israel's foreign aid programme, had completely used up its reserves of gasoline for cars. In East Africa, the situation was little better where Kenya's tourism industry suffered from a reduction in flights from Western Europe and where there were even plans drawn up to ban driving on Sundays to cut back on Kenyans' oil consumption. Regardless of the need, the Arabs repeatedly made clear to Africa that they were not going to sell them oil at concessionary rates.⁵³⁴

Following the Arab defeat in the Yom Kippur War, the oil embargo that they had threatened was enacted and oil shipments to the United States, to the Dutch port of Rotterdam, and thus much of Western Europe, was embargoed. The Arab states were clear that any country that provided any form of support to Israel would see its oil shipments cut, and they carried out their threats.⁵³⁵ The United States lost some of its oil shipments because it sent arms to Israel and provided \$2.2 billion in aid during the Yom Kippur War; the Dutch lost their oil after "their Foreign Minister made pro-Israeli statements, their Defence Minister was photographed at a pro-Israeli rally, and their airline, KLM, did not suspend flights to Tel Aviv during the war." The Arabs cut production of oil by 25%, with future reductions of 5% per month from December 1973 "until Israel withdraws from occupied Arab territory and the Middle East conflict is settled." The European Common Market (bar the Netherlands), Japan, Singapore and the Philippines issued a statement that called for Israeli withdrawal

⁵³³ Israel Isolated in Black Africa, *New York Times*, 6 November 1973.

⁵³⁴ Black Africa Short on Oil, *The Washington Post*, 27 December 1973.

⁵³⁵ The Oil Weapon, *New York Times*, 6 November 1973.

from occupied Arab land and the recognition of Palestinian rights in exchange for the Arabs suspending the 5% cut to their December oil supply.⁵³⁶ Oil may have succeeded in forcing the African leaders to cut ties with Israel, but it did not succeed with the United States or Western Europe and relations with Israel remained largely unaffected. One reason for this, was that the Arabs also wanted the income from the oil and so whilst they made threats and carried out some reductions in supply, ultimately, the oil supply continued to flow.

The majority of African leaders used the reason of Israeli occupation of Arab territories, and Israel's refusal to withdraw from the Occupied Palestinian Territories and the Sinai for their break in relations. The Gambians released a statement that said, "The Gambians are not alone in saying that the break is relative only to Israel's occupation of Arab lands, for many West African leaders still have great admiration for this new nation which has shown such energy and technical brilliance." Ghana released a lengthier statement that noted that "The government of Ghana cannot remain insensitive to African feelings and objectives regarding the security and territorial integrity of member states of the OAU [Organisation of African Unity]. The government of Ghana has therefore concluded that continued diplomatic relations with Israel, which is in violation of the territory of an OAU member state, is undesirable. Accordingly, until such a time that Israel withdraws from Arab lands, diplomatic relations between Ghana and Israel shall remain severed." One final statement of interest is the statement by President Senghor of Senegal that "Being an African, I understand the Egyptian position. Africa ends at the Sinai Peninsula. Territorial integrity has become a myth in our continent and both we and the Semites live on myths."⁵³⁷ These sentiments were repeated by many of the African nations who broke relations, and they provide us with two historical points of importance: the first, as mentioned, is why the African states broke relations in 1973, six years after Israel's occupation of Arab and African territory, and secondly, the wording of the statements of the African leaders never questioned Israel's legitimacy or included phrases that the Arab propaganda would have sought, especially in regards to the

⁵³⁶ Arabs' Enemy List Is Based on Israel Aid, Bias, *The Atlanta Constitution*, 6 December 1973.

⁵³⁷ Quotes of the African leaders on the rupture in relations are in Olusola Ojo, *Africa and Israel: Relations in Perspective*, London: Westview Press, 1988, pp. 38-39.

right of the Palestinian population both within Israel's 1948 borders, and those who lived under military occupation in the Occupied Territories. The lack of attempts to delegitimise Israel at the moment of rupture is a clear indication of the success of Israel's aid programme and the goodwill that Israel had gained in Africa through her aid programme.

With the rupture and break in relations, the Western media and indeed most of the diplomatic corps concluded that the only 'losers' in the rupture with Israel were the African states. South Africa continued to trade with Israel and the Arab world, Arab oil dollars did not materialise in anywhere near the amounts promised, and sub-Saharan Africa had given up their source of development assistance that was making a difference in various parts of society. Not only that, but Israeli intelligence had provided the African leaders with the military assistance and expertise to remain in power.⁵³⁸ The African continent had shifted towards the left due to the disappointment with their development and as one Israeli put it "when you want to belong to the progressive camp in the world there are a number of cards you need to prove it. You recognise North Vietnam, you recognise North Korea, you recognise Sihanouk in Cambodia, and you diminish relations with Israel."⁵³⁹ It is important to note at this juncture, that it was not just disappointment with the Israeli aid programme. When it came to the lack of African development, it must be noted that "Sovereignty changed social and economic circumstances: African politicians in the 1950s could make demands on colonial powers who were by then desperately trying to hold an imperial system together. After independence African governments were on their own." African governments were now responsible for their development and were in control of their nation's trajectory. African leaders "faced the heightened expectations of their citizens that their struggles would improve their lives, but they

⁵³⁸ See: Israel Isolated in Black Africa, *New York Times*, 6 November 1973 and Black Africa and Israel, *New York Times*, 11 February 1980.

⁵³⁹ Israel Isolated in Black Africa, *New York Times*, 6 November 1973.

had fewer means than the former colonial power to meet those expectations.”⁵⁴⁰ Israeli aid provided some of that aid and assistance to the African leaders.

Zach Levey surmised that the rupture in relations had impacted Israel in four ways, both psychologically and symbolically: from 1972, the African states voted against Israel in almost every resolution; strategically, it was a serious setback; the Yom Kippur War forced Israel to deal with the rupture in relations during a moment of grave domestic crisis; and there was the loss of hundreds of jobs for Israel’s ambassadors and diplomatic and consular officials who staffed the embassies and worked in the technical cooperation programmes in sub-Saharan Africa.⁵⁴¹ Whilst in agreement that there was a psychological impact of the break in relations and that a large part of the Israeli public felt betrayed that they had been abandoned just at the moment that Israel needed support the most and whilst under active attack from her Arab neighbours, this was countered by the huge morale boost that the Israeli public received from being victorious and from withstanding an Arab assault on all fronts. The Israeli public, from the media reports of the time, were angry but the diplomatic legitimacy that Israel received from Africa far outweighed any damage that was done through the rupture. The second part of the title of Levey’s paper ‘the road to diplomatic isolation’ should be considered as an over-exaggeration. The closing of embassies in Africa did not lead to the closing of Israeli embassies in Latin America and Asia, nor did Israel face isolation in international forums. Whilst United Nations votes went against the State of Israel, and Zionism, racism, and Apartheid South Africa were frequently linked, Israel was not isolated diplomatically and nor did Israel’s trade relationship with the rest of the world suffer.

Zach Levey also further argued that it was an act of ‘indirect violence’ towards Israel and whilst there can be no disagreement that the actions of Africa and the timing of such acts was less than ideal for Israel, it is difficult to argue that it was

⁵⁴⁰ Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940, The Past of the Present*, 2nd Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019, p. 118.

⁵⁴¹ Zach Levey, Israel’s Exit from Africa, 1973: Road to Diplomatic Isolation, *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 35 (2) August 2008, pp. 224-225.

act intended to cause malice or harm to Israelis or Israel's interests abroad.⁵⁴² The decisions taken by Africa were very much taken on the basis of bilateral relations and internal political needs, the most pressing of 1973 being the need for financial aid and oil concessions from the Arab states. Pan-African unity and the need to present a united front against territorial threats to African territory were very much secondary considerations and many of the African states expressed regret or expressed privately to their Israeli contacts that they did not want anything to change between their own country and Israel, and that the rupture was very much a temporary move.

Yaacov Shimoni, at that time the Assistant Director of the Israeli Foreign Ministry noted that following the break, "... some African leaders informed Jerusalem that the step was only a political move and that they remained friendly toward Israel. Even those who had missions in Israel saw no need to wind up their activities long after the break; at the end of November 1973 the [Israeli] Foreign Ministry had to remind diplomats of the need to do so."⁵⁴³ Furthermore, even with the rupture in relations, and the public disavowal of Israel by some in Africa, several African states sought to maintain their trade relations and requested that Israeli arms sales and intelligence sharing, as well as the training programmes continued. Israel maintained limited relations but did allow intelligence cooperation with Kenya to continue and the Israeli national airline, El Al, also continued flights to Nairobi and Foreign Ministry representatives were hosted.⁵⁴⁴ Indeed, in Kenya, as well as the Ivory Coast, there was a far greater Israeli presence after 1973 than before, due to the local economic booms. In both countries, despite no diplomatic relations, Solel Boneh continued huge construction projects in Abidjan and Nairobi, including the construction of the Abidjan Cathedral and the upgrade to international standards of Yamoussoukro Airport.⁵⁴⁵ Two years after the break in relations, several African

⁵⁴² For Zach Levey's quote see: Zach Levey, *Israel's Exit from Africa, 1973: The Road to Diplomatic Isolation*, *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 35 (2) August 2008, p. 205.

⁵⁴³ Olusola Ojo, *Africa and Israel: Relations in Perspective*, London: Westview Press, 1988, pp. 57.

⁵⁴⁴ See: Letter from Ruppin to Kidron, 12 December 1973, in Israel State Archives, Folder 5384/27 and Letter from Shimoni to Eban, 8 March 1974, in Israel State Archives, Folder 8526/13.

⁵⁴⁵ Samuel Decalo, *Israel and Africa, Forty Years, 1956-1996*, Florida: Florida Academic Press, 1998, p. 149.

officials were engaged in informal meetings and dialogue with Israeli officials in various capital cities around the world and frequently on the side lines of the United Nations. As reported, many African trainees from nations that did not officially recognise Israel were also still studying in Israel.⁵⁴⁶

By 1975, there were already louder murmurs of unhappiness and regret on the part of the African nations over the break in relations with Israel and the little aid that they received from the Arab states in return. Public displeasure from many of the African governments over the lack of favourable oil prices, and the economic aid that was promised but which never appeared, saw tension between Africa and the Arab states become more and more public. As resentment grew, so did discussion of the Arabs 'colonising' Africa and the historic role of the Arab states in the slave trade came to the forefront once more. Within nation states there was also concern over attempts to 'Islamise' the continent with more than one-half million Africans killed in the Sudan during this period. Idi Amin, with Qadhafi's support, also attempted to impose the Islamic religion on Ugandans, eighty percent of whom were Christian.⁵⁴⁷ When it came to financial aid, the Special Arab Fund for Africa that was set up dispersed only \$222 million between 1974 and 1978, with Tanzania and Ethiopia being recipients of the largest sums of \$14.2 million; this however covered only 4% and 8% respectively of their oil bill for the period.⁵⁴⁸ Unhappiness with the Gulf Arabs and North African Arab states grew amongst the African nations, and regret was openly expressed by several African politicians.

By 1980, the African states had openly started to consider the reestablishment of formal diplomatic relations with Israel. The 1979 peace agreement between Israel and Egypt led to the Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula and the exchange of Ambassadors between the two nations, and Egypt therefore became the first Arab nation to recognise Israel's right to exist. The mainstream press media reported that a rapprochement by the African states would "end Israel's virtually complete diplomatic isolation in the Third World." For Africa it was opined that relations with

⁵⁴⁶ Black Africa Is of Several Minds About Jews, Israel, *New York Times*, 19 October 1975.

⁵⁴⁷ Africa and Israel, *The New York Jewish Week*, 31 May 1975.

⁵⁴⁸ Africa's anger over the failure of Arab aid, *Financial Times*, 31 August 1979.

Israel would “re-establish their independence in international affairs from their Arab neighbours to the north. More important for the world, it would give the Africans a significant measure of influence to moderate the Arab-Israeli conflict.”⁵⁴⁹ Africa’s stance on Israel and the renewal of ties marked a breakaway from the North African and Gulf states that were very much against any form of diplomatic contact with Israel, or any Israeli presence on the African continent. The claim that Africa would be able to moderate the Arab-Israeli conflict if relations were restored was naïve, as neither side expressed any interest in Africa moderating nor becoming involved in a resolution to the problem, and for the Arabs, Africa’s only welcome involvement was to provide solidarity with the Palestinian people. South Africa, whose ties with Israel were strengthened as both found themselves increasingly isolated post-1973, had cemented their rule over the majority Black population and the Apartheid regime was very much in control. South Africa also continued to trade throughout the rupture in relations with the Arabs, despite the Arabs insinuating that they were going to support Africa’s attempts to remove the Apartheid regime from power. Israeli citizens were also in Africa following the rupture, but rather than being provided as part of Israel’s aid programme, they were instead businesspeople and companies who sought to make commercial contracts with African states, and in some instances used the contacts they had built up through their aid programme. The *New York Times* reported in February 1980 that Israeli advisors were engaged “in more than 20 African countries but this time in a private rather than public capacity.”⁵⁵⁰ In a further indication of the *realpolitik* approach taken by both sides to the rupture in relations, there were more Israelis in Africa in 1979 than in 1973.⁵⁵¹

In East Africa, in 1980 it was widely reported that Kenya wanted to re-establish diplomatic relations with Israel following the 1979 Israeli-Egyptian Peace Accords. Abdullah Mwidau, a member of the Kenyan parliament and former Mayor of Mombasa told a luncheon in New York that “we don’t see any reason why we should be left behind now that Egypt and Israel have established relations with each other.” Israel had invested in economic ties with Kenya, whilst the Arab states had

⁵⁴⁹ Black Africa and Israel, *New York Times*, 11 February 1980.

⁵⁵⁰ Black Africa and Israel, *New York Times*, 11 February 1980.

⁵⁵¹ Africa’s anger over the failure of Arab aid, *Financial Times*, 31 Aug 1979.

not. Following the rupture in relations, and prior to the formal reestablishment of relations between Kenya and Israel in 1989, Israel fertilised swathes of the Kenyan desert, and sponsored thirty Kenyan students to study at Israeli universities. Kenya had also permitted the Israeli military to use Kenyan airfields for their field hospital aircraft that was used in Operation Entebbe. Kenyan disappointment with Arab aid was a factor as Kenya paid twice as much for her oil as the United States did, and Kenya's development programme was completely destroyed by the high price the Arab states had set oil at.⁵⁵²

Throughout the 1980s, there was a continual growth in the Israeli presence on the continent. As was reported in 1982, there were 500 Israeli families living in Nigeria, and trade with Africa was worth \$100 million per annum (treble the pre-1973 level) with Solel Boneh having construction contracts worth \$2 billion with sub-Saharan Africa.⁵⁵³ Shimon Peres, one of the key figures throughout Israel's history, and a central figure in the Israeli Ministry of Defence at various times during Israel's relationship with Africa, was serving as the Leader of the Opposition Labour Party in May 1978 when he became the first Israeli politician to visit an African country since the break, at the invitation to attend the International Socialist Conference at Dakar. As with Golda Meir before him, Peres's trip to Africa for a socialist conference also included a political meeting with the President of Senegal at his private residence, where Peres updated him on the progress of the Egyptian peace talks.⁵⁵⁴ Israeli contact with African leaders had taken on a different turn to what was present in the 1950s. No longer was Israel offering aid, technical assistance and the education of African citizens, but rather Israel focused on gaining the trust and support of African leaders through intelligence and military aid. However, the trade union connection that brought Meir to Africa in the 1950s, and Peres to Africa in the 1970s remained strong and in the summer of 1979 the Histadrut resumed ties with their Zairian counterparts.

⁵⁵² Kenya to resume Israel pact; Resent Arab mistreatment, *The New York Jewish Week*, 2 March 1980.

⁵⁵³ New Zairean Ties Spurring Israel to Court Africa, *The Washington Post*, 16 May 1982.

⁵⁵⁴ Joel Peters, *Israel and Africa: The Problematic Friendship*, London: British Academic Press, 1992, p. 107.

Whilst Zaire was the first African state to resume relations with Israel, it was President Doe of Liberia who was the first African leader to visit Israel after the rupture. In August 1983, Samuel Doe, accompanied by his Defence Minister, Foreign Minister, and four other Cabinet level ministers, arrived in Israel and sought Israeli intelligence against the Libyan leader, Qadhafi, as well the assistance of the Jewish lobby groups in Washington to restore the United States aid programme to Liberia that had been curtailed following Doe's bloody *coup d'état* and the human rights record of his regime.



Liberian President Samuel Doe standing between Chief of Staff Moshe Levy (left) and a Staff Officer during his visit to Metzudat Kfir Army Headquarters in Jerusalem, 23 August 1983. Photo Credit: Sa'ar Ya'acov, Israeli Government Press Office.

The role of Libya, and Qadhafi's determination to remove both Israel and any African leader he disagreed with, forced African leaders to accept Israeli intelligence aid, which came on the condition of formal diplomatic relations. In August 1986, Shimon Peres once again returned to Africa, this time as the incumbent Prime Minister and thus became the first Israeli Prime Minister in twenty years to visit Africa with a trip to Cameroon. As became the common feature of the resumption, the Israeli military reorganised and equipped Cameroon's security services and the

presidential guard.⁵⁵⁵ Like Zaire and Liberia, Cameroon also wanted Israeli aid as well as the Jewish lobby in the United States. Togo continued the trend when Gnassingbé Eyadema survived an assassination attempt and sought Israeli intelligence and military aid, with relations between Togo and Israel officially resumed in 1987.⁵⁵⁶ Access to Washington and Israeli intelligence came at a cost to the African governments, with Zaire being an example of a nation that was immediately cut off by the Arab oil producers.⁵⁵⁷ When Israel's Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir visited Zaire at the end of November 1982, he received a welcome fit for a Head of State and left Zaire with an \$8 million arms deal, agreement on cooperative efforts to use Israeli expertise in agriculture, water development and fishing resources, and the improvement of Zairian health services. Israel also offered sixty scholarships for students to study in Israel the very next year, and also offered to help Zaire secure American aid. This was an impressive offering by Israel, but Zaire still suffered an economic loss from the withdrawal of Arab aid due to the resumption in ties and for Mobutu's access to Israeli intelligence which helped to keep his regime in power.⁵⁵⁸

The aftermath of the rupture both allows us to assess the impact of the relationship at the moment of rupture, but also the lasting impact of the ties that Israel formed with Africa. It was through Israeli civilian aid and Israel's own development success that the African nations became interested in the small Mediterranean nation born out of a United Nations' resolution. After Israel had gained a foothold due to her development success, Israel was then able to showcase her military prowess and show Africa what Israel could offer militarily in exchange for diplomatic relations. With her military and intelligence skills, Israel was then able to re-establish relations with African nations on much more favourable terms to Israel. No longer were these diplomatic aid relationships, these were rather commercial transactions and intelligence sharing in which Israel was able to gather intelligence on Arab activities

⁵⁵⁵ Joel Peters, *Israel and Africa: The Problematic Friendship*, London: British Academic Press, 1992, pp. 127-135.

⁵⁵⁶ Joel Peters, *Israel and Africa: The Problematic Friendship*, London: British Academic Press, 1992, p. 136.

⁵⁵⁷ Israel's Toehold in Africa May Fall Victim to War, *New York Times*, 19 June 1982.

⁵⁵⁸ Shamir's Zaire Trip Called Israel's Return to Africa, *New York Times*, 2 December 1982.

throughout Africa in exchange for providing intelligence to African regimes on the actions of Libya's Qadhafi, and therefore assisting in keeping the African dictators in power. Israel's aid programme succeeded in ensuring that Israel was never delegitimised again, and that any attempt to do so was futile due to the relationship with the African voting bloc that Israel had held for so many years prior to the rupture.

Further evidence of Israel's success with her aid programme can be seen when one analyses the Israeli psychological reaction to the rupture with Africa. Amongst the Israeli public and media, the rupture of relations was something that was treated with great anger. *Ha'aretz*, one of the largest Israeli newspapers, expressed anger and that Israel "... had reason to react in anger to their [Africa's] lack of gratitude ... the haste to alienate us does not add to our respect for the African countries." The National Religious Party's *Hatsofe* newspaper wrote "one of Israel's diplomatic errors was its great effort to establish close ties with the African states without first establishing whether these regimes were stable and mature enough to make the effort worthwhile." The English-language daily, *The Jerusalem Post* focused on the anger of the Israeli public "... what is clear is that no matter how relations with Africa improve (they can scarcely get worse) at some time in the future, the original enthusiasm which spurred Israel's first overtures to Africa 15 years ago will not return." *Ha'aretz* further wrote that "if we [Israel] come out of this war without being reduced in stature, the Africans will not be slow in seeking relations with us once again. But it is unlikely that the restoration of our position in Africa will be high on Israel's list of priorities for the near future."⁵⁵⁹ The newspaper editorials and journalists did not fear for Israel's international standing or legitimacy, and any concerns over Israel being reduced in stature due to the Yom Kippur War did not force a conclusion that Israel had to have relations with Africa in order to increase that stature. There was an acceptance within the media and the Israeli public that Israel's standing was cemented through the aid programme and diplomatic contacts and that was not at risk, regardless of how many Israeli flags flew over chanceries in Africa. Israel's aid programme had succeeded in providing one of the aims which was to provide the Israeli public with the psychological confidence that Israel's

⁵⁵⁹ All newspaper quotes are from Olusola Ojo, *Africa in Israel: Relations in Perspective*, London: Westview Press, 1988, pp. 56-57.

position in the world was secure, that it was viewed as a legitimate state by fellow non-aligned and Global South nations, and that there was no threat to Israel's existence diplomatically. By the time of the rupture, Israel was also more confident militarily with three stunning victories over her Arab neighbours, and through the development and growth of their own weapons and arms industry. The growth of Israel's domestic arms industry was borne out of necessity which had been forced upon them following the Six Day War, when France, then Israel's biggest military supplier, clamped an embargo on all arms sales to Israel.⁵⁶⁰ Israel's aims had therefore been achieved through her substantial international aid programme to sub-Saharan Africa.

⁵⁶⁰ Israel Struggles With Its Role as Merchant of Arms, *Los Angeles Times*, 8 February 1981.

Conclusion

5 Israel's Foreign Aid Programme: A Conclusion

Israel's aid programme and desire for international legitimacy stemmed from a want for support at the United Nations and international forums where Israeli interests would be discussed. Israel's exclusion from the non-aligned world and their Bandung conference was a major blow, but it was the United Nations that really was the focus of Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The study by Kul B. Rai has been discussed in the dissertation, and the impact of the African voting bloc was a prominent feature throughout the period. However, I would argue that of the aims of Israel's international aid programme, Israel had achieved all of them. The desire that was promoted by David Ben-Gurion and Golda Meir to live-up to the ideals put forth by Theodore Herzl to assist in the development of the African people was achieved through Israel's massive and broad civilian aid programme that educated thousands of African students, provided the necessities for families to live a sustenance existence on new crops and staple foods that Israel had introduced, like chicken eggs, and through the use of new seeds and varieties of crops that were draught resistance. The medical aid programme that included the new eye hospital in Monrovia, Liberia that provided Africans in the region with access to eye treatment that prevented unnecessary blindness and ensured all family members could be productive contributors to family agricultural work, was just one of many such programmes that focused on improving the health of the African population. Israel's need to expand her trade markets and provide an outlet for her goods was also achieved through the growth in trade with African nations that followed the establishment of bilateral relations. That Israel also used this as an outlet for her arms industry is unfortunate, as Israel was heavily responsible for the unnecessary arming of unstable regimes in Africa, but there is no doubt that Israel's trade with Africa grew, and Israel took advantage of the relationships formed to import the raw materials Israel needed for her own domestic development programme, and to export Israeli goods that Africa required.

The measurement of success in an aid programme, whether looking at the overall aid programme or a single project, depends on what the aims of the programme or project are, and from what perspective that you judge the success. The recipient of the aid may believe that the purpose of the project is as defined in the plans: a genuine desire to provide a solution or facility to improve the lives of the recipients, however, for the donor, the aim may well be to provide the aid to improve the lives of the recipients, but there may be another purpose of the aid that is more important to the donor. Such aims may be intelligence gathering, diplomatic goodwill or as a means to open up new economic markets. Whatever the aims, there is a symbolic but very real power politics at play whereby the recipient is reliant on the donor for their development. With the Israeli aid programme to Africa, the size and scope of the programme meant that Israel's impact was limited in the development field to several specific projects that Israel had the knowledge to implement and that was within Israel's economic means, but the aims of the recipients and Israel were largely met. The civilian aid programme produced some good outcomes, both in the agricultural and the health fields, as well as the training of thousands of African students at educational institutions in Israel and Africa. In the military aid field, both Africa and Israel also saw their aims fulfilled. African leaders received intelligence, the training of their personal bodyguards, arms, and military capabilities that they needed to maintain their power. Israel, on the other hand, received diplomatic support in international forums, markets for her arms exports, and opportunities for intelligence gathering, some of which would prove crucial.⁵⁶¹

Scholars of Israel's aid programme, have to date, failed to place the aid programme within the global context and take a multilateral approach to the programme, as this dissertation has done. The global political situation benefited Israel's aid programme, and only through an analysis of such is it possible to analyse the success of Israel's programme and whether Israel met her aim of ensuring her international legitimacy through the foreign aid programme. The Cold War had led

⁵⁶¹ For example, the mission by Israeli forces to rescue the hostages that were held at Entebbe Airport by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-External Operations succeeded in part because Solel Boneh, the Histadrut's construction arm, had built the building in which the hostages were being kept and were able to provide the original blueprints to the Israeli military.

to the division of the world into three spheres: the capitalist world led by the United States of America, the communist world led by the Soviet Union, and the Non-Aligned Movement which aimed to remain out of either sphere of influence and work with both sides of the Cold War. When it came to aid for the newly independent African states, the Soviet Union and her satellite states of Eastern Europe provided military arms and support to North Africa. But the stark reality of the 1960s superpower battle and Cold War aid programmes was that the Soviet Union could barely afford to lend what the United States was giving away.⁵⁶² The advantage was therefore very much with the United States in terms of attractive aid opportunities for Africa, and despite attempts to keep Israel's aid programme from being associated with Washington, Israel's presence in Africa was very much beneficial for the United States.

Israel, who believed that her natural place was amongst the Non-Aligned nations and therefore as a bridge between the East and West, found herself ostracised from the movement due to the movement's support for the Palestinians. Israel's role as a bridge between the East and West was therefore short lived, and despite differences and at times a tense relationship, Israel very much looked towards the United States and Europe for financial support, military hardware, and aid. With Israel's alignment with Washington, and the increasingly powerful Jewish and pro-Israel lobby groups gaining momentum in the United States, the African leaders saw Israel not as a bridge between East and West but as a bridge to the support of the influential lobbyists and, many hoped and Israel encouraged such hope, that Israel would directly lobby the White House and United States' Congress in support of those African nations that maintained friendly diplomatic relations with Israel.

For Israel's relationships with Africa and the impact that had on Israel's position in the Cold War battle and with Washington, we can see that the promotion of the aid programme in the mainstream western, and specifically, American media served Israel's cause with the White House and the various administrations. Through relations with African states and the resultant positive publicity, the Jewish lobby

⁵⁶² Tomohisa Hattori, Reconceptualising Foreign Aid, *Review of International Political Economy*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (Winter, 2001), p. 648.

group was able to solicit donations from the Diaspora Jews for Israel's own domestic development. Israel was also portrayed in a positive light, as that of a small underdog nation striving to help their fellow citizens in the face of the Arab onslaught, especially prior to Israel's occupation of Palestinian land in 1967.

If we agree with Serge Latouche that “development has been and still is the Westernisation of the world”⁵⁶³ and through this prism view the Israel aid programme to Africa, it is a fair summarisation that the Israeli aid programme introduced Western ideals to sub-Saharan Africa. The Israeli aid programme sought to increase the market and capitalisation of goods to African villages, many of which farmed and survived on a subsistence economy. Through their aid programme, Israel opened up new markets and provided methods of agriculture that allowed family farms to produce excess food for market, thus introducing capitalist ideals to the agricultural sector. There was also the introduction of western animal protein in the form of chicken eggs, which in some nations required Israel to first educate the local communities to convince them that eating chicken eggs was both healthy and nutritious and would provide much needed protein for their diets. Israel's aid programme to Africa was thus a prime example of Serge Latouche's argument that foreign aid is an attempt to westernise the world.

Israeli relations with sub-Saharan Africa started to plateau in the mid-1960s when both sides started to lose interest in the other. Israel had achieved her removal from diplomatic isolation and had developed into a state that had a place on the international stage. For Africa, there was the stark realisation that Israeli development aid was not going to produce the exponential economic development that they believed they had been promised, nor were they going to receive large cash injections from Israel. At this time, Arab states of the north, as well as the Gulf countries, had started to use their petro-dollars to gain influence in sub-Saharan Africa. One of the stated aims of the Arab states was to remove the Israeli presence and influence in Africa, and they sought to achieve that by reinforcing Muslim leaders, creating religious Islamic schools and institutions in countries with large Muslim populations,

⁵⁶³ As quoted by Jan Nederveen Pieterse, *After Post-Development*, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (Apr., 2000), p. 178.

and through the promise of large sums of cash in return for African states breaking diplomatic ties with Israel.

Therefore, this dissertation argues that through an analysis of the archives, of the media, and through an analysis of the visits and contacts between Africa and Israel during this period, some of which has not previously been analysed, that Israel's aid programme to Africa provided international legitimacy to the State of Israel, and whilst it may not have garnered the votes at international organisations like the United Nations and Organisation of African Unity, through Israel's aid programme Israel prevented condemnation at international forums. More importantly, I would argue that Israel was able to escape the isolation of the Arab world through the visual impact of hundreds of African diplomats and officials visiting on official trips throughout the aid programme, of the positive press coverage in the United States, Europe, Israel, and Africa that praised Israel's aid programme and spoke highly of Israel's relationship with sub-Saharan Africa. Just as Israel benefited from the visual sight of Arab Ambassadors arriving in Israel after the Abraham Accords of 2020, there can be no doubt that Israel's aid programme to Africa was a huge success in preventing an attempt to boycott, isolate, or encircle Israel or question Israel's international legitimacy.

Israel sought and desperately needed, both for psychological but also diplomatic reasons, bilateral relations with as many of the newly independent states as possible in order to secure their support in international forums and provide Israel with the security, both psychological and physical, that she needed to stand confident amongst nations in the diplomatic arena. Whilst there was not universal support for Israel in all the international forums the African voting bloc prevented resolutions and conference communiqués being passed that were overly critical of Israel, or that questioned Israel's right to exist. The Israeli flag flew over dozens of African cities, and the Israeli presence was felt equally in the urban metropolis and smallest of rural farmsteads throughout the continent. Israel's aid programme to Africa achieved the international legitimacy that Israel sought, it succeeded in providing an education programme that made a real difference to the lives of Africans, and it succeeded in ensuring that Israel's place in the international and diplomatic community was secure. The brutal rupture that occurred in 1973 had short-term ramifications, but the act of

acknowledging the State of Israel through the bilateral relations of the 1960s and early 1970s was irrevocable: Israel as a nation had been firmly established, and her international legitimacy secured by the aid programme that was an attempt by Golda Meir to open up her own a sphere of influence within the defence-orientated Israeli government. The end result was one of the largest, and most successful, aid programmes to sub-Saharan Africa in the immediate post-colonial period.

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