The Economic Peace Theory

Abstract: The first chapter focuses on economic peace theories and their potential implementation in the Middle East, the different models of economic systems, and the economic system in Egypt, Israel, Jordan, and Palestine. We emphasize the economic and cultural gaps between those countries that need to be taken in consideration in proposals for economic cooperation.

Peace concepts

Peacebuilding

The term “peacebuilding” first emerged in the 1970s in the work of Johan Galtung (1975), who called for the creation of peacebuilding structures to promote sustainable peace by addressing the “root causes” of violent conflict and supporting indigenous capacities for peace management and conflict resolution.

In 2007, the UN Secretary-General’s Policy Committee agreed on the following conceptual basis for peacebuilding to inform UN practice: “Peacebuilding involves a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development” (UN website).

Peacebuilding requires effective communication, peace-enhancing structures, a moral-political climate, and security (Reychler & Paffenholz, 2001) at the local and international levels (Keating & Knight, 2004). Governmental and civil society actors should create economic, social, and cultural cooperation on the ground in order to ensure stability and sustain peace.

Solutions must be adopted by the top and mid-level leadership, and at the grassroots (Lederach, 1997).

The political peacebuilding process must be strengthened by opening up opportunities for communication across the conflict lines, understanding the other party’s interests and desires, confirming one’s own interests, and exploring viable alternative approaches that may meet the needs of both parties.

Peacebuilding initiatives involve cross-cutting or integrative ties, such as people-to-people, business-to-business, and institution-to-institution initiatives.

The economic peace theory proposes that economic interdependence promotes peace and prevents conflicts. Economic interdependence is conducive to peace because economic cooperation between private actors may generate national economic interest.

The “dominant” rival (Israelis) may have an upper hand in the distribution of the essential resources at the heart of the conflict, such as land, water, and energy, which affects the types of concessions that rivals can make toward one another. Moreover, the “underdog” (Palestinians) may