

THE IMPACT OF THE WAR ON GAZA ON THE US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Mukhtar IMAM,

Department of International Relations, Al-Muhibbah Open University, Abuja-Nigeria

mukhtarimam01@gmail.com

&

Chubado Babbi TIJJANI,

Department of Political Science & Int'l Relations, Nile University of Nigeria, Abuja, Nigeria

chubadotijjani@gmail.com

Abstract

The War on Gaza, caused by a recurring occupation of Palestinian land by Israel, has long been a focal point of international attention and debate. The escalation of killings and wanton destruction of Palestinian land and people in the ongoing genocide in Gaza has not only had profound humanitarian implications for the Palestinian people but has also reverberated across the global political landscape, including in the context of U.S. presidential elections. This article provides an analytical examination of the impact of the Massacre in Gaza on U.S. presidential elections, with a focus on the electoral dynamics, public opinion, and policy responses. Through a comprehensive review of literature and analysis of electoral outcomes, this article explores the ways in which the War on Gaza has influenced electoral campaigns, candidate positions, and voter perceptions, and assesses its implications for U.S. foreign policy towards the Middle East.

Keywords: *War on Gaza, U.S. Presidential Election, Foreign Policy, Public Opinion, Electoral Dynamics.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

For long the Middle East has been referred to as the melting pot of the world. The reality on the ground appears not too far from this proverbial cauldron. At the center of this imbroglio is the strife over land between the indigenous Palestinian people and the Israeli settlers. This struggle over land has created room for contestation between the Palestinians who have lived on the land for hundreds of years and the Zionists Israeli occupying force which was an imposition by Great Britain following what is now the infamous Balfour declaration of 2nd November, 1917. This declaration by decree created a 'Jewish' home on the land of Palestine. This and a series of event led to the massacre of hundreds of Palestinians and have been the basis of the unfortunate eruption of over 5 full-scale wars between the newly established state of Israel and her Arab neighbors. The region has also witnessed 3 Intifada and a number of violent attacks on Palestinians by the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) and Israeli settlers in Jerusalem, Hebron the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, Imam (2023).

The recent ongoing massacre in Gaza, which the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Court, the United Nations and tens if not hundreds of other international organizations have called a genocide, is also an off-shoot of the invasion and occupation referred to above. The take-over of land and refusal of rights have all culminated in creating the atmosphere of frustration on the part of the Palestinians. The 75 years of Nakba, the decades of repression and hold-back, the long-stretch period of suppression and subjugation of the Palestinian people, the age-long deprivation and sub-human level treatment all brought about the unfortunate incident which was witnessed on the 7th of October where the Palestinian resistance took it open itself to invade and carter away with some hostages (most of whom were military) from the Israeli territory.

What has been infamously referred to as 'The War on Gaza', but agreed upon by global consensus as a genocide has brought about what can mildly be characterized as a recurrent cycle of violence on Palestinians by Israel. This has far-reaching implications for the Middle East region and beyond. The massacre of civilians, mostly women and children, which is still ongoing to this day, the shelling and bombardment of residential areas and refugee camps, the use of starvation as a war tactic by the Israelis have brought upon the world the most barbaric act of savagery ever witnessed in recorded history after the great wars. Beyond its immediate humanitarian toll, the conflict has also shaped global perceptions, policies, and political dynamics, including in the context of U.S. presidential elections. This is as the US has placed

itself as a ‘mediator’ in the crisis, initiating several so-called mediation strategies such as the, Camp David Accord, the Oslo Accord, the Obama Initiative, the Abraham Accord and so on. However, what is apparent is that the US has given unflinching support to the state of Israel and have supplied her with military weaponry and billions of dollars all to the detriment of the Palestinians. This article provides an analytical examination of the impact of this ongoing genocide by Israel and supported by the US in Gaza on U.S. presidential elections, exploring how the conflict has influenced electoral campaigns, candidate positions, and voter attitudes towards foreign policy and the Middle East, Alterman (2024).

2. THE GAZA WAR IN THE CONTEXT OF U.S. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

The War on Gaza and elsewhere throughout the Palestinian territory has often intersected with U.S. presidential elections, either per-chance or design, becoming a focal point of debate and discussion during electoral campaigns. Candidates for the presidency, as well as incumbent Presidents seeking re-election, often find themselves compelled to articulate their positions on the conflict and outline their strategies for addressing the underlying issues. In essence the war has over the years been seen as a front-burner issue in the campaigns of the US. This particular incident which erupted on the 7th of October and has seen the massacre of over 35,000 Palestinians 15,000 of which are children, has galvanized public attention and mobilized advocacy efforts, with various interest groups and stakeholders seeking to influence electoral outcomes and shape U.S. foreign policy towards the Middle East, Lynch (2024).

3. ELECTORAL DYNAMICS AND CANDIDATE POSITIONS

Particularly given the dynamics of the ongoing massacre in Gaza, the never-before seen genocide on women and children, the shelling and bombardment of hospitals, schools and refugee camps, the War on Gaza has no doubt influenced electoral dynamics in multiple ways, shaping candidate positions and campaign strategies. This is also the case as the two leading candidates in the Presidential election are avowed Zionist supporters. Candidates for the presidency have been forced to navigate a complex landscape of competing interests, including support for Israel or lack of it therefore, as is with the case of a few independent candidates, Jill Stein and Prof. Cornel West who have openly shown their displeasure with the genocidal and apartheid Zionist state of Israel. Concerns about human rights violations, and broader geopolitical considerations have also taken center-stage in the lead-up to the elections. The ongoing genocide and War on Gaze and the rest of Palestine has also highlighted divisions

within political parties, with candidates seeking to appeal to different constituencies and balance competing priorities. Essentially, the ongoing War on Gaza and brutality against its people seeks to serve as litmus test for candidates' leadership abilities and foreign policy expertise, particularly with their position on Israel, with voters scrutinizing their responses and positions on the conflict, especially with the current awakening and advocacy on Palestine amongst young voters, Hirsch (2016).

4. PUBLIC OPINION AND POLICY RESPONSES

The War on Gaza and the murder of women and children is having significant implications on public opinion and policy responses, shaping voter attitudes towards foreign policy and the Middle East region in general. Opinion polls have shown that public support for Israel tends to increase during periods of conflict, particularly among certain demographic groups and political affiliations. However, the dynamics have changed around the ongoing pillage on the Palestinian people by the War brought upon Gaza by Israel. This has generated widespread concern about civilian casualties, humanitarian crises, starvation as a weapon of war and the broader implications for regional stability. As such, the conflict has prompted calls for diplomatic intervention, humanitarian assistance, and efforts at a permanent ceasefire. This new dimension and trend in the endless occupation and killings of Palestinians is apparent in the outpour of protests across various institutions of higher learning in and around the United States, Dennis (2024).

5. THE INFLUENCE OF THE GAZA WAR ON ELECTORAL OUTCOMES

The impact of the War on Gaza on U.S. presidential elections extends beyond shaping candidate positions and campaign strategies to influencing electoral outcomes. The sentiments, sympathy and emotions that has been evoked around the world as a result of the gory images of beheadings of children, decimation of body parts of civilians, destruction of hospitals, schools and refugee camps in Gaza and elsewhere in Palestine has the potential to sway voter preferences, particularly among certain demographic groups, such as pro-Israel or pro-Palestine constituencies, whose views on the conflict may be central to their voting decisions. Furthermore, the response of political candidates to the War on Gaza can either mobilize or alienate key constituencies, ultimately affecting their electoral prospects. For example, a candidate perceived as overly supportive or critical of Israel's actions, which have been

characterized by the International Criminal Court as constituting genocide, may face backlash from certain voter blocs, leading to shifts in electoral dynamics and outcomes, Imam (2024).

6. MEDIA COVERAGE AND PUBLIC PERCEPTION

Media coverage plays a crucial role in shaping public perception of the War on Gaza and, by extension, its impact on U.S. presidential elections. The framing of the conflict in news outlets, the portrayal of key actors, and the emphasis on specific aspects of the conflict can influence public opinion and voter attitudes towards candidates' positions on the issue. In this context, social media platforms amplify the dissemination of information and opinions related to the War on Gaza and provide dreadful and gory images of civilian casualties who are mostly women and children. Obviously providing a platform for advocacy, mobilization, and debate as currently being witnessed across universities in the State. As such, the media's portrayal of the War on Gaza can shape electoral discourse, inform voter preferences, and influence electoral outcomes, Mead (2024).

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND DIPLOMATIC RESPONSES

The War on Gaza also has significant implications for U.S. foreign policy and diplomatic responses, which in turn can impact U.S. presidential elections. The stance of political candidates on the War on Gaza reflects broader policy positions on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, U.S. military aid to Israel, and diplomatic efforts which have been exposed as double standard and complacent in the war will no doubt be very instrumental in determining electoral outcomes. Although not a very popular view amongst US elites and not a likely scenario considering the US unflinching support towards Israel, the War on Gaza may prompt calls for U.S. intervention, mediation, or diplomatic pressure to address the root causes of the conflict and promote a lasting peace, especially owing to the outcry and outpour of support for Palestinians as currently being witnessed across the US and Europe. Candidates' positions on these issues can influence voter perceptions of their leadership abilities, foreign policy expertise, and commitment to peace and stability in the Middle East, thus shaping electoral outcomes, Tessler & Helfand (2024).

The Long-Term Impact of the Gaza War on U.S. Presidential Elections

The War on Gaza impacts on U.S. presidential elections extends beyond individual electoral cycles, shaping broader trends and dynamics in U.S. politics and foreign policy. The recurrence

of the hostility and occupation of Palestinian territories and its persistence as a contentious issue in U.S. politics, due to the US unflinching support towards Israel, underscores the enduring importance of the Israeli occupation of Palestine in shaping electoral outcomes and policy decisions. Effectively, the War on Gaza influence on public opinion, media coverage, whereas diplomatic responses can have lasting implications for U.S. engagement in the Middle East, regional stability, and global perceptions of U.S. leadership and mediation role. As such, understanding the long-term impact of the War on Gaza and the ongoing US-Supported genocide on U.S. presidential elections is essential for policymakers, analysts, and voters alike, Alterman (2024).

8. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the War on Gaza and the genocide against children women and children, through the pummeling of Palestine with barrages of rockets and bombs by Israel will no doubt have significant impact on U.S. presidential elections, influencing electoral dynamics, candidate positions, and voter perceptions towards foreign policy and the Middle East region in general. This is largely due to the support that Israel enjoys amongst the elite establishment in the US congress and elsewhere. The genocide has forced candidates vying for the presidency to expose their positions on the conflict and outline their strategies for addressing the underlying issues. Which evidently is in support of Israel even at the cost of every Palestinian live. Furthermore, the War on Gaza has galvanized public attention and mobilized advocacy efforts, with various interest groups and stakeholders seeking to influence electoral outcomes and shape U.S. foreign policy. As the War on Gaza continues to unfold, its implications for U.S. presidential elections and foreign policy towards the Middle East will remain a subject of debate and discussion.

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