



THE ROLE OF NGOS IN THE EU DEBATE ON ISRAEL-PALESTINE

A CASE STUDY OF THE EXPANSION OF A DIFFERENT JEWISH VOICE

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PREFACE

This research is written in the context of the Master degree Human Geography with the specialization Europe: Borders, Identities and Governance. However with this thesis I do not only focus on the European Union, but it focuses on the world around the EU decision making process too. This thesis deals with the complex situation of NGOs trying to change the situation in Israel and the Palestinian Authority. Around the world there are people feeling involved in the conflict or sympathy with the victims of the conflict in both countries. Everybody knows that the conflict is still going, but not much people are really aware of the complexities of the conflict and all the people and organizations involved in finding a solution. The ones that do make themselves strong for the victims are, in my eyes, very admirable because of the infinity of the situation. With this research I want to give more attention to the importance of the outsiders in the conflict that do play a significant role without knowing what they achieve. They do achieve more than is known and with this research this is shown. With this thesis I would want to motivate people to continue or to start committing to issues like the one discussed in this thesis. It is never useless.

I could not have done this research without the help from different people. I would like to thank everybody that helped me with writing this thesis and keeping me motivated.

My supervisor Olivier Kramsch for his insights and support when not everything was turning out the way I wanted to, for his comments on my writings and for his inspiring talks.

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Of course I would also like to thank my respondents for taking the time to talk to me and providing me with very helpful information. The people at the EU institutions for being so open about their activities and the people at the different NGOs for taking the time to show me their work and their perspective on the issue.

I would also like to thank everybody that was interested enough to listen to me talking on about this subject. Talking about it helped me motivate and maintain overview. Thanks for being interested and showing me that most people do not know the situation in the region. It made me realize that a lot of work still has to be done at the national and the European level.

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Jolien Pruijn

SUMMARY

The conflict in Israel, between the Israeli and the Palestinians, has been going on for decades and several supranational organizations have played a role in finding a solution. One of these organizations is the European Union, which won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2012 for making wars in Europe unthinkable. Since they achieved that, you would think they would be able to also achieve this in the surrounding countries that play a significant role in EUs policy. One of its main foreign policies is the European Neighbourhood Policy and both Israel and Palestine are part of this policy. However, this did not lead to peace within the region. As a result of this conflict several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were established. These NGOs try to put pressure on several institutions to fight for peace. The Dutch NGO 'Een Ander Joods Geluid' (EAJG), a different Jewish voice, has been focusing on Dutch politics and public opinion. But they feel that an expansion to the European Union would achieve more, since their place in the Dutch debate is very well developed and they are seen as a trustworthy organization. The focus of this thesis is on the influence of NGOs at the EU level with regard to the Israel-Palestinian conflict. This is to be able to answer the central question of this thesis. Which is: How can a small Dutch NGO influence EU policy with regard to Israel-Palestine?

This is studied to be able to develop a clearer view on NGO influence and the opportunities for those NGOs to expand their influence. But also to help increase the available information on the subject. This study is both academically and socially relevant. It adds to the debate around the issue and might help bring a solution to the conflict closer with more pressure of NGOs on the EU and from the EU on both countries.

The conflict started when European Jews started migrating to the region they named Israel. But it escalated after Great-Britain stopped the colonization of the Mandate Palestine and 'Israel' declared independence in 1948. The region got divided amongst both groups and the Palestinian side got the name Palestinian Authority (PA). Through the years periods of violence and peace processes alternated. In 1967, after the six days war, Israel occupied parts of the Palestinian region. This made the peace process much harder, since the Israeli did not want to leave the region and the Palestinians do not want to move away from the region. So the conflict is still going and recently new peace negotiations started after years of silence and violence. What has been striking is the role the EU played in the conflict.

The EU was almost absent in the first years, since they totally lost power after the world wars. Slowly they recovered and the EU started to play a role of financier in the negotiations, but the EU developed treaties with all surrounding countries, so also with Israel and the PA. However, the EU lacked in action when conditions got ignored by mostly the Israeli. This

showed EUs weak position. The EU does not have a weak position anymore, but it is still very passive towards the region. Different explanations can be found for this role the EU plays, but it does not take away the fact that the EU is violating its own norms and values by letting Israel do whatever it wants. EUs role in the conflict can be described on the basis of a modern capitalist imperialism. This theory describes EUs passive role in the conflict from the fact that the EU is too afraid to lose its world power. Next to that the EU is eager to expand their influence. The neighbouring countries are necessary to achieve their goals. Since it seems more important that these countries become part of the EU, the EU does not hold on to its norms and values. Another explanation is that Israel is economically more developed and is closer in norms and values to Europe. Israel is different from the other neighbouring countries, and because of that Israel can do more than the other Mediterranean countries. However, in the end the theory is lacking a more humanistic aspect. Not all decisions can be brought back to the mentioned theory. There is always a more humanistic sense to decisions and relations.

The other theoretical framework provided in the thesis is focused on NGO influence. Different indicators are developed to make the study easier. Influence is immeasurable and because of that access is the measurable feature in this thesis. Access to certain institutions means that there is influence. Indicators of this feature are pre-existing relations, networks, resources and exclusivity. Next to these are two specific aspects important, but not necessary for influence and access. An NGO needs a clear strategy and self-awareness of their opportunities and strengths and weaknesses. If these indicators and aspects are present and developed in an organization, they have access and with that influence on decision-making processes.

This study has been focusing on NGO influence and the opportunities for a Dutch NGO to gain this influence at the EU level. By interviewing people active in the NGO world regarding Israel-Palestine, people at the EU working on the relationships with both countries and people working at EAJG, I came to the following conclusions.

NGOs do have influence on the EU. It is often not visible and the NGOs themselves do not express what they have achieved, because it is often an achievement of several NGOs. But there is influence, since the NGOs have access to the EU. This access is partly achieved because the EU is open to talk to NGOs, and partly because of the different indicators. Most NGOs I have spoken with mention that networks and pre-existing relations are very useful. They are not a necessity, but having them makes gaining access to the EU easier. Exclusivity shows to be of importance, all NGOs have their own specific feature that makes their message to the EU stand out. The last indicator, resources, seems of less importance to the NGO. They

cannot operate without them, but not much is needed either. The NGOs manage to achieve a lot with little resources.

Showing that NGOs do have influence on the EU decision making, makes it relevant for EAJG to go to the EU. But it does not show if EAJG is able to organize the expansion. The research showed that EAJG does have the resources, since not much is needed. It also has the exclusivity, because the critical Jewish voice is not present in Europe yet. However, regarding networks, of which EAJG has some, and pre-existing relations, of which EAJG has none, a lot of work needs to be done before they should start organizing the expansion. However, gaining access without these two indicators is not impossible. I think they would add to the debate, their voice has often proven to be valued by politicians. The conflict does not seem to come to a solution yet and adding to the debate can be of much value. EAJG however needs to define a clear strategy and be well aware of their own weaknesses and strengths. But it should be possible for them to organize the expansion and focus on some important topics.

To conclude, NGOs do have influence at the EU level. And their work is very important to come to solutions. Every NGO adding to the debate is welcome, so I would recommend EAJG to try and organize the expansion. How they should organize this, is up to them, but they need to renew the contacts and rebuild their European network before they can be of value in the debate. With this I answered the research question and provided some new insights in the world of NGO lobbying. It is important to know that NGOs do have influence and that their work is changing EUs perspective on the conflict. However, much more research is needed and this thesis does not threat all significant aspects of the conflict, of the EU and of the NGO world.

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ACRONYMS AND GLOSSARY

AFET	The European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CIDSE	Coopération Internationale pour le Développement et la Solidarité / International Cooperation for Development and Solidarity
DG	Directorate General
EAJG	Een Ander Joods Geluid/ A different Jewish Voice
EC	European Commission
EEAS	European External Action Service
EJJP	European Jews for a Just Peace
EMHRN	Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
EP	European Parliament
EU	European Union
EUROMED	Euro-Mediterranean Partnership
FP	Framework Programme
MEP	Member of European Parliament
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OPT	Occupied Palestinian Territory
PA	Palestinian Authority
PLC	Palestinian Legislative Council
PLO	Palestinian Liberty Organization
UN	United nations
US(A)	United States (of America)
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROJECT FRAMEWORK

Israel has been in a conflict with 'the Arab world' since its choice of Israel as the promised land for Jews (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2008). Through the years the conflict with the Arabs in Palestine became a worldwide problem. The US, The EU and the UN all played a role in this conflict by trying to solve it, but at the same time by picking sides. In 1948 Israel declared its independence, claiming that the land was theirs. The Palestinians were mainly expelled to the surrounding Arab countries, but some of them stayed. After this declaration of independence, these surrounding Arab countries started a war with Israel to gain back territory. Now, after 65 years the conflict is still going. Different peace processes were started through the years, but they never led to a resolution. The Palestinians live in Israeli-governed parts of Israel and Israel has several settlements on this territory. The Palestinians want their land back, or at least be a separate, independent state. Israel wants to increase its territory with as little as possible Palestinians living there. Both populations went from war to peace process and back to war through the last century (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2008). Abicht (2007) states that peace has never been reached and never will be reached until Israel achieves its goal. Namely, to conquer the land they see as their promised land, with as little Palestinians as possible. This goal has never changed and if this will not be reached, peace is not possible. I think this statement shows why peace processes in this region have never worked out. But I also do think that supranational organizations can do something to bring peace in the region.

Supranational organizations like the EU play a significant role in world politics. With regard to the Israel-Palestine issue the US decided what happened and the EU paid for it. But nevertheless is the EU trying to admit Israel to several EU programmes and with that gaining more influence in the region. In 2012 did the EU receive the Nobel Peace Prize for making wars in Europe unthinkable (NOS, 2012). But around the same time did the conflict in Israel escalate again. After a few weeks the groups came to another truce, but again peace seems far away. Also in other Mediterranean countries conflicts are escalating and populations are revolting against their 'leaders'. One of the influential organizations in these countries is the organization that won the Nobel Peace Prize, namely the EU. The EU managed to make wars in Europe unthinkable and it brought stability to Eastern Europe. But the EU also plays a role outside the European Union, where it does not manage to reach peace. "Europeanisation is a legitimising process through which the EU strives to gain meaning, actorness and presence internationally" (Jones and Clark, 2008). The EU has several treaties with many countries

around the world for a good relationship with and a say in those countries. Part of the Europeanisation process is the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). In 2004 the biggest increase in member states of the EU took place (European Commission – COM, 2003). This also resulted in many new neighbours for the EU. To make sure there was a good relationship with these countries they developed the ENP (Freyburg, Lavenex, Schimmelfennig, Skripka & Wetzel, 2011). “The ENP is a strategy for the progressive approximation of non-member states to the European Union’s *acquis communautaire* through their association with the EU” (ibid.). The ENP is implemented in the countries around the Mediterranean sea and among the eastern border¹. The countries become as European as possible without becoming a member state. The ENP is seen as the solution for the limits of the European enlargement (Jones and Clark, 2008). Since these countries are not European, they cannot become a member state. By implementing the ENP, the EU manages to influence the governance of the countries without them becoming member states. This ENP is an important part of the European foreign policy and also of the individual member states foreign policies. For Example the Netherlands have their own embassy in Tel Aviv and its own foreign policy with regard to the region, but this foreign policy does not focus on peace (Dutch Embassy Tel Aviv, n.d.). The policy with regard to peace goes through the EU and the ENP. The ENP represents the EU as a whole, but also partly the individual member states. So the EU is very involved in its surrounding countries, or at least it appears to be. But despite this involvement, the EU did not manage to reach peace in the Middle-East. So this makes me wonder if EUs involvement is of any significance to the peace process in the Middle-East and how this can be changed.

One of the sources influencing EU policy making are non-governmental organizations (NGOs). NGOs exist next to the different governments and governmental organizations. Around the world many NGOs are focusing on the conflict in the middle-east and the conflict in Israel. Within the Netherlands is the critical Jewish population represented by A Different Jewish Voice (Een Ander Joods Geluid – EAJG). This organization wants the world to hear a ‘different Jewish Voice’ (EAJG, 2013). Not every Jew agrees with the Israeli government. The Israeli government is, according to themselves, representing the whole Jewish population. But around the world there are many Jews that do not agree with the Israeli policy. This voice needs to be heard and EAJG is trying to achieve this. They have been mainly focusing on the Dutch politics and on the public opinion. But they have also tried to reach the EU with a group named European Jews for a Just Peace (EJJP). This group represented eleven NGOs from different European countries. This partnership was ended. Not officially, but all contacts and

¹ The countries involved in the ENP are Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Israel, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Jordan, Syria, Ukraine, Moldova, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, and Lebanon (European Commission, n.d.a).

activities stopped. EAJG still thinks it is necessary that this critical Jewish voice is heard and that the EU is the right institution to make this heard by. So EAJG would like to expand its activities to Brussels in a new try and with that influence EU policy making or at least pressure the EU to take a stronger stand and work towards peace in the region.

In November 2012 the conflict between Israel en Palestine came, after an escalation, to another truce with little influence and pressure of the EU. This makes me wonder what the EU does to solve this problem. The EU is not the only body in the world that has enough power to find the solution, but it is one of them and it is the one that just won the Nobel Peace Prize. So in my opinion they should do more. I will try to gain some insight in the role the EU plays in this story to be able to define proper recommendations for the Dutch non-governmental organization (NGO) 'Een Ander Joods Geluid' (a different Jewish voice; EAJG). Many NGOs are involved with the Israel-Palestine conflict by informing the public and the government with the ultimate goal of finding a resolution for the conflict. EAJG wants its voice heard by the EU and wants the EU to get more involved in the conflict. But before statements can be made about the opportunities for EAJG, I need to have a proper insight in how NGOs based in Brussels influence the EU and if this influence achieves anything. This research is necessary to gain more insight in the peace process and the role of the EU in this process, but most of all to gain insight in the role of NGOs and the way they can influence EU policy making.

1.2 RESEARCH AIM AND QUESTION

This study will focus mainly on NGO influence on the EU debate regarding Israel-Palestine, hereby focusing on the case of the Dutch NGO EAJG. The goal of this study is to gain better insight in the opportunities of a Dutch NGO to have a voice in the EU debate and solve the conflict. I will look at the opportunities for a small Dutch NGO in Brussels. Is it possible to advise the EU on the conflict? Is cooperation with other NGOs within Europe necessary or should they focus on the Dutch government and try to influence the EU through this channel? The main question in this thesis is: ***How can a small Dutch NGO influence EU policy with regard to Israel-Palestine?*** To be able to answer this question I will first have a look at the role of the EU in the conflict by looking at the relation between the EU and both countries individually and by looking at the attempts of the EU to solve the conflict. Next to that I will look at the decision making process of the EU. This will lead to a proper insight in where the opportunities lie for EAJG. All information provided in this thesis will eventually lead to a conclusion on the opportunities of EAJG to expand.

1.3 RELEVANCE

This study is socially relevant because it will gain more insight in the conflict and it will make it better understandable what role the EU plays within world politics. This might lead to a better understanding of why and how things happened through history and why certain initiatives failed. Next to that, it might help NGOs, that want to lobby at EU level, become aware of their opportunities and it might lead to less failure of this lobby. This might be another step closer to the resolution of the conflict. It will not solve it, but it might add to the long and difficult process. Every bit of information and insight helps clear the ambiguities surrounding the conflict and it is important that the critical Jewish voice is heard. It adds another dimension to the debate.

The scientific relevance lies in the information obtained about the European Union and its foreign policy. It will gain more insight in the complex institution the European Union is. This institution will always need to be explored further to really understand it. This research is an addition to this broad study subject. It also is adding to the studies about NGO influence, what makes the available information for NGOs even broader. NGO influence seems important to the EU, because NGOs are often consulted, but the question is if it really adds to the discussion. This study will contribute to the insight gained in NGO influence and it might add to a more effective lobby.

1.4 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

After this introduction I will continue with the elaboration of all the main issues in this thesis in chapter 2. At first I will discuss what is meant with Israel and Palestine or the PA. After that I will treat the relationships of the EU with both conflict countries. I will provide a theoretical framework that explains EU involvement in the conflict. At last I will develop indicators for the research on NGO influence. These indicators are provided for the study for EAJG, but can also be used to study the influence of existing NGOs. In chapter 3 the methods are discussed. Hereby elaborating on the research strategy and the research material. In chapter 4 I will discuss the results of the research with regard to NGO influence. After which I will have a look at the opportunities for expansion of EAJG in chapter 5. When these results are discussed, a conclusion is defined in chapter 6. In this conclusion will the mentioned questioning be answered and recommendations for further research will be defined.

2. THEORY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the available theory and information about the different aspects in this study will be discussed. Hereby focusing on the role the EU played from a theoretical perspective. This theory is provided to gain proper insight and to have a perspective from which EU involvement will be looked at. Last, NGO influence will be conceptualized. To be able to define recommendations for EAJG a proper insight is necessary in NGOs and their work and influence in the EU. Indicators will be developed to study their influence and to study the opportunities for EAJG.

2.2 THEORY ON EU INVOLVEMENT

It has been mentioned that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a result of the European imperialism and colonialism in the first half of the 20th century (Benyaich, 2010), but looking at the contemporary enlargement of the EU and its stand in the conflict it is, from my perspective, a form of a more modern capitalism and imperialism. There are several theories that can explain EUs passive attitude, and the one below is one of them. In this research will be looked at the position of the EU from the perspective provided below. This perspective consist mainly of the combination of the existing theories on Marxism and Imperialism. However do these theories not provide a complete explanation, so in the end I will add a humanistic aspect to the perspective.

2.2.1 *MARXISM*

Marxism is based on the thinking of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (1848). In their Communist Manifesto, they describe the system of capitalism and how that system is going to be turned into a communist system by the uprising of the proletariat. An important aspect of capitalism was gaining profit and providing capital accumulation. As several other academics described: capitalism is always looking for a new economy, is always expanding, and has a constantly growing profit, in other words it has 'a never stopping hunger' (Marx and Engels, 1848; Luxemburg, 1972; Harvey, 1989). Because of the search for new profit and new capital, capitalism would never stop looking for new economies and new capital. With their theory, Marx and Engels have inspired many others in their way of thinking and acting and writing. They made statements that can give more insight in cross-border governance, and more specifically in EUs foreign policy with regard to Israel and Palestine. Marx and Engels state that "the bourgeoisie has 'rescued' the proletariat from rural life, as it has made the countries

dependent on the towns, and the East dependent on the West” (1848). So the Eastern countries, including Israel and Palestine, are dependent on Europe and other western countries who have to rescue them from ‘rural life’. This is already shown in the development of the quartet that is concerned with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The quartet consists of the EU, the USA, the UN and Russia. All developed western countries or organizations. These four actors play an important role in the conflict and make the East even more dependent on the West. This dependency started from capitalism and continued in the modern version of capitalism, namely the expansion of world power of the supranational organizations.

Rosa Luxemburg (1972) is a Marxist, but brings in Imperialism to solve the problem accompanied with Marxism. Or at least, the problem she discovered but that not everybody agrees on. This problem lies in the conditionality of capital accumulation. Capital accumulation is an essential concept of Marxism, but without certain conditions this will not be achieved (for more information see Luxemburg, 1972). The solution to the problem is the connection to Imperialism (ibid.). “The typical external phenomena of imperialism: competition among capitalist countries to win colonies and spheres of interest, opportunities for investment, the international loan system, militarism, tariff barriers, the dominant role of finance capital and trust in world politics, are all well known. Its connexion with the final phase of capitalism, its importance for accumulation, are so blatantly open that it is clearly acknowledged by its supporters as well as its enemies” [sic.] (Luxemburg, 1972: 60). Imperialism and the way it is connected to capitalism gives an insight in EU’s policy towards the Israel-Palestine region. But I will first introduce Imperialism a bit further and provide some concepts that can be examined for the case.

2.2.2 IMPERIALISM

Imperialism is not only part of Luxemburg’s Marxism, but also an aspect of post-colonialism. Imperialism is the process in which countries expand their power in other parts of the world by conquering and ruling them (Kuitenbrouwer, 1998). The focus in the post-colonial – empirical turn is mainly on becoming a new Empire. “Empire is on its way back as a new form of government” (Personal communication Olivier Kramsch, 21 March 2013). Different academics have written about this idea of the post-colonial – empirical turn. According to them can the European expansion be seen as a projection of colonial governmentality (Kuus, 2004; Kramsch, 2011). Not in the way of the historical imperialism by conquering and using violence, but they do expand its power and its political ideas. As Hardt and Negri define it: “Along with the global market and global circuits of production has emerged a global order, a new logic of structure and rule – in short, a new form of sovereignty. Empire is the political subject that effectively regulates these global exchanges,

the sovereign power that governs the world” (2000: xi). The EU would love to be that sovereign empire and uses its neighbouring countries to expand its political influence. But we cannot say it managed to become a worldly empire, yet. On the other hand can this setting be used to explain EUs policy towards the conflict region. Before we come to that, we first have a look at the theoretical features of Imperialism.

With the globalization of the world, the sovereignty of nation-states has declined, but that does not mean that sovereignty as such has declined (Hardt and Negri, 2000). So ‘the new Empire’ would be a sovereign empire. Some institutional features are accompanied with this concept of imperialism. First, they discover, sustain contact and settle in the new countries. Then, trade linkages get created, with as a result unequal exchange, continuous extraction of resources and forms of economic value from peripheries to centres. Unequal exchange can be seen as the political-economic face of imperialism. The Empire uses its political power to benefit from the ‘occupied’ or ‘colonized’ countries and exploit its resources and fertile land. Third, they insert proxy rule, there will be a conflict or war and international law will be necessary. And last, the conquered country will give in. Administration, normalization, modernization and reform will then be the everyday terms. Imperialism is not reached easily, but as Kramsch mentioned: “conflict is a fundamental feature of the world we now live in” (personal conversation, 21 March 2013). ‘The Other’ will always be too interesting to discover and when a country, or an empire, has the resources a conflict will be the easiest way to occupy another country. Europe is expanding to become an empire without violence, but in all the member states and the neighbouring countries is or were conflicts and violence often used measures. This is still the case in the Israeli-Palestine region. Its settlement policy is the first feature of imperialism. Except Israel will never go beyond its ‘own’ borders, but it does want the Palestinians out of its territory and conflict is a good way to reach this. Israel states that the land is theirs, it was 2000 years ago so it still is. They feel they have the right to live in and fight for the territory, which is appointed to Palestine. Europe does not support this violence, but does not do anything against it either.

Other important aspects of Imperialism, or what is also called the substance of modern Imperialism, are coloniality, unequal exchange, the import or export of disciplinary governmentality, and geopolitics (Personal Communication Olivier Kramsch, 21 March 2013). Coloniality lies in the process and the condition of the cognitive mapping of an empires population and accompanied to this the use of ‘otherness’. Otherness is the process of seeing oneself as the standard, everyone that is different belongs to the other. This process is part of bordering. Borders make a population belong together and lead to the exclusion of others (Van Houtum and Van Naerssen, 2002). As mentioned earlier is unequal exchange the face of imperialism. Olivier Kramsch states it as “the sustained centripetal channelling of economic

value". In this process, the Empire is looking how to benefit most of these economic values. The import or export of disciplinary governmentality is the focus on norms and standards, but in this process are colonies often seen as laboratories where forms of production and rule are tested. And last, geopolitics is the process of how the geography of this empire influences politics. Part of this is international politics which plays an important role in the case. These concepts show a lot of similarities with the above mentioned features. Since these last concepts are easier to examine in the case, will we use these as indicators of imperialism to explain EUs role.

The eventual dream or Utopia of Imperialism is a realm of peace and universal values. No more outside or inclusion/exclusion (Hardt & Negri, 2000). Otherness will not play a role anymore, we will be one big empire. An important aspect of this is just wars on borders and internally, and the ability to present a force as being in the service of right and peace. Next to that is the 'right of intervention' of importance to this Empire, this is based on universal norms, like for example justice. To reach and to control this juridical categories and ethics have to be unified. This seems like a dream that never will be reached, but parts of this postmodern Empire are already existent today.

2.2.3. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE EU POSITION

Looking at all the aspects discussed above provides the combination of capitalism and imperialism a sufficient framework for the study of EUs cross-border governance with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. From capitalism we take the urge to always expand and the never stopping hunger to grow. What eventually results in the dream of becoming a world player, or in the vocabulary of these theories becoming an Empire. Accompanied with this Imperialism are different characteristics and features that can be found in the case. Marxism focuses mainly on capitalism and its intention to always expand. As Harvey (1989) explains it: capitalism is restless, it is never satisfied and always moving beyond. This is also EUs attitude towards its expansion. The EU was restricted by its borders, to overcome these borders the EU developed a new policy concerning its neighbouring countries (COM, 2003). As excuse, they say they want to strengthen the relation with all neighbouring countries. But looking at the ENP Action Plan for Israel, it does not stimulate action. Its language use is not committing, and not explicit (Del Sarto, 2007). To me it only looks like the EU wants to expand its influence in its neighbouring countries. These countries cannot really become member states, but with the ENP they have almost the same preferences as the member states. So, EUs urge to enlarge is a big force to expand its governing. Europe wants to become a global player, or in other words, a new Empire. So it tolerates Israelis settlement policy to make sure the relationship stays good and Europe can expand its influence in the world. Next

to that does the EU fear the US, Israel's biggest partner or financier. Taking a stand 'against' Israel is like taking a stand against the US. Since the US is the contemporary world power, this might jeopardize the EU's dream of becoming a world player.

As mentioned above, the EU's policy looks like capitalist modern Imperialism. Imperialism focuses on the conquering and ruling of other countries. This is not precisely the case with the European Union. The EU does not conquer them and does not rule the countries, where it does want to believe it rules them. The EU lacks in its action, specifically towards Israel (EUISS, 2010). However, does the EU try to influence the ruling of other countries and does it set conditions and make those countries dependent on them. For example, with being Israel's biggest trade partner and Palestine's biggest donor. So in some way does the EU 'conquer' them. But before we can truly make this statement, we first have to look at the characteristics mentioned. In the theoretical paragraph some features concerning Imperialism were mentioned. We will take a look at these features and their role in the case. There was a difference between the substance and institutional features, but they overlapped in many aspects. Since the substance was the most clear and explicit, we will have a look at those. These features are: coloniality, unequal exchange, the import or export of disciplinary governmentality, and geopolitics.

Coloniality is the process of the cognitive mapping of the population and the use of 'otherness'. This can be perceived as the EU telling its neighbours that they are part of the European group with the ENP. Both Israel and Palestine receive 'the benefits' of the ENP, so they are part of the us. The surrounding countries that are further away from Europe belong to the other from the perspective of the EU. Israel can find itself in this perception, but Palestine cannot. Palestine belongs to the Arab world and has more things in common with the surrounding Arab countries. The Israeli population supporting the one-state solution, where both populations live in the same country, do also think that the Palestinians should or could move to the surrounding Arab countries and the conflict is often seen as a conflict between Israel and the Arab world (EJG, 2013). On the other hand does the EU also add other Muslim countries to the ENP. So this looks more like the disappearance of 'the other'. Which is necessary to become an Empire (Hardt and Negri, 2000). But the shared values of the EU with Israel, that are absent in the relationship with Palestine, can be a cause of the lack of action of the EU towards Israel. They feel that Israel is more attached to their group and their 'culture'. With that, Israel is economically more developed and already part of different European projects, like the European Global Navigation Satellite System (GALILEO). The EU defined two goals after the failed Oslo peace process, namely a two-state solution of the conflict and deepening the cooperation between Europe and Israel. This last goal stands in the way of achieving the first goal (Tocci, in EUISS, 2010). Here again they state the

separation of political (two-state solution) and economical goals (deepening cooperation). The last goal has been achieved, Israel has become a significant trade partner of the EU, mainly because of the EU-Israel Association Agreement, but also because they signed different additional agreements, for example on procurement and agriculture. This shows that the EU is much more related to Israel and sees Israel more as part of 'us' than Palestine, which gives an explanation why the EU does not interfere in Israel's policy towards Palestine.

The second aspect is unequal exchange. This can be found in the fact that Israel has better trade agreements with Europe and that products from the settlements also benefit from these agreements (B'Tselem, 2010). This unequal exchange exists more between Israel and Palestine, but the EU does provoke it. Next to that does the EU have a trade surplus with the region, they export more to Israel and Palestine than import from both countries (EUISS, 2010). This shows that the EU benefits more from the relationship than the region itself. But in the region, does Israel benefit more economically than Palestine since politics does not play a role in this aspect. On the other hand, do they both not really benefit politically, neither do they disadvantage because the EU does not do or ask anything (Del Sarto, 2007). The authors of different articles mention that the EU is very attached to or afraid of the US, which supports Israel. Next to that are the member states afraid to act on their own. So there is some sense of unequal exchange between the two countries in international politics. Israel can do whatever they want, where Palestine is often more restricted (Ha'aretz, n.d.).

The import or export of disciplinary governmentality focuses on exchanging norms and standards. But the colonies are often used as laboratories to test certain forms of production. In this case it would be the testing of forms of governance. Except both countries are not that colonized to govern them, so testing will not be an issue. The exchange of norms and values is neither the case. Since the EU is too afraid of other supranational organizations they do not force their way of governing on Israel. This is different in the other ENP countries, and also in Palestine. The EU forces Palestine to reform and become more Western following Europe's standards. It is more the USA that can achieve something in Israel, the EU does not take the opportunities they get to play a significant role in the conflict of which the settlement policy is one (EUISS, 2010). Where the Advisory Council on International Affairs advises the EU to take the opportunities they get, since the US is losing its importance in the middle-east (AIV, 2013).

The last aspect is geopolitics, the process of how the geography of the empire influences politics. In this case does the geography of the region determine which countries will belong to the 'empire' and which do not. The geography of Europe determines which countries become member states, which will be neighbours and which will not belong to the region. So Palestine and Israel belong to Europe's neighbours because of where they are situated not

because of their shared values. In the case of Israel is this less, because they do have shared values and those seem important (European Commission, n.d. b). But as mentioned earlier does Palestine belong more to the Arab world concerning their shared values. Palestine is part of the ENP because of its geography. Europe's international politics plays a big part in this process, because that defines who they cooperate with. Next to that does the international politics determine who they support. Because of its role in world politics that Europe wants to remain or if possible increase, the EU supports the US and with that Israel. Instead of penalizing Israel for the violation of human rights and breaking international law.

Out of the above mentioned characteristics of Imperialism we gain more insight in Europe's policy towards the conflict region. Imperialism is a good perspective to look at this case and it explains why Europe acts the way it does. Without setting conditions and demanding action. The capitalist and the imperialist perspective together explain Europe's urge to expand its governing to become a world player. The four features coloniality, unequal exchange, the import or export of disciplinary governmentality, and geopolitics all show that Europe is more focused on the US and other world politics than on its own norms and standards. So it is more focused of being of importance and making sure there will be no conflict with the US than indicating Israel on its shortcomings and its breaking of international rights. EU's policy with regard to Israel and Palestine, and Israelis settlement policy, has characteristics of Imperialism, but the EU is not the new Empire. Above we mentioned some essential features of the new Empire. Like the disappearance of inclusion or exclusion. Which is already the case within the EU. But to achieve this perfect Empire the EU should change a lot in its policy (see Hardt and Negri, 2000). Perfect Modern Imperialism stays an Utopia.

However, I cannot say that these theories explain the whole situation. The relationship with Israel can be described from the above, but since Europe does not benefit from its relationship with Palestine and they lack shared values this is more difficult. Of course there is the urge to expand and because of that they need all their neighbouring countries. But the EU taking a stronger stand in the conflict, despite of its failure, is not explained from these theories. The EU does not finance Palestine only to gain more power, but the EU takes a stronger stand to come closer to a solution and the end of the violation of human rights. So how can that be explained? Something has to be added to the above mentioned theories. I think that there is a humanistic aspect in all contemporary relations. Relations are mainly based on profit for the countries, but the EU loses more from its relationship with Palestine than that it gains. The only benefit the EU receives is that it helps bring a solution closer in a way, because it is trying to make Palestine less dependent and more ready for negotiations

and independency. So I think something should be added to the above mentioned perspective on the role of the EU, namely the sense of responsibility for other human beings. Not everything can be explained from this urge to expand and the self-centeredness of the European Union. They also feel responsible for the conflict, and for the bad circumstances Palestinians but also Israeli are living in. They try to live up to this by donating to Palestine and keeping Israel as a friend, but also by adding other less developed countries to the ENP. They want a ring of friends and with the ENP they gain power to ask for better living conditions and other improvements in the neighbouring countries. The problem with Israel is that it is already very developed, so the EU loses some of its power. But the other countries are more willing to meet EUs terms. We cannot say that this works to come to a solution, it actually makes the situation worse if the European Union picks a side. But the humanistic responsibility sort of forces the EU to take a stronger stand in favour of both countries and will probably help to reach peace. This sense of responsibility is something NGOs should address in their lobby.

2.3 CONCEPTUALIZING NGO INFLUENCE

Above we gained more insight in EUs position in the conflict from a theoretical perspective. But that does not provide us with opportunities and measures for EAJG. In this section I will provide a framework for the expansion of EAJG. This framework will provide a setting in which expansion is possible. I will provide indices that are necessary to be present in an NGO to be able to play a role within EU decision making.

EAJG is of course not the first organization that wants to try to influence the EU. Many organizations are active in Brussels. Also with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are already many organizations present in the EU lobby. Mentioned is that the pro-Israel lobby is very developed, especially in comparison to the counter argumentation concerning the issue. So any addition to this counter lobby is welcomed. However, there is no guidebook on how to contact, lobby and influence the EU.

The EU lobby consists of different actors, not only NGOs are involved, but also businesses, nation-states, interest groups and more. The EU does not consist of only the institutions in Brussels, also the delegations at the mission level and the member states are of importance in EU decision-making. However, the institutions in Brussels are the most important, but also the hardest to contact. The European Commission has put great emphasis on the need for democratic participation in the EU (De Jésus Butler, 2008). NGOs are seen as representing civil society and because of that make it possible for individuals to be active in the EU (ibid.). This is also formally recognized in the Treaty of Lisbon. But despite this treaty,

it is not said that it is easy to interact with EU institutions. Every institution has its own way of dealing with this. I will only describe the interaction channels with the three significant institutions, the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers of the EU. The European Commission, with its role as initiator of legislative proposals is very important to contact. Most NGOs already have existing relations with DGs, which allows them easier access to the decision-making process. Other DGs are often less accessible. Access to pre-existing relations is also mentioned by Bouwen (2002) as an important aspect of EU influence. This applies to the other institutions too. Creating trust and being able to live up to this gets you further in the world of EU politics (Personal Communication respondent, May 2013). The EC has adopted principles aimed at a clear consultation of interest parties, open consultations were launched as part of this. These guidelines are not legally binding, so these were not really lived up to neither were they violated. But the NGOs and the DGs were already engaged in dialogue. So the process of open consultation failed (De Jésus Butler, 2008). Since the Commission consists of so many areas of interest with different DGs, it is very hard to keep up with this. Focusing on the relevant people or groups is of importance to keep an overview in the complex EU world (Personal Communication respondent, May 2013). Informal relations seem to be the key to this. Not only with regard to the EC, but also with the EP. The EP is the most accessible institution, however also the largest. So one needs several MEPs to achieve their goal. Meeting up with MEPs appears to be routine for NGOs to advocate on particular issues. There is a formal aspect in the regulation of the more informal activities with regard to interaction with the EP. However, as mentioned, informal pre-existing contacts are again the most effective way of interaction. An opportunity can be the existence of intergroups (De Jésus Butler, 2008). These are informal groups of cross-party MEPs that are concerned with a certain area of interest. These can be contacted on an informal basis, but since they are from different parties a bigger field will be reached and the information can be taken to a higher level of EU decision-making. The last institution, the Council is harder to reach, since there is no formal channel for interaction and informal relations are very hard to maintain (ibid.). The only way to reach the Council is through lobbying at the national level. Employees of the minister are easier to reach and bring you closer to the relevant minister. Here lies an opportunity for networks with organizations from different countries, because every organization in such a network can lobby in its own country and via that route bring it to the European level. Again are informal relations important, only this time on the national level (Personal Communication respondent, May 2013). However, most NGOs do not feel that they have the time and the financial resources to facilitate this (De Jésus Butler, 2008).

Literature on EU lobby is very developed, however no one perfect framework to lobby or influence at the European Union is available. The lobby is very diverse and complex, what makes generalization very difficult (Bouwen, 2002). If an NGO wants to expand its activities to a higher level, it needs to be aware of its possibilities. Needed is self-awareness of the organization, its structure and its potential. In most organizations is this self-awareness not present, many organizations are too ambitious and they fail in their trials (Personal Communication respondent, May 2013). This was also the case with EJJP. Self-awareness however cannot be measured, because no one can tell for sure what the organizations potential is and no one can check it. Another important aspect of expansion is a clear strategy. Every NGO should have a strategy that is agreed upon by all actors involved in the expansion. This strategy should contain the ideas and vision on which the organization is based. Next to that should be clear how the NGO will contact the EU, what their goal is with the expansion and how they want to reach this. Will they focus on informing or on active lobbying? And clear and feasible goals should be set. This should all be figured out before contacting the EU and written down. So that, while carrying out the activities there is a strong basis to rely on and that everybody holds on to. Of great importance to this is that a unified voice is spread out. Despite disagreements within the group, to the world it should seem like there is unity among the participants and about the activities and statement that are brought out. Self-awareness is not measurable in this research, but I will try to discuss this critically in the results. As an objective researcher I think I will have the best perspective on this. The strategy of EAJG will be looked at too, however this is not measurable either. The NGO is not ready with its exploration of the possibilities, so there is no clear strategy yet. These two features will not be measured indicators in this thesis, nevertheless they are of importance for expanding NGOs to take into account so they will be discussed in the results.

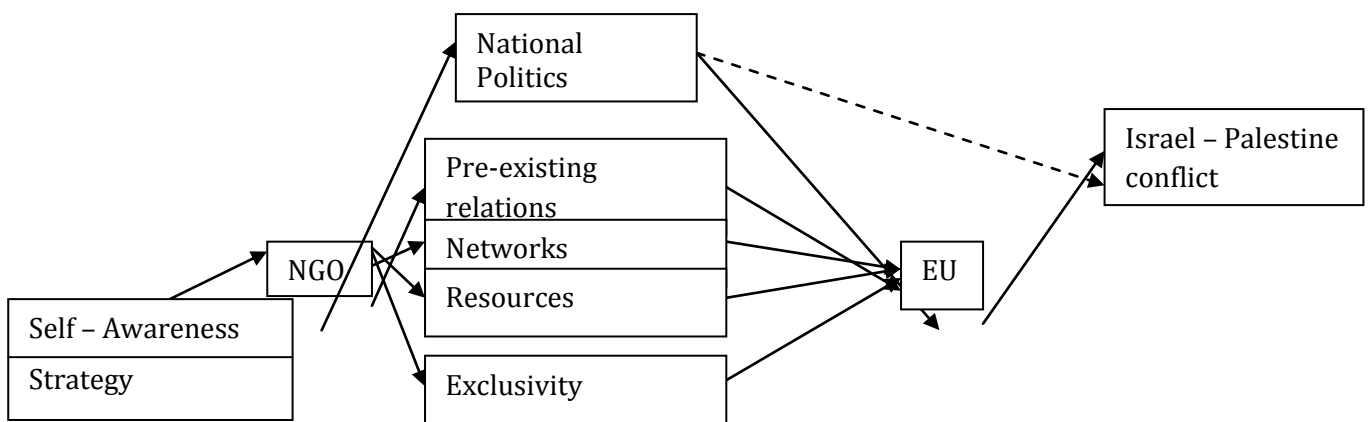
Influence at the EU level is the main goal of the expansion of EAJG, but this is hard to measure. Especially in our case since EAJG is not present in Europe yet. Since influence is not measurable, I will use access as the research subject. Truman has pointed to the close relationship between access and influence in his study in 1951. He states that "power of any kind cannot be reached by a political interest group, or its leaders, without access to one or more key points of decision in the government. Access, therefore, becomes the facilitating intermediate objective of political interest groups. The development and improvement of such access is a common denominator of the tactics of all of them". (Truman, 1951, in Bouwen, 2002: 366). So access will be one of the main features in this study. From the literature can two indicators for access be provided, namely pre-existing relationship and networks. It is proven that pre-existing relationships gain easier access to the law-making process (De Jésus Butler, 2008). So the amount of contacts EAJG made will be studied and

how much of them are still relevant or interested. Also is evident that many NGOs work in networks. Not with every lobby activity, but it provides a platform for influence and experience. With this experience comes available information, for example about the EU agenda, and other contacts. So within a network more EU employees can be reached what brings success closer (ibid.). However, a NGO should also be able to do the lobby on its own. Important to this individual lobby is the ability to facilitate it. This is not mentioned in the literature, but I do think it is of importance for the NGO to take into consideration before starting the expansion or the lobby. The earlier mentioned strategy should give clearance about this individual lobby, who and what is available. For example, does the NGO want to rent an office in Brussels and work from there or do they work from their existent office. This is all dependent on the resources the organization has, which mainly consist of financial support by donors and foundations. But also the capacity of the organization, how much of the employees can be active in the lobby. Since I am not an accountant and I do not know how much this costs, I will discuss this with the NGO and their perspective on the resources will be the answer to this part. Of course should the NGO also take into account if they are needed. So exclusivity is the last indicator that will be measured. Since the lobby in Brussels is so developed, certainly with regard to the conflict, it is of importance that you are unique. They should look at the necessity of their presence. This can be studied by looking at the NGOs that are present in the EU lobby and who they represent. If there already is an NGO that has the same representation as the NGO, than it is useless to also go there. So is the NGO a novelty in the debate? This is a necessity for a NGO to obtain interest in their perspective and it will lead to contacts and the possibility to be of influence. If not, cooperation can be a solution, but we will find this out during the research.

Above were different features and indicators discussed. The features of self-awareness and strategy will be discussed in the results. However this is something that will not be decisive for my concluding recommendation, since they both are immeasurable. Access will be the main research subject as substitution of influence, since influence is immeasurable and has no indicators. The four indicators as part of access – pre-existing relations, networks, resources, and exclusivity – will be of greater significance to my recommendations. Below in the figure is shown how I see these aspects related to each other. The self-awareness and strategy influence the NGO and the NGO forms these features. The NGO has its pre-existing relations, its network that it is or can be participating in, its resources, and its uniqueness. These form the influence the NGO can have on the EU decision-making process with regard to the conflict. This decision-making influences the conflict in a negative or positive way, but the EU does have a significant position in the conflict. Last, I also added national politics in the scheme, because that is the original area of focus of most NGOs and certainly from the NGO is

this study. It is of importance that this focus is kept, since national politics also influences EU decision-making. For example in the Council of the European Union, which consists of all national ministers. The combination of all member states national politics is the main driver of decision-making within the EU. So this cannot be ignored in the study. However, national politics also tries to influence the conflict individually, that is why the arrow from national politics to the conflict is involved. But since this is not part of the research, the arrow is dotted.

Perceived causal relation:



Now that insight is provided in the aspects that are of importance in this study, I will continue with the method used to gain the necessary knowledge, before I start defining my results and conclusion.

3. METHODS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the research strategy and methods will be discussed. This to be clear and transparent about this research, the way the data is collected and about how we came to the results. At the end of this chapter I will discuss the respondents. This is done in this chapter, so that I do not have to mention them while discussing the results. The respondents comments have been very useful, but it is not necessary to know who said what. So they will be discussed below and after that referred to as respondent x.

3.2 RESEARCH STRATEGY

This study will be a qualitative research, focusing on a small case with a need of specific and in-depth knowledge. A quantitative study will not be able to achieve the set goal, namely to gain better insight in the role of the EU in the conflict and in the possibilities of a Dutch NGO to spread their knowledge in Brussels. Quantitative research will give me general knowledge about NGO's, but not in-depth knowledge about the different NGOs, their methods and their contacts. Qualitative research gives me the opportunity to have interviews that are semi-structured, so that I will be able to respond to answers. Semi-structured interviews will give me the needed knowledge. As mentioned is influence immeasurable, so it is impossible for the respondents to tell me about results and influence in a quantitative research with surveys or other quantitative forms of research. This is the main reason I chose for qualitative research, next to the fact that I like doing interviews and talking to people instead of sending random people a survey.

I want an in-depth analysis of the perspective of the different actors involved. Since this research consists of different parts, I use different research material, but the study will be a case study. "A case study focuses on the diagnosis or evaluation of a specific situation" (Wester and Peters, 2004). It is a study in which the researcher tries to gain deep and integral insight in one or several time-spatial limited objects or processes" (Verschuren and Doorewaard, 2007). Other qualitative research methods, like the longitudinal study and the retrospective study, do not suit this study (Flick, 2009). In this study the case, NGOs in the EU debate with regard to the Israel-Palestine issue, will be studied in different ways to achieve this in-depth analysis that is the result of a case study. Next to that a case study is the most feasible strategy in the time and spatial limited research period. Actually this thesis consists of two different cases, the NGOs influencing the EU form basic information necessary to answer the central question of the research focusing on the opportunities for EAJG. So EAJG is

the second case. There is not enough information available on NGO influence with regard to this subject, the conflict in Israel-Palestine. So a study of this is necessary to be able to have the needed insight to be able to define recommendations for EAJG. So this study is a case study, that consists of two different cases that partly overlap and in the end together provide more insight in the NGO world with regard to the conflict.

Different types of case studies can be distinguished. First there are the explorative, descriptive, and explanatory (Vennix, 2007). This study will be partly descriptive and partly explorative. The research describes the different treaties of the EU with regard to Israel and, to a lesser extent, with Palestinian Authority. It also describes the role the EU has played in the past in finding a solution to the conflict. This is available information and a short summary of this information is provided. This descriptive part is necessary to eventually understand the results of the explorative part of the study. The study is explorative in the fact that it explores NGO influence amongst different NGOs present in Brussels and it explores the possibilities for EAJG. The study is explorative in this sense, because not much information is available on these subjects, so this information needs to be developed by myself.

Next to these types, two other types can be found in the literature. The single and the multiple or comparative case study (Vennix, 2007; Verschuren and Doorewaard, 2007). The type of case study best applicable in this research is the single case study. The feature of this type is that one case will be thoroughly examined. In this study, the Dutch NGO EAJG will be the case. The other type, the comparative case study, focuses on different cases that will be compared with each other. This is not possible and usable in this study. Two different cases will be studied, but these should not be seen separate in the way that they are compared to each other. It are two separate single case studies, that together come to the best answer to the questions asked in the introduction. The single case study uses triangulation, to make sure that different aspects of the case will be highlighted and that the study is valid and reliable. This is also the case in this study, I will come back to this in the next paragraph.

Features of a case study are a small number of research units, intense, depth, selective sampling, open observation, and qualitative data and research methods (Verschuren and Doorewaard, 2007). These features correspond to the method needed to reach the set goal. To gain more insight in NGO influence in the EU debate, in-depth research is necessary. As mentioned before, in-depth research will provide the necessary information to be able to define proper answers and recommendations. Sampling has to be selective, because there are specific people that are active in the field of NGOs and the EU. These people can provide the needed information. Using random sampling will lead to a lot of useless information. To talk to the right people in the field is a requirement.

Demands are placed on the choice of the cases and the research material (Wester & Peters, 2004). These demands are dependent on the choice of function of the study which comes forward in the goal of the research. In this thesis I chose an explorative study. These demands are different for every study. But what the case should have or be is it should be a representative organization or person, and they should have sufficient relevant information that is available to the researcher. The cases in this study are the NGOs active at the EU and the Dutch NGO EAJG. The actual case, EAJG, is representative because of its presence in the national lobby and because of its earlier work at the EU level. The organization does have the knowledge and the background to organize the expansion of the lobby and to provide me with the necessary information. The cases will be studied by contacting actors involved in the world of NGOs both on the European level and the national level where it is concerning EAJG. I have chosen to study two different cases, because EAJG cannot be studied without the knowledge provided by the first case study. Where the influence of European NGOs on the EU is studied. This information will eventually lead to better insight in the position of EAJG and will make it more entitled to define reasoned recommendations for the NGO. The demands for the research material and the used research material will be discussed in the next section.

3.3 RESEARCH MATERIAL

In this study, there are multiple research objects, but all of the same type. The EU and the NGO are both organizations. The study should deliver knowledge to be able to answer the question, formulate recommendations, and help the NGO. The material that should lead to this knowledge are experts (persons), and literature, documents and the internet. The demands placed on the research material is, like the demands for the case, dependent on the choice of the study and the material the researcher wants to use. The demand that comes forward in the literature and that fits this study, is the demand that “the material should show the subjective perspectives of the respondent” (Wester & Peters, 2004:39). I will come back to this later on in this paragraph.

The first part, regarding the role of the EU, will be a literature research. Hereby looking at the relationship the EU developed with both countries and on the role the EU played in the peace process. The different treaties that are the basis of these relationships will be described. Literature on this topic is available. The different treaties and other documents will be analyzed and compared to come to the most complete perspective on the role of the EU. Next to that, I will look at documents focusing on the success of the treaties, mainly the success of the ENP. A lot of research will be reviewed, but only focusing on the EU. This will be a more introductive part to the rest of the study, to gain a good understanding of the

process. A lot of information will be used in this section, but all available information that is already provided by others.

The other part, regarding the opportunities of the NGO, will be an analysis of information available on NGOs, on EAJG and information obtained from interviews. I will interview experts and actors part of the Dutch NGO 'Een Ander Joods Geluid' (EAJG) on the ambitions of the organization and on the failures from the past. The research will consist of analyzing the previous attempts to build a network in Brussels and interviewing people that were involved in these attempts. Here, I will use the knowledge and network of EAJG. I will also interview actors involved in the lobby at the EU and at the Dutch national level. These people are very well-known with the way it works at the EU level and what EAJG can do. Last, I will get in touch with MEPs or other EU employees, hereby focusing mainly on the way it works at EU level, but also explore in some sense the openings for EAJG. The semi-structured interviews used to gain the needed information will also help to get the subjective perspectives of the respondents. The respondents will be asked about their experiences and their perspective on the world. So the earlier mentioned demand that the material should show the subjective perspectives of the actors will definitely be fulfilled. This demand is of importance to the results of this research and because of that will be of importance in the development of the interview guide. In this interview guide will only be the subjects mentioned that I want discussed in the interview. The structures of the interviews are dependent on the answers of the respondent and the information is needed at that moment.

The information obtained in this study will eventually be analyzed and answers will be compared. Triangulation is very important where it concerns case studies, this means that different types of research material will eventually lead to the answers of this thesis. The most important information in this thesis is the information provided by the respondents. This information will lead to a good insight in EU decision making and EU institutions and will provide a good informational basis to be able to define recommendations for EAJG. The provided information will be discussed in combination with the literature on NGO influence. In the end all information I got before the interviews on the respondents from the internet play a significant role as well, however this information is not mentioned in the results section. So different sources are used to come to the conclusions in this thesis, but we cannot really state this is triangulation. Since most information is obtained from the interviews.

The respondents will be discussed in the next section to provide an overview of where the information comes from and how the answers in this thesis were established.

3.4 RESPONDENTS

As mentioned is the information in this study provided by conversations and interviews with respondents. At first employees of EAJG provided information in conversations during the internship at the organization. The employers gave insight in the organizations and in the NGO world in the Netherlands. After that interviews with different respondents from different NGOs took place. These respondents were Agnes Bertrand-Sanz from Aprodev, Nada Kiswanson-van Hooydonk from Al Haq, Martin Siepermann from the Rights Forum, Nicole Lambert from the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network, Phyllis Starkey a former member of UK Parliament that is now an expert on the issue of settlements and working on an ad hoc basis for different European NGOs. Hilla Dayan former member of United Civilians for Peace and Coalition of Women for Peace, now founding member of and working for Gate 48. Willem-Gert Aldershof, a former employee of the European Commission now working on an ad hoc basis for different NGOs and in cooperation with other experts in the field on different breaking issues. And Deborah Casalin working for the European network CIDSE. These people provided a good insight in the NGO world regarding the issue of Israel and the PA in Europe. To fulfill this insight I also met with people from the European External Action Service. Anna-Maria Bonnici is in charge of the OPT desk and Krassimir Nikolov of the Israel desk. They showed me the other side of the lobby, the institutional side.

I have tried to meet these people in person, but not all of them were living in the Netherlands or available at the times I was in Brussels. It was impossible for me to travel to Brussels all the time. So, many interviews have taken place through Skype. I do not have the feeling that these conversations were different than the ones in person, but I do have to take into account that I did get less non-communicable signs, like body language. However, I do not think that this influences my results and the conversations that took place. Next to that there were conversation in Dutch and in English. In the ones in Dutch I did manage to get more information, because it was easier to ask further on specific answers and there was no language barrier. In the ones in English there was sometimes a misunderstanding, since English was for only one of the respondents the mother language. It took some more time to get an answer to my questions, but despite that I did manage to get answers and insights from all conversations. The ones with employees from the EU did take place in person, together with some others in person the interviews were not recorded. So information got lost, however I tried to write down as much as possible and a lot has been reminded.

All these respondents offered enough information to be able to answer the former asked research question. Their answers and insights will be discussed in the coming chapter. I will not refer to them directly to keep their privacy. I will refer to them as one of my respondents. With this way they cannot be appointed on their meaning and what they shared with me. I

might sometimes refer to their background, like if they are part of an NGO or the EU. Their insights will be anonymous, but a great addition to my research.

4. GEO-HISTORICAL CONTEXT

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the context in which this thesis is written will be discussed. Hereby going into detail about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the EU and its institutions, and the Dutch NGO EAJG and its work. This is significant information to be able to understand the results of this research and the context in which it is provided.

4.2 ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

In the end of the 19th century anti-Semitism grew in Europe (Benyaich, 2010). This meant that Jews were discriminated in most European countries. As a result the Jewish population developed the dream of a country for all Jews. They looked at different territories, but Palestine seemed to be the best option. According to them it was “a country without a population, for a population without a country”. And it was the place where they were once driven out off. This resulted in resistance from the Arabic population living in Palestine. But despite this, Jews still migrated and settled there and the European countries encouraged the Jews to migrate. In 1948, after the horror of world war II, did Israel declare independence. Before this the UN had tried to divide the territory among both groups, as shown in figure 2.1 the second map. However Israel did not take this division into account after its independence. In 1967, after the six-days war, were both populations appointed a new territory (Benyaich, 2010). This can be seen on the third map in Figure 2.1. This figure is a good envisioning of the land the Palestinians lost. The fourth map is the contemporary situation, which shows a clear difference with the third map. The official division from 1967 is not existent anymore, but it is still seen as the best solution. In this thesis while talking about Israel and Palestine, I will also use the division of the third map. Where Israel has the most land and the Palestinians have the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. This is still the internationally accepted division. While talking about the Israeli land in the Palestinian territory on the West Bank, shown on the fourth map, I will talk about the settlements.

Palestine can be seen as an independent country despite Israeli occupation, however the state Palestine is not existent, yet. The contemporary territory of the Palestinian population is named Palestinian Authority (PA), or Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT). In this thesis I will use the term Palestinian Authority since this is in my eyes to most neutral name. The PA has its own governing, which is divided between the two areas. The Gaza Strip is governed by Hamas and the West Bank by the Fatah group. Since November 2012 is Palestine a non-member observer state in the United Nations (BBC, 2012). So the PA is internationally seen as

an independent country, based on the territory from map 3. As a result of the upgrade in UN status, the Palestinians changed their name officially to the State Palestine in January 2013 (Ha'aretz, 2013). However, this is not internationally accepted yet. So, in this thesis PA will be the used name for the Palestinian region.

After clearing up the appellative of the region and the division of the region I will continue with a short summary of the progress of the conflict through the years. This to be able to fully understand all developments before continuing with the role of the EU and NGO's.

4.3 THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

The conflict in the region started because of the migration of Jews to 'their promised land', Israel. They saw the region as a country without population (Benyaich, 2010). They did not take into account the Arabs who lived there. This resulted first in a conflict of the Jewish population of Israel with the Arab World. Until 1948, the region was a British colony under the name British Mandate of Palestine. After this colonization, Israel declared independence in 1948 and, as can be seen in figure 2.1, took a big part of the land. At first, Great-Britain tried, together with the US, to admit Jews to the existence of Palestine and to divide the country among both groups in the UN Partition Plan (United Nations, 1947), as can be seen in figure 2.1 on the second map. However, the Jews felt they had the right to live there and take the land. This is true, it was their right, since it is anybody's right to live wherever they want. But they did not have the right to ban the Palestinian population. Since this declaration of independence several peace attempts have been made by 'objective' partners like the US. But these attempts never achieved peace and a solution to the conflict. Nevertheless, I will take a look at a few important events in the conflict and in the peace process to gain a proper insight in the course of the conflict to be able to understand the rest of the thesis. Since the conflict is such a complex issue with so many actors involved.

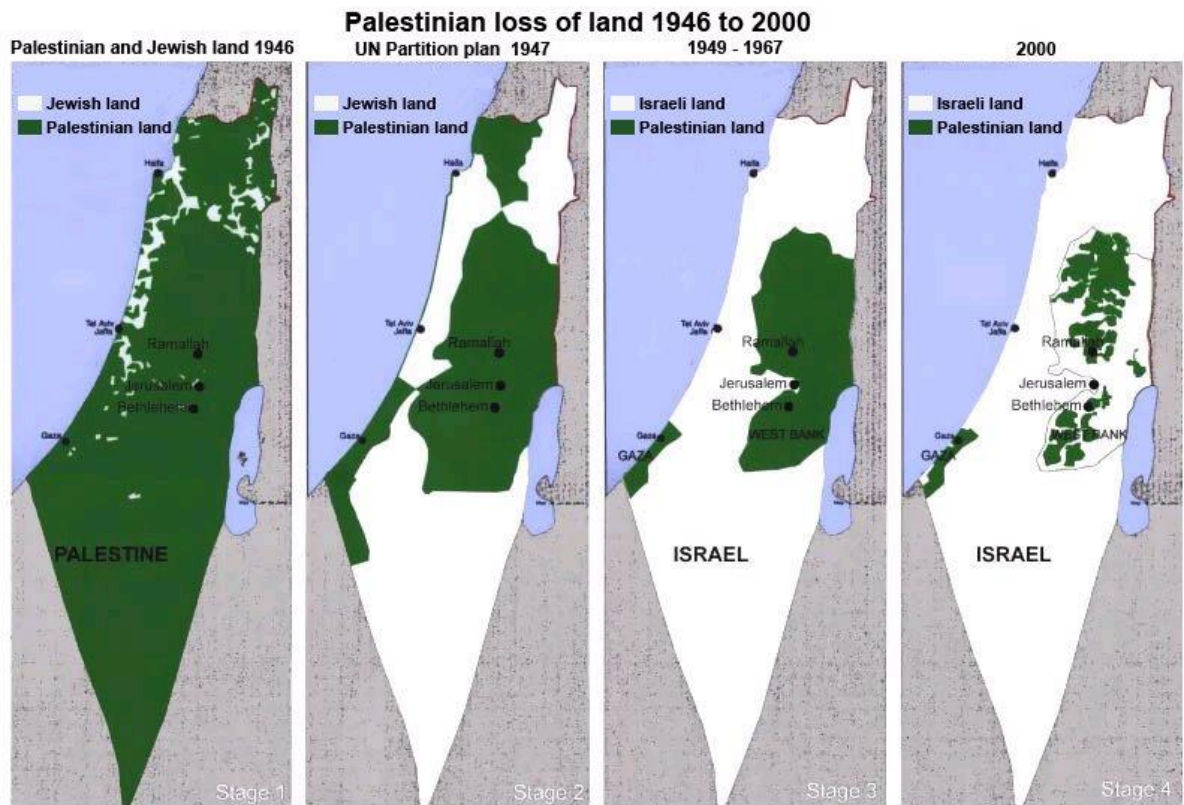


Figure 4.1 Progress of the Palestinian loss of land

Source: EAJG, n.d.



Figure 4.1: Control Palestinian territory BRON: AUSTRALIANSFORPALESTINE.COM

After the 1948 declaration of independence, many Palestinians moved to the surrounding countries, but also many Palestinians stayed. In the first twenty years, this was not a problem. But in 1967, during the six days war, Israel occupied Palestinian territory – the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem – and since then the Palestinian territory is under Israeli occupation. This has resulted in several violent attacks from both sides, a blockade of the Gaza Strip and an unwillingness to come to a (two state) solution.

The biggest peace initiatives in the region are the Camp David accords, the Oslo accords, the new Camp David accords, and the Roadmap to Peace of the quartet (Abicht, 2007). In between these initiatives was violence the rule of the day with intifada's, suicide attacks and bombings. The Camp David accords were signed in 1978 after twelve days of negotiations between Israel and Egypt in Camp David monitored by the US president Jimmy Carter. Al Sadat, the president of Egypt, and Begin, prime minister of Israel, signed accords that should lead to peace in the Middle-East. The accords dealt with the Sinai region and provided a framework for negotiations about an autonomy regime in the West Bank and Gaza (CIDI, 2004). These accords were a beginning for several other peace initiatives of Israel with several other countries, like Lebanon and Syria. In 1991 formal negotiations were started between Israel and the Palestinians in Madrid. However, these did not lead to a solution, so in 1993 secret negotiations took place in Oslo as a reaction to the first Intifada. The first Intifada was an outbreak of violence against the Israeli presence in the West Bank. This Intifada took place from 1987 to 1993 (Benyaich, 2010). The Oslo negotiations were negotiations between Israel and the PLO², which represented the Palestinian population. After this, Israel acknowledged the PLO as representative of the Palestinian population, and the PLO acknowledged the right of Israel to exist and violence and terrorism were adjured. The main principles of the accords were the withdrawal of the Israeli army from Gaza and the West Bank and the right to self-government of the Palestinians which lead to the formation of the PA (CIDI, 2004). These negotiations led to many expectations, however these were never lived up to. Within these accords the Palestinian territory got divided into three levels of government. These region were named A, B and C regions. Wherein region A the PA has full civil and military power, in region B the PA has only civil power and Israel military power, and in region C Israel has military and civil power. The division of this Palestinian land can be seen in the above provided figure 2.2.

After the Oslo accords a few other initiatives took place, but these did not lead to significant new developments in the conflict, for example the failed Camp David Negotiations in 2000 (CIDI, 2004). The Oslo accords were not lived up to, at least the Palestinians did not

² The Palestinian Liberty Organization is the biggest political party in the PA and was the representative of the Palestinian population by several negotiation processes.

see or feel any different developments and processes like the building of settlements continued, and new negotiations failed. This resulted in a new outbreak of violence, the second Intifada. Which was very violent and deadly, with 972 Israeli deaths and 3301 Palestinian deaths (Benyaich, 2010). In the end the last main peace initiative was the Roadmap to peace of the Quartet. This was the first initiative where the EU was involved in the negotiations and not only as a financier. These negotiations led to a 'roadmap' in which was clearly discussed what steps needed to be taken to reach peace. However the implementation or the execution of this accord failed just like the other attempts to find a solution. The conflict is still going on, there is still a lot of violence and violation of human rights, and a solution does not seem close. So how can this process be turned around?

At the moment, after years of silence, new peace negotiations are taken place. The US minister of foreign affairs John Kerry took the initiative to restart the negotiations (NRC, 2013a). When this was announced, the Dutch ministry of Foreign affairs admitted to have had secret negotiations with both countries, but they stopped because of the new initiatives from the US (NOS, 2013). So many new developments have taken place in the last month. But still no sign of the European Union in this process. I will continue elaborating on EUs role in the conflict and show that there are many opportunities for them to be of significance in the peace process. This will be discussed in the next section.

4.4 THE EUROPEAN UNION

The EU has always played a significant role in the conflict, at first by encouraging Jews to migrate and with that partly causing the conflict and latter by trying to solve the conflict. The EU has played a less important role than the US did, but at the moment it has the best position to negotiate. This paragraph will discuss the role of the EU in the conflict by first looking at the relation between the EU and Israel and between the EU and Palestine. After that we will take a look at the actual role the EU played in solving the conflict. After which a theoretical framework will be provided to explain this role.

4.4.1 EU – ISRAEL

The EU has always maintained good relationships with Israel since its establishment. The Jewish community is deeply rooted in European history and culture. Sometimes there is even spoken of a shared heritage (Terpan, 2010). In 1959 were the first contacts established and in 1964 was the first treaty signed (Benyaich, 2010). After which in 1975 the Cooperation Agreement was signed (Pardo, 2009). This was followed by the Association agreement in 1995, which went in progress in 2000. The first treaties, especially the Cooperation Agreement, mainly focused on trade agreements, with the emphasis on free trade (European

Union, 1995). During this treaty was the EU not yet involved in the conflict. It was already very hard to set up a treaty on trade without the complexes of the conflict. Because the treaty had to be in agreement with all the treaties of the individual member states, with the foreign policy of the EU, and with the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) (Terpan, 2010). These trade relations formed an economical base for the following association agreement. Which could, because of that, focus on strengthening the links between the EU and Israel, and on providing a framework for political dialogue next to the trade agreements (Aprodev, 2002). Next to that did the treaty give attention to the deeper relations that existed between the EU and Israel. In the period that the association agreement was established, did the EU get involved in the conflict. Because of this did the treaty allude on the political dialogue. After these treaties did the relations between the EU and Israel evolve even further.

An association agreement serves as the legal basis for the improvement of relations between two countries (Unknown, n.d.). In the case of Israel is the association agreement the basis for the ENP and EUROMED, but it is also a part of the ENP. Another significant aspect of the ENP is the action plan. The Israel action plan was established in 2005 for three years. In 2008 did Israel request an upgrade of her status in the form of a new action plan. Israel's goal was to gain the same status as Switzerland and Norway. As said, did the EU and Israel always maintain good relations. This meant that Israel is the only country in the ENP that got the status of special relation. However, it wanted an even more developed relationship with the EU. But this upgrade is never completed. In 2011 was decided to stop the upgrade and to elaborate on the opportunities of the 2005 action plan. The EU set different conditions for this upgrade aimed at the shared values defined in the action plan. These values concern democracy, respect for human rights, the rule of law and fundamental freedoms, good governance and international humanitarian law (Council of the European Union, 2008). These conditions were violated by Israel in its continuing settlement policy and the blockade of the Gaza strip. Because of these violations was the upgrade frozen. In February 2011 was decided not to continue with the upgrade, but to work on the possibilities left from the current EU-Israel action plan. It seems that the EU takes a stronger stance towards Israeli policy with regard to Palestine than in the implementation of the first action plan. However, there is still no new action plan – this year the implementation of the 2005 action plan was extended again – and not much is changing within the region. As shown next, the action plan does not stimulate action, so a new action plan is needed.

The ENP is EUs most important policy with regard to its surrounding countries. However with regard to Israel does the action plan not stimulate action. Del Sarto (2007) and other organizations like the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN, 2008) emphasize that the language use in the plan is very general and vague. Besides that,

controversial subjects like the settlement policy and the violation of human rights are hardly mentioned. Compared to other ENP action plans does Israel's plan lack demands from the EU. Critique on the action plan and EUs passive behaviour led partly to the freezing of Israel's status upgrade. However, the problem is seen in a gap between Europe's perception of Israel and the actual situation in Israel. To solve this problem an upgrade of the status would be necessary (EEPA, 2008). However, this is not on the agenda anymore.

Despite the detention of this upgrade did Israel become part of different European Projects like GALILEO (satellite radio navigation) and the Framework Programme for Research and Development – Israel was part of FP IV, V, VI, VII and will be part of the future replacement of FP7, Horizon 2020 (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2007). At first was this membership of leading projects part of the upgrade, but this got disconnected. Now, the involved actors state that this participation was already part of the 2005 action plan and because of that it should be seen separate from the upgrade. Since the upgrade was ended, exceptions have been made for Israel again. This also shows that the action plan can be interpreted in the most favourable way at every moment in time. Formally we cannot speak of a status upgrade, however this did happen partly. Despite EUs conditions with regard to Israel, did Israel again get extra benefits. While the situation in the occupied territories worsened after the request for the upgrade. The EU is really eager to involve Israel in these prestigious projects, because of Israelis intellectual and economic development. So, the EU lacks its own norms and values to achieve this.

Europe does support the two states solution. This would be the only solution that will lead to peace in the area. Next to that are they convinced that it would be better for the Israeli as well. It offers certainty and security. "The creation of a Palestinian state will reduce tensions, and foster peace, stability and wealth" (Ferrero-Waldner in Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2007: 3). Thence does the EU hold on to the appointments made in 'the roadmap of Peace'. Ferrero-Waldner – the last European Commissioner for External Relations and the European Neighbourhood Policy – also mentions that "getting to know each other better will be the key to cooperation" and that "the road to cooperation has not opened yet because Israel does not know how to work with the EU" (Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2007: 4). But what also seems from this speech is that the EU wants to keep Israel as a friend and does not dare to express specific criticism. Shown in multiple documents is Israelis special relation with the EU compared to other ENP countries. Which can be declared from the fact that Israel is economically close to Europe and democratically further developed than the other countries (Bulletin Quotidien Europe, 2009). This special relation and the closeness of the country to the EU, makes it hard for the EU to express critique. The EU wants to keep the

country close because it needs it in the programmes, but also because it wants to expand its influence to the surrounding countries with the process of europeanisation.

It seems that the EU with regard to Israel still feels guilty because of the Jew-baiting in the second world war and the fact that Israel was a British colony. The conflict with Palestine has also been described as 'the conflict of the victims with the victims of the victims' (AIV, 2013). However, both events should be seen separate. Next to that does the EU seem frightened to lose its place in world politics. The relation between Israel and the US is very developed and this has led to conflicts between the EU, and the US and Israel. Now it seems that the EU wants to prevent such a conflict, at all costs. This can declare EUs passive policy towards Israel and the conflict. Israel gets the chance to do whatever it wants without the EU setting conditions. The stand the EU takes is that political and economical aspects should be treated separately. So, the EU does not want to use economic conditions or penalties to achieve something politically. The freezing of the upgrade does not have much effect, because the settlement policy and the blockade of the Gaza Strip are not reduced and Israel does become part of the different programmes. It seems that the EU finds its role in world politics more important than the fact that human rights are violated every day. But the EU did not really manage to play a significant role in world politics. Its most influential achievement is that it became part of the quartet, the occasional band that deals with the conflict in Israel (EUISS, 2010; AIV, 2013). The three other members are the US, Russia and the UN. This quarter did not manage to achieve much, but it did develop 'the roadmap for Peace'. This roadmap was executed hardly or not at all, but it is often referred to as possible solution or as part of the solution. This is also shown in the above mentioned speech of Ferrero-Waldner at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem in 2007.

It seems that the EU cannot achieve much, because of the passive policy and her reserved attitude. She lets the US solve the problem. However, the prominent role of the US in the Middle-East has reduced and it seems that the focus of the US has shifted towards 'the East', which means Asia. The advisory council on international affairs (2013) advises the EU to trust less on other actors and to take more action. At the moment it seems that EUs policy has two sides. On the one hand does the EU force Israel to stop the violation of human rights, focusing on ending the settlement policy and the blockade of the Gaza Strip. But on the other side does the EU not do anything if Israel does not meet the set conditions. The question remains if the EU is of significance in the region. The EU has always kept a little aside, partly because of the divisions within the European region (EUISS, 2010). However, because of her geographical location with respect to the conflict region and the strong economic and diplomatic relations, they could be of more significance than before. They should adapt their policy, attach more importance to earlier agreements and take more action. The EU should

impute itself a more important role and with that regenerate the peace process. Which has stand still for several years (AIV, 2013). Israel would have to be more open for input from the EU. In the past it seemed that Israel cared less about the position and the set conditions of the EU. The relationship has also been described as “the EU gives, Israel takes”. The EU should not accept this anymore if it wants to change something in the region. The specific opportunities for the EU can be found in the thesis of the EU Institute for Security Studies (2010). Which elaborates specifically on opportunities and actions the EU should take, for example using economic penalties when conditions are not met. It seems that here is room for EAJG to inform and lobby at the EU to make them take action. I will come back to this later.

4.4.2 EU – PALESTINE

Not just Israel is part of the ENP. Palestine has also agreements and treaties with the EU. The first relations were established in 1975 as part of the Euro-Arab dialogue. Palestine, represented by the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) has an interim association agreement with the EU. This resulted in an ENP action plan for Palestine in 2005. The action plan was developed for 5 years, but the implementation has since 2010 been extended yearly. EU's support is particularly evident in the financial sources Palestine receives. The EU is Palestine's largest donor. This support ran into billions between 2000 and 2009. After that another 436 million Euros was made available for support for the Palestinians in 2009 (Europa.nu, n.d.). This financial aid is used to build a state, especially to make Palestine ready to become an independent state.

What shows the difference in the relationships of the EU with both countries, is the language use in the action plan. In the case of Israel, there was almost no attention for the conflict and the resolution of this. In the action plan for Palestine is this clearly mentioned as a priority and different solutions are given. In the action plan for Palestine did the EU provide specific details about economic and political reforms (Tocci, 2006). And these reforms were mainly financed by the EU to help build a state. The document shows that the EU takes a strong stand in favour of Palestine, however this cannot be found in the Israeli action plan. It seems that the EU defines those documents in such a way that the country is satisfied with it and because of that commits to the EU and the ENP. With this they strengthen economical and political bonds without actual action. The EU and Palestine are both motivated to deepen the bilateral relations. Palestine is seen as a ‘willing country’ (Tocci, 2006). Despite this willingness of both countries, the reforms will never be implemented enough because of the lack of incentives. The EU seems more concerned with the possession of its member states

and the protection of these member states. This protection is easier when the surrounding countries are connected to the organization.

In December 2008 was decided to strengthen the connections with all Mediterranean countries (Council of the European Union, 2008). Regarding Israel, this was already spoken of earlier in that year. All the other countries were mentioned at the end of the year. This appointment showed that the interim association agreement would be replaced shortly. This is still not the case. So the interim association agreement is still in place. However, the negotiations on a new action plan have been completed in 2012. There is progress in the relationship of the EU with Palestine (AIV, 2013).

What has been of influence on the position of Palestine in the conflict is the recognition of Palestine as non-member observer state of the UN. This shows that Palestine is more and more seen as a legitimate, independent state. But Israel does not agree with this, they still see Palestinian territory as theirs and part of their state. Europe has in majority voted in favour of the nomination of Palestine (14 out of 27 member states voted for, 1 against and the rest withdrew from voting of which the Netherlands was one). So, this has hindered the peace process and the position of the EU (AIV, 2013; Europa.nu, n.d.). However, the EU still supports the two states solution and they think that communication is the best way to achieve this. The denomination of Palestine brought this resolution closer in a way (European External Action, n.d.). What makes this more difficult is the stand of the EU to refuse to talk to Hamas. They see them as a terrorist organization. Hamas, however, is the leading party in the Gaza strip. The Fatah party is the leading group in the West Bank. Besides this stand of the EU is there a conflict between both groups. The groups disagree in their vision on the state of Israel. Fatah came to the conclusion that the use of violence is very ineffective, since Israel hits back harder. Non-violent negotiations has more effect to improve the situation in Palestine. The Hamas party does not support this perspective. The EU has in the meantime improved its relation with the Fatah movement, but refuses to talk to Hamas. To be able to find and achieve a resolution to the conflict should the EU revise its stand. Hamas is needed to come to a resolution, without the agreement of this organization peace and an independent Palestine will never be achieved.

So, the EU is mainly a financier of the Palestinian state, where its relations with Israel go much further. The role of the EU in the conflict will be discussed next to complete the perspective of the relationships the EU has and the way it uses its relationships and its position.

4.4.3 ROLE EU

Besides the above mentioned relationships did the EU also play a role in solving the conflict and indirectly by the emergence of the conflict. Through the years several attempts have been made by different actors to solve the conflict. The EU has never played a prominent role in this process, but it did have input in some attempts. For example, this is evident in the fact that the EU is a member of the Quartet. But it has already started during the emergence of the conflict (Benyaich, 2010). The anti-Semitism began in Europe at the end of the 19th century and developed the urge of the Jews for their own country. Eventually they chose Palestine. Where, in their own words, would not be a population. They did not think about the Arabs living in that territory. The migration to Palestine or Israel was promoted by different groups within Europe. During the final exclamation of the State Israel in 1948 was Europe divided in which 'country' to support. Germany felt guilty because of the holocaust so they supported the Israeli, but other countries supported the Palestinians. Europe eventually acted as financier, because of the division within the organization. Where countries as the United States and the Soviet Union played a more significant role in finding a solution to the conflict. These countries chose a side and supported countries because they needed the support in the Cold war and the oil available in the Middle-East. None of the countries ever dared to take a stand, because they needed both countries.

The EU did try to take a stronger stand in the following years, but they were restrained by the US and the USSR. The EU lost her world power after the world wars, where they needed the support of other superpowers. This made the EU take a step back in her position in the conflict. The US took over the power in the Middle-East after the Cold War and the EU had to settle with this. The US was the driving force behind the peace initiatives and the EU got the role of financier. They had not much to say in the conflict or conditions to set up for both groups. However, by means of this financial role "they bought their spot on the diplomatic table" (Benyaich, 2010: 77). The EU insisted negotiations and a resolution a few times, but until now without any result. The stand of the EU was subject to change because of the different and changing stands within the different member states, but also because of the new stands of new member states. This made EUs stand even less influential (for more information see Benyaich, 2010). The earlier mentioned division with the US as superpower in the middle-east and as ally of Israel has shifted the last years. The US is less dependent on the oil in the region and shifted its attention to Asia. Besides this, the EU has grown and concluded treaties with all its surrounding countries in the ENP. So the EU got more power and participation in the Middle-East (EUISS, 2010; AIV, 2013). The EU should benefit from this shift and put more pressure on both groups. So here is space for all NGOs in Europe to motivate action of the EU.

As mentioned was the role of the EU never of significant importance, but it could be. This insignificant role can be declared from different theories. These theories will be treated later, after more insight is provided in the decision making process.

4.4.4 EU DECISION MAKING PROCESS

Within the EU decision making process there are several institutions involved. I will first describe all relevant EU institutions and after that describe the decision making process in short. This is necessary knowledge to find an entrance within the EU.

Institutions:

The EU consists of seven institutions. The European Commission (EC), the European Parliament (EP), the European Council, the Council of the European Union, the Court of Justice, the European Central Bank, and the Court of Auditors. The last three are not relevant in the decision making process, so will not be treated further. The other four are of significance and will be described below.

The European Parliament

The EP is the only institution that is directly elected. It consists of 754 members, all chosen for a period of 5 years by Europeans that are qualified to vote. At the moment, the EP is co-legislator at almost all policy areas (European Parliament, n.d.). Together with the European Council they accept or change legislative proposals from the Commission. Besides this, it also has supervisory and budgetary competences. The EP oversees the work of the EC and adopts the budget for the EU.

The members are organized on their political background and not on nationality (ibid). These fractions mainly match the political movements and parties in the different member states. The Parliament is lead by a chairman, who is chosen for a period of 2,5 years. The EP has 20 committees specialized in different fields, like human rights, health, the environment and many others. The substantive work is done in these committees in preparation for the plenary meetings. Next to these committees does the EP also have different delegations. These maintain contacts and exchange information with parliaments from third countries. The EP contributes to the representation of the EU and the promotion of her norms and values abroad with these delegations.

The European Commission

The EC is the executive body of the EU and serves the interests of the EU as a whole (European Commission, 2012). The Commission sets objectives and priorities, makes

legislative proposals with the Parliament and the European Council, takes care of the management and the implementation of EU policy and the budget, maintains European law, and represents the EU outside Europe. 'The Commission' stands for the college of commissioners, but also for the institution itself. Besides this has the commission representation in all individual member states.

The college of commissioners consist of 27 commissioners, one of every member state. One of these commissioners is the president of the EC and one is the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. Under the commission work the departments, the Directorate-Generals (the DGs). These DGs are qualified for a certain policy area. They make the legislative proposals that have to be approved by the college of commissioners after which they are checked by the other institutions. Next to these DGs, does the EC also have executive agencies. These are established to take on certain tasks for the management of community programmes (Europa.eu, n.d.a).

The legislative proposals are set up by employees of the concerning DG. However, before these legislative proposals are shown to the college of commissioners, they first pass many other employees. And during the development of these legislative proposals, external expertise is used.

The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, at the moment Catherine Ashton, can be seen as a special position within the EU institutions. Formally it is part of the Commission, however it also plays a role in the other institutions like the Parliament. The high representative has its own supporting agency the European External Action Service (EEAS) (EEAS, n.d.). The EEAS supports Ashton in the execution of the foreign and security policy. But is also does the preparing work for the High Representative when it comes to debates. The EEAS is the institution that meets with NGOs and that takes in all information to be able to have a well-reasoned position in debates and decision-making processes.

The Council of Ministers of the European Union

"The Council of the European Union is the forum for national ministers of every EU member state that establishes law and coordinates policies" (Europa.eu, n.d. b). The council consists of 27 representatives from all member states. The subject under discussion determines which minister will be delegated. The council has together with the parliament the last say over a legislative proposal from the commission. Besides this, it coordinates the economic policy, it concludes international agreements on behalf of the EU, it determines the budget together with the Parliament, it works on a common foreign and security policy, and it tries to acknowledge legislation for the whole union (ibid.). The chairman of the council is the

relevant minister of the country that has the rotating EU chair. Except with regard to foreign policy issues, these are chaired by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. In the council is voted with qualified majority, however with a certain amount of votes per country on basis of the population.

The European Council

“The European Council defines the general political directions and priorities of the European Union” (European Council, n.d.). The council consists of the Heads of State or Government of the Member States, its President and the President of the Commission. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy also cooperates in the work of the council. The members of the council can choose to be assisted by a minister or a member of the commission depending on the issues on the agenda.

The council was at first established as an informal forum for the heads of state or government. It amassed an official status in the treaty of Maastricht in 1992. The treaty mentions that the council has the task to “provide the Union with the necessary impetus for its development and defines the general political directions and priorities thereof. But it does not have legislative functions” (ibid.). Since the treaty of Lisbon is the council one of the seven institutions of the EU. At the moment is Herman van Rompuy the president.

The Decision Making Process

The above mentioned institutions represent the population of the EU, the EU itself and the individual member states. These institutions together take care of the secondary legislation, where the treaties are EUs primary form of legislation. The EU drafts guidelines, these are aimed at structuring the legislation in the individual member countries. The countries can themselves decide the extent to which the guidelines are implemented. Besides this does the EU use regulations that do have to be implemented directly and that influence everybody. Last, the EU uses decisions aimed at member countries or individuals, to incite them to or keep them from action.

Within the EU there are three important forms of decision making: the co-decision procedure, the assent procedure, and the consultation procedure. However, these are very complicated and do not influence the results of the study. So I will not describe these processes in detail. The most important are the institutions that have to be influenced in their decision making towards Israel and Palestine. To gain better insight in how these institutions are interwoven, I will shortly describe the process of the decision making regarding the status upgrade of Israel. This can show us how the lobby in the EU should be organized.

At first instance did the council approve the upgrade of Israel and it signed the agreement in April 2008. After which protocol was submitted to the Parliament for assent. The AFET, the committee for foreign affairs, agreed to the Protocol on November 6th 2008. In the report of the Parliament was made clear which institutions were involved with the agreement. Especially the European Commission seemed engaged in the treaties. It is concerned with the implementation of the agreement and a yearly evaluation of the participation of Israel in community programmes. The most important is that this participation is in line with the principles and commitments drawn up in earlier treaties between the EC and Israel and it should work towards a solution of the conflict. The Commission and the Council also have to monitor the right implementation of European legislation. The AFET reconsidered its decision of December 3rd and asked for postponement of the vote. The other MEPs agreed and the agreement was frozen. The participation of Israel in European programmes was seen as an upgrade, however did Israel not meet the set conditions. On top of this did the Council discuss the upgrade, with as a result that the European citizens asked for clearance and transparency in the process. The latter was of great importance to the decision to freeze the process. In this short description is clearly shown that all institutions are involved and are very interwoven in their attitude towards Israel. This will also be the case with regard to Palestine.

Concluding from all of the above, the relationship between Israel and the EU is mainly a trade relationship. The EU keeps itself in the background with regard to solving the conflict. With regard to Palestine is the EU its biggest donor, to compensate for all the benefits Israel receives and that disadvantage Palestine. EUs stand should change and should be more focused on solving the conflict. However, this is easier said than done. While looking at all different stands within the EU and the complex decision making process, we can state that it is not easy to find consensus within the Union. The lobbying and the informing of different NGOs is very important to this. Without this the image of the conflict would be incomplete and policy will definitely fail. However, there is always more to tell and it is very important that every actor in the conflict is represented in the EU lobby.

4.4 EAJG

The Dutch NGO 'Een Ander Joods Geluid' has played a significant role in the Dutch debate regarding the conflict between Israel and the PA. EAJG got established after the second intifada. It was an initiative of a part of the Dutch Jewish community that did not agree with the statements and the policy of the Israeli government with regard to the Palestinians and the occupation. Within the Jewish community in Israel different people raised themselves as spokesman of the community. These people supported the Israeli policy and defended this

amongst all cause. This development called on opposition amongst the Jews. The Jewish Dutch that are a member of EAJG want to make heard that there is a critical perspective on the conflict from the Jewish community (EAJG, 2013). EAJG was formally established in 2011 and is since trying to express this perspective. They are mostly focusing on Dutch politics and public opinion and informing those about controversial aspects of the Israeli policy and the conflict.

EAJG has a strong position because they represent Jews with a critical view on the situation in Israel. They do not see themselves as pro-Palestinian or pro-Israeli. But, as there slogan mentions, they are for peace, against violence and occupation. Peace would be best for both Israeli and Palestinians. It would give them rest and they do not have to live in fear anymore. EAJG is convinced that the conflict should come to a solution for both groups. And the best way to reach that is the two-state solution. EAJG supports this, because it is the internationally accepted solution. However, they fear that this is not feasible anymore.

EAJG has since its establishment strengthened its position in the Dutch debate. They are seen as one of the most prestigious and trustworthy organizations in the Netherlands. But also because they represent a population that is seen as victims. The critical perspective of these victims is unknown by many and adds a strong argument to the debate. Because of the position they have in the conflict, their message is seen as valuable. Because of that they are often asked to shed their light in specific issues in the media, but also in conversations with politicians.

EAJG has in 2011 chosen to focus less on lobbying and more on publications. Since there are so many different lobbyists they felt like they did not add to the debate concerning issues significant for the conflict (Personal communication Rick Meulenstein, April 10 2013). With their publications they inform instead of debate about the conflict. These publications reach people in different sections that are important to changing the conflict. They reach politicians, but also people working in other NGOs and people in the business world. With this they feel they add more to the debate. Next to these publications they are present in the media and they use the internet to spread information and petitions. The themes they discuss are dependent on the hot topics of that moment. Since the debate around the conflict is an ongoing process there are always themes that need a critical perspective.

EAJG tries to cooperate with other Dutch NGOs that focus on Israel and the PA and that agree in their statements with EAJG, but that represent other groups like the Palestinians and the Israeli. They cooperate because more can be achieved when several groups are represented and they bring the same message without having to change their vision, position and methods. One of the bigger issues the organization is working on in cooperation with other organizations is the treatment of child prisoners by the Israeli army. The organizations

involved are Defence for Children, United Civilians for Peace and War Child but also smaller organizations like Gate 48. They are trying to draw attention to this issue to make politicians ask questions in the government and to start the debate on this issue.

EAJG has tried before to lobby at EU level. The most developed attempt was in the cooperation of European Jews for a Just Peace (EJJP). In this partnership were several European Jewish organizations cooperating to put pressure on the EU. They thought that a cooperation of different critical Jewish groups from different countries was stronger than pressure from all the individual groups. However, the differences between the groups were too big and the initiative came slowly to an end. The organization has been able to achieve something in their active years, but not much result was obtained. They have tried to focus on the hot topics in Brussels as well as on the national topics in the different countries individually. One of the problems of the group was that every individual organization wanted to focus on different themes, what resulted in too many themes that needed to be discussed and lobbied at the EU level. It is still hard to focus on just a few themes but it is impossible to discuss all the issues involved in the conflict, because of the complexity of the conflict.

Despite these earlier failures EAJG is still convinced that the message they bring to the debate is very important and should be heard at the European level. So another attempt is possible, but it should be the last try. Another failure will lead to the decision to stay in the Netherlands (personal communication Max Wieselmann, May 8 2013). Because of this it is necessary that the organization is very well aware of what they want to achieve and how they want to achieve this. I will come back to this later when discussing the results of the research and defining recommendations for the organization.

5. NGO INFLUENCE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

As mentioned above is NGO influence almost immeasurable. Despite this I did try to gain insight in this process to be able to define recommendations for a Dutch NGO. For this I spoke to several people involved in the lobby in the EU with regard to the debate around Israel and the PA. These actors provided insight in the world and in their influence. I will discuss the results that came out of these qualitative interviews in this chapter. After that I will discuss the opportunities for EAJG to expand their activities and the influence they will have on the basis of the earlier mentioned indicators pre-existing relations, networks, exclusivity and resources.

Out of the interviews seemed that all organizations had the feeling they had influence on the EU debate. They bring subjects to the agenda and they provide information in the meetings that take place regularly. What a respondent from one of the Dutch NGOs noted is that since they mostly lose all the debates, winning cannot be seen as the only result. Adding to the debate and making MEPs ask questions can already be seen as result and with that as influence. Making people aware of the other side of the issue and making sure there is a debate instead of issues just passing by as a bureaucratic decision is for the NGOs result. With this perspective, everybody in contact with EU employees providing information about the issue is an achievement and can be seen as influence on the debate. I will elaborate on this further in the next section where I discuss the results from the study with a focus on the earlier mentioned indicators of access.

5.2 ACCESS

In this research access has been studied as the measurable subject of influence. When NGOs have access to the EU they have influence. What seemed from the interviews is that getting access to the EU institutions is not that difficult. Most of them are open to the information and insights provided by the different NGOs. The respondents from the EEAS mentioned that NGOs are the second most important information source, after the delegations in the regions. This shows that NGOs are of importance to the EU and because of that access to the EU institutions is easy to achieve. However, the people that are open for this are not the people in the important positions, but more the supporting delegations. Like the EEAS for Catherine Ashton and the coordinators of the delegations for the MEPs. For example the Dutch Bastiaan Belder, who is the chair of delegations with Israel is not open for NGOs that are not supporting his perspective. He is very pro-Israeli and, as mentioned by a respondent at the

EU, he ignores the organizations that are more 'pro-Palestinian'. There are more people like this in the more important positions. NGOs have to take in consideration that it is impossible to reach everybody. But there are always people that are open to all information that adds to the debate. Like the coordinators of the DGs for the relations with Israel and the PA, or in this case the PLC (Palestinian Legislative Council), they are open to NGOs. So it is dependent on the people and the positions how accessible they are. The lower the level of importance the higher the accessibility. These people within the EU all inform each other, so with any access to the EU there is influence. However, as one of the EU respondents mentions there are different levels of influence. These levels vary per NGO and per influential person. So, the lower the level of importance, the higher the accessibility, but also the lower the influence within the EU. NGOs should try to reach as high of a level of importance as possible to be of the most influence to the EU debate.

What has been mentioned by all respondents from the network organizations, but also by respondents from other NGOs active in Brussels, is that the lobby at the national level is the most important. The power in the EU is mainly with the individual countries and these different perspectives on issues come together in the EU, for example in the council. Pressure has to come from the NGOs on the national level and from the EU to the national levels to be able to achieve something. So the lobby on the national level should be the main point of interest of all NGOs and networks. Next to that, it is of importance that people in the EU institutions, like the Parliament, get informed. Because these MEP's have to know a lot about many different issues. Most of the time they are not well informed, what makes the vote not very valuable but the result of the vote will be the eventual legal agreement. A good example is the vote on the ACAA³ proposal. In the internal vote, with only the people involved in the debate voting, there was a difference of two votes in favor of Israel. However, in the plenary vote there was a huge majority for the proposal and with that in favor of Israel. This shows that the people not involved in the issue have a different opinion, what can be a result of the fact that they are less informed. This makes voting in the EP not very valuable. Not only on this issue, but on every issue. People are not informed enough when they are voting for or against a proposal and with that choosing a side. Almost all MEP's have the understanding that information is crucial in a vote. That is one of the reasons why the accessibility of all the supporting organs is so high. And every bit of information added to the debate can be seen as a valuable addition.

³ ACAA is short for "the Protocol on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of Industrial Products", which is part of the EU-Israeli Association Agreement. The protocol is focusing on eliminating technical barriers to trade on industrial products for external partner countries (European Coordination Committee for Palestine, 2013).

The above given insights are not the complete story of access. In previous chapters indicators were defined to study access. These indicators will first be described in general with the answers of the respondents. After that we will have a look at EAJG and their position in these indicators. From that recommendations can be developed for EAJG and its expansion to the EU.

5.2.1 NETWORKS

As stated in the literature, networks can be seen as an indicator of access and with that influence. Networks can be seen in two ways, there is the network of contacts organizations have in the lobby and there are the network organizations that lobby as a collaboration of different NGOs from different countries. Networks, both organizations and contacts, bring you information, contacts and expertise. Mentioned by the EU respondents is that they prefer contacts with network organizations. They get so much information that it is impossible to include it all in their recommendations to the supervising people. Networks summarize the information of a group of NGOs. This makes the information for the EU employees better treatable and usable. This is also mentioned by the different networks themselves. They feel that their contacts with the EU are very much appreciated and of more value than contact with individual NGOs. The representatives of the network do the work at the European level, where the members focus on the lobby at the national level. So are the two most important levels reached and is the influence bigger. Networks make it also easier for NGOs to be active at the EU level with not too much workload. Networks have the contacts and the expertise. In a network is much more information available than in a single NGO. This makes the lobby at EU level stronger, what makes an organization more trustworthy and access to the EU easier. Also a network of contacts within Brussels can be of much value. There will be no formal collaboration agreement, but the organizations will still collaborate and share their knowledge. Next to that, there are people, like two of the respondents, lobbying on their own. Their expertise can be used for some cases. These people have a political background and already a very well developed network of contacts at the EU institutions. So these experts on the issue can be of great help while gaining access to the institutions. Being part of a network organization or having built a prestigious network of contacts can be of much help by gaining access to the EU institutions. Most of the NGOs I spoke with that are active at the EU lobby have these networks. They are on the one side a network organizations, but they also cooperate with other network organizations, individual NGOs and experts in the field, and they have a good network of contacts. This helps them build a well-informed and extensive lobby. So for the existing NGOs being a network organization and being part of the Brussels network is of importance and helps them influence the EU debate.

5.2.2 PRE-EXISTING RELATIONS

Also pre-existing relations were mentioned in the literature as an indicator of access. Existing relations make contacts more trustworthy and make it easier to gain access to people and with that the EU. This has also been mentioned by the respondents that did have the relations. This were mainly the respondents with the political background or the organizations that had active members with a political background. Messages from these persons with a political background are trusted and seen as more valuable than messages from non-political persons. As mentioned it is not difficult to make contact in the European Parliament or with other supporting institutions like the EEAS. However, making sure that the message is included in the debate is easier when you have the relations and the expertise about how the EU works. So more value will be appointed to the insights of those longer standing relations. The same applies to the message of people from the field. People in the EU add more value to a message from an expert from Israel or Palestine than from a person not involved in the conflict. There are so many people that feel sympathy with the conflict and that have a very strong opinion about it. Many people that spread their opinion are also very well informed and their position is well reasoned. However, EU members add more value to people actually being part of the conflict.

What has also been mentioned by most NGO respondents is that the message that is told by many different lobbyists, is seen as more valued from a Jewish position than that message from other lobbyists that are not really part of the conflict. So there are some groups that have a stronger position in the EU lobby and pre-existing relations add to these positions. People are more open to meet when they feel that the people they are talking to are in some way victims or that have had a prestigious and authoritative job within politics. As an NGO it is good to be able to have contacts with people like them, so it is always good to have people come over to talk for you and it is good to have someone that is known with EU politics in your organization. Being able to refer to those people gives value to the message and makes access easier and influence bigger.

Coming back to pre-existing contacts within the EU. When somebody is already known within the EU institutions this opens doors. It is not impossible to make contacts without these existing relations. But as said, when an organization uses the contacts they have, access is gained easier and more important their message will have more influence on the debate. The respondents that did have the contacts mentioned it helped them, the respondents that did not have the contacts did not have any experiences to compare it to. And most of the time, they took over the job from someone that already made the contacts. So they never started from scratch, what would make it much more difficult. This will be sort of the case for EAJG, but I will come back to this later.

5.2.3 EXCLUSIVITY

One of the indicators that did not come directly out of the literature, but that indirectly could be ascertained from the literature was that an organization should in some way be exclusive. Every organization should have a unique feature where they could focus on. This is also mentioned by all respondents. Every organization should focus on their unique feature. Every organization is different in some way and that is what makes the organizations unique and the message they bring in some way different. For example, EAJG should emphasize on its Jewish background, where Palestinian organizations should emphasize on their Palestinian background. That enlarges the chance of people being interested in what you have to say and with that gain access to the EU institutions and influence the debate. If you are the same as other organizations, you can better cooperate with those other organizations, because there is nothing that makes you stand out and that makes you more interesting than the others.

However, while talking to the EU respondents this was not what they mentioned. They are open to anyone that can help them improve their knowledge and insight on the issue. While looking at the active organizations in Brussels it are mostly networks, that combine the individual unique organizations. So it is dependent on how you want to contact the EU. If you will do it through a network, your message should be clear and in agreement with the networks stand. If you go on your own or as a united European organization, like EAJG did with EJJP, you need to have a unique message or you have to represent a unique group. If not, the chance that you will influence the decision-making process is very small. You have not proven yourself yet and you are not a member of a European standing network, so your message has to be special and an addition to the debate. The organizations present in Brussels do this too, even the network organizations. Like EMHRN focuses on human rights, it does not matter to them what is decided upon the conflict as long as human rights are respected. And so does every organizations have to make sure they focus on their exclusivity, on what makes them different and stand out from other organizations. Because that is what will add to the debate and makes them gain access to the institutions.

5.2.4 RESOURCES

What has been mentioned in the theoretical chapter as an indicator is the presence of resources. To be able to influence anything resources are needed, mainly people to do the job and money to pay for it. Resources have not really been part of the conversation with the respondents, since this is different for every organization and private. However, what seemed from the respondents is that resources are not that important. Regarding the amount of people working on the issue, they are with a few people. In the networks, there are one or

two people working in a working group with people from the member organizations. Most of the work in Brussels is done by the person concerned with the Israel-Palestine issue, the member organizations do have a say in it but do not need to do the work. They focus on the national lobby. So the total amount of people whose daily job it is to be working on the EU debate on Israel-Palestine is very small from the more critical lobby. Especially compared to the Israeli lobby. The Israelis are very well represented in Brussels, the Palestinians are with three. And in the NGOs there are one or two people concerned with the issue. So the amount of people working on the EU issue from an organization does not have to be that big. But everybody that adds to the discussion is welcome. On the one hand do the NGOs mention that there are already many people working on the issue, but on the other side they mention that they are alone in their organization. So there are two sides to the story. What can be concluded is that the existing organizations would like to control the lobby and they do not really welcome new organizations. But on the other side, they are very happy with any new voice in the debate. So they do want organizations to come, but on their terms. Since they are not with many people, everybody knows each other and the collaboration is very well developed. So everybody new is significant to the debate, but as an NGO it should not be too hard to organize the lobby with regard to employees working on the issue.

With regard to financial resources, as has been mentioned by some of the respondents, it is not the most important. Of course, there is some money needed to organize the lobby. But it could be done with a small amount. Since not many people need to work on the issue and contacts can be laid very easily through internet or telephone. The same is the case with an office in Brussels. Different respondents, mainly the ones active and based in Brussels, mention that having an office is not a necessity. It is also very possible to do the work from the existing office in the country of origin. Contacts are made very easily and especially in this digital era, contacts can be maintained through email. So it is not necessary to be present in Brussels all the time. A few trips per year can be enough. But that is dependent on how the lobby is organized and how intensive the lobby will be. The more an organization wants to achieve the more resources are needed. But it could be organized with little money, from the country of origin and with one person focusing on the debate and the contacts.

However, if you want to be professional, resources are necessary. The support of followers is needed in this world. This was also one of the problems for EJJP, where EAJG was the only one that received financial resources on a regular basis and that had an active professional lobby in the Netherlands. All the other organizations were less formal and developed. This meant that most of the work had to be done by EAJG. So without resources the lobby cannot be organized professionally, but not much is necessary to be able to organize the European lobby. Resources do not have to play a role in the failure of a lobby,

access to the EU can be gained without any money. However, the development of the lobby is dependent on resources. The more resources available the easier it is to organize the lobby, gain access and influence the debate.

5.3 CONCLUDING REMARKS

From the results of the interviews we can state that the provided indicators for access can be found in the EU lobby. However, they are not necessary to be able to have influence on the debate at the EU level. NGOs try to focus on a few specific themes, but somehow to have critical arguments present at all issues. Influence is seen by those organizations as something immeasurable and they do not know how much they have achieved. But they do feel that their message is taken into account and that they make people aware of the different sides of the discussed issues. Since they try to be part of the debate on all issues it is not possible to measure the influence of the organizations. The organizations I have spoken with represent one side of the lobby, but there are more sides to the lobby that also try to influence the perspective on a certain issue. Because of this they see it as something immeasurable and they see the contact with others and being part of the debate as result of their lobby.

So the lobby does achieve something and the indicators help to achieve this. Their relations and their expertise make it possible to contact the EU in the right way. So for every organization that wants to expand and be part of the EU lobby relations and networks are of importance, because they make the lobby easier and help reach goals. In the end the organizations do feel that they have influence on the debate and they feel that the positions within the EU are changing. This can also be seen in the media, where the EU condemns Israel's policy more and more. For example, the EU recently adopted new guidelines that should prevent the EU from financing Israeli settlements (NRC, 2013b). So the EU is finally taking actions. Israel is less seen as the victim and more people want to support the Palestinians with not only money. The money they send help the Palestinians build a future, but is most of the time nullified by the Israelis. Within the EU things are changing and pressure from all organizations is necessary to get this through. Access to the institutions is in that way easy to gain. However, how much is achieved with that access is hard to tell. The NGOs do feel that they have an important message that is influencing the debate and changes can be seen in EU's policy. The provided indicators do play a role in this, however they are not a necessity to gain access to the EU institutions. Resources are needed, but a lot can be achieved with little resources. An exclusive feature of the organization or a new message or insight in the conflict will make the organization heard sooner. And networks and pre-existing relations will especially help with organizing the lobby. However, they are not

necessary to gain access to the EU. The more contacts the organizations have, the easier the access is gained and influence is exerted. So in the end we can conclude that it is possible to organize the lobby and gain access without the indicators, except a few resources. But the more these are present, the easier and more influential the lobby. With this perspective we can state that a small Dutch NGO should be able to expand their lobby. I will elaborate on this further in the next section.

6. A DIFFERENT JEWISH VOICE

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the opportunities for EAJG to expand to the EU will be discussed. Before I studied the fact if NGOs even have influence at the EU level. The conclusion was that NGOs do influence the EU debate. This make EAJGs expansion not useless. However, it does not mean that EAJG is also in the position to influence the debate. I will first elaborate on EAJGs position with regard to access to the EU. This position will be discussed by the different indicators provided in the theoretical chapter. After this discussion, recommendations are provided for EAJG to expand its activities or not. In the previous section the general results of the interviews were provided and it was showed that the indicators are a good help for NGOs but not a necessity. Influence can also be gained without them, since access to the EU seems very easy to gain. However, for a new organization or for an organization that is expanding, these indicators can be of help while preparing the expansion. The Dutch NGO EAJG wants to expand their activities and to be able to define proper recommendations the indicators will be of help. Before concluding on EAJGs opportunities, I will discuss some points of focus for EAJG. This to eventually have full insight in the organization and themes it should focus on. In the end a short conclusion will summarize the features discussed in this chapter.

6.2 EAJGS POSITION

To gain insight in the world of EU lobbying in Brussels and to be able to define recommendations for the Dutch NGO, I spoke with several people active in the field. These respondents worked for different European NGOs and network organizations, the EU, and other Dutch NGOs that were cooperating with EAJG. These people provided me with good insights in what is important to the EU lobby and what not. In this section I will discuss EAJG with regard to the different indicators for access. This will show if EAJG should be possible to gain access to the EU institutions or what they should change to achieve this. This position will eventually lead to the recommendations provided in the next section.

6.2.1 NETWORKS

EAJG is a Dutch organization that has cooperated with several other NGOs, but it never became member of a network organization. Not in the Netherlands and not in the EU. From their point of view they are stronger while working from their own organization in cooperation with other NGOs. These NGOs can represent other groups, like Israeli or

Palestinians, or progressive Jews in other countries. This comes from the fact that they are a Jewish organization and with that they represent a specific exclusive part of the community. Since this progressive Jewish voice they spread is seen as a new development in the conflict. In the Netherlands and before in their mission to lobby at EU level they did not need this membership of a network organization, because they gained their position in the Dutch lobby as an individual organization and they were part of a European organization in the EU lobby. This European organization was a collaboration of different Jewish organizations from different member states that were all equally represented and equally doing the work. However, while looking at the indicators, networks can be of great help. It is not a necessity to be part of a network organization, but they do have the expertise and they can do the work for you. In that case, as a small Dutch NGO, your voice is heard at EU level in some way and it does not cost you much. This can be a choice of the organization. But in my eyes the network you build is not only with those network organizations, but also with other NGOs working individually and experts, but also people within the EU institutions are of importance. These people can help you strengthen your point and make you heard more. As been said by a respondent from one of the NGOs, it seems that a certain message from an important representative is perceived as of much more value and of much more interest than the same message by just some random person. So the people in your network are necessary and to me it seems that EAJG does have some contacts within the NGO world and it does have the opportunity to contact significant people. But they are not known within the EU institutions, so they really have to work on expanding that network. They do not have politically significant people as an active member of their organization. So EAJG should really focus on expanding their network of contacts before they start organizing the lobby. Especially with regard to the present NGOs in Brussels. These NGOs can help a lot with new contacts and gaining access to the EU institutions. EAJG did make some contacts in the past when going to Brussels. But these contacts never lasted, because EAJG failed to stay in Brussels. So some of the respondents I spoke with knew about EAJG or one of the representatives of EAJG, but they did not know what EAJG actually stands for and is trying to achieve. So EAJG needs to expand its contacts and work on its reputation to make the expansion to a success.

With regard to this indicator, there is no evidence that they are part of a network, but their network of contacts is more developed. However, they did not use these contacts a lot in the last years since they did not work on the EU level. This means that these contacts need to be renewed. EAJG has an exclusive position that will disappear when it will become part of a network organization, but it could use the expertise and the contacts of those organizations. So EAJG should try to renew contacts and make new contacts in Brussels to make this lobby

work. It should also use its contacts that are part of their daily activities. Because these can also open doors or provide useful information.

6.2.2. PRE-EXISTING RELATIONS

As said EAJG has a network of contacts that they can cooperate with or that can be used in the lobby. However, this network does not mean that this are meaningful pre-existing relations. The network they have does not bring you access to the EU institutions, what is the main goal of the expansion. If access is achieved, influence is present. The expertise of the contacts EAJG has can help in some way by making it easier to contact people. But EAJG does not have relations with people that are in the EU institutions and that have a worthy voice. The contacts that they made in their earlier attempts at the EU level did not take place on a regular basis, this does not prove trustworthiness. So these contacts are not a basis for future contacts. They need to start all over again with making contact and interesting them for the organization. They need to renew the contacts they made in the past. They do have some knowledge about who is interested in the case and is interested in their voice. The things they do not know they should find out from other NGOs or while making contacts at the EU level. EU employees are open to talk to you, however you need to prove that your message is trustworthy. These employees will help you contact other significant people. But a lot of work needs to be done to achieve this. And when these relations at the EU level are developed they need to be maintained.

Other significant pre-existing relations could be with people that have worked at the EU or national political level. These people open doors at the institutions. However, EAJG does not have an active member that was in politics and that, because of that, still has the contacts with the right people in the EU institutions. This will make it harder for EAJG to gain access to the EU institutions. They could use individual lobbyists, however these individualists lobby for different organizations all the time and that does not prove a regular presence in Brussels.

EAJG needs to work on this issue. It does not have significant pre-existing relations at the EU level. It does have a lot of relations in the Netherlands, but these cannot help them at the EU. Because these people represent other organizations or are not known with the EU. So EAJG should contact these people and maintain those relationships. Despite of when they are planning their lobby. These relationships could always be useful.

6.2.3 EXCLUSIVITY

As mentioned, EAJG has been working from its own organization and its own background in cooperation with other organizations. The reason for this was their unique feature that they represent a progressive voice from the Dutch Jewish community. This voice has not much

been heard in the Israel-Palestine debate. EAJG should focus on this unique position according to the respondents. This is their addition to the debate. The message they bring is not new, but this message from the Jewish community is new. It shows that critique on the Israeli policy is not always anti-Semitic, because even Jews do not approve on this policy. With this message the EU should be informed and it could change EUs stand in the conflict. It has been mentioned that things are changing in the EU, and by bringing this message from the Jewish community this change is even more pressured by the different NGOs. Besides this could the EU counter anti-Semitic arguments with the example of organizations like EAJG. So EAJG would add a lot to the debate when focusing on their exclusive feature of being a progressive Jewish organization, representing a group of Dutch Jews. With their followers they could show that there is a group that supports them. So EAJG would bring a strong message to the debate. Because of this they should work individually or with other progressive Jewish organizations. But they should definitely increase awareness in Europe about their existence. After this is done they could collaborate with other organizations, but then their presence in such a collaboration would add value to the message.

So according to the different respondents perspective on EAJGs uniqueness, it is necessary for EAJG to expand to the EU and put pressure on the national and the European level. The exclusivity EAJG has with its Jewish background could make this much more easier. It is clear that EAJG is exclusive in a way and they should use this, because it makes their lobby stronger. This uniqueness should help them gain access to the lobby and it should make it easier to achieve the two earlier mentioned indicators networks and pre-existing relations. Because what they have to say is an addition to the debate and this opens doors.

6.2.4 RESOURCES

As been mentioned resources are not the most important indicator, however without resources the lobby could not be organized. EAJG has access to some money for a European lobby in the form of EJJP. But it could also be redirected to only EAJG or another Jewish cooperation. This money is needed to organize the lobby, but as mentioned not much is needed. So they should be able to achieve a lot with this money.

If EAJG wants to go to the EU they should have an employee that has the time to work on the issue. The lobby could be organized with a little money, because they can work from the office they are already in and mostly have contact through email and other non-personal sources. Not much extra resources are necessary, but that is dependent on how the lobby will be organized. The more intensive the lobby, the more resources are needed. They do need an employee that will be working on the issue daily or at least weekly, because much is changing in the EU and if you want to be part of the debate you need to be up to date in the issues that

are going on in the institutions. So someone needs to be totally informed about the developments at the EU level. This could be organized by intensifying the contacts with the different networks in Brussels and let them inform the organization about the different developments. As mentioned, an office is not necessary. However, it would be the ideal situation to be situated in Brussels and work on the EU lobby daily. This is dependent on the successes EAJG will make and the money they are willing to spend on the lobby.

So, it should be possible to organize the lobby from the point of the resources, since not much is needed. EAJG does have the financial support from different funds and individuals. An office in Brussels is not needed and they only need one person that will be working on the European issue on a regular basis. So with this knowledge, the resource part of the lobby should be achievable and make the expansion easier to achieve.

6.2.5 STRATEGY AND SELF-AWARENESS

In the theoretical chapter I discussed the necessity, but also the immeasurability of the strategy and the self-awareness. While working at the organization it shows that the organization has a clear strategy focused on the Dutch lobby, but there is no strategy for the European lobby. They have been lobbying at the EU-level in the past years as EJJP, but it was mainly EAJG that was present in Brussels. To me it seemed that there was no agreed strategy within the Dutch organization on how to organize the European lobby, who would be contacted and what would be discussed. Before they will organize this expansion they should develop a clear strategy within the organization. In this strategy the organizations strengths and flaws should be clear. If they are aware of these, the lobby could be organized around their strengths and the flaws should be avoided. I think EAJG is not totally aware of its opportunities. EAJG is convinced they could organize the EU lobby on its own, however while talking to the respondents this seems not very achievable. Of course they can organize the lobby on their own, however the influence will be minimal and less people will be reached. They have to be aware of the fact that they are just a small organization and that they only represent a part of the Dutch Jewish community, this will not add much to the debate. If they could talk for a part of the European Jewish community this will be a greater addition to the debate and more influence will be exerted. Since this failed in the past with EJJP, they are a bit afraid of another attempt. But I do think it will be the best option. As mentioned a network will not pay much attention to the unique group EAJG represents. So their influence will not be great. But within the EU it is better to represent a European population and not only a national population. EAJG should be aware of their options and write this down in a clear strategy. They should focus on what they want to reach and how they want to reach it. But also with who they want to start this adventure. When this strategy is clear, they could

continue for example starting a new Jewish cooperation and define a strategy for that organization. But at first EAJG should have its own strategy focusing on its own self-awareness.

These features are not decisive for the expansion, but they do influence the organization and this should all be known before they start the EU lobby. It is much easier when goals are written down, and along the way these goals could be increased to a higher level. But EAJG should first focus on the feasibility of their goals. This would make the lobby easier to organize.

6.3 EAJGS INFLUENCE

EAJG has tried before to influence on the European level, but also on the national level. As mentioned an organization should focus on a few themes, this is where many organizations lack. They try to be part of the discussion regarding the conflict at all times, concerning all issues. There are many NGOs working on the conflict, however not enough to divide all themes amongst different NGOs. So the network organizations do have some advantages in this sense, since they have different organizations that can help them work on certain issues. For EAJG this is not the case and they should be aware of the themes they want to discuss before they even think about cooperating or doing it individually.

There are many issues part of the conflict and all decisions on these issues can help bring a solution closer or further away. So in some sense all debates need critical arguments to come to a good decision. However, EAJG as an individual organization cannot achieve this. As mentioned, they need to choose the topics they want to work on. However, it is hard to bring topics to the European agenda, so they need to be aware of the European agenda and choose their topics on basis of this agenda. Next to that, they need to choose one or two topics they want to base a project on. Like they are doing at the moment with the project on child prisoners. However, I am not convinced that they should take this theme to the European Union on their initiative, but on the initiative of one of the bigger organizations.

One of the topics I think they should focus on is labeling. They have been working on this in the Netherlands and it is still a hot topic. Some visible result has been achieved with this in the Netherlands. Which shows that result can be achieved and everyone that helped to achieve this result should take the credits. The activities on labeling resulted in the fact that some grocery stores have chosen to label the products originating from the settlements as settlement products. EAJG has added to this result with publicizing factsheets and pressuring debate on this issue. However, the result is not optimal yet. Many other stores need to follow this example nationally and internationally. So, there is a lot of room to achieve more on this subject. Public awareness on this issue needs to be increased and the work they have done on

this issue can also be done at the European level. Hopefully it will result in more grocery stores that take over the labeling conditions that are part of European law. The mentioned indicators should help make the activities on this issue reach beyond the national boundaries.

Another intriguing topic is the European Neighbourhood Policy. The ENP was the reason I got interested in Israel. Studying the Israel Action Plan showed me that the position Israel has in the European Union is very different from the other neighbouring countries. This should change. Israel could still be intellectually closer, but it should like others take into account human rights and the EU should hold on to its norms and values. This is a subject that is always going on. As mentioned above, there is no new action plan and because of that was decided to continue with the 2005 action plan. However, this plan is lacking stimulation to take action. A new action plan could help bring a solution closer if the EU is willing to take a stronger stand. As mentioned the EU is changing its stand and taking more measures against Israel. I think this is a good time to start putting pressure on this action plan. Many developments have taken place that could change this action plan and make the ENP more useful. However, if no one is paying attention to this topic nothing will change. So, here is a chance for EAJG. Not on their own. But they should gather other organizations to start pressuring a new, more active action plan. In the past there have been activities focusing on parts of the action plan, like the ACAA. And on the whole action plan when too much benefits for Israel came out of it. But the attention for the action plan faded the time it got less topical. I think for an organization like EAJG, or a European collaboration of it, this would be a good topic for a longer period of time. Keeping up to date with developments within the ENP makes it possible to be ready when it is needed, but also to bring this topic back on the agenda.

In the end there are still a lot of topics that need attention, despite the fact that all NGOs try to focus on all topics that are currently on the agenda. I think that if EAJG wants to go to the EU they should focus partly on topics they focused on nationally too, but also on topics that disappeared from the agenda, but that definitely will come back. With pressure from them or with pressure from others. The ENP for both Israel and Palestine is such a topic that will always be of importance to the conflict and finding a resolution to it.

6.4 OPPORTUNITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The above discussed position of EAJG shows EAJGs possibilities to expand their lobby to the EU level. At first, I want to state that there is a gap in the European lobby that EAJG could fulfill. The critic Jewish community is not represented in the debate, what is a shortcoming in the information that is provided. So I would state that EAJG should expand their lobby, but that does not mean that they can.

As mentioned EAJG does have its resources to organize the lobby and an exclusive feature that will add to the debate. However these indicators have a lower weighting than the indicators of networks and pre-existing relations. EAJG does not have these developed sufficiently for easy access to the EU. They do have a network, but they did not maintain relations they made in the past. So their network is not very reliant on the organization. They do have contacts they could use, but they need to work on this before their network is developed significantly to be able to play a role at the European level. With regard to pre-existing relations does EAJG not have many. Here too did they make some contacts in their earlier attempts especially with EJJP. But these contacts do not take place on a regular basis and they did not develop a steady basis for future contacts. They need to make these contacts before they start to organize the lobby. There are many opportunities to make these contacts, but since these have not been developed through the years there is a small chance that these could be used for their expansion. Next to that does EAJG not have significant members that played an important role in politics in the past. These could also have helped by organizing the lobby and gaining access to the institutions.

In the end I want to conclude that EAJG does have the opportunities and the resources to organize the European lobby. However, gaining access to the institutions is more difficult since they do not have enough contacts in the political world and they did not maintain the contacts sufficiently in the NGO world. EAJG should first focus on their reputation in the EU. They should make sure that when they organize the lobby they could continue it on a regular basis. Since this did not work out in the past, they need to make sure it does happen in the future. Another failure will lead to more distrust in their capability to lobby at the EU. This should be their main point of focus while strategizing the lobby. I would recommend EAJG to try organize the expansion. The ideal situation would be in another collaboration with other progressive Jewish organizations like with EJJP. This has also been mentioned by some of the respondents. Because than the access to the EU is easier to gain and the organization has the right to speak for a European Jewish population. However, things need to be different from the attempt of EJJP. They should cooperate with just a few other organizations that do have sort of the same method of work and the same point of interest in the conflict. This should lead to less disagreement and more results. I do think it is of importance that the Jewish critical message is provided in the European debate, but EAJG needs to be aware of its boundaries and its opportunities. Next to that they should not forget their national lobby. As mentioned this is the most important part of the lobby and the most result will be achieved. EAJGs position in the Dutch lobby is very strong. They are seen as one of the most important organizations in the Dutch lobby by the Dutch media. They should use this position while going to the EU. Their lobby in the Dutch debate is very well organized and their message is

very much appreciated. They started from scratch and they were able to come to this position. They should learn from their failures and successes throughout their existence and try to develop the same position in the European lobby without losing their focus on the Dutch lobby. They need to find a perfect combination of a national and a European lobby. But they should definitely try to organize the expansion of their activities.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The main goal of this research was to find out if non-governmental organizations influence EU decision-making with regard to the debate on Israel and the Palestinian Authority. This conflict has a long and complex history with several external actors involved in finding a solution. In this concluding chapter will the results of the research be presented and will be concluded on different issues. Also will be tried to answer the question asked in the introducing chapter. This question was: How can a small Dutch NGO influence EU policy with regard to Israel-Palestine? First will the role the EU played be summarized to be able to fully understand the conclusions about NGO influence and the possibilities for EAJG which will be discussed afterwards. In the end the research will be reflected and recommendations for further research are defined.

7.2 ROLE EU

The EU has never played a very significant role in the peace making process, however the situation is changing. In the past, after the second world war, the USSR and the US where the global powers that 'ruled' the world. The EU was too weak and afraid for conflicts with the US, so it went along with the decisions made by others. The EU paid for these 'solutions', and with that bought itself a place at the negotiation table. Through the years the EU became more and more a significant player. Not only because of the money, but also because the EU shifted their attention from the member states to the surrounding countries. Next to that is the US shifting its attention more to the east, looking for money since they are no longer dependent on the support of those countries in the Cold War and on the oil these countries provided. The EU is gaining a more significant role in this debate, however they do not use their position. Europe is Israel's biggest trade partner and is financially very important for the PA since it sends a lot of money to the PA to build a state. Europe is in the position to set political conditions and, if these are not lived up to, use economic consequences. However, they keep economics and politics separated and with this Israel does not respond to any conditions the EU has set. So, the EU does not use its position in the right way.

Several explanations for this can be found in the literature. There is the Marxist imperialistic perspective on this issue, which explains EUs urge to expand and because of this they think it is more important that these countries are part of their policy than that they actually live up to EUs norms and values. Next to that has Israel always been close to Europe, it is more developed and economically less dependent than all the other countries in the ENP.

Israel has always grown following EUs standards. This partly explains EUs tolerance with Israel. They are trying to compensate this by sending money to the PA. In this way they cannot be blamed to favor one of the parties. The mentioned Marxist imperialist theories are lacking in some sense, they do not take into account a humanities aspect. Which is also a part of EUs policy towards both countries. Feelings of guilt and pity are forces behind EUs stand in the conflict. This perspective does not give a full overview of EUs role in the conflict, but it is a perspective that can help explain the influence of NGOs on EU decision making. This is the perspective used in this research to study NGO influence. The EU is too much focusing on expanding its power, without actually using this position. Pressure from NGOs is necessary to change this stand and the toleration with Israel. If NGOs really influence EU decision-making is discussed in the next section.

7.3 NGO INFLUENCE

NGOs try to influence the decision making process on many issues and on many levels. But not much is known about the results of the lobby. The debate regarding Israel and Palestine is very complex and negotiations and results are often hidden. So there is not much information about the influence of NGOs on this debate. Nevertheless, they keep on trying to lobby at the EU level and some result must be achieved. In this research has been tried to gain some insight in the influence of NGOs on the debate to develop a complete overview of the opportunities and the need for EAJG to expand the lobby to the EU.

Different indicators were provided for NGO influence on the EU debate. These indicators are not focused on influence, but on access to the EU. Access can be seen as a good replacement for influence, which is immeasurable. The studied indicators are networks, pre-existing relations, exclusivity and resources. If these indicators are present in a sufficient way, gaining access to the EU institutions should be achievable in an easy way and with that the EU decision making is influenced. Next to these indicators are also a clear strategy and self-awareness of the NGOs of importance to be able to organize the lobby. If the strategy is clear and the strengths and weaknesses are known and taken into account, it should be easier to organize the lobby and the chance of success is bigger.

The partial goal of this research was to study the influence of the NGOs on the EU debate regarding the conflict in the Middle-East. Several respondents have helped to gain insight in this world, in the NGOs and their perspective on this. These people are part of NGOs, the EU and experts on the conflict. These people provided insight in their influence and in the opportunities for EAJG. The results of the interviews eventually led to the conclusion that to the organizations results are not always clear, but adding to the debate and making issues questioned by MEPs is a result to them. Making sure that issues do not just pass, but that they

are talked about and people are aware of the consequences is a result to them. No matter if they lose or win the vote or the debate. Next to that was mentioned that access to the EU is relatively easy to gain and with that the organizations influence the debate. However, the organizations are never certain of their influence. They never know what their success is and what other organizations did, since there are so many organizations active in the field. The side of the lobby studied loses a lot, since the counter lobby is much more organized and the perspective within the EU institutions, which represent the European population, lacks a lot of information and because of that they stay in the perspective that Israel needs to be helped. But this is not the case anymore and not everything they do is beneficial for the Israeli. So there is influence, but a lot more is needed. The different indicators show that in the lobby networks and pre-existing contacts are important to NGOs. It helps them gain access and be more trustworthy in the eyes of the EU employees. If an employee of an NGO has worked in politics, they still have their relations and the message that is provided by these people is trusted. Other relations already developed in the past and maintained with good and trustworthy information and messages are very much valued by the EU employees. They know who they can rely on and which people bring an interesting story. Which means that gaining access to the institutions and the debate is much easier when you already have the contacts. Next to that, the organizations present in Brussels cooperate a lot with each other and with many organizations from the member states as members of the organizations. This makes it possible to say that the European population is represented. These networks have the expertise and the contacts, so cooperation between the organizations reaches more people and more influence is exerted on the EU. Exclusivity has been mentioned by most of the respondents as an important aspect of their lobby. Every organization should bring something new to the debate, so every organization should have a unique feature. There are already so many actors in this debate, so to gain access an organization or an individual should be able to add something and not come with the same message as all the others. Then the chance that you are heard is very small. The last indicator regarding the resources has not much been mentioned. The organizations all seem to be able to organize the lobby with little financial resources and with little manpower. So it is not the most important. However, without resources it is impossible to organize anything. So it is necessary to have some resources available when the lobby will be organized.

The different respondents have showed that the NGOs do have access to the EU. Most EU employees are open to all information provided by the NGOs. As been mentioned by one of the respondents at the EU: "the NGOs are the second most important information source for the EU institutions". So everything they offer the institutions can be seen as an addition to the debate and with that influence. It seems that it is not too hard to gain access to the

institutions, while talking to the EU employees. However, it does not mean that it is easy to influence the decision-making. Because the people that are open to information from the NGOs are the people that are working on the issue daily. However, the people that agree on the decision making are all EU employees and these are not reached by the lobby. It stays important that more and more people are reached by the lobby activities and that they are all informed about what is going on in the region. As been mentioned, many organizations are active in the lobby. However, the one side is much more represented than the other side. So every addition to the lobby and all new information is needed to eventually be able to pressure as much as needed.

In the end I would like to conclude that the provided indicators are not a necessity for the organizations of a European lobby. Access to the institutions can also be gained if these indicators are not present in the organization. However, it is easier to organize the lobby if the indicators are present and the chance that the organization will be of any value influencing the EU is much bigger. The story shows that there is a place and a usefulness for EAJG in Brussels, but it does not show EAJGs position on their expansion. I will elaborate on this in the next section.

7.4 EAJG

EAJG wants to expand its message. They are a highly appreciated organization in the Dutch lobby and they feel it is necessary to bring their message to the European debate. As mentioned above this message can be of value to the European debate, the progressive Jewish community is not very present in the lobby and every critical voice is welcome in Brussels. However, this does not show if EAJG is able to organize the expansion and maintain their activities in Brussels. Since this failed in the past, EAJG needs to be fully aware of their opportunities and their boundaries. This has been discussed on basis of the earlier mentioned indicators for access.

The resources and the exclusivity are present in the organization. EAJG brings a unique feature to the debate, since the message they bring from the Jewish community is new this should make access to the EU easier. The resources are there and should not be hard to organize. They have the people and the expertise about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, they only lack expertise about the European lobby. Besides this, they have the financial resources. As mentioned not much is needed, but what is needed is already available for EAJG. This should ease the organization of the expansion.

The other two indicators, networks and pre-existing relations, are not that well developed yet. EAJG did make some contacts in the past and it should be able to use its network of contacts in their favor. However, they are not part of an existing network, and

since the earlier attempts failed, contacts were not maintained. EAJG needs to renew its contacts and make sure that they will have a place in the European lobby. This can only be achieved when contacts with other organizations are existent and good. Because these organizations are already present and could help EAJG stay up to date with developments in the lobby. This is especially necessary in the beginning, when EAJG should be organizing its lobby from its office in Amsterdam. It seems that the last indicator, pre-existing contacts, is not present at all. EAJG failed to maintain relations after their failed attempts. They should have kept in touch with the people they met in Brussels. Because then they would have shown that they are still working on the issue and that they are still trying to inform politics and the public. However, this is not the case. What makes it much harder for EAJG to renew these contacts. Next to that, EAJG does not have any active members with a political background and existing political relations. This would have helped gain access to the EU. Since this is not the case EAJG has a lot of work to do to renew these contacts at the expense of their work on the issue. Nevertheless, even without these contacts EAJG should be able to organize this expansion. They have the expertise and the people in Brussels are open to meet with anybody. This does not mean that they will actually influence the EU, but gaining access should be possible and access often leads to influence.

I would like to conclude this section with recommending EAJG to organize this expansion. Hereby they should really focus on the group they represent. The past has shown that this groups opinion has been valued a lot and it opens a lot of doors. They do need to spend a lot of time on renewing the contacts, but this should be possible and EAJG could definitely add to the debate. However, this attempt should be a success, another failure would mean an end to the European dream the organization has. So the organization should be convinced that they are ready and able to organize this. A clear strategy that focuses on its strengths and weaknesses and the feasibility of set goals should be developed. This makes the expansion more likely to succeed.

7.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

We can conclude that there are opportunities for NGOs to influence at EU level and EU institutions are open to their input. However, influence is almost impossible to measure and every NGO perceives it in a different way. Influence is something personal. But the lobby is very important to the EU, because it informs them and shows them different sides of the story. The study showed that NGOs do influence EU decision-making. And every NGO wanting to organize the lobby at the EU level could be able to do this. The main point of focus of these contacts should be making contacts and maintaining them. The different indicators provided in this research are not a necessity for organizations, but the presence of these indicators in

the organization will make the expansion easier and influence more likely. This needs to be taken into account by NGOs while organizing the lobby. If they are lacking in some sense they should try to focus on those points what will bring result closer. In the end we can state that NGOs do have influence, but it is impossible to know how much. And every addition to the debate is welcome. So, it should be possible for EAJG to organize the expansion to the European level.

7.6 REFLECTION

This study gained some more insight in the complex EU decision making process and the role of NGOs in this process. However, this study was not able to really measure influence and to give academically sound insights. NGO influence should be studied further to be able to define measurable indicators and to develop theories. However, as mentioned, influence is something personal and different for everybody. So every theory will be lacking in some sense. I have tried to give some overview of the process and the activities of NGOs. With this information other NGOs could be helped, but the time and resources were lacking to be able to develop a good basis for those NGOs. So more research is needed to gain insight in the NGOs and their role in the debate. And hopefully someday this will help to find a solution to the conflict in Israel and Palestine. The EU and the conflict region are much studied subjects, however there is still no solution so it is still not studied enough. Where this research focused only on NGOs, much more actors are involved in the lobby. Research is needed to be able to have an overview of the lobby activities, this is needed to be able to find a solution for the conflict and increase EU's role in this, but also for future EU lobby activities on other subjects. Because the EU will play a significant role in our lives and in international politics. As said the EU wants to expand its influence and will keep doing that. So many other issues will be discussed within the EU and lobbied on by others. So all information provided on the EU lobby is helpful for future activities and necessary to gain the needed insights. This research was an addition of information to several subjects, but not the last information needed. Much more research is needed to understand everything and the chances are small that studying these subjects will ever stop since they are always developing.

When writing this thesis new developments took place in the peace process. The US minister of foreign affairs, John Kerry, restarted the peace talks with both Israel and Palestine. At the same time did the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs confess that they have been talking with Israel and Palestine in the last years, in secret. This shows that the debate regarding the conflict is always changing, since there are always new developments. But this also shows that result is not always visible. EAJG did help pressure Rosenthal, the former

Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, to do something about the situation. And it also informed Rosenthal about the different issues going on in the region. So this shows that EAJG had result with their activities, together with other organizations, but they should take their credits. But it also shows that achievements are often invisible, because many developments are not shown to the world. NGOs should definitely continue their work on all issues, because they help bring solutions closer. And academics should continue researching the NGO world, but also the EU and Israel-Palestine. Because many new developments will lead to many new insights and hopefully one day to peace.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX 1. LIST OF RESPONDENTS

List of EU Respondents

- Anna Maria Bonnici, EEAS OPT Desk
- Krassimir Nikolov, EEAS Israel Desk
- Christian Garrigues, European Parliament DG EXPO Euromed-Middle East Israel Palestine Coordinator.

List of NGO Respondents

- Agnes Bertrand-Sanz, Aprodev
- Deborah Casalin, CIDSE
- Nicole Lambert, Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network
- Nada Kiswanson- van Hooijdonk, Al Haq
- Martin Sieperman, The Rights Forum
- Hilla Dayan, Former employee of different NGOs now
- Willem-Gert Aldershof
- Phyllis Starkey

EAJG Respondents

- Max Wieselmann
- Rick Meulenstein

ANNEX 2. INTERVIEW GUIDE

Organization – what and how

- What does the organization do?
- What is your role in the origination?
- What is your stand in the conflict?

Role EU

- What is the relation of the EU with both countries?
- What is the most important function of the EU in the conflict?
- How can the EU be influenced by NGOs like yours and ours?
- What role would you like to see the EU play in the conflict? What would be the ideal situation?

Organization – EU

- How is your relationship with the EU? And how did you create this contact?
- Are you active in the EU? Like lobbying, inform, publicize etc.
- How do you influence the EU and her decision-making process?
- Do you feel you achieve something with your work/ you have influence?

Opportunities EAJG

- Are you known with EAJG?
- What opportunities do you see for EAJG in Brussels?
- Is there a need and a platform for the voice of EAJG?
- What activities should EAJG use in Brussels? Should they focus on lobbying, or informing by factsheets and other publications?
- Should they cooperate? And what organizations would you recommend for this?

Themes

- What themes are of importance to the EU regarding the conflict?
- Where could EAJG be of significance? In the already developed fields of settlement policy and labeling or should they focus on new subjects?
- Should EAJG focus on the Dutch themes? Or should they take another course?

Do you have some more relevant information for me? Or people I can contact?

Thank you so much for your time and your collaboration!