

## Chapter 5: Three Levels of Analysis

### 5.1 Summary of Findings

The case on repealing the “Zionism is racism” resolution proves a legal right to repeal a UNGA resolution and becomes a useful precedent for revoking Resolution 2758. More importantly, the analysis showed the shifting political circumstances of UNGA member nations, not the change in laws, were the principal cause of the adoption or repeal of the Zionism resolution in the UNGA. The text of the Zionism resolution represented the ideological conflict between Zionism and anti-Zionism, but when it comes to adopt or repeal the ideological resolution in the UNGA, it required the assistance from political and economical power. Once the UNGA members’ concern for the negative consequences of the repeal disappeared in 1991, the number of vote in support of revocation surpassed that of disapproval. There were three major key factors that the UNGA inclined to adopt the revocation resolution, namely: 1) the shift in international circumstances; 2) the US diplomacy; and 3) Israel’s willingness to find a room for Arab-Israeli reconciliation.

As the Zionism resolution was a byproduct of the Palestine issue, the revocation offered a glimmer of hope to alter the unacceptable status quo in Palestine. Since the UNGA adopted the Zionism resolution in 1975, the international political environment had changed significantly. At the time that the Cold War ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Soviet bloc, the Soviet Union and Israel restored diplomatic relations. The Gulf War, although Washington was pleased with Israeli restraint from retaliating against the Iraqi attack, also exposed the vulnerability of

Israel as a US strategic asset in the region. The political power of the Arabs began to decline when Western dependency upon Arab oil was reduced. The *Intifada*, on the other hand, achieved the Arab unity and the international recognition of the PLO, the collective pressure of which isolated Israel and promoted more equal preconditions for the Middle East peace negotiation. The continuous growth in Jewish settlements in the Territories left the Arabs no choice but to come to terms with Israel. Hence, even from the Arab perspectives, the political benefit of convening a UN involved Middle East peace conference was much more attractive than the moral benefit of preventing the Zionism resolution from being revoked in the UNGA, especially when time apparently favored Israel.

While the international political stage was set for peace, the actual trigger for the repealing process was generated by the adjustment in the US Middle East policy. Chomsky (2004) notes, “Since World War II, the US government has adopted the standard practice of powerful states, regularly choosing force over law when that was considered expedient for ‘the national interest,’ a technical term referring to the special interests of domestic sectors that are in a position to determine policy” (p. 29). As a matter of fact, powerful Israel lobbies attempted to shape American Middle East policy through their interpretation of what is the national interest. Regarded as domestic interest groups and associated with neo-conservatism, the formal lobby established effective links with Washington. And also informal lobby, capitalizing Jewish American’s strong connection with mass media as well as education sector, produced the sympathetic public opinion toward Israel and the notion that Israel does matter to the US. However, the policymaking process was not entirely in the hand of Israeli lobby. For example, Zunes (2006) points out that “there are far more powerful interests that have a stake in what happens in the Persian Gulf region than does AIPAC, such as the oil companies, the arm industry, and other special interest whose

lobbying influence and campaign contributions far surpass that of the much-vaunted ‘Zionist lobby’ and its allied donors to Congressional races” (para. 12).

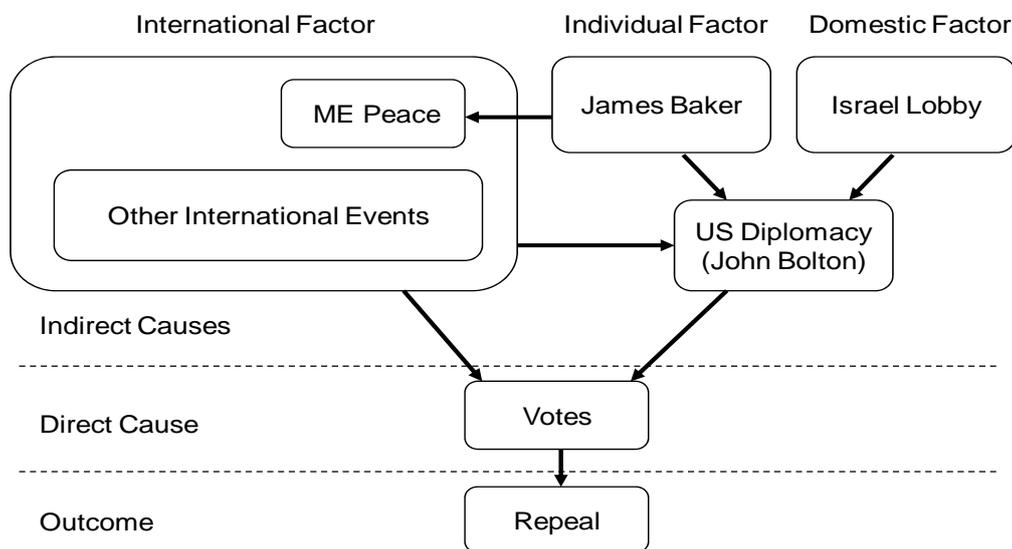
The US national interests in the Middle East during the Cold War era were defined as 1) the containment of Soviet expansion, 2) the access to the oil supplies, 3) economic and diplomatic relations with the Arab states as well as Israel, and 4) regional stability to maintain 1, 2, and 3 (Bard, 1990; Rubenberg, 1986). The Washington’s attempt to overturn the Arab-led resolution of 1975 would have conflicted with traditional American interests in the region. However, the US Middle East interests were gradually modified to reflect the new international environment. The establishment of peace and stability in the Middle East was placed on the top priority of the US regional interests in the aftermath of the Gulf War.

Israel alone could not swim against the current of time or world public opinion, yet Israel, a status-quo power in the region, had power to qualify an arrangement of Middle East peace and did not easily comply with the US-led peace initiatives, which came with Israeli consideration of partial withdrawal from the Territories. It was when Secretary of State Baker played a central role for advancing the Arabs and Israeli commitments to the peace process, utilizing the US diplomatic pressure and reputation as a relatively fair mediator. The revocation was not a primary goal for Baker, but he could not avoid it after Israel made it a precondition to develop the UN-involved peace conference. With Baker giving a political and economic carrot, the Arabs came to enter into peace negotiation with Israel, and Israel also yielded to participate in the peace conference in exchange for the US diplomatic effort to repeal the Zionism resolution.

Indeed, in the end the American Middle East policy for repealing the Zionism resolution was the decision of President George H. W. Bush and Secretary of State James Baker who interpreted the Middle East peace as a core American interest, and

positive domestic public opinion made their decision easier to justify. Despite Bolton’s testimony, which appeared as if the Israel lobby was primary driving force to establish the US foreign policy for repeal, but it was a mutual interest for both of the Bush administration and the Israel lobby for political and ideological benefits. In short, the revocation of the Zionism resolution was brought by the convergence of the international political circumstances plus American national interests.

Figure 4: Flowchart of Influence



Source: Drawn by the author

## 5.2 Theoretical Mechanism for Levels of Analysis

The questions from the literature of levels of analysis arose to the endless arguments between holism and reductionism, namely whether international environment determines the act of individual or the other way around. As each level is capable of interact and influence the outcome of another level (and sometimes overlapping each other without clear-cut borderlines), like chicken and egg dilemma,

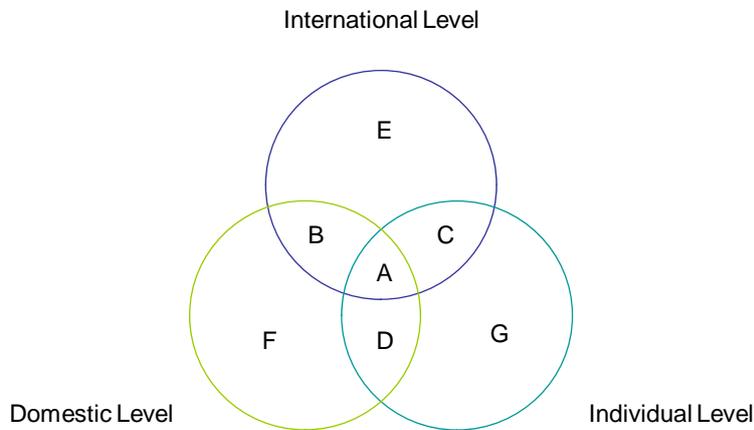
those are neither opposites nor independent of each other, but only relationships where relative value depends on a case-by-case basis. Nye (2000) also notes that “in international politics there are so many variables, so many changes occurring at the same time that evens are overdetermined – there are too many causes” (p. 47-48). However, some questions still need to elaborate. What condition of levels is considered as a minimum requirement to repeal the Zionism resolution?

It is not that all three levels unconditionally supported for repeal, but this research rather focused on the favorable elements within each level in order to develop the method to revoke Resolution 2758. Nevertheless, as for the case of repealing the Zionism resolution, the lack of the support from one of three levels would have made much difficult to overcome. For example, without a right international environment such as prior to the Gulf War, even the combined pressure from a lobby and a leader could not perform the revocation (Area D in Figure 4). On the other hand, even at a right international circumstance, the absence of a strong leadership or a lobby would not initiate the revocation process (Area E and either Area B or C). While the ideology of a lobby would be less affected by the international condition, the power of a lobby is maximized only when an executive approved a plan. Therefore, the mixture of supports from all three levels was essential for the revocation (Area A).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> It occurs especially when the domestic level includes not only the interest group but also the US diplomacy. However, this conclusion largely influence by the definition of what the level is referring to, if domestic and individual levels are within the system of the international level, the international level has the most significant role than others.

Figure 5: Interaction of Three Levels



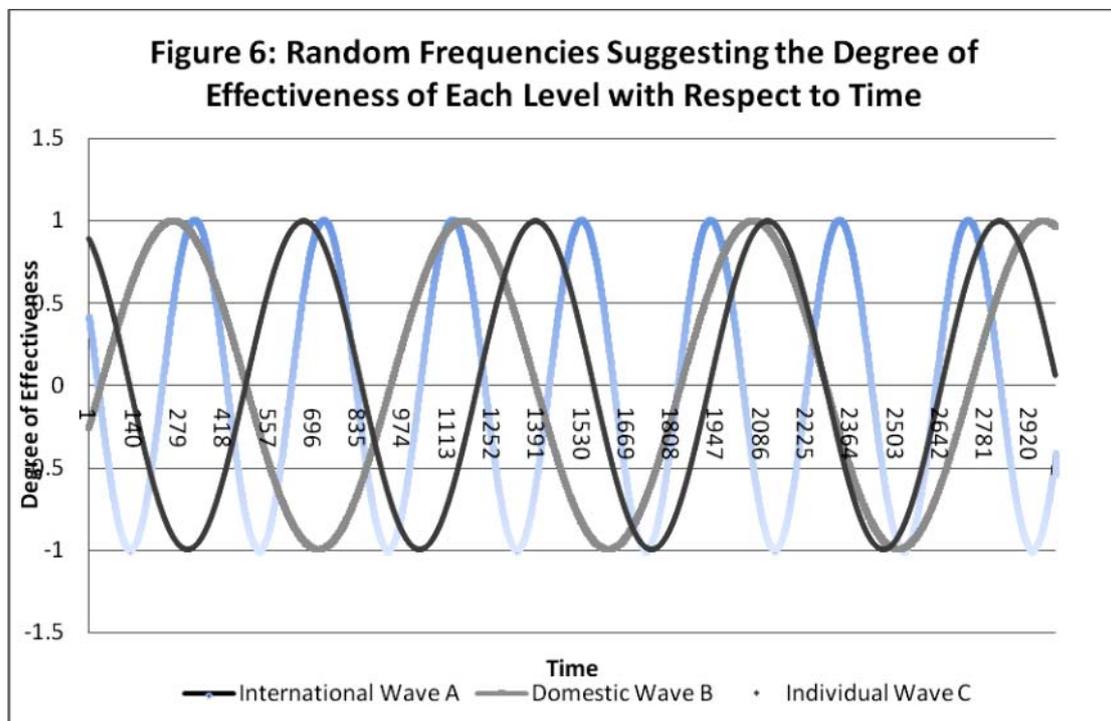
Source: Drawn by the author

While supports from all three levels become the basic condition for repeal, how much support is enough to initiate repeal? Despite no clear-cut answer, what the matter most appeared to be the timing when a level of frequency has to match with the others.

Figure Five is randomly designed to suggest the degree of effectiveness of each level with three sine waves A, B, and C where horizontal axis shows time.<sup>2</sup> Here assumes that Wave A indicates international factor, where positive and negative values refer to favorable and unfavorable international circumstance for repeal, respectively. Wave B is US domestic factor, referring to the degree of influence of the Israel lobby, with respect to other factors, such as a pro-Arab lobby, and Wave C is individual factor, indicating the presence or absence of a capable leader at the moment.

<sup>2</sup> The Diagram does not reflect to reality. It was constructed just to explain the importance of timing to develop the explanation in the levels of analysis. The numbers of period (A, B, C) and starting point (a, b, c) of three sine curves:  $\sin(A*x+a)$ ,  $\sin(B*x+b)$ , and  $\sin(C*x+c)$  were randomly picked from every 0.1 from 0.1 to 1.0 and every 10 from 0 to 90, respectively. Y values of each suggesting International Wave A, domestic Wave B, and individual Wave C becomes  $\sin(0.9*x+10)$ ,  $\sin(0.4*x+50)$ , and  $\sin(0.5*x+90)$ , respectively, where the X values were arranged from 0 to 3000.

Even though there is no definite threshold (the higher Y value, the more difficult to achieve) if the degree of the effectiveness of all three have to be positive number to activate the repeal process, a right moment appears the time period between 1208-1230, 1927-2027, 2228-2286, and 2739-2827 in the figure five (total 272 out of 3000). If all three Y values have to be above 0.5, only the period between 1987 and 1993 (0.23%) could be a right moment for repeal. Although the degree of each level in the graph is overly simplified as a fluid sine wave, it indicates the importance in timing and patience in international politics. While all three levels' continuous efforts to incorporate in another level are the basis of achieving their purpose, the timing has also critical impact to determine the outcome of their efforts. Thus, the revocation of the Zionism resolution was fulfilled due to the collection of the international support, the presence of powerful lobby as well as the effective leadership.



Source: Drawn by the author