

UACES Scholarship 2010

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Outline of project

The aim of this research is to give light to the EU role in the Palestinian territories and in particular the extent to which EU policies and programmes in the area have been able to assist the process of state-building in Palestine in the aftermath of the 1993 Oslo accord. By looking closely at three areas, namely governance, security and development the proposed research aims at making a synthesis of two literatures; EU and conflict resolution and state-building. To this end the main case studies of this research are the European Union's initiatives on Security Sector Reform and the two civilian missions that the EU has deployed in the Palestinian Territories namely EUBAM Rafah and EUPOL COPPS as well as initiatives on the domain of Judiciary Sector Reform such as the so called "Seyada" project and development initiatives. The research aims at contributing to the literature by providing synthesis and comprehensiveness as well as exemplification by its case studies. More specifically it envisages to directly contributing to the EU and state-building literature by explaining how state-building can be used as a conflict resolution tool. Finally, this research will try to answer the following questions; to which extent have the EU aid programmes in the area been able to assist the process of state-building in Palestine in the wake of the 1993 Oslo Accord? What conclusions can we gather from a detailed study on EU initiatives on the ground? Can this information tell us anything we do not know about the high politics of the conflict? Why have the EU's state-building strategies in Palestine had so little impact?

Academic Achievements

This UACES Scholarship had duration of 3 months and was provided in order to support fieldwork in Brussels, Jerusalem and Ramallah. Almost 100 interviews were carried in these 3 months with EU, Israeli and Palestinian Officials. More specifically in Brussels interviews were conducted with Officials from the European Commission (DG for External Relations, DG AIDCO and DG ECHO), European Council, and the European Parliament (Committee on Foreign Affairs, Delegation for relations with the Palestinian Authority and Delegation for relations with Israel). Finally, interviews were carried with officials from Catherine Ashton's Cabinet and officials from EU member states' permanent representations in Brussels.

Approximately 50 interviews were conducted in Jerusalem and Ramallah with officials from the European Commission's Technical Assistance Office for the West Bank and Gaza (ECTAO), Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Palestinian Negotiations Department, Palestinian Prime Minister's Office, EU member states embassies as well as officials from the two EU civilian missions. Representatives of NGOs were also interviewed.

Positive and Negative Aspects

Overall my research trip was successful and rewarding as I managed to collect material crucial for the success of my PhD.

I am grateful to UACES and the European Commission for this scholarship as it was indispensable for my research; without it the chance for the successful completion of my PhD would have been minimized. I am also grateful to all my interviewees for their time and for sharing their knowledge and experience with me.