

T.C.
ANTALYA BILIM UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION

GLOBAL POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS PROGRAM
MASTER'S THESIS

**ACTIVE NEUTRALITY AS A FOREIGN POLICY: THE CASE OF MOROCCO
IN ABRAHAM ACCORDS**

Reda ESSAHLI

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This thesis was accepted by the jury (with unanimous vote) on the date 09/05/2024 of Global Politics and International Relations of Department of Global Politics and International Relations.

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DECLARATION

Master Thesis of this study named “Active Neutrality as a Foreign Policy: The Case of Morocco in Abraham Accords”, which I presented, I declare that scientific moral principles were followed in the preparation of this study, in case of benefiting from the works of others, reference is made in accordance with scientific norms, no falsification has been made in the data used, and that any part of this study is not presented as another academic study.

/ / 2024

Reda ESSAHLI



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ABSTRACT

ACTIVE NEUTRALITY AS A FOREIGN POLICY: THE CASE OF MOROCCO IN ABRAHAM ACCORDS

Reda ESSAHLI

MSc Thesis in Global Politics and International Relations

Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Burak Toygar HALİSTOPRAK

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Active neutrality is one of the realist foreign policies adopted to address a conflict that a state sees its security interests are indirectly affected by. In such conflicts, maintaining/establishing relations with both parties of the conflict is a survival must. According to Realism's IR school of thought, securing security is an act of survival in an international system characterized by anarchy. States will do whatever it takes to ensure their survival. This thesis takes Morocco as case study with regards to its handling of the Palestine/ Israel conflict as a manifestation of this policy. It found itself dealing with a situation that jeopardizes its security interests; a Cold War with Algeria. It adopted active neutrality as a response to the conflict it had to have a stance on to ensure its security. The question therefore is: How can active neutrality as a foreign policy orientation explain Morocco's foreign policy decisions during the Abraham Accords of 2020? As related; in what sense, active neutrality can make sense of evolution of Moroccan foreign policy? A comparative analysis is conducted via the qualitative content analysis method. The study compared Morocco's stance on the conflict three years before and after the Abraham Accords in the context to its Cold War with Algeria. The thesis concludes that some policy changes, especially with regards to normalization with Israel is detected in the post-Abraham Accords in the foreign policy speeches coded. The essence of this change signals more of a smooth transition instead of a dramatic policy change. Therefore, one can suggest that active neutrality policy orientation is built in a continuing manner of which indicators can be detected in both periods focused on in this thesis. Other than that, the thesis could not detect any other changes, particularly with regard to its solidarity with Palestine; it appears that Morocco has been consistent with its stance on the conflict throughout the study's time frame. Morocco's normalization with Israel in exchange for the US' recognition of the Moroccaness of the Sahara, is explained by the defensive realist theory as a way for Morocco to maximize its security via active neutrality; a policy that is regarded as moderate in the context of its Cold War with Algeria.

KEYWORDS: Abraham Accords, Active Neutrality, Defensive Realism, Foreign Policy, Morocco, Security, Palestine/Israel conflict.

COMMITTEE: Asst. Prof. Dr. Burak Toygar HALİSTOPRAK

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ÖZET

DIŞ POLİTİKA OLARAK AKTİF TARAFSIZLIK: İBRAHİM ANLAŞMALARINDA FAS ÖRNEĞİ

Reda ESSAHLI

Yüksek Lisans Tezi , Küresel Siyaset ve Uluslararası İlişkiler Anabilim Dalı

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Aktif tarafsızlık, bir devletin güvenlik çıkarlarının dolaylı olarak etkilendiğini düşündüğü bir çatışmaya yaklaşımında benimsenen, Realist akımdan etkilenmiş bir dış politika şeklidir. Bu tür çatışmalarda, çatışmanın her iki tarafıyla da ilişki kurmak/sürdürmek hayatta kalmanın olmazsa olmazıdır. Uluslararası İlişkiler'in Realist ekolüne göre, göre güvenliği sağlamak, anarşik bir yapıya sahip olan bir uluslararası sistemde hayatta kalmanın ön şartıdır. Devletler bekalarını sağlamak için ne gerekiyorsa yapacaklardır. Bu tez, bu politikanın bir tezahürü olarak Filistin/İsrail çatışması bağlamında Fas dış politikasını örnek olay incelemesi olarak ele almaktadır. Fas dış politikasında, Cezayir ile yaşanan çekişme, Fas'ın kendi güvenlik çıkarlarını tehlikeye atan bir durum olarak öne çıkmaktadır. Bu kapsamda, Fas güvenliğini sağlamak için, cereyan eden İsrail-Filistin çatışmasında tavır almak zorunda kalmış ve tepki olarak aktif tarafsızlığı benimsemiştir. Bu bağlamda bu tez şu araştırma sorusunu incelemektedir: Bir dış politika yönelimi olarak aktif tarafsızlık, Fas'ın 2020 İbrahim Anlaşmaları sırasında aldığı dış politika kararlarını nasıl açıklayabilir? Bununla ilintili olarak; Aktif tarafsızlık Fas dış politikasının evrimini nasıl açıklar? Tezin yöntemi olarak nitel içerik analizi benimsenmiştir. Çalışma, Fas'ın İbrahim Anlaşması'ndan üç yıl önceki ve sonraki çatışmaya ilişkin tutumunu, Cezayir ile Soğuk Savaş bağlamında karşılaştırmaktadır. Tez, İbrahim Anlaşmaları sonrası kodlanan dış politika konuşmalarında özellikle İsrail ile normalleşmeye ilişkin bazı politika değişikliklerinin tespit edildiği sonucuna varmaktadır. Bu değişikliğin özü, dramatik bir politika değişikliğinden ziyade yumuşak bir evrim sürecine işaret etmektedir. Dolayısıyla bu tezde üzerinde durulan her iki dönemde de göstergelerin tespit edilebileceği aktif tarafsızlık politikası yöneliminin süreklilik arz edecek şekilde inşa edildiği önerilmektedir. Bunun dışında, tezde özellikle Filistin'le dayanışma açısından başka bir değişiklik tespit edilememiştir; Fas'ın, çalışmanın odaklandığı süreç boyunca çatışmaya ilişkin tutumuyla tutarlı olduğu görülmektedir. ABD'nin Batı Sahra bölgesi üzerinde Fas egemenliğini tanıması karşılığında Fas'ın İsrail ile normalleşmesi ve ayrıca Fas'ın aktif tarafsızlık yoluyla güvenliğini garantiye alması, Cezayir ile yaşanan Soğuk Savaş da düşünüldüğünde, ılımlı bir politika olarak nitelendirilmekte ve Defansif Realist yaklaşım kapsamında değerlendirilmektedir.

ANAHTAR KELİMELELER: Abraham Anlaşmaları, Aktif Tarafsızlık, Savunmacı Gerçekçilik, Defansif Realizm, Dış Politika, Fas, Güvenlik, Filistin/İsrail çatışması.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AA	: Abraham Accords
AU	: African Union
EU	: European Union
MAP	: Maghreb Arab Press
MENA	: Middle East and North Africa
POLISARIO	: Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Río de Oro
SDAR	: Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic
UN	: United Nations
US	: United States
USSR	: Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WS	: Western Sahara
WW2	: World War 2

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PREFACE

In the name of Allah, all glory belongs to Him. Indeed, Allah is great and gracious. I thank Him for giving me the strength to finish this thesis and giving me the chance to make my parents proud.

Dear Mama and Baba, the only two people that I care about the most, this work is dedicated to you and only you. I know it is nothing compared to the amount of sacrifices you had to make in order for me to be where I am now. I pray to Allah I will have more power in me to make you more proud of me. Inch ‘Allah, I promise, this is only the beginning.

I would like to thank my supervisor; Dr. Burak Toygar HALİSTOPRAK, for helping me achieve such a goal. His wisdom is nothing short of great and his contributions to this thesis are countless. It was an honor being under his supervision. I would also like to extend my thanks to the other jury members; Dr. Senem ATVUR and Dr. Dicle KORKMAZ, whose feedback helped me write a better version of my thesis. I would also like to take this opportunity to showcase my endless gratitude for some of my professors in this program, whom I had the privilege of being their student. Dr. Edward J. ERICKSON, Dr. Burak Toygar HALİSTOPRAK, Dr. Tarık OĞUZLU and Dr. Dicle KORKMAZ.

To Zouhair; my only brother, thank you for always being there for me no matter what. I pray that you will be able to finish your master thesis too. To Nassim, Zaid and Greg; my close friends, whose support have gone beyond what is required. I am immensely grateful to Allah for blessing me with such people in my life. I also want to thank Ashraf, Nizare, Soukaina, Walter, Rachid and Deniz. These people, may Allah bless them, have supported me in various ways and I am immensely thankful for that.

Writing this thesis have gone beyond just an academic task, it morphed into an existential meditation on life. It seems that the life lessons I have accidentally learned while writing this thesis are way more valuable than the academic knowledge itself. One of these lessons is related to Albest Cumus’ quote “il faut imaginer Sisyphe heureux”, which has never made more sense to me until now.

When I started working seriously on this thesis, the war in Gaza had just started. It was difficult to focus on writing while the news of the death of innocent children is being reported daily for more than half a year. This conflict has been going for too long. As much as it seems impossible, I believe it is time for peace. This is the reason why I choose such topic. For me, Morocco is the only serious third party that is seeking the end of such conflict. I believe the Kingdom of Morocco’s foreign policy headed by His majesty the King, Mohammed VI regarding this conflict; which I refer to it as active neutrality, is the most appropriate stance a third party could have. Such stance helps Morocco remain not only a credible third party for both parties of the conflict, but also it showcases the seriousness of its wish of ending such conflict via the two-state solution. I pray to Allah no more children have to pay with their lives the sins their parents have committed in this war.

As always, Allah, Homeland, King.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Puzzle and Significance of the Research Question

In times of conflict between two opposing parties, third-party states are pushed to support one party in the conflict; however that is not always the case. In certain conflicts, states seek to adopt neutrality. In simple terms, neutrality refers to a foreign policy that a state adopts when it does not want to be involved in the conflict in any way possible that could lead it to enter it in favor of one party. Therefore there is this passive quality that defines this type of neutrality.

Active neutrality on the other hand, is also a foreign policy, which is adopted in a situation where a state is pushed to take a stance on a conflict, due to the conflict's indirect effect on it. It is one of the policies taken where maintaining relations with the main parties of the conflict is needed to preserve the state's security interests. A state that adopts active neutrality sees no benefit in siding with one of parties of the conflict, but on the contrary it could prove to be costing if it did so. In addition this type of foreign policy yields other benefits for the state that adopts it. The state in question tries to have an active relation with both parties of the conflict so that to preserve its security interests which are the benefits of such stance. This active relation takes many forms as the case study in this thesis has shown. Defensive realism theory sees security of critical importance in the international system. Therefore this thesis explains the states' actions as a maximizing security via active neutrality.

Keeping both parties of the conflict within arm's length is a survival must. A country's interests differ from one country to another. However, in a realist international order, one interest that all countries seek to attain and maintain i.e. security (Devetak, George, and Percy 2017, 59). Securing security is an act of survival in the international system jungle. Anarchy is the name of the game and states are its players. Whether by joining alliances or acquiring the latest military hardware, states will do whatever it takes to ensure their survival. The country that this thesis takes as case study, found itself dealing with a situation that jeopardizes their security interests. The catch is that the conflict does not affect it directly but the way it reacts to the conflict does.

The country in question is Morocco; a middle power during the Palestine/Israel conflict. At first, this thesis started with the assumption that Morocco, only in the wake of the Abraham Accords adopted active neutrality with regards to this conflict as a foreign policy stance due to its Cold War with Algeria. The question therefore is: *How can active neutrality as a foreign policy orientation explain Morocco's foreign policy decisions during the Abraham Accords of 2020? As related; in what sense, active neutrality can make sense of evolution of Moroccan foreign policy?*

The Palestine/Israel conflict is one of the most critical conflicts in the MENA region. This conflict impacts the foreign policy of almost every state in this region. The conflict is a military and political conflict about land and self-determination. There had been multiple attempts as well as peace treaties between Arab states and Israel. The Abraham Accords are the latest version of such efforts. The Accords are a peace treaty between Arab states and Israel.

The reason why this case study was chosen is because of how unique its application of active neutrality is. The case of Morocco takes place in a region (MENA) where such a policy is uncommon. The majority of the states in the region particularly the neighboring state Algeria can be considered hostile states to Israel. Morocco on the other hand sought to have active neutrality concerning the Palestine/Israel conflict, as part of the historical Abraham Accords between Arab countries and Israel. Morocco's normalization of relations with Israel is deemed as a security-maximizing foreign policy in the context of its Cold War with Algeria. Morocco managed to gain US support and straighten the legitimacy of its autonomy plan over the Western Sahara.

In a defensive realist world order, states seek to maximize their security rather than their power, and maintain as well as strengthen their position in the status quo order (Devetak, George, and Percy 2017, 42). Morocco adopted active neutrality as a foreign policy to address a conflict that indirectly affects their security interests. Defensive realism will be the guiding theory to explain the use of active neutrality adoption. Morocco's foreign policy decision making towards this conflict can be best understood via Defensive Realism. Defensive realists contend that within the international system, no system assures certainty of security; such anarchy encourages states to adopt policies characterized as 'defensive' and 'moderate' in nature. Waltz (1979) states that the "first concern of states is not to maximize power but to maintain their position in the system" (Waltz 1979, 126). Therefore there is a desire to maintain the status quo, with that in mind, if a state is seeking security via aggression it will not be the right policy because aggression will lead to possible military engagement in the conflict. This thesis sees active neutrality as a moderate policy to achieve security. This is apparent in the manifestations that were defined for this policy with regards to the conflict at hand.

The thesis concludes that some policy changes, especially with regards to normalization with Israel is detected in the post-AA in the foreign policy speeches coded. The essence of this change signals more of a smooth transition instead of a dramatic policy change. Therefore, one can suggest that active neutrality policy orientation is built in a continuing manner of which indicators can be detected in both periods focused on in this thesis. Other than that, the thesis could not detect any other changes, particularly with regard to its solidarity with Palestine; it appears that Morocco has been consistent with its stance on the conflict throughout the study's time frame. Morocco's normalization with Israel in exchange for the US' recognition of the Moroccaness of the Sahara, is explained by the defensive realist theory as a way for Morocco to maximize its security via active neutrality; a policy that is regarded as moderate in the context of its Cold War with Algeria.

In order to effectively answer the questions raised in this thesis, a qualitative content analysis will be used. The study will seek to compare Morocco's stance on the Palestine/Israel conflict, three years before and after the Abraham Accords. The thesis will generate codes that will be the categories of the comparison. The codes are: (1) Normalization with Israel, (2) Solidarity with Palestine, (3) Active Neutrality, (4) Preservation of Status, (5) Cold War with Algeria, and (6) African Rapprochement.

Regarding data collection, this study will base its analysis primarily on the statements of King of Morocco; Mohammed VI. In addition, books regarding the

conflict, news articles during the period of the study, and statements by the heads of state and political figures while also be used when needed. Since realism sees states as the most important actors as well as being the most rational in the international system, the unit of analysis will be the state of Morocco presented by the King himself. The Moroccan Constitution states that the King is the only party that handles external affairs. Therefore his statements are the sole representative of Morocco's foreign policy as a state in the international system.

1.2. Organization of the Thesis

The thesis will consist of four main chapters. The first chapter; Literature Review, deals with a presentation as well as a discussion of the literature and debate regarding neutrality as a concept in International Relations. In addition, a mention of its different types and manifestations as a foreign policy in notable cases throughout history will be discussed. The second chapter will establish the theoretical framework of defensive realism as well as the methodology of qualitative content analysis that will be used to address the questions laid out in the introduction. The third chapter will act as the presentation of the findings accompanied with analysis. In the fourth and last chapter, a comparison of the two periods as well as a discussion of the findings in the context of the literature will be provided.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will act as a presentation and a discussion of the literature and debates regarding neutrality as a concept in the International Relations field of study. In addition, it compares and contrasts the concept's different types and manifestations as a foreign policy in notable cases throughout history. This chapter also seeks to show where the study is hoping to contribute. It plans to showcase Morocco's stance in the Palestine/Israel conflict as an example of active neutrality.

2.1. The Various Debates Concerning Neutrality

2.1.1. Neutrality vs. Neutralism

The history of the concept of neutrality spans five hundred years. There are multiple meanings of this term "depending on context and time, or the agent employing the term" (Müller 2019, 4). Neutrality for Müller (2019) is a wartime policy, where in the event of two parties being in an armed conflict, a third party chooses not to take sides in this conflict and remains neutral. The author also admits that, in modern times, this concept has morphed into a peacetime policy. The neutral country proclaims neutrality concerning any foreseeable or unforeseeable wars. This mantra has specifically characterized the Cold War era.

The term neutrality is used interchangeably with other terms such as neutralization, non-alignment, and neutralism. This leads to confusion about the meaning of these concepts concerning world politics. As of result, a proper analysis of neutrality as a concept is needed, to define it in comparison to the other terms of such nature. Neutrality, for Brecher (1962) means "a status which comes into existence only after a war has begun" (Brecher 1962, 224). Non-alignment is "the passive, first stage of neutralism" (Brecher 1962, 224). In such a case, the state is against any military entanglements or alliances. Such a view on neutrality; contrasts the contemporary perception of it. Since it is also viewed as a peacetime policy (Müller, 2019).

If being a non-aligned state meant having a negative attitude towards bloc conflicts, being a neutralist state means the exact opposite. These states seek to be more active concerning peace promotion between the parties of the conflict. Even though neutrality and neutralism are not the same concerning the techniques they utilize to operate in the world political system. They are, however, "derive from the same basic aspiration" in which "neutralism is a contemporary expression of the time-honored theme of neutrality" (Brecher 1962, 224).

Neutrality, in particular, seems to be used "interchangeably with neutralism" (Lyon 1960, 256). The two concepts are closely related in terms of their meaning as political terms. However, neutrality has a "strictly legal as well as a general diplomatic or political connotation" (Lyon 1960, 257). Neutralism is not as legally and politically on par with neutrality as a concept. Another difference is apparent in the sense that neutralism "seems to draw forth a greater multiplicity of meanings" and "imply a greater profusion of theory and practice" (Lyon 1960, 257).

Neutralism is "relatively new in historical-legalistic terminology" (Frohman 1958, 187). It was not until WW2 that such a term came into existence. There is yet

another distinction between neutrality and neutralism based on ‘relative action’ and ‘relative inaction’. There is an association of neutralism with the former and neutrality with the latter (Frohman 1958). The unique type of neutrality that characterizes Switzerland, which Frohman (1958) refers to as ‘absolute inaction’. Not only the country itself sought such policy but also its European neighbors in the Congress of Vienna. Neutrality is ‘the legal form’ where the state is bound by internal tradition and history. In addition to being also bound by international law. Such states “live within the confines of rigid and dogmatic neutrality” (Frohman 1958, 190). The other type; neutralism is political “adopted by nations in the course of history the United States, Scandinavia, and Belgium” (Frohman 1958, 190).

2.1.2. Neutrality’s Various Manifestations

Current-day institutions have made a great impact on the way neutrality was seen after the year 1907, given that in this year, neutrality, which dates back to the 16th century, was codified in The Hague Convention. The Cold War affected neutrality as a concept. It became a subject to various definitions and interpretations. This concept has become associated with ‘non-alignment’, ‘peaceful and active co-existence’, ‘active formal neutralism’, ‘positive neutralism’, and ‘isolationism’ etc.

Given the inconsistencies observed in countries that claim to be neutral, even though they are still involved with one of the parties of the conflict if not both. A distinction should be made between three types of neutrality that can be traced back to a specific time in history (Müller 2019). The first one is “occasional” neutrality. It was used by England, Sweden, and Denmark during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This type entails that, the neutral party’s purpose was to contain the conflict and attempt to benefit from it economically or strategically; “a short-term realist policy...[with no intent of]...long-term commitment” (Müller 2019, 5). The second type is the ‘long-term voluntary’ neutrals. These countries have made neutrality part of their long-term foreign policy. They also seek to make it part of international law. These countries are characterized as being small in terms of influence and military power (Netherlands and Denmark). As a solution to cool down tensions among great powers, the third type is permanent neutrality exemplified in both Switzerland and Belgium. Both were “guaranteed to a neutral state by an agreement among great powers” in the nineteenth century (Müller 2019, 6).

Neutrality as a concept has transcended the rules regarding the rights and duties of neutral states in times of conflict. Being neutral went from being a ‘longer-term policy’ to a ‘non-membership of military alliances’. Second, neutrality is a form of foreign policy, in addition to it being a national security strategy as well. Third, the idea of involvement in collective security organizations has caused quite a dilemma since the very nature of neutrality is “fundamentally incompatible with membership of military alliances” (Cottey 2018, 25). Therefore, “the compatibility of neutrality and collective security is a grey area” (Cottey 2018, 25). Fourth, “the normative character of neutrality” (Cottey 2018, 26).

There is a pragmatic quality to neutrality. States seek not to engage in any conflict that will result in war, to keep one’s state in a state of “national survival and independence” (Cottey 2018, 26). However, neutrality has expanded to a new frontier, a

frontier that has the feature of a “strong normative dimension” (Cottey 2018, 26). Normative in the sense that neutrality at its surface level can be viewed as an ‘anti-war policy’ or a ‘peace policy’. However, it also expands to supporting other states’ independence, by extension; it also can be regarded as anti-imperialistic in nature.

That is why neutrality “has evolved since the nineteenth century, thus incorporates important normative principles” (Cottey 2018, 26). By the end of WW2, “Most neutral states... have supported a set of intertwined normative institutions” (Cottey 2018, 26). These institutions (such as the UN) goal is peace promotion in all of its forms. Neutral states are perceived to think that their foreign policy is morally superior. Sweden for example, is viewed as a ‘moral superpower’ because it supports the aforementioned normative principles; having antiwar, anti-imperialist, and anti-apartheid stances.

2.1.3. Neutrality and International Law

Neutrality in the form of “non-belligerency in war can be traced back to the ancient Greek city-state system” (Cottey 2018, 22) Neutrality seems to be “as old as war itself” (Cottey 2018, 22). The neutrals were not respected for this foreign policy stance. It was not until the Middle Ages that some form of agreement was made to assure that “states respect for their position of neutrality” (Cottey 2018, 22). Still, throughout history; particularly in the Middle Ages, Neutrality in International Relations as a practice had not much of a popularity to attest to. It was not until the 19th century, that states like Switzerland and Belgium adopted such a concept. During both world wars, there have been some violations of neutrality by some states who claimed to be neutral. Both Switzerland at the Congress of Vienna in 1815 and Belgium under the 1839 Treaty of London, were granted the status of permanent neutrality, by powerful European states. This was carried out to ensure that these states “which had been a focus of great power conflict would hopefully not become so in future” (Cottey 2018, 23).

Both neutrality and international law are connected in the sense that the former has impacted the development of the latter. The rise in fame of neutrality as a policy can be traced to the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The First League of Armed Neutrality (1780–83) came as a response to the American War of Independence. Several states (Russia, Denmark, Sweden, the Ottoman Empire, Prussia, and Portugal) initiated such a league. So that Britain will refrain from “searching and seizing ships carrying French contraband” (Cottey 2018, 22). France was a supporter of the United States' independence from Britain. A second league was formed. This time was as a response to the French Revolutionary Wars. Several states wanted Britain to refrain from intercepting these countries' ships. However, this league failed since “Britain attacked Denmark and Russia shifted its policy to support Britain” (Cottey 2018, 22).

It was not until the 19th century that the International law regarding neutrality had some major development. The development came in the form of “The Paris Declaration Respecting Maritime Law of 1856” (Cottey 2018, 23). This declaration tried to put into effect rules to protect sealing vessels belonging to states that proclaim themselves as neutral. More detailed regulations followed suit. By 1907, the Hague Conventions declared “the rights and duties of neutral states in war” (Cottey 2018, 23). The parties at war should refrain from using the neutral states' territory for military

operations of any kind. That also includes recruiting citizens of the said states. With regards to the neutral states' duties, it is the same conditions in addition to the requirement to be impartial when it comes to trade. For example, if a neutral state were to cut trade with one of the parties of the conflict, it is also obligated to cut it with the other parties of the conflict.

The establishment of the United Nations made it complicated for some neutral states. On the other hand, the emergence of the type of active neutrality came into International Relations. These states have the possibility for "mediation, peacekeeping, and other activities" (Rolenc 2008, 13). However, because of the Cold War, neutral states were pushed to choose to back one of the parties of the Cold War. This pressure to take a stance covered all fields "politically, economically, and militarily" (Rolenc 2008, 13). As a result, a new type of neutrality emerged; 'armed neutrality', where some neutral states choose to increase their defense budget so that they will remain neutral regardless of foreign pressure. In recent times, with the arrival of globalization, neutrality seems to be given a makeover. Now it has been turned into 'military non-alignment' where there is now more "cooperation with various international institutions" (Rolenc 2008, 13).

2.1.4. The US: From Isolationism to Neutrality to Full Involvement in World Affairs

It appears that there are various types of neutrality depending on which country we are analyzing. For example, the United States' first use of the concept of neutrality in foreign policy did not even refer to it by name but rather as a set of principles. The principles are directly influenced by George Washington's farewell speech. The departing president advised not to get involved in European wars. The farewell speech can be regarded as the concept of neutrality masquerading as isolationism (Lyon 1960, 259). This historical event marketed the first conception of the American form of neutrality and it is exemplified in the speech. He did not exactly use the exact term neutrality in his speech. However, he warned the young nation which is the United States of "entangling alliances" (Cottey 2018, 23). The United States "did not always maintain a policy of neutrality" (Cottey 2018, 23), however, its foreign policy had always been impacted by such policy, from the 19th to the early 20th century. Until the US got involved in the two world wars.

The US' geographical location has contributed to its desire to stay out of various conflicts since its inception in 1776. Such sentiments concerning the nation's external affairs have laid out a doctrine for the foundation of the US foreign policy of isolationism. Such policy has been in effect for years until WW2. One of the most prominent periods of American foreign policy was during WW2. The war led to the formation of two groups in the US. The first group; the isolationists, believed that peace would only take place if America assured its national security. While the second group; non-isolationists, contends that it is by seeking both America's and the world's security that peace should materialize (O'Donnell 1939, 334). In the aftermath of WW1, President Wilson failed "over his League of Nations...to rally the nation behind his plan for American participation in an international peace program" (O'Donnell 1939, 333). The American People back then believed that neutrality; in addition to isolationism and economic nationalism; constitutes the tenets of what differentiates America from the

world in terms of its democratic system. The American people believed that it would be government tyranny, if the US was to aspire for international collaboration (O'Donnell 1939, 333).

The US foreign policy in the interwar period to its entrance in WW2 has seen an attitude change from isolationism to neutrality. Neutrality is a better term than isolationism to describe the US foreign policy in the interwar period. The US saw neutrality as a way to “make liberal use of sanctions and other short-of-war forms of coercion to impact the policies and conflicts of others” (Blower 2014, 369). The US sought the latter by placing “wholesale embargoes, to shut off supplies to all waging nations” (Blower 2014, 369). The US believed that economic sanctions are a better policy to address foreign conflicts than military involvement. The US continued such a policy when WW2 started. Again, it placed an “embargo on the sale of war materials to all belligerents” (Blower 2014, 371) in the hope that its neutrality would be respected by the parties of the conflicts. The US hoped that such a policy would maximize its security. However, once the Pearl Harbor attacks took place; the US stopped its long-standing tradition of isolationism as well as neutrality and joined the war on the side of the Allied forces.

2.1.5. Neutrality: Which Theory of International Relations Embraces It?

Within IR scholars, there is a distinction they made between an armed conflict between two sovereign states and an internal conflict/civil war. Countries cannot proclaim neutrality about the latter. The definition of a war in global affairs is a war between two legitimate parties. The neutral country is indirectly giving legitimacy to the non-sovereign party of the conflict/Civil War (Müller 2019, 5).

With regards to the concept of neutrality within the International Relations field as both a theory and practice, it appears that neutrality is a “neglected subject in the literature on international relations” (Rolenc 2008, 11). Only some mentions of neutrality by famed writers such as Thucydides as well as Machiavelli. It is the inter-war era that saw the proliferation of idealism as an ideology. It was critical of neutrality because it did not reflect the nature of all the states' ‘harmony of interests’. Rolenc (2008) thinks that post-WW2 realism analyzed neutrality via two approaches. The first one fundamentally rejects it because it is at odds with the concept of power politics. Power is a defining feature of realism because, through it, the state seeks the protection of sovereignty through war. The second approach embraces neutrality. States acting on their interest, by choosing to be neutral in a given conflict, is indirectly a feature of realist school of thought. It aligns with its idea that states seek self-interest for whatever it takes.

There are other attempts to analyze the policy of neutrality via International Relations theories such as neoliberalism, constructivism, and neorealism. The European countries that are considered neutral, particularly about their security policies, are commonly taken as case studies when studying neutrality. Those states implementing neutrality back in the day can be understood via neorealism theory, while neo-liberalism is a great theory to understand why those same states “redefined and modified neutrality as its security policy attaching less value to it” (Scheck 2012, 107). On the other hand, constructivism is not a suitable theory to approach neutrality. Since those neutral states,

seeking economic growth, believed to achieve such growth, they needed to make some adjustments to their definition of neutrality. Constructivism is not the proper theory to analyze neutrality because it is “an icon of national identity and public support” (Scheck 2012, 126). Neoliberalism provides an understating of why these states sought a redefinition of neutrality. It also provides an understating of how these same states have come to claim support for ‘military non-alignment’ than neutrality, for much more specific intentions.

Since IR theories are mainly concerned with state interaction concerning security, there seems to be a relationship between international cooperation and neutrality. The two are not that much different in practice as opposed to what the theory proposes. The neutral states have managed to find a way to balance between their commitments to the ideals of neutrality, and also still be a part of the international community. Avoiding tension with both parties of the Cold War, was primarily due to their participation in the United Nations and other international organizations. This leads Karsh (1988) to conclude that “neutrality and collective security are indeed mutually exclusive concepts” (Karsh 1988, 57).

Therefore, neutrality is not some ‘antisocial policy’ that only seeks to deter any involvement of any form but rather, a need for international cooperation by neutral states. There are multiple instances where it is clear that neutral states have played a pivotal role in mitigating tension. It was during the *détente* period via a security organization named the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). These neutrals are established along with non-aligned states in the N + N (neutral and non-aligned) Group.

What made the CSCE unique was its ability of “functioning as an intermediate stage between the universal and the regional spheres” (Karsh 1988, 67). This has made the neutrals avoid getting caught in the issues commonly associated with such cooperation. Neutrality and collective security are two concepts that exist in the same sphere, where both of them complement each other. The pre- and post-World War 2 eras have shown that neutrality appears to be much more relevant in comparison to collective security. Neutrality as a foreign policy has succeeded in showcasing its usefulness and importance regardless of the collective security’s attempts to discredit it.

In the nineteenth century and the twentieth century, small and medium-sized states in particular, “have been neutral or attempted to pursue policies of peacetime neutrality” (Cottey 2018, 40). Wars that happened in Europe, particularly WW1 and WW2 have led those same states to join organizations such as NATO. There are two aspects to neutrality; realist and idealist aspect, The realist aspect of neutrality deals with a given state’s direct and natural interest in seeking a “national security strategy... by which states try to ensure their survival and independence” (Cottey 2018, 41). On the other hand, neutrality also has an idealist aspect in which it is “viewed as a peace-promoting policy” (Cottey 2018, 41).

For example, during the Cold War, European neutral states supported several attempts to ease the tension between the parties of the conflict by promoting the “UN, peacekeeping, conflict resolution, *détente*, and nuclear arms control and disarmament” (Cottey 2018, 41). While there is a certain change in the European neutral states’ attitude towards neutrality in its traditional form due to the involvement in many

“Western/EU/NATO policies” (Cottey 2018, 41). Those states’ policies still possess multiple elements that make them distinct by comparison to those organizations that they have joined. These distinctions can be detected in the support of neutral European states of the Palestinian cause against Israel, which is an unpopular attitude in Europe.

Nuclear weapons are yet another important topic neutral European states have different attitudes towards in comparison to the rest of Europe. Nuclear disarmament versus “the pro-nuclear policies of Britain, France and some other NATO EU members” (Cottey 2018, 41). Switzerland is an example of this distinction; A non-EU member with a maximalist approach of neutrality. Contrary to the other neutral European states (Austria, Finland, Ireland, and Sweden). “Switzerland has not been influenced by the same EU foreign policy Europeanization” (Cottey 2018, 40).

There are some calls for a change in the discourse of neutrality if it is to remain relevant in the future (Joenniemi, 1993). In the late 20th century the world witnessed significant developments, and those developments are happening to the “political order on the European continent” (Joenniemi 1993, 289). Security more than any other topic, has become the very agenda that shapes the policies related to global affairs. Yet another change in this ‘new regime’, is neutrality which “has been...defined by (in)security” (Joenniemi 1993, 289). The existence of the fear of conflict is what keeps neutrality relevant in world affairs. The end of the Cold War has marked the end of the need for an agency that promotes dialogue with the parties of the conflict. In the context of European politics, neutrality seems to be more and more in danger of being irrelevant. To avoid such an outcome, this concept should be approached via a “critical and dynamic perspective...societal approach to neutrality” (Joenniemi 1993, 302), which makes more sense theoretically in the context of International Relations.

Neutrality in its traditional sense was in line with the realist school of thought while also being very relevant during wartime; the two world wars and the Cold War. However, there is no hope for neutrality’s future in its traditional sense, due to the “emergence of new ‘sectors’ of security, not only military, but also environmental, economic, social, and political” (Rolenc 2008, 17). In addition, the rise of non-state groups and individuals that try to have a say in contemporary International Relations.

2.2. The European Neutrals

There are countries that are known for their neutrality. Some of these countries happen to be located in Europe. A great deal of studies have been conducted on their neutrality. The studies (Neuhold 1982, Ojanen 2003, Beyer and Hofmann 2011) tackle the differences and the similarities of these countries’ neutrality as well as their source and projected future. The countries are Austria, Finland, Ireland, Sweden, and Switzerland. These studies seem to emphasize how European organizations such as the EU, and NATO, as well as the other ones, affect these countries’ neutrality. It should be noted that Sweden and Finland recently gave up neutrality by joining NATO.

A list of conditions a state must meet for it to be successful in its foreign policy concerning neutrality. First, a certain degree of balance of power must exist between the parties of a given conflict. Second, the conflict should not be of high intensity. It will make it harder for the neutral state to play the part of peace promoter and mediator; and eventually bring the conflict to an end. The third condition relates to the neutral state

itself. It must have its domestic affairs in order. It should have no local conflicts or critical issues. In addition, it should be capable of protecting itself to deter any parties in the conflict from trying to attack the neutral state.

Neutrality in the context of modern-day European political approach, views it differently when compared to other concepts that exist under the same umbrella. Concepts like 'neutralization' 'non-belligerency', 'non-alignment'... (Agius and Devine, 2011). Switzerland stands apart out from these five states as the only one that represents the type of neutrality that is 'permanent neutrality'. The country is known for being neutral whatever the circumstances are (Agius and Devine 2011, 267). For the unique neutrality of Switzerland, Morris and White (2011) approach it via realist, liberal, and constructivist theories of neutrality. For the authors realism fails in this regard because its concern is all about power politics it fails to examine Switzerland's neutrality. Liberalism is also not an adequate theory to approach such matters. The main concern of this theory is the advantages a state could gain from seeking memberships of different corporations. Constructivism can be of use when trying to comprehend Swiss neutrality. The reason behind the continued policy of neutrality in Switzerland is the public's support every time they are questioned. Switzerland unlike other states is willingly continuing the tradition of upholding the tenets of neutrality as a foreign policy.

First, some conditions have been taken in these studies, to see which European neutral states should be included. Some states could not be considered for such studies because of the small size of their land and populations (Vatican City, Liechtenstein, and San Marino). Other states like Malta, due to it not fully committed to the permanent neutrality's requirements regarding the legal aspect. In addition, "Malta will allow the use of her military facilities by foreign force" (Neuhold 1982, 14).

As for Ireland, some studies do include it, while others do not, as it will be addressed shortly. For example, Neuhold (1982) does not include Ireland in his study. What keeps it from meeting his criteria is its ties to European Communities (EEC). Even though Ireland is not involved in any military alliance, permanent neutrality extends to the economy, and if a state were to have ties with such organizations it should be of minimal integration.

Outside of Europe, Laos is an example of a state that seemed to be on the track of being a committed permanent neutral state and to be included in the study. However, Laos went through "Internal unrest and foreign interference" (Neuhold 1982, 15). It ended in the state being run by communists, and eventually establishing relations with Vietnam in 1977, which is considered its neutral status demise.

Neuhold (1982) and Ojanen (2003) both tackle the impact of European organizations such as the EU on these states' neutrality. Ojanen (2003) seeks to answer the questions raised via the speech analysis of a seminar of the representatives of five European countries (Austria, Finland, Ireland, Sweden, and Switzerland). On the other hand, Neuhold (1982) conducts a comparative study between these European neutral states with the exclusion of Ireland.

Both of the studies try first to detect what could these states have in common and in opposition concerning their neutrality status. For Ojanen (2003), it seems that the

similarities between these neutral countries deal with public opinion. Neutrality is popular among the populace of these countries. As for Neuhold (1982), these states share the sentiment of avoiding any policy that infringes the international law of neutrality.

Out of these two studies, Neuhold (1982) seems to focus more on the economic aspect of this debate. It appears that the highlight of his study is the economic consequences of permanent neutrality. The political aspect of neutrality extends to the economy via international trade. The rules of neutrality regarding foreign economic policy state that: a state should refrain from economic integration with other states. Only minimal trade should be carried. This creates a critical economic problem for small states that are considered neutral. Austria, Sweden, and Switzerland's joining to EFTA would not stop them from upholding their neutral status. In such a trade, they can "prevent decisions ... if it sees its special international status jeopardized" (Neuhold 1982, 21). However, an economic alliance is the same as a military one, where a neutral state would have "to vote on an embargo against a state at war with a Community member" (Neuhold 1982, 21). Such complexities lead to 'economic marginalization'.

In Ojanen's (2003) study, he focuses on a more general perspective. He looks into the five European countries' attitudes towards new developments in Europe concerning neutrality. The kind of impact it was exposed to. Given that the European Union is seeking the integration of the remaining European countries that are known for being neutral. Therefore one of the questions that are addressed concerning the five countries (Austria, Finland, Ireland, Sweden, and Switzerland) is whether the "EU pose a threat to their policies – or do they themselves pose a threat to the EU's policy?" (Ojanen 2003, 7).

One question that is present in Ojanen's (2003) study which is absent in Neuhold's (1982) study, is why it is uncommon for neutral countries to act in a single voice. Ojanen (2003) seems to detect two reasons for such phenomena. The first reason deals with these countries' unique approach to neutrality along with the bad reputation it might get. They fear that they will be seen as 'bloc building' by other countries. The second one deals with the fear of raising 'the suspicion in the EU' by getting involved in 'bloc formation'.

In the studies regarding the five European neutral states, a focus on the relationship with the EU is also addressed. In Ojanen's (2003) study, there is a very palpable sense of contradiction in the EU is detected. A pattern in the EU that seems to pave the way for more military operations is presented as a solidarity initiative, which is clearly at odds with neutrality. It appears that "members of the EU share a positive attitude towards the development of the EU's security and defense policy" (Ojanen 2003, 62). Discussions regarding security are also popular among the people. It seems that these five countries debate these topics in different ways and with dissimilar extents (Ojanen, 2003).

In addition, the trajectory that the EU seems to be heading shares a striking resemblance to that of the UN. The latter seems to operate with the principle of "UN membership would thus come first, neutrality second" (Ojanen 2003, 66). Therefore there seems to be an unintended confusion within the EU that seems to regard 'common defense' as a 'military alliance'. Among the five countries, Ojanen (2003) thinks that

Finland is the one most likely to join an alliance, due to its increasing need to be associated with the EU. The EU membership gives its members the feeling of being “self-confident of their place in Europe” (Ojanen 2003, 67). In addition, it has been observed that politicians in the three states (Finland, Austria, and Sweden), have made an effort to put an end to these ‘normative qualities’. They seek for more opportunities to “integrate economically and politically within the EU” (Scheck 2012, 126).

With regards to Beyer and Hofmann's (2011) study, the countries are now applying “a narrow understanding of neutrality” (Beyer and Hofmann 2011, 302). These countries avoid “being part of a mutual defense alliance”. Yet these same countries take part in military operations for the EU and NATO framing such operations as ‘crisis management’ and ‘peace support’. This has sparked debate over the “impartiality and renunciation of military power” (Beyer and Hofmann 2011, 302) concerning the ‘active’ nature of this type of neutrality.

Beyer and Hofmann (2011) try to analyze ‘neutrality as a norm’. This way is much better to understand how such policy becomes part of a given country’s foreign policy agenda. The ‘four interrelated factors’ constitute how each country’s perception of this policy changes concerning “international military institutions” (Beyer and Hofmann 2011, 302). Even though Sweden, Finland, Austria, and Ireland have neutrality in their foreign policy, it is of different approaches and started for different reasons.

Austria, Sweden, Finland, and Ireland are countries known for being neutral states. However, they have in recent years “unevenly loosened their understandings of neutrality in their journeys toward adherence to a norm termed non-alignment” (Agius and Devine 2011, 275). Hofmann and Beyer's (2011) “rationalist and a norm-driven approach” explains the reason behind the aforementioned four states’ attitude toward their idea of being a neutral state. ‘Four interrelated factors’ that led to such an event. Those factors are “political elite opinion, public beliefs, and values, the reasons for and timings of...neutrality and the form of institutionalization” (Agius and Devine 2011, 275).

These four countries’ attitudes towards neutrality are analyzed by looking at three main sections. The ‘Initial form and degree of neutrality’, ‘Today’s form and degree of neutrality’, and ‘Interpretation’. Regarding the first one, both Sweden and Ireland’s neutrality was a ‘Voluntary choice’ as opposed to Finland and Austria in which it was a ‘Coerced norm’. It should be noted that these statements are regarding these countries' first experience with neutrality.

Secondly, today these countries’ forms of neutrality, is continued willingly, with a “narrow definition of neutrality” (Beyer and Hofmann 2011, 302). Meaning that they identify as ‘militarily non-aligned’, where they participate in a military activity without formally joining military alliances.

Thirdly, both Sweden and Ireland’s involvement in multiple alliances, made the government make some changes regarding the norm of neutrality as a practice. In both countries, “the political elite is more in favor of change than the public” (Beyer and Hofmann 2011, 302). On the other hand, due to the recent nature of security in both Finland and Austria, they are motivated to rethink neutrality as a norm. The public and

the elite are in favor of change given that neutrality was forced. Therefore, in Finland and Austria, where neutrality was forced, it appears that neutrality as a norm has experienced change while by contrast in Ireland and Sweden neutrality has not changed significantly. Given that it was followed by choice. However, in all these countries “the norm of neutrality retained influence on choices about foreign and security policy” (Beyer and Hofmann 2011, 286).

2.3. Active Neutrality as Unique Form of Neutrality

2.3.1. How is Active Neutrality Addressed in the Literature?

Ireland seems to be the state most commonly referred to as employing the unique form of neutrality, active neutrality. Both Gallagher (2023) and Devine (2006) take different approaches to see if this type of Irish neutrality can be even considered neutrality in the first place. Gallagher (2023) starts by asking the question “Is Ireland neutral?” in which he states that the question is not as complicated as the question of which exact type of neutrality is Ireland adopting. The common definition of active neutrality deals with the act that seeks “peace promotion, and nonaggression, the primacy of the UN and the confinement of state military activity of the UN peacekeeping” (Gallagher 2023, 1987). Those characteristics describe Ireland’s foreign policy attitude towards neutrality. Such an aspect of active neutrality is viewed favorably since 40 percent of Irish interviewees in a 2001 study believed that their country is indeed adopting active neutrality (Gallagher 2023, 1987).

The Cold War has helped neutral small powers to “move towards active neutrality and the creation of a niche role for the neutrals between the superpowers” (Doherty 2017, 28). Ireland’s case of active neutrality is unique because it was within the Western sphere of influence. Still, it managed to maintain active neutrality through peace-building and promotion via the UN. However, unlike the countries of the Non-Allied Movement (NAM), Ireland did vote in favor of the West in the UN, “indicating the fact that neutrality did not mean ideological neutrality” (Doherty 2017, 28).

Devine (2006) on the other hand, takes a post-structuralist deconstructionist approach to challenge the ongoing discourse that states that Irish neutrality is nothing but a ‘myth’ via IR theories as a framework. A non-realist approach is believed to be more suitable to understand such a topic, given the fact that IR theories are not scientifically objective for such a matter. Neo-realism’s helpfulness as an IR theory is discredited when trying to make sense of international politics and foreign policy (Devine, 2006). The only reason it is dominant in IR is “because of the political structures, institutions, and elites supporting it” (Devine 2006, 139). An engaged public in the political discourse regarding neutrality further proves Ireland’s active neutrality approach. During peacetime, it resorts to tension mitigation that could have otherwise resulted in war (Devine 2006, 134).

To shift the focus out of Europe and look for other cases that could be deemed as employing active neutrality. One country’s case of active neutrality that appeared to be less addressed in the literature is Iran’s. Iran’s active neutrality during the Kuwaiti crisis entailed Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait. The reasons and the ramifications of such a foreign policy stance were because Iraq and Iran went to war for eight years from 1980 to 1988. The war ended after two years before the 1990 Kuwaiti crisis.

The war resulted in no territorial changes, but the animosity between the two countries persisted afterward. That is why Iran condemned Iraq's actions and sought to support a United Nations mediation to end the crisis. Iran did not want any further presence of the US in the Middle East. However, once Iraq ignored the United Nations Security Council resolution to withdraw from Kuwait, an American-led military coalition consisting of various Arab countries intervened to fight the Iraqi forces out of Kuwait.

The Gulf War was between two parties that Iran considered hostile; the US and Iraq. Therefore it adopted active neutrality to deal with such a situation. Both Iran's and the US' interests coincided in that both wanted Iraq to be weakened (Milani 2007, 52). Iran managed to keep relations with both main parties of the conflict. It reached a peace plan that favored it with Iraq when it moved "thirty divisions of his army from Iranian borders" (Milani 2007, 51). As well as getting "paid \$200 million for undelivered weapons Iran had purchased under the Shah" from the US. President Bush requested the "US oil companies to import Iranian oil". In addition, allowing "Iran's request for foreign loans from the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and Japan," without the disapproval of the US (Milani 2007, 52).

The most recent example of active neutrality adoption to address a conflict is Türkiye. The war in Ukraine has brought many countries to come for its help against Russia. Some help came in the form of economic sanctions on Russia; others helped militarily by providing Ukraine with arms. Türkiye, on the other hand, seems to be adopting active neutrality as a policy toward the conflict between the two countries.

As part of its long-lasting tradition of "peace at home, peace abroad" that was adopted since the formation of the republic; almost a century ago, Türkiye laid out three policies to deal with the conflict. Condemnation of Russian actions "while remaining an acceptable mediator", "maintaining good relations with Ukraine" as well as with its Western (North Atlantic) partners" (Gozkaman 2022, 161). Türkiye seems yet again as the case during WW2, seeking to strengthen its position in the status quo because of its rocky relations with its Western partners. Maintaining relations with the parties of the conflict via active neutrality represents its ultimate goal of maximizing its security interests.

2.3.2. Türkiye's Active Neutrality During WW2

2.3.2.1. Historical Background

As previously mentioned, Türkiye appears to approach the ongoing Russian/Ukraine war via active neutrality. However, it is not the first time it will approach conflicts in such a manner. During the ww2, Türkiye, a small power at the time, managed to employ active neutrality concerning a conflict that was global in scope.

The last war Türkiye (Ottoman Empire) was involved in was WW1. It joined the Central Powers in 1914 next to the German Empire against the Triple Entente of the United Kingdom, France, and Russia. In the first weeks of WW1, it was in Entente forces' interest to keep the Ottoman Empire neutral "The objective lay in keeping the Ottomans outside the war for as long as possible... the Entente governments

correspondingly increased their efforts to keep the Ottomans neutral - and the by now two-week-old war as confined as possible” (Aksakal 2008, 1-18).

It was not in the Ottoman Empire's interest to enter the war either. Its existence was in danger because of economic instability and political upheaval throughout its colonies that marked the previous years leading up to the war. It was seen by Europe as a ‘sick man’ in its last days of glory (Deringil 2004, 3). At the time before the war, the empire did indeed try to stay out of it. However, it became convinced that “states and peoples could survive only through the demonstration of military power...the battlefield could bring the empire the unifying and liberating experience it so desperately needed” (Aksakal 2008, 1-18).

This brings into perspective two notions that characterized both the Ottoman Empire and Türkiye as a republic. The first one is having neutrality as a foreign policy no matter the conflict. The second one is being neutral depending on the conflict and the circumstances. It appears that the latter is what Türkiye as a republic put into action about its foreign policy during WW2. It only broke the status of neutrality around the year 1945 once it was clear that Nazi Germany was losing the war. It should be noted that other countries did the same. Many states joined the side of the Allied forces once it was clear that the Allied were winning the war.

2.3.2.2. Türkiye's Realist Foreign Policy Approach During WW2

Regarding the literature, that deals with the case study that will be tackled; this thesis studies the reasons that led Morocco to engage in neutrality as a reaction to the conflict that it had to deal with. Those reasons; as they are being studied stem from an economic, political, and militaristic nature. However, most importantly the reason is to maximize security. Deringil (1982) cites one of the main reasons Türkiye chose neutrality as a foreign policy during WW2 was because Türkiye at the time was weak. Coming out of a brutal WW1 that cost it the loss of great territory as well as its military might. The British observed that the military of Türkiye at the time was not upgraded to the standards of WW2. Türkiye was still operating with WW1 artillery. Türkiye was practicing what is referred to in the literature as ‘active neutrality’ (İnanç 2006). It was trying to maintain a level of relation with both parties of the conflict. The studies regarding such topic usually cover the industry of chromite ore production and Türkiye's trade of this product to both parties of the conflict. It was due to Türkiye, generating a great portion of the world's such products at the time.

A US Department of State report that concerns the ‘US and Allied wartime and postwar relations and negotiations’ with countries that also include Türkiye, tackles Türkiye's active neutrality during WW2. Türkiye was trying “to ensure its territorial integrity and economic well-being” (Slany and Eizenstat 1998, 113). It managed to do so by maintaining both an "alliance with Britain and friendship and mutual trade with Germany” (Slany and Eizenstat 1998, 113).

The Allied (mainly the US and Britain) relations with Türkiye had two stages depending on their situation in the war. In the first stage, which started from the beginning of the war, the Allied accepted Türkiye's neutral stance. They made sure to keep it that way by providing it with “economic and military assistance until it could join the Allies” (Slany and Eizenstat 1998, 114). The second stage took place when the

Allied forces started making progress in the war against Nazi Germany in 1943. Now, they are trying to “Minimize Türkiye’s contribution to German war economy” (Slany and Eizenstat 1998, 115), particularly concerning its trade of chromite ore. The US deemed it as important for Nazi Germany’s war industry (Slany and Eizenstat 1998, 121). Türkiye was the only accessible source of such material that was within reach for Nazi Germany (Slany and Eizenstat 1998, 121).

In a defensive realist world order, states seek to maximize their security rather than their power, and maintain as well as strengthen their position in the status quo of order. According to the theory, the latter is achieved via ‘moderate’ policies to avoid conflict escalation. Türkiye sought to have a realist approach, specifically a defensive realist one via neutrality when dealing with WW2.

It believed that as much as it saw that siding with the Allied in the first years of the war was the more reasonable side to join, given the fact that it was seen as “the least harmful to [Türkiye’s] interests” (Deringil 2004, 4). Türkiye believed that joining the Allied Forces, a policy marked by idealism, because they were the morally superior side, was not the right policy to maintain its existence and stability. The Turkish government made sure to curb the parties of the war propaganda among the public so that they would not be swayed to change their neutral attitude about the war. In which:

“Selim Sarper, the Director of the Turkish Government’s Basın Yayın Enformasyon Müdürlüğü (Press and Information Agency), controlled the Anadolu Ajansı (the Anatolian Agency, the Turkish press agency), Turkish radio and other printed materials. Sarper took opportunities on a number of occasions to crack down on the propaganda activities of both warring parties, in response to complaints that his Agency was leaning too far towards favouring one side or the other” (Corse 2021, 897).

The Turkish press made sure when reporting on the war to be as neutral as it could be by stating “the victories and the defeats of both sides” (Deringil 2004, 137). They felt there should be only “defense of Türkiye's frontiers in case of attack”. (Deringil 2004, 4) While also “the maintenance of the British alliance, and friendship and commercial relations with Germany” (Deringil 2004, 4). They sought a more appropriate balance to achieve and maintain, this is evident in Türkiye’s actions during the war. The influences behind such foreign policy during WW2, stemmed from a great sense of nation and nationalism. That marked the decision-makers of this period. Those people have experienced firsthand the many conflicts that led to the formation of the republic; “WW1, Turkish war of liberation and the founding of the republic” (Deringil 2004, 58).

2.3.2.3. Diplomatic and Statesmanship Prowess

There is a less addressed aspect of Türkiye’s active neutrality during WW2. It has showcased diplomatic and statesmanship prowess through its leadership that contributed to its survival during WW2, as well as its progress in the post-war period. The fact that, given its single-party system during WW2, “not many but few people took an effective role” (Çalis and Soker 2019, 459) in crafting the country’s foreign

policy. The Turkish President at the time; İsmet İnönü, made sure to appoint members of his government, of those who shared his view of active neutrality towards the war.

Even though the Turkish leaders had different opinions about whom to support in the war, “none of them was in favor of joining the war as a belligerent country” (Çalis and Soker 2019, 459). So much so that in 1944, when the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs during the war, Numan Menemencioğlu; showcased bias towards Nazi Germany, was replaced by another minister since the country was in the process of cutting ties with Nazi Germany. The new minister in question was Hasan Saka, who viewed Britain more favorably than his predecessor (Çalis and Soker 2019, 458).

Turkiye’s parliament during the war was the first in the country’s history. A body of government that would directly represent the people. At least in such a manner as part of a “free, egalitarian electoral system based on general ballot” (Koçak 2005, 3). The parliament turned out to be the opposite of what it was supposed to represent. The power was more centralized in the hands of the few, in a single-party system that lasted until the end of WW2. Particularly during the elections of 1939, which happened after the death of the country’s first president Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

The new president; İsmet İnönü, who was at odds with Atatürk in his last days as his prime minister, made sure to prevent “MPs not sharing his beliefs being re-elected to Parliament” (Koçak 2005, 17). As well as bringing back to the Parliament “his former peers who, due to political disagreements with Atatürk had been forced to withdraw from parliamentary and political life” (Koçak 2005, 17). The same happened after the 1943 elections, in which there were parliament seats taken by independent candidates (Koçak 2005, 17). The instability in the young country as well as the world caused by WW2, has reinforced the legitimacy of the one-party system in Türkiye. It lasted until the end of the war in 1945 when the country changed to a multi-party system.

Turkiye’s small power status during WW2 did not stop it from achieving its security interests. The ‘resilience’ is the small powers’ advantage. Meaning that their power status pushes them to “expands the policy options” as well as the possibility “to move between various alliances” (Gürol and Önsoy 2016, 7). For a small state to further strengthen its position it needs to be neutral with regards to external conflicts. So that it can make agreements with all parties of the conflict and refrain from ones that could harm its chances by antagonizing one side of the conflict (Gürol and Önsoy 2016, 8).

It should be noted that before the Soviet Union entered the war on the side of the Allied, Türkiye had to balance not only between two sides but rather three. One side is represented in the unique plans the Soviets had particularly with the Nazi Germany-Soviet Union pact. Those two were not Allies but they signed this pact in August 1939 one month before the war. This pact marked their agreement on their spheres of influence in Eastern Europe. This has added more pressure on Türkiye due to the three powers have expressed interest in making agreements with it due to its geopolitical significance.

However, it proved to be beneficial for it because Great Britain for fear that it might lose Türkiye because they signed with Nazi Germany a non-aggression treaty that assures economic and military trade, as well as not getting to war with each other for 10 years. Great Britain made sure to showcase its interest in establishing close relations

with Türkiye via agreements. So that it will not repeat the same mistakes made during WW1 when Britain and the Ottoman Empire were on opposite sides of the conflict. This move was seen as avoiding the “dangers and difficulties we had created for ourselves in the last war by not securing Türkiye's friendship or neutrality beforehand” (Deringil 2004, 82).

Türkiye pushed Great Britain to meet its demands that were financial and as well as political in nature. Great Britain had no choice but to agree to those demands due to the war having already started and Poland being occupied by both Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. Türkiye managed to get its demands (financial aid as well as military equipment). While also maintaining a goal-oriented foreign policy marked by active neutrality with no requirements to enter the war if the Allied were in danger (Deringil 2004, 89). Even with the fall of France in the hands of Nazi Germany, Türkiye maintained its commitment to only get involved if its existence was in danger. It however sympathized with its Allied in the west.

There was a fear of the Allied that Türkiye might join forces with the Axis as a result of this. Türkiye managed to get Nazi Germany to trade its ‘war material’ in accordance with the 1941 ‘Clodius agreement’. The agreement entails the trade between the two countries of Chrome Ore in exchange for ‘war material’ much to the dissatisfaction of the Allied (Medlicott 1952, 527). This was part of a substantial diplomatic maneuver by the Turks given the fact that Nazi Germany at the time was making military advances into the Soviet Union.

At the peak of the war, Türkiye managed to get both forces of the Axis and Allied to supplement it with military equipment as well as monetary support. The intention was to maintain Türkiye's independence from each side of the war and deter it from any attacks from the other side. This period marked Türkiye's foreign policy of ‘Active Neutrality’ in full effect because it “could not be satisfied by declaring herself neutral and awaiting events” (Deringil 2004, 136) but rather get itself into deploying strategies that would lead to its advantage via reserving arms. This sentiment will be further sensed in the statement by the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time Mehmet Şükrü Saracoğlu. He assured the parties of the war that Türkiye has no territorial aspirations but does believe in defending its existent territory not by a passive neutral state but rather an active one.

The United States entered the war on the side of the Allied as a result of the Pearl Harbor attack. Türkiye was worried that a new set of rules could be established, particularly with the failure of Nazi Germany to invade the Soviet Union. The latter now is backed by the United States. As well as Great Britain's presence in Syria and Iraq, which borders Türkiye in the southeast. Türkiye had to change its foreign policy from active neutrality to full-on involvement in WW2 on the side of the Allied forces. Türkiye saw that it was clear that the war was reaching its end in favor of the Allied forces.

During WW2, Türkiye via active neutrality, managed to make agreements that constituted “friendship, mutual security and cooperation” (Gürol and Önsoy 2016, 12) with all willing countries. Small powers have adopted active neutrality to maximize security in the nuclear age of the Cold War as well after WW2. The ‘non-offensive defense’, means to seek with parties of the conflict improvement of political peace and

economic ties (McSweeney 1987, 39). Active neutrality is a much better policy for smaller countries because it is more active and positive than the traditional more passive form of neutrality. It has a negative and immoral reputation in world affairs. Active neutrality is a pragmatic policy in which small powers seek to “prevent war, to reduce tension and to promote detente” (McSweeney 1987, 43).

2.3.3. Morocco’s Active Neutrality in Context of its Relation with Algeria

Ever since the end of WW2, the Palestine/Israel conflict has been one of the most impactful as well as important conflicts in the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region. In which it constitutes many of these region’s countries’ foreign policy. The MENA region countries have a somewhat hostile attitude towards Israel with varying degrees. Morocco also has been meticulous in its approach to addressing this conflict, so much so that it could be seen as the least hostile state to Israel in the region.

The Abraham Accords agreement, which entailed relations normalization with Israel, has further proved that Morocco is strategically approaching the conflict in the context of its Cold War with Algeria concerning the WS issue. Lucarelli, Alessandro, and Moro (2019) state that there is a competition between Morocco and Algeria for the “influence not only in the classic Maghrebi strategic arena but also more profoundly in the Sahel” (Lucarelli, Alessandro, and Moro 2019, 83). The two countries are believed to be the only two relevant powers that exert enough influence in the region.

The earliest evidence of such competition between the two countries was during the Cold War. Morocco was leaning towards the West while Algeria was leaning towards the East. Once the two countries got their independence from France, two major events took place that would define the relations between the two for the next decades. The first one deals with the colonial border conflict, which resulted in the Sand War of 1963, and the second one deals with Algeria’s support of the Polisario Front for WS independence in 1975.

The non-involvement of the Soviet Union concerning the WS conflict was abnormal. It has always supported pro-independence nationalist movements in third-world countries. However, it took a neutral stance on the conflict given its important economic ties with Morocco (Zoubir 1987, 18).

During the Sand War, the USSR “blamed Morocco for starting the conflict” and “Deliveries of Soviet weapons to Morocco were cut off” (Zoubir 1987, 23). Algeria saw the USSR more favorably than the Western powers due to their close ties that were marked by helping modernize the newly independent Algerian army after they were denied arms support from Western powers. It resulted in the “Soviets to establish a limited presence in Algeria” (Zoubir 1987, 26). The relations between the two got more pragmatic when they witnessed several events that were perceived as hostile toward their security interests. First, Morocco’s formation of an alliance with Western powers concerning the Zaire crisis (Zoubir 1987, 26). Second, the Camp David Accords were perceived as the US-Israeli-Egyptian alliance of both ‘imperialism and Zionism’ (Zoubir 1987, 27). Therefore a balance of power was needed by Algeria that led to its closer ties with the USSR against the more pro-west rival Morocco.

One of the few cases that both Algeria and Morocco supported was the Palestinian cause. Ever since the formation of the state of Israel, the two countries were on the side of Palestine against Israel. However, in the following decades, the two had different approaches to the Palestine/Israel conflict. Lounnas and Messari (2018) states how even though both Algeria and Morocco voiced their support for the Palestine cause, “Algeria endorsed the most radical stances on the Arab–Israeli conflict” while on the other hand, Morocco “advocated for a just and fair compromise with Israel” (Lounnas and Messari 2018, 7). Such different stances on the Palestine/Israel conflict have added to the chasm in relations between the two countries.

The Moroccan foreign policy and its relations with Europe have seen improvements ever since the beginning of the 21st century. The reason is Morocco’s moderate stance on Israel, aside from the officially stated reasons for the ‘Jewish–Arab past in Morocco’. It believes that “Arab and Jew could not only live together but could flourish together” (Willis and Messari 2003, 153) but more important is Morocco’s strategy “to attract US support on the Western Sahara issue” (Willis and Messari 2003, 153). As well as showcase to its European partners that it is seeking peaceful resolutions for the conflict as opposed to the more radical options of other Arab states.

In 2020, Morocco further changed its approach towards the Palestine/Israel conflict from a moderate stance to an active neutral actor. The Abraham Accords agreement, Morocco now officially has diplomatic relations with Israel as a tradeoff for “The U.S. recognition of Morocco’s sovereignty over Western Sahara” (Singer 2021, 4). Out of any other Arab country that normalized relations with Israel, Morocco had “the most generous U.S. incentive” (Singer 2021, 4). Because of how much the international recognition of its autonomy plan over WS means for its security interests against Algeria in the context of the Cold War that is happening between them.

There seems to be an emergence of a new front for the ongoing Cold War between Algeria and Morocco. This new front is represented in the projected gas pipelines that will link Europe and Nigeria into two pipelines. One pipeline will be through Algeria and the other through Morocco. This will add to the geopolitical competition of the two in Africa. Morocco’s normalization with Israel and the US recognition of its claims over the disputed WS, along with other reasons, have angered its neighboring country. As a reaction to such events, Algeria preceded “to halt gas exports to Spain via Morocco” (Voytyuk 2023, 29) as well as cut its diplomatic ties with it.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Given that, the purpose of this thesis is to explain certain foreign policy acts as defensive realist policy via active neutrality. This section will act as a bridge between the theoretical concept of defensive realism and the foreign policy of active neutrality. First, it is a must, to delve deeper into the theory of realism, to understand how this thesis justifies its reasoning of displaying Morocco's attitude, towards the Palestine/Israel conflict as active neutrality.

Realism has always been the theory that was sought after, to understand relations between states and to understand the state's actions. The theory is usually associated with pragmatism which seems to be lacking in its counterpart; liberalism, which is a more optimistic perspective on international politics. Realists' thinkers go as far back in history such as Thucydides, Machiavelli, and Hobbes, with an interest in the study of conflict and power politics (Chiaruzzi 2012, 36). For realists, events such as war are a natural reaction given that they see it as inevitable and necessary in international politics (Waltz 1959, 232). War provides a resolving solution when diplomacy fails. There is no guarantee of stability or order but the balance of power or hegemony is the only viable option for states according to realists. As the case with any other International Relations theory, realism also branches out into different approaches. Classical Realism and Structural Realism, although the two still maintain the main assumptions of realism, they differ in certain aspects that will be addressed shortly.

3.1. Classical Realism

The nonexistence of a world government results in a state of anarchy in international relations. This is what makes it different from domestic relations. In a given state, there exists a government; a ruling body that insures security for its populace as well as it makes rules and enforces them. On an international level there is Anarchy, one of Realism's key beliefs, this concept, along with the idea that the only thing that shapes international relations is power politics and war. The early pioneers of such a school of thought are Thucydides along with Machiavelli with Hans J. Morgenthau being one of the modern realist thinkers. One could mistake such an analysis of a state of anarchy as a sign of disorder and chaos. However, what the realists exactly mean, is that "sovereign states do not recognize any other higher authority above themselves" (Chiaruzzi 2012, 36). By extension, in such a state of anarchy; war is natural to take place, as well as the protection of states is cared by themselves.

Among realists, there exists, a rejection of the idealist and liberal assumption that all states seek peace (Carr 1946, 51). Such an assumption is ideological in nature. It does not have a pragmatic dimension. It fails to take into account, the palpable existence of different interests among states, particularly when it comes to how they view the status quo. Whether they want to keep it or change it. Classical realists, like Hans J. Morgenthau, are also critical of what he describes as the 'liberal illusion', particularly in the wake of WW2. States have a desire for power as well as to get more of it and to showcase it (Morgenthau 1946). Classical realists are skeptical of liberalism's faith in human rationality concerning international politics. For them, power is viewed as a corrupting and addicting influence on human relations, and international politics for states is a mere struggle for them to gain more power (Morgenthau 1973, 25).

Hans J. Morgenthau's six principles of political realism:

1. Human nature plays a critical role in politics
2. States interest in power is of paramount importance when it comes to foreign policy
3. States interest in power and the exercise of it has always been the norm throughout history
4. There is no place for idealism in international politics
5. Realism rejects idealism's view of morality
6. Politics as a scientific and intellectual endeavor is independent from others disciplines and does not fall under the same rules as they do (Morgenthau, 1973: 3–13)

Given the need for new perspectives as well as approaches to international politics, contemporary authors such as (Behr and Williams, 2016) try to reassess classical realism in comparison to critical theories. It seems that the two although perceived as opposites, do share “concerns about political and social crises, modernity and humanity” (Behr and Williams 2016, 1). Classical realism is the ‘problematization’ of international politics to address its “key themes and dilemmas” (Behr and Williams 2016, 6). Being anti-positivist and rejecting teleology are features that both critical theories and classical realism have in common. Both reject the idealistic claims about progress, with skeptical tendencies of political modernity's progress. They both provide a counterargument to neoclassical realism about social power in the context of modernity. They invite to “open up the state in terms much broader than focusing too narrowly on processes of decision-making or domestic politics alone” (Behr and Williams 2016, 7).

Other authors like Edinger (2022) analyze classical realism by trying to make sense of Russia's war on Ukraine. The state, according to such theory, is not only seeking power but also prestige (Edinger 2022, 1886). The pursuit of prestige is one of Russia's goals by waging such war. There are two aspects of the theory that coincide with Russia's foreign policy. First, it wants to maintain its status as the regional hegemon, because “great-power status carries with it the expectation that . . . smaller states, especially within its region, will defer to its wishes on foreign policy” (Larson and Shevchenko 2019, 233). It is Russia's way to take revenge on the West for not respecting its status. Therefore, the war, according to “the Russian leadership came to view the use of military force as a ‘necessity’ rather than a reckless wager” (Edinger 2022, 1886).

Second, there is a paradox that emerges concerning the reasoning behind Russia's actions via classical realism. Question of Edinger (2022) “Why would a Russian leader choose a course of action that is sure to outrage those by whom he seeks to be recognized?” (Edinger 2022, 1886). Russia, by putting to use force to seek such goals, will lead to two results. Either it will lead it to reinforce its status and ultimately be respected by the West or the other scenario where it will have the opposite results. For classical realism, there appear to be two aspects of the state's prestige. The first one is the “prestige in support of a policy of the status quo” (Edinger 2022, 1887). The second one relates to the “pursuit of prestige for its own sake (or for ‘the personal glory of the ruler’)” (Edinger 2022, 1887).

Smith and Dawson (2022) also think that Russia's actions can be understood via classical realism. Such a theory "can coherently marry material, ideational, and psychological factors into an overarching power politics framework which can offer useful and convincing realist explanations for the Ukraine war" (Smith and Dawson 2022, 186). It seems that classical realism disagrees with neorealism; the former puts more importance on the leader who is representing the state than the state itself. As well as, it departs from the notion that states are rational actors (Smith and Dawson 2022, 187). For the leader, survival comes in second place after the "struggle over the determination of wills and meanings and the fulfillment of vital psychological-emotional desires" (Smith and Dawson 2022, 187). Contemporary IR scholars like Smith and Dawson (2022) and Mercer (2010) think that states should not view emotion as the opposite of rationality, but rather, it should be embraced, because the two need each other. Since, "IR concepts such as power, nationalism, and status would make no sense without their emotional-psychological aspects" (Smith and Dawson 2022, 187).

3.2. The Structural Realism/ Neorealism

Structural realism served as a continuation, as well as an elaboration of classical realism. It offers a more emphasis on economic and scientific methods, rather than history, which was of more critical importance for classical realism. Structural realists such as Kenneth N. Waltz diverge from classical realism and its belief that human nature as well as state characteristics can be used to make sense of international relations. He contends that, it is rather the international system that constitutes how a given state behaves. In the international system, there exist three components that are of importance: 'the differentiation of units, the organizing principle, and the distribution of capabilities' Waltz (1959, 1979). Such components of the international system allow for the possibility of analyzing the structure as a whole.

1. The first one deal with the nature of the order (hierarchy or anarchy).
2. The second one is concerning how states function in this order with regards to security.
3. The third one is about power and how states utilize it in a given order (unipolarity, bipolarity, multipolarity).

Anarchy is also further elaborated on by structural realism. It contends that such a system plants the seed of doubt among states, not to trust each other regardless of the projected gains it could gain in areas like trade. States fear of being too dependent on others, which could create a relative gains situation, where a state is worried about other states gaining more. This further separates realism and liberalism in which liberals state that interdependence results in peace, however for structural realism, it creates vulnerability for states.

On the other hand, neoclassical realism to Smith and Dawson (2022) "is best thought of as a toolkit to undertake foreign policy analysis rather than as an explicit IR theory" (Smith and Dawson 2022, 190). In comparison to structural and classical realism, it is more concerned with issues related to international relations as well as "it entails a researcher develop a unique framework to help understand and explain a central problem" (Smith and Dawson 2022, 190). Neoclassical realism views power

distribution in the international system as an independent variable, which is yet another contrast between the three types of realism (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016).

Unlike the scientific nature of structural realism, neoclassical realism is more subjective in its approach to the study of International Relations. The fact that such an approach is based on actors that are presented by their foreign policy decisions cannot allow for consistencies that mark the scientific method (Schweller 2004). Such subjectivity which is also present in the state's foreign policies makes it challenging to have an "objective assessment of relative power" (Taliaferro 2006, 213), either regionally or internationally. It appears that both classical realism and neoclassical realism are unbothered by the unscientific nature of their approach to international relations because "contradictions and incongruities are acceptable as long as it performs a pragmatic service" (Smith and Dawson 2022, 192). The framework of neoclassical realism allows the inclusion of "identity and perceptions ... as intervening variables" (Smith and Dawson 2022, 192). Such inclusion seeks to "channel, mediate and (re)direct systemic pressures into unique foreign policy outcomes" (Schweller 2004, 164).

In addition, Smith and Dawson (2022) focus on two aspects concerning neoclassical realism. The first one deals with 'identity'. Such an aspect encompasses "the values, beliefs, norms, and assumptions that a state prioritizes for its international role" (Smith and Dawson 2022, 192). The state representatives use 'identity' as a guide to how to operate within the international system. The second aspect deals with 'perceptions'. Such aspect is yet another thing that the state representatives base their foreign policy decisions on, along with the "calculations of relative power and other states' interests and motivations" (Smith and Dawson 2022, 192). The second aspect is yet another subjective dimension to the state per neoclassical realism. Because "a state's perceptions stem from collective cognition, they are understandably prone to human error" (Smith and Dawson 2022, 192).

Meibauer (2020) views neoclassical realism as seeking to "fill a gap within structural realism" (Meibauer 2020, 11) through its development of a theory of foreign policy. Since neoclassical realism is a combination of classical realism and structural realism, the focus will be now on the latter (Smith and Dawson 2022, 178). Per Barry Posen (2022) structural realism focuses on "the anarchic nature of international relations" because war's occurrence is natural in such a system. War in this case is "a reminder that states still compete for security, sometimes violently" (Barry Posen, 2022). There is no trust (as it should be) among states. Such a way of thinking is justified "because states are inherently aggressive...due to anarchy" (Tang 2008, 453). There is a sense of competition when it comes to achieving security among states. Such sentiment is detected in Posen (2022)'s following statement:

"Anarchy shapes and shoves because it permits the strong to try whatever they wish to try and incentivizes those in the way to react. Anarchy encourages competition, mainly in and about any means that contribute to security" (Posen 2022).

As it will be expanded on in the next section, structural realism is separated into two types. The first type is offensive realism. As explained earlier, such type is used by some IR scholars to make sense of Russia's war on Ukraine. The second type; defensive

realism, is used by others to make sense of the US President Obama's policy regarding the Middle East during his eight-year tenure. Indeed, Juneau (2020) believes that "Obama's efforts to bring America's Middle East commitments into line with his circumscribed perception of its interests were consistent with defensive realism" (Juneau 2020, 387). A focus is put on how under his presidency, he showcased restraint and moderation of the use of force, two features that are associated with this type of realism. His Middle East policy during the civil wars in both Syria and Libya are example of such consistency. He opted for the US to have "a limited involvement" instead of "intervening on a large scale" (Juneau 2020, 388). Juneau (2020) believes that Obama's rationale coincides with defensive realism's idea of "strategic patience instead of intervention" because for these two states (Libya and Syria) "nation-building and democratization must come from within and can rarely be externally imposed" (Juneau 2020, 389).

3.3. Offensive Realism vs. Defensive Realism

For structural realists, military power plays a critical role in how states interact with each other. The least one can expect from states is their aim to ensure their survival, while seeking world hegemony, which is the maximalist example of states' interaction beyond security (Waltz 1979, 118). Military power is the variable that constitutes how the international system will be, whether a hegemony, bipolar, or multipolar world order. Structural realists contend that these systemic configurations are constituted by the balance of power. It is not as liberalism suggests that calculated diplomacy between states produces such systems, but rather it is the balance of power that plays the role of automatic mechanism that produces such results in the international system. In a system where anarchy is the dominant feature, states, for fear of the repercussions of the balance of power, lean towards adopting a defensive policy that seeks to maintain the status quo.

This is where the similarities between offensive realism vs. defensive realism end. Their ideas are different, with regards to what states seek, being that just maintaining security or seeking more power. John Mearsheimer, the leading offensive realist, disagrees with the defensive realist Kenneth Waltz. Mearsheimer, along with his fellow offensive realists, believe that states "are always searching for opportunities to gain power over their rivals" (Mearsheimer 2001, 250). Offensive realists depart from the others in their idea that, states particularly great powers are always on the hunt to expand their power. Therefore, the ultimate difference between the two streams of structural realism, is how they view security and power concerning which one states seek and how.

In a defensive realist world order, states seek to maximize their security rather than their power, and maintain as well as strengthen their position in the status quo of order. Defensive realists contend that within the international system, no system assures certainty of security; such anarchy encourages states to adopt policies characterized as 'defensive' and 'moderate' in nature. Kenneth N. Waltz states that the "first concern of states is not to maximize power but to maintain their position in the system" (Waltz 1979, 126). Therefore there is a desire to maintain the status quo, with that in mind, if a state is seeking security via aggression it will not be the right policy because aggression will lead to possible military engagement in the conflict. Although he describes himself

as an offensive realist, defensive realism follows the same outline presented by John Mearsheimer's five main assumptions. In which states that:

“First, the international system is anarchic. Second, states possess the capabilities necessary to hurt and possibly destroy each other. Third, basic goal and aim of states is survival. Fourth, states think strategically about how to survive in the international system. And fifth, States can never be certain about other states' intentions” (Mearsheimer 1994, 10).

Offensive realists continue to agree with classical realists in their assumption that power is the ultimate goal for states. “Nations expand their political interests abroad when their relative power increases” (Zakaria 1998, 19). The system in place normalizes the states' hunt for more power. The more powerful the state the more it aspires to gain more territory (Gilpin 1981, 106). It is through gaining more power, that the state could ensure its survival. Influence and wealth are also of critical importance because these two help build a strong army. The structure of the system, for offensive realists is encouraging security via maximizing power, not by indulging in moderate policies that avoid such goals. As a result, every state should seek to be the hegemon in the system, which is the only situation where that state assures its security.

Such a way to achieve security is aggressive in nature, because states are justified to seek any opportunity that presents itself to reach such a goal. So much so that, offensive realists, like Mearsheimer, believe that it will be unwise of a given state to think that it has in its possession enough power to feel secure and pass on the chance to acquire more of it. Since other states will do so if they get the chance (Zakaria 1998). Therefore, the paramount goal for the state is not to be of equal footing in terms of power, but rather to be a more powerful one.

States are never certain of their condition in the status quo, they are always in fear that they do not have an advantage over other states. Therefore, offensive realists believe there is no assurance that the status quo shall remain the same. States particularly powerful ones, are always in the pursuit of getting the power scale in their favor. The idea is that there is no trust among states, and will always assume the worst of each other. States are always on the lookout for a looming military attack on them by other states. That is why they must always seek to be one step ahead of one another. Even in times of relative peace, states will be as vigilant as in times of conflict, because they can never be sure of the other state's intentions (Labs 1997). Such uncertainty and worst-case scenario preparedness are some of the key assumptions that deem offensive realism (Mearsheimer 2001).

Defensive realists uphold the notion that it is security that states seek, not power or influence. In addition, they see maintaining the status quo to be of necessity, particularly during the absence of conflict. This, along with the preservation of the existing power scale equilibrium, can be deemed as non-aggressive aspirations (Grieco 1990). “In anarchy, security is the highest end.” (Waltz 1979, 126). Defensive realists disagree with offensive realists' maximizing power assumption. Claiming that “the first concern of states is not to maximize power but to maintain their positions in the system” (Waltz 1979, 126).

For defensive realists, a state trying to become a hegemon is counterproductive given that fact such an endeavor will only be met by more hostility and opposition by other states. Ironically, it will lead to that state being less secure and less powerful. Therefore the balance of power is effective in maintaining security. In the case of a state trying to be a hegemon, other states “are more secure because aggressors will face combined opposition. Status quo states should therefore avoid provoking countervailing coalitions by eschewing threatening foreign and defense policies” (Walt 1985, 4). Moreover, for fear of alliances against a given state, they are more likely to be dissuaded from accumulating alarming power (Walt 1985, 11). As a result of such a situation, “the balance of power that arises out of international anarchy punishes aggressors, it does not reward it” (Snyder 1991, 11). It can be argued, that defensive realism frowns upon the idea that states need to maximize their power via conquest. It is a gamble; the stakes are too high for the state that is seeking such a route. That is why; the international system is more rewarding for states that take moderate policies. On the other hand, it punishes the ones that seek expansion because of its costing drawbacks.

3.4. Making Sense of Active Neutrality with Defensive Realism Theory

It is a challenging feat to try to state that neutrality and realism go hand in hand. Both concepts denote certain features that are widely different and as well as, belonging to dissimilar spheres in International Relations. One (realism) sees power as the guiding force in the system, while the other (neutrality) is in belief or at least wanting to believe that institutionalism is what drives the system in place (Austin 1998, 37). Neutrality, therefore, given its link to institutionalism, could be more related to the liberalism school of thought rather than realism’s. Another difference stems from their ideas on what dissuades states from going to war. Realism sees that it is the fact that the state could lose that war that encourages it to try to avoid conflict. While for neutrality, is the idea of cooperation, that exists between states. The idea of conflict being an unwise event. Realists have been very critical if not disillusioned with regards to neutrals. They regard them as “an anomaly, or fail to account for them at all” (Austin 1998, 37). Realists are accused of not being able to account for the relevance of neutrality in international relations. They are thought of as not having the right tools to make an understanding of international events (Austin 1998, 39).

Neutrality has been described by some realists (Morgenthau 1958) as a byproduct of balance of power. Particularly for small states, that employ neutrality when they are not being sought after by more powerful states. Although Waltz (1979), appears to be not even considering it as an option for states. It seems that states in times of conflict on a global scale are presented with only two options, either ‘balance or bandwagon’. Power for realists like Waltz (1979), is a tool in international politics, an important constant feature of authority. It is a capability that does not align with the normative nature of neutrality as a regime.

Although they stem from different sources, both the balance of power and neutrality in theory seek to bring about stability in the system. The balance of power, on the one hand, sees the military power that exists between states as what encourages such stability. The balance of power is, therefore, primarily concerned with the measurable materialistic nature of the firepower owned by a given state, and how much of a threat it is to other states. On the other hand, neutrality’s chief concern is to replace those very

tools that constitute the balance of power with institutions that promote norms and rules (Austin 1998, 39).

It is already established, that realism is very unsure about international cooperation, because of the distrust states have for each other. However, realists do believe that the only time states are involved in a situation that requires international cooperation is when they think that it strengthens their position in the status quo, as opposed to the other states (Keohane 1984). Realists like (Waltz 1979) also share the same rationale, by stating that states only get involved in such activities when they see that it will bestow upon them an advantage in the system.

This thesis starts from the idea that neutrality more particularly active neutrality is a realist policy. "Neutrality and mediation are both rooted in an international system constituted by nation-states" (Goetschel 2020, 527). The two share the resemblance of realist nature. In the sense that both seek conflict dissolution favoring sovereign and territory protection. In addition to its idealistic nature via non-violent means of support. Therefore "both concepts' idealistic dimensions are embedded in their realist dimensions and the respective international order" (Goetschel 2020, 528).

This thesis defines active neutrality as one of many foreign policies a state adopts in a situation where it is pushed to take a stance on a conflict, due to its indirect effect on it. It is a policy taken where maintaining relations with the main parties of the conflict is needed to preserve/strengthen the state's security interests. In such situation, the state in question does indeed lean towards one of the parties of the conflict. However, it maintains a balanced attitude towards the conflict in order to remain a credible third party for both of the parties of the conflict. As it has been established, defense realism theory sees seeking security of critical importance in the international system, particularly through moderate policies. Therefore, this thesis explains Morocco's actions as a maximizing security via the moderate policy of active neutrality.

Neutrality as a foreign policy has always been relevant throughout history as it has been already established in the literature review. Even though the world has witnessed two world wars in the last century, certain states did maintain their neutrality. It is a policy that Goetschel (2011) simply explains as "not taking sides in a military conflict between third-party states" (Goetschel 2011, 313). It is a state seeking what is best for itself via abstaining from war; therefore, it is seen as 'an expression of sovereignty' (Goetschel 2011). There is a realist aspect to neutrality in which it is a state's need for political independence because it might not be as strong in comparison to other states in the region. Both Switzerland and Sweden; two countries that are known for being neutral had to act as "the 'neutral separator' in Cold War Europe" in the case of Switzerland. As for Sweden it "was the centerpiece of the 'Nordic balance' in the same period" (Goetschel 2011, 314). Morocco employs a realist attitude to preserve its interests and maintain their independence. Given that neutrality has both an idealist and realist dimension, it is the latter that is the focus of this study because the case study deals with a conflict that constitutes a defensive realist response via active neutrality.

Defensive realists contend that within the international system, no system assures certainty of security; such anarchy encourages states to adopt policies characterized as 'defensive' and 'moderate' in nature (Waltz 1979; Walt 1987; Snyder

1991; Layne 1997). Kenneth N. Waltz states that the “first concern of states is not to maximize power but to maintain their position in the system” (Waltz 1979, 126). Therefore, there is a desire to maintain the status quo, with that in mind, if a state is seeking security via aggression it will not be the proper policy because aggression will lead to possible military engagement. This describes a foreign policy orientation in great parallel with series of policies followed by state actors that adapted active neutral foreign policy believes that there is no overarching system that will assure certain structure. The WS dispute for Morocco is a security issue, which is related to its very existence. The fact that Morocco is not in a direct war but rather a Cold War with Algeria whom we have already established represents a security risk due to its direct support of the SDAR; Morocco has sought a defensive realist approach to deal with such geopolitical reality. It believes that taking a defensive approach to its relation with Algeria will be a more pragmatic approach than what has been done before, including the Sand War of 1963 with Algeria regarding borders, the WS War with the Polisario Front from 1975 to 1991 as well with Mauritania from 1975 to 1979. All these wars were in the name of territory disputes, all parties involved saw the other seeking power maximizing. However, in a post-Cold War world, the region has its own Cold War unfolding between Morocco and Algeria via the Polisario Front which the latter ended the 29-year ceasefire in 2020, which led to ongoing military clashes between the two. The ongoing clashes between Morocco and the Polisario Front, according to defensive realism theory is a natural occurrence in which “conflict is sometimes necessary such as in the case of aggressor states, when their security is threatened, when they are insecure, or when differences are irreconcilable” (Lobell 2010, 10).

From Algeria’s perspective, supporting the Polisario Front is a form of maximizing security. Waltz (1979) believes that if a state wanted power it would seek the stronger of the two parties of the conflict. Since Algeria joined the weaker party, the Polisario Front, it is security against Morocco that Algeria is pursuing. The reason for such stance is that “the system encourages them to seek ... security” (Waltz 1979, 126). Seeking power does not assure security. As a result, a balance of power has been achieved between Morocco and Algeria, to deter the former from being the regional hegemon/power of North Africa/ Maghreb region. The tensions between these two countries regarding the WS, is one of the main reasons why the Arab Maghreb Union has been unsuccessful. In addition to Morocco and Algeria, the Union also includes the other Maghreb/North African countries Libya, Mauritania, and Tunisia. The Union was sought to be in the image of the European Union as hopefully a rival. In which it will be an economic as well as a political block. However, the unresolved WS dispute caused its failure.

Morocco has sought to strengthen its standing in the status quo, which entails maintaining the autonomy of the WS, by taking active neutrality regarding the Palestinian/Israel conflict through the normalization with Israel. The latter has resulted in both the US and Israel’s support for its claims. This leads it to maximize its security against Algeria specifically and the region in general. Morocco’s attitude towards the Palestinian/Israel conflict is active neutrality from a defensive realist approach, which is an accurate analysis given the fact that Morocco is still very much in support of the Palestinian cause, this is present in the King’s statements. Therefore Morocco gets to maintain its support of the Palestinian cause which holds religious as well as ethnic importance given the strong relations the kingdom has with the Muslim and the Arab

world. At the same time, it gets the opportunity to maximize its security concerning the WS conflict against the Algeria-backed Polisario Front by normalizing relations with Israel. Morocco's active neutrality adoption is a non-aggressive approach to deal with a defensive realist situation that favors moderation of policy to maximize security as opposed to power which leads to unwanted escalation that could result in warfare with Algeria.

To sum up, this thesis not only sees Morocco's active neutrality as a realist policy but also as a moderate one. The first reason is that it is seeking to maximize its security, not its power in the context of its Cold War with Algeria. Secondly, its two-state solution advocacy is a defining attribute of this policy concerning the Palestine/Israel conflict.

3.5. The State as the Most Important Actor in the International System

The state of Morocco, in this thesis, is taken as a rational actor, and therefore the most important unit in this case study. Given that fact the state actions with regards to the case study are analyzed through the lenses of the defensive realism International Relations school of thought. Although there exist multiple differences among realists concerning various topics, their views on the state are strikingly similar. Realists do believe that the state is the most important unit in the international system. They see it as a rational actor that seeks its survival in a given system. The reason for the state having such importance for realists is because of the features it possesses. The first feature deals with the idea of sovereignty. The state is the only authority in the land that has the right not only to make laws but as well as to enforce them. The second feature is hegemony. The state acts as a hegemon concerning its local and foreign affairs. It has at its disposal the power which is represented in the police and the army. The third feature is the state's ability to differentiate itself from other states through territory and the people inside it (Chiaruzzi 2012, 43).

For realists, everything in the international system is run by the state. The more powerful the state the more saying it has over organizations that have the involvement of other states. Organizations such as the United Nations, European Union, or NGOs as well as non-state actors might have some autonomy, however, in reality, they are within the sphere of influence of the state/s. The state stands alone, as the only actor that possesses the power to shape the political, social, and economic functions (Spruyt 1994). Realists argue that the state or more particularly the most powerful one in the international system, can influence the system in a way that aligns with its aspirations. This is carried through globalization (Waltz 1999). This is evident in the reality that arguably the most powerful state in today's international system; the United States, has managed to push the system into a capitalist and liberal route. This further aligns with realism's idea of the importance of the state as an actor in the international system. In which "dominant global trends generally depend on the power and interests of hegemonic states" (Chiaruzzi 2012, 43).

Yet another point to be made, on the importance of the state in the international system, is its ability to override rules put by international organizations. Realists, particularly offensive realists like Mearsheimer (Chiaruzzi 2012, 44), believe that the Iraq war is a clear example of how flawed the liberal school of thought is concerning its

beliefs of the liberal world order. The United States as a state can ignore resolutions made by organizations such as the United Nations, which were thought to be actors, that will act as a world government.

The state is allowed to have such a position in the international system because of the nature of such a system. Anarchy as has been mentioned before, creates an environment where the state has to always seek to ensure its survival. The non-existence of an overarching actor that would play the role of the protector of states, gives more responsibility and by extension more importance to the state. This results in a constant need for the state to be vigilant in its endeavor to ensure its survival via security. Therefore, it leads to the fear of being present among states that become a 'contagious disease' (Montesquieu 2000, 224). This disease is referred to as a 'security dilemma' (Herz 1962). It is the phenomenon that resulted from the anarchic system in place, where states keep hoarding more power for fear that the other states might be more powerful than them.

One last point to address, according to this thesis' handling of defensive realism, three main policy motivations shape the state action: (1) Preservation of the Status; (2) Prioritizing of Security; (3) Maintaining the Status Quo. Yet, as different from offensive branch of realism, defensive realists suggest that states seek these by not engaging in aggressive policies. On the contrary, they adapt moderate policies that will help them to achieve the above mentioned three main sources of policy motive actions.

Table 1. The link between the theory of defensive realism and the policy of active neutrality.

International Relations Theory		The Theory's Moderate Policies	The Link Between Theory and Policy	Operationalization of Active Neutrality
Realism and State Survival	Defensive Realism Approach to State Survival	Preservation of the Status	Moderate Policies	<i>Normalization with Israel</i>
		Prioritizing Security		<i>Solidarity with Palestine</i>
		Maintaining the Status Quo		<i>Position Strengthening Against Algeria</i>

Table 2. Morocco stance throughout the study's time frame.

Pre-Abraham Accords <i>From 2017 to 2020</i>	Opportunity to get recognition of its sovereignty in 2020	Post-Abraham Accords <i>From 2020 to 2023</i>
- Active Neutrality via the two-state solution advocacy. - Pro-Palestine - No official relations with Israel.	Abraham Accords	- Active Neutrality via the two-state solution advocacy. - Pro-Palestine - Official relations with Israel.

3.6. Methodology

3.6.1. Introduction

This section will act as a presentation of the methodology as well as the procedure that this thesis used for the research design. In addition, explanations on why specifically the method, the approach, and the case study were taken will be provided. The data and the way it was collected, classified, and analyzed will be presented too in this section. At last, the difficulties, limitations, and challenges that were met when conducting this research will be provided.

3.6.2. Research Design

Before getting into the details of how such research will be done, it is a must to explain the components of this research design. It is of paramount importance to know why a given research is done in the first place. Research is a “systematic process of discovery and advancement of human knowledge” (Asenahabi 2019, 77). By conducting research we aim to uncover specific information as well as provide new knowledge to accumulating literature on that specific area of research. The importance of the research design lies in the fact that it guides the research. One of the decisions that must be made before carrying a research is choosing a fitting type of analysis. It should be reflected in the research design.

This study chooses the qualitative content analysis. This type of analysis entails a subjective processing of texts (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p.1278). Such a process is carried out by coding and identifying themes or patterns that are detected in a given text. This approach is empirical as well as methodological in nature. It seeks to place the analyzed text in the in the confinements of the context of when and where they were made. It avoids the reckless nature of the quantitative type (Mayring, 2000, p.2). In addition, there is a goal of identifying the main points of recurrent motifs as well as meanings. This is done by “qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort” (Patton, 2002, p.453).

We can observe that there is an importance given to context when analyzing texts via qualitative content analysis. It differs from the more quantitative type in the matter that it does not rely on the latter’s use of ‘counting words’. It goes a step further by seeking “social reality in a subjective but scientific manner” (Zhang and Wildemuth 2009, 318).

Further differences between the two content analysis types need to be addressed. Doing so will further clarify how the two operate in research. The two types are used in research areas. Qualitative content analysis is used mainly in areas of anthropology, qualitative sociology, and psychology. Its purpose is “to explore the meanings underlying physical messages” (Zhang and Wildemuth 2009, 318). On the other hand, quantitative content analysis deems areas of research that deal with mass communication. Such a method is seen as inadequate because it lacks syntactical and semantic information (Weber, 1990).

Qualitative content analysis is used in this study because of its deductive nature. It helps test hypotheses as well as assists in answering questions that arise from theories.

With regards to date sampling for qualitative content analysis, it allows the possibility of being selective when it comes to texts. In contrast to the quantitative approach, which results in “numbers that can be manipulated with various statistical methods” (Zhang and Wildemuth 2009, 319), the qualitative approach helps create descriptions that paint a wide range of meanings of the research topic.

With regards to this thesis topic, such type of analysis was used so that it will help detect if indeed there was a policy change in Morocco’s stance on the Palestine/Israel conflict following the Abraham Accords of 2020. As well as if such a change can be regarded as active neutrality. This method will help come up with certain categories that are present in the speeches that are analyzed. The purpose is to show that those speeches do imply a policy change in the handled issue.

It is a challenging feat to establish a link between speeches as well as policy announcements with the policy of active neutrality. It is related to the process of interpretation of state behavior in the system. This thesis chooses to tackle the study by focusing on the context of those speeches and policy announcements that were made. Focusing on only the literal meaning of words will not be fruitful for the aim of the study. A deep analysis of word choice as well as the way sentences are sequenced is very relevant in the broad context of foreign policy.

In addition, there are instances where the state does not publicly nor officially state its intentions. What is not being mentioned in speeches is as important as what is being mentioned. It also addresses certain topics without mention, which is open for interpretation in the research. For example, although Morocco and Algeria are going through a Cold War, it is rarely mentioned directly in speeches by the head of states. However as shown in the literature, multiple studies do state that the Maghreb region has been witnessing its version of the Cold War ever since these two countries got their independence from France.

From the realist perspective, states are the most rational actors in the international system. Therefore, state interaction is the level of analysis. In addition to trying to figure out if there was a policy change in Morocco’s policy regarding the conflict, this thesis is also trying to test whether defensive realism can explain Morocco’s policy change. Defensive realism’s IR theory is therefore used to create meaning and purpose for Morocco’s policy change, which is being studied. (Asenahabi 2019)

Empirically, the research approach as mentioned before is deductive in nature. The meaning is forged out of the data that exists about this topic. Such a research approach allows detailed analysis. “Case Study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores real-life, contemporary bounded system (in a case or cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information, and reports a case description and case themes” (Creswell 2013, 97).

With regard to what type of case study this thesis will go about. The selection procedure is a comparative in essence. Meaning, it seeks to detect the contrast of the cases concerning the hypotheses that were put forth for the research (Box-Steffensmeier, Brady, and Collier 2008). In this thesis, the comparison is made between Morocco’s foreign policy three years before and after the Abraham Accords.

3.6.3. Data Collection

In order to analyze the change in Morocco's policy concerning the conflict, this thesis starts by providing the process by which the speeches that were used were acquired from, what type of speeches they are comprised of, and the coding scheme. As for data collection, the primary sources of documents were obtained from the official websites of the Moroccan governments as well as credible sources. The search was carried out online and included material published three years before and after the 2020 Abraham Accords. The reason behind opting for the inclusion of the official texts from the Moroccan government is to be able to contrast them which will facilitate trying to understand the change in policy regarding the conflict.

Given the qualitative nature of the analysis, this study utilize NVivo. This computer software will help merge the information it will be provided so that it to compare codes or categories efficiently. This program is effective in use when trying to carry out a comparative study because it "limits the researcher to finding codes throughout the dataset" (Leech and Onwuegbuzie 2011, 71). In other words, NVivo is useful to assist in the analysis process, especially in the management of empirical material in qualitative data content analysis to generate insights for further exploration (Oliveira et al. 2013; Leech and Onwuegbuzie 2011; Hilal and Alabri 2013). It should be noted that this program only helps code the documents and visualize the data it is provided, however, it does not analyze any text. Such a task is upon the researcher to do.

3.6.3.1. Primary Sources

The scope of this study is dated from 20th December 2017 to pre-7/10, 2023. At first, the intention was to also include documents that date back way before the year 2017. The relationship of Morocco with this conflict goes all the way back to the year 1948. This year marked the formation of the Israel state. However, it proved to be unwise given that this study aims to only focus on how the 2020 Abraham Accords affected Morocco's policy change and if this change could be regarded as active neutrality. Given the resumption of war between Hamas and Israel in the aftermath of the 7th of October events 2023, this study will have this date as the end of the timeline. Since the war is still on going as of working on this study, it is unwise to include those two months because Morocco's stance regarding those events is still developing as the war continues.

With regards to the sampling criteria of the data, this study chooses to focus only on the King's statements that refer to the codes selected for the study. This criterion will help produce a more focused analysis as well as a manageable research. Of all the statements that the King made during the studies time frame, only 80 statements were used due to their relevance.

The collected statements will be uploaded to the Nvivo system to examine the qualitative content analysis. The Nvivo system will classify the case into codes, which will be analyzed later. After that, it will mark the references that overlap with the definitions that were made for the codes. The categories and themes of this study "are named using content-characteristics words" (Elo and Kyngäs 2008, 111). The purpose

of this process is to showcase the link between the categories\themes and the concepts that are provided in this thesis.

There are three approaches to qualitative content analysis. The difference among these three approaches is “based on the degree of involvement of inductive reasoning” (Zhang and Wildemuth 2009, 319). This study will put to use the directed content analysis approach. In This approach, the initial coding starts with a theory. Since this thesis put forth the theory of defensive realism via active neutrality as the theory it seeks to explain Morocco’s policy change. The themes and codes will be already chosen beforehand. The study will allow other themes to emerge from the data if they had any relation to the study. Therefore, “the purpose of this approach usually is to validate or extend a conceptual framework or theory” (Zhang and Wildemuth 2009, 319).

Qualitative content analysis allows the possibility to analyze multiple types of data. However, any type of data should be in written form when analyzed (Zhang and Wildemuth, 2009). The data that will be used for this study are speeches, statements, and any announcements by the Kingdom of Morocco via the King himself or his representative; the external affairs minister. However, it is mandatory to justify the choice of the content that will be used in the study (Patton, 2002). With regard to the justification for actor selection (the King), this study sees him as the only party that is the true representative of Morocco as a state in international relations. Since in the Moroccan Constitution, the King is the only party that has the responsibility of handling the foreign affairs of the state. The minister is the spokesperson of the King in interviews. And when needed, his statements will only act as elaboration of what the King already stated. Since the King rarely takes part in interviews, if ever. He does however give speeches. Those speeches always cover numerous of topics.

With regards to the unit for analysis, this method focuses more on individual themes as opposed to the physical linguistic units which leans more towards the quantitative method of analysis. Those themes can vary in size; they can be represented in just a single word or an entire document (Zhang and Wildemuth 2009). By using themes as the coding units, this study searches for the expressions of the specific ideas it tries to detect (Minichiello et al., 1990).

Since this study is trying to detect policy change in the data available, it needs to link the texts related to the theme of change via coding. Therefore, this study has sought to state the patterns and contextualize the content in codes. Some themes are directly stated while others are generated via interpretation analysis. The categorization entails multiple themes that were put in the coding scheme. Those themes are identified in relation to the influence of the Abraham Accords as well as the Cold War with Algeria might have on Morocco’s policy change to active neutrality. “Coding the data allows the researcher to rearrange the data into analytically meaningful categories’ (Forman and Damschroder 2007, 49). These categories of codes are created for the purpose of description of meanings. They serve as a map to be able to make sense of the data that deals with the topic study. Therefore, the “coding scheme comprised the code name, code definition, text examples, and coding rules” (Burla et al. 2008, 114). Below are the codes that were chosen for this study:

1. Normalization with Israel
2. Solidarity with Palestine

3. Active Neutrality
4. Preservation of Status
5. Cold War with Algeria
6. African Rapprochement

It should be noted that the reason why active neutrality has its specific code, although it could combine both the ‘Normalization with Israel’ and ‘Solidarity with Palestine’ codes, is because of a justifiable decision that has been made with regard to the study. The reason is that when reading the King's statements, it is clear that a special code had to be created for active neutrality. Further clarification of the specifics of these codes will be presented in Table 3. It can be detected that such code was needed.

3.6.3.2. Code Scheme

As with categories and a coding scheme, these two are produced from the available data. The studies that have been done as well as theories that cover the same topic can also be used for such purposes. Since coding schemes are done inductively and deductively, the difference comes down to the existence of theories that deal with the study. If there are none, it's upon the researcher to “generate categories inductively from the data” (Zhang and Wildemuth 2009, 320). For this case study, it is better to put to use the deductive content analysis because the intention is to “describe a particular phenomenon or verify an existing theory” (Zhang and Wildemuth 2009, 321).

Table 3. Code scheme

Code Name	Code Definition	Code Indicator	Examples
Normalization with Israel	Normalization means official diplomatic relations with Israel. The relations have to be mentioned directly in the King's statements and officially published through trusted sources and channels. A distinction is made between the mentions of Judaism/Jews as a fellow Abraham religion/adheres and Israel as a Zionist/Jewish state. The former belongs to the active neutrality code while the latter belongs in the normalization code.	Normalization can be made via: - Joined conferences with Israeli state officials. - Recognizing Israel as a state. - Exchanging contact with Israeli state officials.	Keywords: Normalization, Moroccan Jewish diaspora, Israeli Moroccan Jews, Abraham Accords, etc. E.g., “...the King welcomed the reviving of cooperation mechanisms between the Kingdom of Morocco and the State of Israel...” (MAP, 2020) ‘The King holds a call with Israel's prime minister...” (MAP, 2020)

Preservation of Status	Morocco's claim of sovereignty over Western (Moroccan) Sahara as well as its call for territorial unity and integrity. Also any mentions related to Morocco's southern provinces regarding projects and conferences that are taking place there.	Preservation of Status can be made via: - Call for territorial unity and integrity. - Organizing projects and conferences in Morocco's southern provinces.	Keywords: Sovereignty, territorial integrity... etc. E.g., "...the question of our country's territorial integrity..." (MAP, 2018) "This year, once again, the Forum is being held in the city of Dakhla." (MAP, 2018)
Active Neutrality	Morocco's active neutral role in the handing of the Palestine/Israel conflict. Maintaining a balanced stance as a credible third party for both sides.	Active neutrality can be regarded as: - Two-state solution advocacy. - Support of religious harmony among the three Abraham religion adherers particularly between Muslims and Jews.	Keywords: Two-state solution, inter-religious dialogue...etc. E.g., "...the Moroccan position... It is a position based on the two-state solution..." (MAP, 2021) "...my country's commitment to the values underpinning inter-religious dialogue" (MAP, 2018)
Cold War with Algeria	Statements by the King that address the tensions that are caused by security fears between Algeria and Morocco. Those statements at times address Algeria by name other times it is done indirectly.	The Cold War tensions can be seen in: - The signing of the Abraham Accords. - Algeria's continued support of the Polisario Front. - The Africa Atlantic Gas Pipeline. - Call for the end of tensions between the two states. - Division and lack of unity in the Maghreb.	Keywords: Western (Moroccan) Sahara, Polisario front, Normalization of relation with Israel, E.g., "...the first is the Africa Atlantic Gas Pipeline, aimed at reshaping the regional electricity market..." (MAP, 2018) "...I should like to refer to the division and lack of unity in the Maghreb" (MAP, 2018)
Solidarity with Palestine	Morocco's believe in the right of the Palestinian people of a state. As well as it opposition to the Israeli settlements in the Palestinian territories. In addition to condemning Israel's violence on Palestinians in both the West Bank and Gaza strip. As well as Morocco's activities about the protection of al-Quds Islamic status.	Solidarity can be done via: - Political and economic support of the Palestinian state. - Condemning Israel actions against Palestinian people. - al-Quds protection.	Keywords: The Palestinian cause, Palestinian state... E.g., "...the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People..." (MAP, 2018) "...the benefit of the just cause of Palestine and of Al-Quds al-Sharif." (MAP, 2021)

African Rapprochement	Morocco's efforts to straighten its relations with states of the African Union. Morocco's involvement in many conferences that concerns Africa. In addition to its call for Africa's unity and its Pan-African attitude in various fields.	Straightening its relations can be done via: - Re-entering the African Union. - The involvement in multiple Africa related events. - Establishing projects with African states.	Keywords: African brothers and sisters, African Unity... E.g., "...a common African vision on migration..." (MAP, 2018) "...a shared destiny, Morocco should simultaneously address Africa..." (MAP, 2022)
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With regard to the conceptualization of the concept of active neutrality, this study uses such a term to describe a specific foreign policy. Active neutrality is one of the foreign policies a state adopts in a situation where it is pushed to take a stance on a conflict, due to its indirect effect on it. It is a policy taken where maintaining relations with the main parties of the conflict is needed to preserve the state's security interests. A state that adopts active neutrality sees no benefit in siding with one of the parties of the conflict, but on the contrary, it could prove to be costing if it did so. In addition, this type of foreign policy yields other benefits for the state that adopts it. Although it leans towards one party of the conflict, the state in question tries to have an active relationship with both parties of the conflict so as to remain a legitimate third party as well as preserve its security interests that are considered the benefits of such policy.

As with the operationalization of active neutrality, this study predicts that the change in Morocco's policy concerning the conflict as active neutrality. This means that, since Morocco now at the same time has diplomatic relations with Israel and maintaining its support of the Palestinian cause, it is interpreted as active neutrality. And in relation to the way such policy is defined in this study, it fits the criteria because of the reasons that led to such policy. Morocco seeks to benefit from reestablishing diplomatic relations with Israel so that it will get the US recognition of its claims over the WS. Such recognition will strengthen its position in the Cold War it has with Algeria. Since the latter is in support of the independence of WS from Morocco's rule. Morocco sees Algeria's attitude towards WS as a threat to its sovereignty and by extension as a security threat. That is why this study analyses Morocco's policy regarding the Palestine/Israel conflict of active neutrality via the IR International Relations theory of defensive realism. This theory suggests that states will do what it takes to strengthen their position in the status quo in order to maximize their security. However they do seek such goal through moderate policies which characterizes the policy of active neutrality in relation to the conflict at hand.

3.6.4. Limitations and Challenges

This study faced multiple limitations and challenges. This study covers a topic that is still relatively new, meaning that there are not a lot of studies that are made regarding it. In addition, the way this study uses the concept of active neutrality is different from how it is used in other studies as shown in the literature review. There exist only a handful of pieces of literature that alludes to what this thesis defines as

active neutrality. The study also tries to make sense of Morocco's change of policy regarding the Palestine/Israel conflict as active neutrality via the IR International Relations theory of defensive realism. Such a feat is complicated to carry, given the fact that defensive realists reject anything to do with neutrality. They see neutrality as an idealist policy that challenges the very tenets of what realism stands for. Therefore, other studies by other researchers should be done.



4. CONTEXTUALIZATION OF THE CASE STUDY

This chapter will seek to put various aspects of this study into context. First, it presents a historical background of the Kingdom of Morocco's most notable events. Second, it introduces the WS issue and its most relevant actors. Lastly, it provides an overview of Morocco's philosophy about foreign policy.

4.1. Historical Background

The late King of Morocco, Hassan II has been famously quoted saying "Morocco is a tree with roots in Africa, which leaves breathe in Europe." This quote perfectly captures the essence of Morocco's foreign policy agenda and more importantly its geopolitics. Morocco is a North-Western African country that has proximity to Europe as well as Africa. Throughout history, there have been many dynasties that have ruled this part of land, the most notable one was the Umayyad Caliphate during the 8th century. It was the second caliphate established after the death of the Islamic Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). It is considered notable because it was the dynasty that brought Islam as a religion and Arabic as a language which play a big part in today's Moroccan identity as a nation. As well as being the second biggest Islamic caliphate in terms of territory after the Ottoman Caliphate. After all, the natives of this land were not Arabs but Amazigh people who existed in the form of various tribes all over Morocco under different names. For almost ten centuries Morocco was ruled by mostly Arab/Muslim dynasties that ruled for a period and then replaced by another.

For years Morocco managed to stay out of the control of both European powers as well as the Ottoman Empire, which was the only North African country that was not under its rule (Barnett 2014, 228). Particularly during the Alaouite Dynasty, which came into power in 1631 and still the current ruling dynasty of the Kingdom of Morocco for almost four decades. The royal family is believed to be descended from the prophet of Islam Mohammed (peace be upon him). Barnett (2014) comments on the aforementioned as well the longevity of the Alaouite dynasty's rule over Morocco by stating that:

"...Religious authenticity, has added a sense of continuity and legitimacy... The Alaouite Dynasty was able to unify the country and reorganize its administration... The Alaouite Dynasty created a very centralized government system known as the Makhzan, and ruled as an absolute monarchy for most of its period... The Alaouite Dynasty distinguished itself in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by maintaining Morocco's independence while other states in the region succumbed to Turkish, French or British domination" (Barnett 2014, 229).

In the early 20th century, as part of the Scramble of Africa campaign, Morocco was under the colonization of both France and Spain while Germany was also trying to establish a presence in Morocco. However, it was denied as a result of the 1906 Algeiras Conference that was held by European powers and Morocco. Spain and France in 1912 made the Treaty of Madrid about their specific zones of influence in Morocco. Although under the French per Treaty of Fez of 1912, Morocco was a

protectorate, meaning that Morocco did enjoy a degree of autonomy in handling internal affairs as opposed to the extreme example of colonization that offered no autonomy to the local governments as happened with the neighboring country Algeria which had more a severe form of colonization under France.

During WW1, WW2, and other French military campaigns, some divisions of the Moroccan army were fighting on the side of France given that it was its protectorate. After WW2, the calls for Moroccan independence grew more and more, especially via the newly established United Nations where Moroccan nationalist political parties were formed (Miller 2013, 149). One in particular, the Istiqlal Party (Independence Party) led this movement in Morocco especially when France exiled Sultan Mohammed V to Madagascar in 1953 due to his “growing popularity and his stubborn refusal to do their bidding” (Miller 2013, 150). This has only caused more resilience in the Moroccan independence movement which protested such a decision. Even some segments of French society have reacted negatively about it.

Charles de Gaulle, the famed French army officer and statesman who led the French Forces in WW2, who was out of the political scene during this period, was quoted referring to the exile decision as a "stupidity," and stating about the sultan that "he will return... I know it... he will never abdicate," (Miller 2013, 150). Upon such reaction in France and Morocco as well as international dissatisfaction (Miller 2013, 150), France allowed the return of the sultan in 1955 and one year later gave Morocco its independence. Following France's footsteps, Spain also gradually gave up territory to Morocco however it kept two northern cities that Morocco still claims as its own.

4.2. Western Sahara

WS is the main issue that greatly defines Morocco's internal as well as external affairs policies. This region was formally known as the Spanish Sahara (under Spanish rule) from 1958 to 1976. It forms almost half of the current political map of Morocco; it is situated in the southern part of it. King Hassan II sought to claim this part of the land under the kingdom's control by rallying the Moroccan people to initiate a peaceful mass protest in the form of what would be later called the ‘Green March’. This march witnessed the participation of 350,000 unarmed Moroccans who marched “to induce Spain to relinquish the territory to Morocco” (Boukhars & Roussellier 2013, 17). As a result, Spain abandoned this region by 1976. The Spanish leaving WS didn't prove to solve any issues; on the contrary, it caused arguably even more complex issues, this is because not only did Mauritania (Morocco's neighbor to the south) get involved in this region, but also the Polisario Front; a politico-military organization, that is explicitly politically backed by Algeria (Ghetas 2017, 131).

A series of wars between Morocco, Mauritania, and The Polisario Front took place. It resulted in Morocco gaining hold of the northern two-thirds of the area. Mauritania, who got control of the southern third, later made a peace agreement with the Polisario Front however Morocco took hold of the region Mauritania was previously in control of. The war continued between the last two parties until 1991 when a cease-fire was reached, this was because in 1988 both parties supported and agreed on a peace proposal offered by the United Nations (UN) that entailed a referendum to decide if the indigenous inhabitants of the region ‘Sahrawis’ wanted an independence or be under the

rule of Morocco. However, no referendum was held due to the two parties not agreeing on the parameters of it, mainly voter eligibility (Zunes & Mundy 2022); many UN-sponsored talks between the Polisario Front and the Moroccan government were held during the 2000s and 2010s but without significant progress.

The most important development was Morocco's Autonomy Proposal of 2006 in which it delivered its plan to the UN Security Council in which it will grant autonomy to WS but under its sovereignty with defense and foreign policy being handled by Morocco with no independence offer. The proposal has been deemed a realistic solution to the conflict by several countries like the US and France along with others. However, it was viewed negatively by other countries like Russia (Zunes & Mundy 2022, 278). The proposal was rejected by the Polisario Front because their main goal was the creation of an independent state from the kingdom.

Two significant events took place in 2020. The first one dealt with the end of the 1991 cease-fire agreement with the Polisario Front in which Morocco responded with military action to make an end to a blockade set by the Polisario Front of an important trade route between Morocco and Mauritania. Military clashes have continued ever since. The second event comes in the form of the decision by US President Donald Trump to recognize Morocco's claims over the WS, becoming the first country to formally do so.



Figure 1. The Official United Nations Map of the Peacekeeping Mission “MINURSO”
Source: <https://minurso.unmissions.org/map>



Figure 2. The Political Map of the Kingdom of Morocco including the Claimed Territories

Source: <https://www.maroc.ma/en/content/map-morocco>

4.3. Foreign Policy Philosophy

Given its geographical situation, Morocco tries to maintain good relations with three political spheres. The first one is in the Muslim/Arab/Maghreb sphere in the MENA region, the second one is in Africa via the African Union and the third one is in the West (the US and Europe particularly France).

The case study of Morocco acts as an example of a non-European and African case study as opposed to the cases studies presented in the literature review. The state of Morocco has a singular and unified government body about its clear foreign policy philosophy. Morocco is a constitutional monarchy of a multi-party system as it defines itself in the latest version of the Constitution in 2011. This version of the Constitution increases the executive power of the prime minister and parliament and promotes the former to the head of government. However, the person is appointed by the King from the party that won the elections. Before, the King could appoint as prime minister whoever he chooses. The government holds executive power while the legislative power is shared between the two chambers of parliament (Representatives and Councilors). The judiciary branch is independent from the other branches of government. The King also heads the army as well as matters related to Morocco's foreign policy.

Morocco's first notable showcase of neutrality was it becoming part of The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), a bloc that was established in the year 1961(it joined the same year) as a reaction to the West (NATO) vs. East (Warsaw Pact) blocs during the Cold War. NAM mostly consists of developing countries that seek to distance themselves from the two blocs during the Cold War. Some of its tenets deal with the ideas of territorial integrity and sovereignty, as well as non-aggression and Peaceful co-existence with other states.

Morocco is considered as a middle power. In the post-Cold War era, Morocco got its independence from France in 1956, had according to Fernández-Molina (2015) three main foreign policy objectives

“first, the international promotion of the 'democratising' image of Morocco - or at least the idea of a 'Moroccan exception' within a regional context marked by greater political instability and/or authoritarianism; second, the continuous strengthening and preservation of privileged bilateral relations with the European Union (EU); and third, the international recognition and legalisation of Rabat's de facto annexation of Western Sahara.” (Fernández-Molina 2015)

The author believes there is a quality of interconnection that the three objectives have with one another that by extension grants further credibility and legitimacy to the ruling King. The author comments on the results of such foreign policy by stating that over the years Morocco has proved to have made a good deal of these objectives with its EU relations. However, Fernández-Molina (2015) believes with regards to the WS issue is where the country seems to lack success via international recognition.

Morocco's foreign policy can be seen as yet another manifestation of defensive realism via the use of active neutrality, in which it seeks to keep healthy relations with the countries in the hope of maintaining and in some cases attaining their support of getting recognition of Morocco's authority over the WS. The most recent example is the Abraham Accords of 2022. In a widely publicized agreement under US President Donald Trump between the state of Israel and Arab countries one of them is Morocco. The Accords entail the normalization of relations between Morocco and Israel which eventually resulted in the US recognition of Morocco's authority over the WS.

One thing that should be noted is the history behind such Accords. For years Morocco had no official relations with Israel due to its support of the Palestinian cause. Making such an agreement was understood as Morocco's withdrawal of support of the Palestinian cause, a cause that is very popular in the Arab/Muslim world as well as for the Moroccan people. However, the official statement by the King assures Morocco's continuing support of Palestinian cause remains unchanged.

The history of Moroccan's relations with Israel is complex. This is due to the context of such relations. Before the establishment of the state of Israel, Morocco had a significant Jewish population. Today, many Israelis have either two or one parent of Moroccan background. Such a link between the two states encouraged Morocco to play the role of a mediator between Israel and Arab states. During the reign of King Hassan II in the 1980s, he sought to have better relations between the two states (Miller, 1986). In 1986, the King welcomed the then-Prime Minister Shimon Peres of Israel. Such an occurrence was the first of its kind in Morocco, where an Israeli leader visited the country officially.

During the reign of King Mohammed VI, he continued his father's policy of maintaining unofficial relations with Israel. The King tried to make some progress on the Palestinian/Israeli conflict. He recruited more advisors of Jewish background such

as Sam Ben Shitrit (Wootliff, 2016). The relations between the two states witnessed positive changes during the 1990s right until late 2000 with the outbreak of the Second Intifada, where “Israel’s liaison office in Rabat had been closed...., Morocco decided to call off the existing low-level ties between the two countries... Though the countries’ liaison offices were closed some 20 years ago, the properties remained in their respective possessions, allowing Jerusalem and Rabat to rapidly reopen them” (Berman, 2021).

The case study was chosen to showcase that security interests and more importantly sovereign integrity (WS issue) have pushed Morocco to adopt a defensive realist approach via active neutrality. It appears to be also applicable in a post-WW2 and post-Cold War era in a non-western/non-European country. It should be noted, that the parameters of such an approach only seem to apply to certain causes. Morocco is not a neutral country in the traditional sense, meaning it does not go as far as how Switzerland applies neutrality.

Historically speaking, Morocco during the Cold War was more under the sphere of influence of the Western bloc (indirectly and forcefully due to its ties to France). However, in recent years it seems to be more strategically using neutrality in the form of active neutrality, in which during the Russo-Ukraine war it refrained from condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022 and sought to have a neutral stance on the matter. With regards to the two countries' attitude concerning the issue of the WS, Russia has an ambiguous attitude with no official foreign policy on the matter however it did express its reservations on the 2020 US support of Morocco’s claims over the issue. On the other hand, Ukraine in 2023 expressed support for Morocco’s autonomy plan over WS via its Foreign Affairs Minister, Dmytro Kuleba in a joint press briefing held in Morocco with Nasser Bourita; the Moroccan Foreign Affairs Minister. In the same briefing, there was no declaration of Morocco’s support of Ukraine in the war but rather an effort to seek a peaceful resolution to the conflict as reported by (Morocco World News, 2023).

As it has been shown, Morocco has been consistently showcasing realist policies. It puts the security of its sovereignty as its number one priority. The upcoming chapters will deal with how such realism exemplified in its active neutrality stance can be detected in Morocco’s King statements.

5. FINDINGS

5.1. Data Analysis

The following chapter will be concerning the analysis of the documents found in the case of Morocco. The analysis is based on the King's statements. Those statements are made on different occasions. The King's speeches are retrieved from the website of the Moroccan governmental news agency "La MAP" (Maghreb Arab Press). This agency is part of Morocco's Department of Communication of the Ministry of Youth, Culture and Communication. The website has the entire King's speeches as well as activities in English. This chapter will tackle both the pre-and post-Abraham Accords eras. The subchapters will deal with the codes that were chosen for the study.

The ultimate goal is to see if Morocco's policy regarding Palestine/Israel has changed and if this change can be regarded as active neutrality. Afterward is an analysis comparing the two eras. The computer software NVivo for content analysis was used to code and analyze each text. As shown in the methodology, such a program is good for organization and coding, as well as visualization of the analyzed data.

The time frame of this study is three years before and three years after the Abraham Accords that took place on the 20th of December 2020. Therefore, the pre-Abraham Accords era will start on the 20th of December 2017. The King's statements were originally made in Arabic and later translated into other languages such as English. The validity of this translation can be considered representative of the King since it is published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs itself. The minister has made multiple statements in different languages. The focus will be on the ones made in the three languages I am familiar with; Arabic, English, and French. However, an effort will be made to give priority to statements made in English to avoid translation issues.

In the study time frame, the King has made in total of 80 statements that refer to the codes that have been laid out for the research study. Those statements are in the form of letters, messages, phone calls, royal office announcements, and speeches. 40 statements were made in the three years (2018, 2019, and 2020 pre-AA) preceding the Abraham Accords. As for the following three years of the Abraham Accords (2020 post-AA, 2021, 2022, and pre-7/10 2023), 40 statements have been made.

Below is the stretch of the statements made about this study's codes in the six years.

- In 2018 he made 23 statements.
- In 2019 he made 12 statements.
- In 2020 pre-AA he made 5 statements.
- In 2020 post-AA he made 4 statements.
- In 2021 he made 9 statements.
- In 2022 he made 5 statements.
- In 2023 pre-7/10 he made 12 statements.

5.2. Pre-Abraham Accords

To answer the question of this thesis concerning whether there was a change in Morocco's policy about the Palestine/Israel conflict, with a focus on whether this change can be seen as active neutrality, 40 statements by the King that date back three years before the A.A. were analyzed. All six themes were coded and presented the relationship that the Cold War with Algeria had on Morocco's decision to take active neutrality as a foreign policy concerning the Palestine/Israel conflict. As an overview, the following main results emerged:

First, it was possible to determine that the "Normalization with Israel" code is not present in the statements of this period. The reason is simply that Morocco did not have official relations with the state of Israel before the Accords. Israel was only mentioned when advocating for the two-state solution or condemning its actions against Palestinians. These two are covered in the codes "Active Neutrality" and "Solidarity with Palestine" respectively, in which they were all almost covered equally with the "Preservation of Status" code. It makes sense that this code comes in second place since Morocco is seeking international recognition of its autonomy plan over WS which is its number one foreign policy priority.

Second, concerning the "Active Neutrality" code, it was thought that it would only appear in the post-AA and would be absent in the pre-AA period. Such an idea came with the belief that Morocco, before the AA was only concerned with Palestinian solidarity, with no care for the other party of the conflict; Israel. However, through the close analysis of the King's statements, Morocco was indeed doing both, meaning that its stance was in support of the Palestinian cause, but also its support for the two-state solution which can be regarded as a policy of active neutrality. However, there was indeed a "change" or more like a natural "evolution" of this active neutrality stance in the aftermath of the AA which will be discussed in the post-AA chapter.

Third, the "Preservation of Status" code comes right behind the "African Rapprochement" code. This code later emerged from analyzing the statements closely. This code is the most frequent one among the six codes. This means that the King's statements predominantly covered this code. The reason for such occurrence is Morocco's efforts to strengthen its ties with states of the African Union ever since it left it in 1984 when they admitted the SDAR into the Union. The African Union still includes the most important supporters of the SDAR such as Algeria. This brings us to the "Cold War with Algeria" code. It was the least covered because of the nature of the tensions between Algeria and Morocco. It is rarely addressed by the King, and when he does so, it is for the call to amend relations between the two states given the many similarities they share. See the figure below (NVivo10 2024).

In the table below, extracted from the NVivo10, the 6 codes are presented. The 'number of items coded' column refers to the number of statements that were linked to each category. The 'number of coding references' column refers to how many sentences or paragraphs that referred to these codes were found. See table 5.2 below. It should be noted that this study prioritizes the analysis of the meaning of these statements within their context. Therefore the frequency of the codes is not as important as close analysis. The tables and the graphs are just for visualizations of the data.

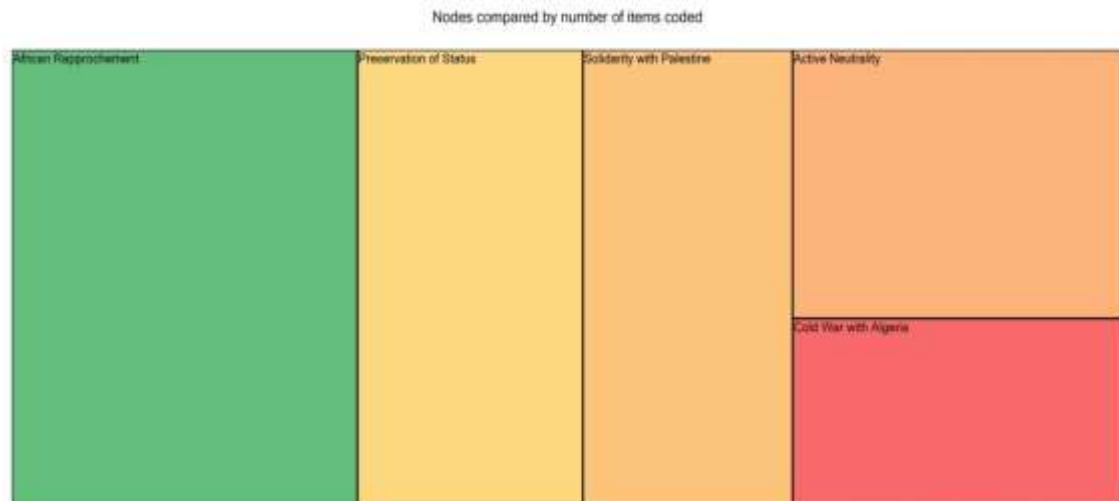


Figure 3. Pre-Abraham Accords period codes (NVivo10)

Source: Retrieved from NVivo10 (NVivo 2024).

Table 4. Pre-Abraham Accords period codes (NVivo10)

	Number of coding references	Number of items coded
African Rapprochement	33	23
Preservation of Status	45	15
Solidarity with Palestine	50	14
Active Neutrality	43	13
Cold War with Algeria	17	9

Source: Retrieved from NVivo10 (NVivo 2024).

5.2.1. Normalization with Israel Code

One way to detect Morocco's normalization with Israel is through official diplomatic relations. Since before the Accords, Morocco had no official relation with Israel, the King did not address Israel in official statements. It should be noted that Morocco was always seen as the least hostile state in the MENA region and one of the few Arab states that allow Israeli passport carriers to enter its territory. The reason for this is the Moroccan Jewish diaspora that lives in Israel. As it will be discussed much more in detail in the "Active Neutrality" code section as well as the post-AA period chapter, Morocco believes that it is a right of anyone of Moroccan heritage regardless of religion to enter Morocco, including Israeli Jews of Moroccan heritage. Morocco at one point in time had a quarter of a million Jews living within its territory. In addition, around one million Jews of Moroccan origins live in Israel, which constitutes 10 percent of the population.

As previously mentioned, a conscious attempt was made to make a distinction between the mentions of Judaism/Jews as a fellow Abraham religion/adheres and Israel as a Zionist/Jewish state. The reason for this is that there is confusion among the public

between the two. Many equate the two and use them interchangeably. Not every Jew is Israeli and not every Israeli is Jewish. In many cases that is the case since Israel presents itself as a Jewish state. However, this study is interested in how Morocco views both Israel as a state and Judaism/Jews as a fellow Abraham religion/adheres.

As previously stated, Israel is only mentioned by the King in this period, when advocating for the two-state solution or condemning its actions against Palestinians. These two are covered in the codes “Active Neutrality” and “Solidarity with Palestine” respectively. These two codes will be covered next since no more information can be provided for the “Normalization with Israel” code in the pre-AA period.

5.2.2. Solidarity with Palestine Code

Palestinian solidarity by Morocco during the pre-AA period can be seen on multiple fronts. This code refers to any statements by the King that directly advocate for Palestine as a future state and as a people. The solidarity can be in the form of opposition to the Israeli settlements in the Palestinian territories as well as condemning Israel’s violence on Palestinians in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In addition, the King is the Chairman of the Al-Quds Committee. This Committee is an intergovernmental organization that operates under the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. This Committee tackles issues related to the city of Jerusalem caused by the Palestine/Israel conflict. Its focus is on keeping the Islamic nature of Al-Aqsa mosque, as well as the multi-cultural and Abraham religious heritage of Jerusalem. In addition, it provides help for the Palestinians in the city (Gehaisheh, 2021).

The idea for this Committee was initiated by the King’s father, the late King Hassan II in 1995. Morocco stands on top when it comes to the country that provides the most funds for committees. It provides around 87 percent of all funds. It should be noted that these funds are not only for Palestinians of Jerusalem but also benefit all segments of the city (Zouiten, 2023).

Of the total of 40 statements in the pre-AA period, 14 of them included solidarity with Palestine. Within these statements, 50 references were identified. This code had the most references in all of the statements of this period in comparison to the other codes. Those mentions are made most predominately in events and conferences that are specifically concerned with the Palestinian cause. The King makes a statement on 29th November of each year regarding the Palestinian cause. This day is designated as ‘the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People’. His statement is for the ‘Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People’. This Committee is part of the United Nations General Assembly. Its purpose is to promote the rights of the Palestinian people. Morocco is an observer member state. The King’s statements for such events always feature Morocco’s support of the Palestinian cause, in which he says that:

“I should like to take this opportunity to reiterate our solidarity with our Palestinian brothers and reaffirm the Kingdom of Morocco’s immutable position and unwavering support for the Palestinians in their endeavors to achieve their just, legitimate rights and establish their independent State along the lines of 4

June 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital” (29 November 2019).

The pre-AA period marked the US decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel’s capital and move the US embassy there in 2018. Such a decision has been received negatively by the international community, particularly by Morocco. The King made sure to voice his opposition to the US decision in the Fifth International Conference on Al-Quds:

“I also informed my brother President Mahmoud Abbas that we reject the American decision and assured him of Morocco's full solidarity and its strong commitment to exert all possible efforts to rally international support to uphold the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to an independent State, with East Al-Quds as its capital” (26 June 2018).

In addition to stating his support, the King personally supervised an operation that was meant for humanitarian aid for the Palestinians. This followed the condemnation of Israel’s actions following Israeli forces firing live bullets at the demonstrators in the ‘Great March of Return’ in the Gaza Strip. He states that:

“The Kingdom of Morocco immediately condemned and rejected this dangerous Israeli behavior which is incompatible with international law. Morocco also expressed deep sorrow at the tragic events which exacerbate human suffering among our Palestinian brothers” (26 June 2018).

The mention of Israel in this code’s statements is either to condemn its actions against Palestinians or to state Morocco’s belief in the two-state solution. The latter is addressed in the following section that covers the “Active Neutrality” code. The King’s statements regarding the matter always something along these lines:

“...the establishment of an independent, fully sovereign Palestinian State, with East Jerusalem as its capital, living side by side with Israel in peace and security, in accordance with international legitimacy resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative”(29 November 2018).

5.2.3. Active Neutrality Code

It should be noted, that the “Solidarity with Palestine” and “Active Neutrality” codes generally appear in the same statements. Since the two codes are related to the same topic; the conflict. Of the total of 40 statements in the pre-AA period, 13 of them refer to the manifestations that were defined for this code. Within these statements, 43 references were identified. This code had the second most references in all of the statements of this period in comparison to the other codes. Those mentions are made most predominately in the same events and conferences that specifically concern the Palestinian cause.

As stated before, the mention of Israel in the pre-AA period either concerns the King’s condemnation of its action against Palestinians or Morocco’s advocacy for the

two-state solution. This code is not clearly stated in the statements however, via close analysis; it can be argued that there are manifestations of active neutrality during this period shown in Morocco's actions towards the conflict.

The definition for this code as highlighted before, refers to Morocco's active neutral role in the handling of the Palestine/Israel conflict. An emphasis is put on 'maintaining/establishing relations with both sides', given that Morocco had no official diplomatic relations with Israel, it is a challenging feat to say that it was treating the two parties equally and not taking sides. As stated before, Morocco indeed was on the side of Palestinians in this conflict during this period. However, that does not go against the definitions put for the policy of active neutrality. Other aspects of this policy align with what Morocco was doing during this period. The first one is its support of a two-state solution and its support of religious harmony among the three Abraham religions adherers, particularly between Muslims and Jews.

Morocco has been consistent with its support of these two manifestations of this code throughout the whole time frame of the study. When addressing the conflict, the King's statements always mention the need to get the two parties of the conflict to agree on a deal that will result in the existence of a Palestine state as well as an Israel state, coexisting together and living in peace. As mentioned at the end of the previous section, the King always directly voiced his belief in such a solution. In which he states that:

"I am convinced that the Palestinian question is the key to a permanent and comprehensive solution in the Middle East region. Such a solution should be based on enabling all peoples of the region to live in security, peace and harmony, within the framework of international legitimacy, and in accordance with the principle of the two-state solution, which is agreed upon by the international community"(30 November 2020).

The second manifestation of this code can be seen in the King's incessant call for religious harmony and interfaith dialogue of the Abraham religions adherers, particularly between Muslims and Jews. This is evident in the King's goal as a chairman of the Al-Quds (Jerusalem) Committee. The King advocates for keeping this city's religious and cultural heritage, given that it is been the home of the three Abraham religions for years. The King's statements also cover how Morocco is a model for a predominantly Muslim country that showcases tolerance and acceptance for the other Abraham religions particularly Judaism given the country's historical identity. Such statements are as follows:

"In Morocco, there is no difference between a Muslim and a Jewish citizen. They celebrate religious events together. Our Jewish citizens attend services in synagogues and practice their faith in a safe environment, holding annual commemorations and making regular visits to Jewish religious sites. Together with their Muslim fellow citizens, they work for the well-being and advancement of the motherland"(10 September 2018).

The three codes that have been covered up till here are all related and exist in the same sphere. Those codes overlap throughout the speeches that were taken for this

study. In this period, Morocco's stance on the Palestine/Israel conflict is clear. It showcases solidarity with Palestine, while at the same time, advocating for the two-state solution and interfaith dialogue between Muslims and Jews. Such advocacy can be regarded as active neutrality although it does not have yet official diplomatic relations with Israel.

The next three codes are not as directly linked and are rarely mentioned together in the same statements. However, in their context, they do elude to one another. This is done via a close analysis of each statement. A link will be made between all of the six codes later on in this chapter.

5.2.4. Preservation of Status Code

As is the case with any head of state, their statements always feature the call for the preservation of status via the protection of sovereignty. This is done by advocating for the respect of the state's territorial integrity. Since Morocco is dealing with issues related to the disputed WS, the King's statements always refer to it as 'our southern provinces' and 'Moroccan Sahara' along with other descriptions. The WS issue is Morocco's number one policy in terms of priority. It is both a domestic as well as a foreign policy.

This code has been present in 15 statements. Within these statements, 45 references were identified. Those mentions are made most predominately in the King's yearly speech about the historical Green March. The march's purpose was to retrieve the Moroccan southern provinces from the colonial rule of Spain in 1975. In such speeches, the King reminds the importance of such events for Morocco's ongoing mission for territorial unity. In which he states:

“The Green March is not simply a watershed in the completion of our territorial integrity. It is an ongoing process whereby we confirm the Moroccanness of the Sahara in the international arena, making its celebration a driver of economic growth at the regional and continental levels” (07 November 2020).

The statements also mention the events and the developments that the area has been witnessing, as well as the projects that are planned for it. Those statements also define this code, even though they do not directly address the code, they do imply certain messages. Those messages are that Morocco is making use of its territory in the way it wants to. For example, some events take place in those disputed areas that the King mentions. One of these events is the yearly Crans Montana Forum. The forum is by a Swiss international non-governmental organization. As per the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), the forum “offers an alternative way to create, expand and deepen knowledge and business relationships in a unique and friendly atmosphere” (UNDRR, 2013). Many of its editions were held in the city of Dakhla. This city is in the disputed area. The King has sent a message to the forum talking about how:

“...It gives me great pleasure to send this message to your assembly as you hold the Fourth Crans Montana Forum, which will address the theme Africa and South-South Cooperation. This

year, once again, the Forum is being held in the city of Dakhla...As you know, Dakhla has special significance in the history of Morocco. Thanks to its unique position, it serves as a strategic link between the Kingdom and regions and countries further south in Africa” (16 March 2018).

He also adds that:

“...in the beautiful region where you are today, right here in Dakhla: indeed, and as is the case elsewhere in the Southern Provinces, the city has witnessed a political, economic and social transformation. My ambition is to press ahead with this endeavor so that the Moroccan Sahara may reclaim its historical role and serve, once again, as a crossroads in the Continent” (16 March 2018).

One of the important projects, that concern this area; which serves as a link to the next two codes that will be covered momentarily, is concerning the ‘Morocco-Nigeria Gas Pipeline project’. This project will bypass several countries in West Africa through the WS and linked to Europe. Such a project is a competitor to a second pipeline project. The project will also start in Nigeria and end up in Europe; however, it will be through Algeria. The neighboring country with which it is in a Cold War.

5.2.5. Cold War with Algeria Code

This this code was the least covered in the statements of this period. This code has been present in 9 of the statements. Within these statements, 17 references were identified. Such numbers can be misleading because Algeria is the most vocal supporter of an independent WS. Such a policy stance endangers Morocco’s goal of territorial unity. By analyzing the statements that cover this topic, it appears that the King does indeed address those tensions with Algeria in two manners; directly and indirectly. The King seems to either call Algeria by name or refer to it as a ‘sister Maghreb country’ when directly calling for the need for reconciliation between the two countries. Such direct mentions are made in the yearly speeches of ‘Throne Day’ and the ‘Green March’ anniversary. Such statements by the King are made in such manner:

“I wish to reaffirm our sincere commitment to the policy of the outstretched hand towards our Algerian brothers, out of loyalty to the bonds rooted in brotherhood, religion, language and good-neighborliness that have always existed between the peoples of the two sister nations”(29 July 2019).

The second manner is indirect. The King always refers to Algeria as ‘some countries’ when he wants to talk negatively about it. In such types of stalemates, he refers to Algeria’s incessant efforts trying to violate its sovereignty. Such statements by the King are made in such manner:

“...the vast majority of the international community refuses to endorse the views peddled by the other parties. As a result, the number of countries which do not recognize the fictitious entity

now stands at 163, or 85% of UN Member States” (07 November 2020).

As well as:

“...the policies and practices of certain Arab countries towards fellow Arab nations. The elimination of such threats hinges on commitment to the principles of good-neighborliness, respect for the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of states and refraining from - or putting an end to - interference in the internal affairs of states” (25 February 2019).

As mentioned in the previous section, the ‘Morocco-Nigeria Gas Pipeline project’ is also coded for this section. Given the fact that it offers yet another space for this Cold War to operate. Contrary to Morocco, Algeria is an energy power. Such power gives it a certain status in the region, since it provides multiple countries with the gas it produces, some of these countries are in Europe. Morocco is also one of these countries via a pipeline that goes through it to Spain until 2021 when Algeria did not renew the pipeline contract due to reasons that will be discussed in the post-AA period section. Energy security is yet another front for the state to make sure that it does not compromise its survival. Morocco is seeking other ways to fulfill its energy needs so that Algeria does not have an advantage in the status quo. Such a project also acts as a way to strengthen Morocco’s ties with African states. Such a goal is related to the final code, which will be discussed in the pre-AA period. Ever since Morocco reentered the AU, it has been seeking to accelerate such a goal.

On the 13th of November 2020, just one month before the AA, the ceasefire that was in place since 1991 ended with the declaration of war on Morocco by the SDAR on 16th of November. The ceasefire was between Morocco and the self-proclaimed Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR), represented by the Polisario Front. The ceasefire was monitored by the UN’s MINURSO mission to organize a referendum to settle the dispute. The resumption of war between the two parties was due to the blockage of traffic by pro-WS independence protesters of a road that connects Moroccan-held territory to sub-Saharan Africa. The road holds economic importance for Morocco. Algeria once again stated its support for an independent WS. In a statement by the royal office, the King stated in a telephone call with Secretary General of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres that:

“...the Kingdom of Morocco will continue to take the necessary measures to ensure order and guarantee a safe and fluid movement of people and goods in this area on the border between the Kingdom and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania” (16 November 2020).

He also added that:

“...the Kingdom remains firmly determined to react, with the utmost severity and within the framework of legitimate defense, to any threat to its security and the peace of its citizens”(16 November 2020).

5.2.6. African Rapprochement Code

At the surface level, this code does not appear to be related to the study's research question. However, to fully understand Morocco's foreign policy concerning the Palestine/Israel conflict it is needed to understand under what context such a stance is taken. As stated before the WS issue is Morocco's number one foreign policy priority. As is the case with any state, also Morocco seeks to ensure its security. It regards this issue as a threat to its sovereignty. That is why it seeks to get more support for its autonomy plan over the area.

The African Union is one of if not the most important unions Morocco is part of. The reason for that is because of many realities. The Union's geographical proximity serves as political/geopolitical/economic importance for the Kingdom. However, the most critical one, deals with the fact that this Union has multiple states that support WS's independence. At one point in history, the SDAR had 38 out of 54 (70%), African Union (AU) member states. The states are Algeria, Nigeria, and South Africa. They are considered middle powers as well as regional powers. The Union also has as a member the SDAR. It was admitted in 1984, which resulted in Morocco's withdrawal from the Union as a protest to its addition. Therefore, Morocco is trying to regain the support of states in this Union. By reentering the Union, it is trying to "fight" for its sovereignty's security from "inside" of the Union. Such an approach has proved to be fruitful as it will be shown in the pre-AA chapter.

Of the total of 40 statements in the pre-AA period, 33 of them refer to the manifestations that were defined for this code. Within these statements, 23 references were identified. This code was present in most statements of this period in comparison to the other codes. Those mentions are made most predominately in African-related events and conferences. The statements cover various topics. Topics like migration, corruption, African women empowerment etc. The King appears to emphasize the importance of the Union for Morocco's security of sovereignty. The King states how:

"...the Kingdom wants to work with African sister nations and with their friends and partners to make the Continent a land of the future. This has been the spirit guiding our action, especially since Morocco returned to its African institutional family" (16 March 2019).

As has been already alluded to, the last three codes that have been covered in this section are interconnected, as the case for the first three codes. Even though they are not as directly addressed as them, however, their connection is implied. In this period, Morocco's foreign policy has focused more on African rapprochement due to on-the-ground realities. It showcases that the WS issue is linked to the security of its sovereignty. Although it is not addressed directly by the King, the Cold War with Algeria is taken into consideration when forging policies. This will be further amplified in the next chapter which deals with how the AA has affected these codes, particularly the "Cold War with Algeria" code. The connection between the first three codes and the second three codes is not yet as interconnected but it will be the case due to the AA. Such newfound connection will be discussed in the next chapter. It will deal with the pre-AA period.

5.3. Post-Abraham Accords

For this section, 40 statements by the King that date back three years after the A.A. were analyzed. All six themes were coded and presented the relationship that the Cold War with Algeria had on Morocco's decision to take active neutrality as a foreign policy concerning the Palestine/Israel conflict. As an overview, the following main results emerged:

First, the emergence of the "Normalization with Israel" code has been detected. This has to do with the fact that now Morocco and Israel have official diplomatic relations. However, this code is the least covered in the statements. In this period, the King's statements regarding Israel concerned the two states' resumption of relations, congratulations messages, as well as the two-state solution avocation. As the case in the pre-AA period, Israel is mentioned in the same statements about the "Active Neutrality" and "Solidarity with Palestine" codes. However, in this period, its mentions also overlap with the "Preservation of Status" code.

Second, the "Active Neutrality" code as predicted also appears in the post-AA. It was thought at first that it would be only present in this period. However, as discussed in the previous chapter, Morocco was indeed having an active neutral stance about the conflict. What distinguishes this period's active neutrality is the fact that now Morocco fulfills the other condition of this code; maintaining relations with both parties of the conflict. In addition to its support of the Palestinian cause and the two-state solution. Therefore, there was indeed a "change" but a better description would be the "natural evolution" of this active neutrality stance in the aftermath of the AA.

Third, the codes "Active Neutrality", "African rapprochement", and "Preservation of Status" codes are the three most covered in the statements with the latter being slightly covered more. The "African rapprochement" code is yet again one of the most covered codes. This means that the King's statements regarding this code have been consistent throughout the whole study's time frame. The reason for such an occurrence is still Morocco's efforts to strengthen its ties with states of the African Union. The African Union still includes the SDAR and its most important supporter; Algeria. However, as it will be discussed, Morocco indeed has managed to succeed in such rapprochement. Multiple African states have revoked their recognition of the SDAR. This brings us to the "Cold War with Algeria" code. It was yet again one of the least covered codes. As the case with the pre-AA period, the reason for that is the nature of the tensions between Algeria and Morocco. It is rarely addressed by the King, and when he does so, it is for the call to amend relations between the two states. See the figure below (NVivo10 2024).

As the case in the pre-AA period section, the table below, extracted from the NVivo10, presents the 6 codes. The 'number of items coded' column refers to the number of statements that were linked to each category. The 'number of coding references' column refers to how many sentences or paragraphs that referred to these codes were found. See Table 5.3 below.

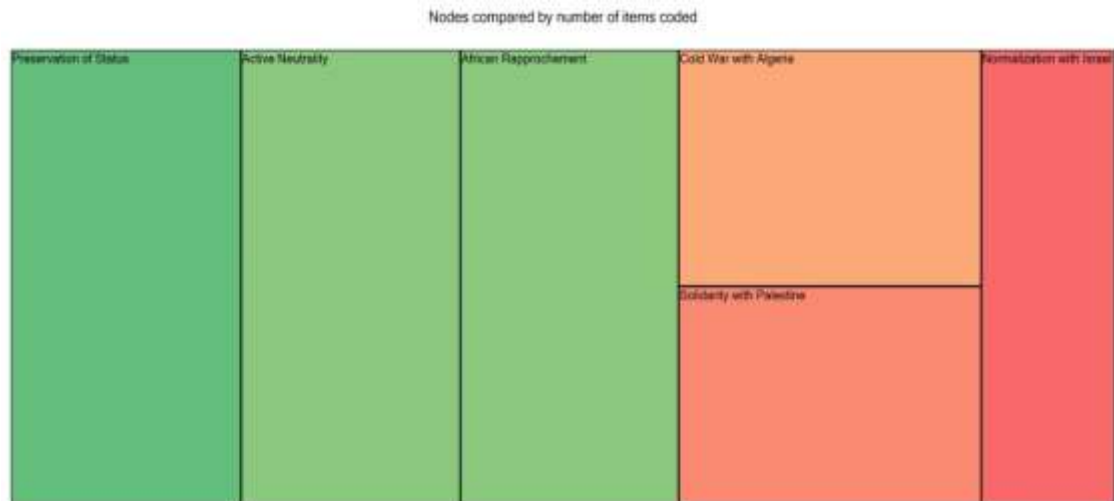


Figure 4. Post-Abraham Accords period codes (NVivo10)

Source: Retrieved from NVivo10 (NVivo 2024).

Table 5. Post-Abraham Accords Period Codes (NVivo10)

	Number of coding references	Number of items coded
Preservation of Status	50	19
Active Neutrality	71	18
African Rapprochement	29	18
Cold War with Algeria	27	13
Solidarity with Palestine	31	12
Normalization with Israel	27	11

Source: Retrieved from NVivo10 (NVivo 2024).

5.3.1. Normalization with Israel Code

As it has been already mentioned, this code appears in the post-AA period as predicted. On the 10th of December 2020, the royal office shared an announcement. The announcement concerns the “resumption of relations” with the state of Israel. It should be noted that the King uses the term “resumption of relations” instead of “normalization of relations”. The reason for this is that the term “normalization” is very controversial in the Arab world, particularly in Morocco. However, the term “resumption” is technically correct, since Morocco and Israel, before the early 2000s had liaison offices in each other’s countries. The closure of these offices came as a reaction to the outbreak of the Palestinian Second Intifada in 2000. This study sees both terms of equal footing and applicable to this code, and they will be used interchangeably.

Of the total of 40 statements in the post-AA period, 11 of them referred to this code. Within these statements, 27 references were identified. This code had the least references in all of the statements of this period in comparison to the other codes. Those mentions are made most predominately in the announcement event of the “resumption of relations” with Israel in which the royal office announces:

“the full resumption of diplomatic and official contacts and relations with Israel at the appropriate level, the promotion of dynamic, innovative bilateral economic cooperation, as well as measures for the re-opening of liaison offices in Rabat and Tel Aviv” (22 December 2020).

Other forms of this code have also been taken into consideration when coding the available date. The two states are also now exchanging congratulatory messages, something that was absent before AA. Messages such as when the King congratulated Naftali Bennett when he got elected as Prime Minister of the State of Israel in 2021. As well as receiving congratulatory on the occasion of Ramadan in 2023 from Isaac Herzog, the President of the State of Israel. In addition to, a congratulatory message on the occasion of the Throne Day, from the Prime Minister of the State of Israel, Mr. Benjamin Netanyahu the same year. In these messages, there is always a mention of the religious dimension of the relationship between the two states. Expressions like “all the children of Abraham”, “shared history and a deep affinity between our peoples”, and “all peoples in the region live side by side”.

In July 2023, Israel recognized the sovereignty of Morocco over WS. As well as stating its intention of opening a consulate in the city of Dakhla. This event took place towards the end of this period. The recognition was mentioned in both, royal office announcements as well as in the yearly speech on Throne Day of the same year. In the announcement, the King refers to Israel’s decision as ‘just and far-sighted’, adding that such a decision “will contribute to closer ties between Morocco and Israel” (MAP news, 2023) adding that it:

"will also be an opportunity to promote the prospects of peace for all peoples in the region, bearing in mind the content of the Tripartite Declaration signed on 22 December 2020 by the Kingdom of Morocco, the United States of America and the State of Israel, including the principles which should guide the settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict" (19 July 2023).

The statements that have been coded for this section have been also coded for almost all other codes except for the “African Rapprochement” code. The rest of this chapter will present links of this code with the other ones. The first one is the link to the code “Preservation of Status”.

5.3.2. Preservation of Status Code

It is not a coincidence that two events concerning Morocco’s foreign policy happening in the same month. The events that are referred to here are the US recognition of the Moroccaness of the Sahara and the resumption of relations with Israel. These two events happened in the same month of December 2020, only 12 days apart. The reason for this is a deal has been made between the three parties, Morocco, the US, and Israel. Morocco will resume relations with Israel in exchange for the US recognition of Morocco’s claims over the WS. Such a deal was part of the Abraham Accords, in which Morocco was one of the four Arab countries to be involved. The other three were Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, and Sudan. By normalizing relations with Israel, Morocco became the sixth Arab League country to do so along

with Egypt and Jordan who already did so in the 1978 Camp David Accords and the 1996 Wadi Araba Treaty respectively.

In the King's statements there is no mention of this deal, or at least referring to it as so. At first, there was a phone call held between the King and the then US President Donald Trump on the 10th of December 2020. The contents of the call have been made in a statement by the royal office. In which the two heads of state "discuss[ed] regional and international issues of common interest" (MAP News, 2020). The statement first stated that the US president "announce[d] the historic decision of the United States of America to recognize the full and entire Moroccanness of the Kingdom over its Sahara." (MAP News, 2020) Afterward, the King refers to a 2018 meeting he had with the US president's Special Advisor Jared Kushner. The royal office statement refers to the latter's "decisive [attitude] on various issues, including this topic [Western Sahara]; as well as through contacts, exchange of delegations and several unofficial visits" (MAP News, 2020). It appears that this deal has been in negotiating as early as 2018.

In the same royal office announcement, the mention of the war that just restarted a month ago with the Polisario Front On the 13th of November 2020 is present. In which it reads:

"It also comes after the decisive and effective intervention of the Royal Armed Forces in Al Guerguarat area, to maintain security and stability in this part of the Moroccan territory and to ensure the free movement of people and goods with the brotherly African countries" (10 December 2020).

This mention of the war links the Abraham Accords to Morocco's preservation of status efforts. It appears that Morocco is indeed approaching this deal as a way to ensure the security of its sovereignty. Of the total of 40 statements in the post-AA period, 19 of them referred to this code. Within these statements, 50 references were identified. This code had the most mentions in the statements of this period in comparison to the other codes.

Another code that is mentioned along with the already covered two codes is the "Solidarity with Palestine" code. As it will be presented in the following section, the King in this period always reaffirms Morocco's unchanged stance on the Palestinian cause when addressing the Abraham Accords announcement.

5.3.3. Solidarity with Palestine Code

On the same day of the call with US President Trump, the King also made a telephone conversation with the President of the Palestinian National Authority, Mahmoud Abbas. The royal office also announced the contents of this telephone conversation. It appears that the purpose of this call is to "inform the Palestinian President of the content of the telephone call that the Sovereign had with His Excellency the American President Donald Trump, given the esteem HM the King has for His Excellency the Palestinian President" (MAP News, 2020). The King assures that the new developments "in no way affects the unwavering and continuous commitment to the defense of the just Palestinian cause" (MAP News, 2020). He goes as far as to state that:

“Morocco has always placed the Palestinian question at the same level as the question of the Moroccan Sahara and that the Kingdom's action to uphold its Moroccanness will never be done, neither today nor in the future, to the detriment of the struggle of the Palestinian people for their legitimate rights” (10 December 2020).

There is nothing that could be added to this section, given that there was no change in Morocco's policy toward the Palestinian cause, particularly in terms of solidarity. Indeed, it seems to be the case for the whole duration of this period, in which the King continued to showcase his solidarity for the Palestinian cause on various occasions as well as whenever the opportunity presented itself. As was the case in the pre-AA period this code was almost covered in the same frequency. However, it fell in ranking because the next two codes have seen an increase in coverage in this period; “Active Neutrality” and “Cold War with Algeria” codes.

5.3.4. Active Neutrality Code

Along with the “Preservation of Status” code, this one was the most referenced and most present in statements; appearing in 18 of them while having 71 references. The reason for such an occurrence is that normalization-related statements were also coded as active neutrality. One of the manifestations of this code is maintaining relations with both parties of the conflict. By the resumption of relations with Israel, Morocco has now fully legitimized its active neutral stance regarding the Palestine/Israel conflict. Per the royal office, the King, in the same two telephone conversations with President Trump and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, has stressed that:

“Morocco supports a solution of two states living side-by-side in peace and security and that negotiations between the Palestinian and Israeli sides remain the only way to achieve a final, lasting and comprehensive settlement of this conflict” (10 December 2020).

In one of the statements, the King appears to indirectly condemn the action of both parties in the conflict, which was absent in the pre-AA period. The condemnation is usually towards Israel's action. However in the following statement, which was part of a message for the previously mentioned yearly ‘Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People’; the King states:

“...The unfortunate clashes that took place in the region last May, causing innocent victims on both sides, was one of the manifestations of the impasse impeding a political settlement” (29 November 2021).

In this period, Morocco is more than ever in support of the two-state solution. This clearness in terms of its stance is advent in the fact that the solution is mentioned every time one of the parties of the conflict or both are brought up. So much so that a royal announcement has been issued regarding an incident of the General Secretariat of the Moroccan political party; the Justice and Development Party expressing discontent

of Morocco's relations with Israel in the wake of certain developments in the occupied Palestinian territories. The royal announcement referred to his comments as 'irresponsible' and 'dangerous'. In addition to stating that:

“The Kingdom's foreign policy is a prerogative of His Majesty the King, may God assist him, as per the Constitution - a foreign policy which His Majesty implements in light of the immutable values and best interests of the nation, chief among which is the question of territorial integrity” (13 March 2023).

The second part of the above statement perfectly summarizes Morocco's purpose for having an active neutral stance towards this conflict. Morocco did not change its stance in its support of the Palestinian cause, but it surely changed its attitude towards Israel. It did so to seek the “best interests of the nation” which is “territorial integrity”. Such a change of attitude towards Israel was taken as a security threat to the neighboring country Algeria. The latter is one of the most hostile states towards Israel in the MENA regions. The Abraham Accords have further intensified the Cold War between Morocco and Algeria as will be discussed in the next chapter.

5.3.5. Cold War with Algeria Code

This code has surely seen more coverage in this period in comparison to the previous one. Algeria has publicly stated that it sees Morocco's resumption of relations as a security threat. Of the total of 40 statements in the post-AA period, 13 of them referred to this code. Within these statements, 27 references were identified. Yet again, as the case in the pre-AA period, the King refers to the tensions between the two countries in two ways. The King appears to directly refer to Algeria by name when calling for the reconciliation between the two and indirectly referring to it as ‘some countries’ when addressing its hostilities towards Morocco. It should be noted that the King uses the plural when tackling the latter; this is because Iran is also a country in the MENA region that is at odds with Morocco. The tension between the two states is religious in nature since Iran is Shi'ite while Morocco is moderate Sunni. However, the more critical cause of this tension is Morocco's accusation of Iran's support of the Polisario Front. Because of this, Morocco cut its diplomatic relations with Iran for the third time in 2018 just after four years of reestablishing them in 2014.

As it can be observed, the King does not name any countries in particular. However, it is quite hard not to think that indeed he is referring to what is happening between Algeria and Morocco. Concerning the indirect way of addressing the tensions, the King made statements such as the following:

“I should like to point out, in this regard, that the challenges which the countries of the Arab region are currently facing, and which threaten their security and stability, are sometimes due, regrettably, to the policies and behaviors of some Arab countries towards other Arab nations. With that in mind, it must be emphasized that this situation, which is fraught with peril, cannot be successfully addressed without compliance with the principles of good neighborliness, respect for the national sovereignty and

territorial integrity of states, and non-interference in their internal affairs” (09 December 2022).

As for the direct way of addressing the tensions, the King mostly calls for “good-neighborliness” between the two states following Algeria’s decision to cut ties as well as close its borders with Morocco. The King states:

“I reiterate my sincere call to our brothers in Algeria for us to work together, without conditions, for the development of bilateral relations based on trust, dialogue and good neighborliness” (31 July 2021).

In these types of statements, one gets the sense that the King is truly serious about his call for the end of this “Cold War” between the two states. And from the close reading of such statements, one cannot help but sense such seriousness. The King takes a relatively great portion of his yearly speeches to address this matter. He uses terms like ‘brother’ to describe Algeria, a term the King only uses for the MENA region states and African states. He even goes as far as referring to it as a “twin” brother. The King states in the same speech that:

“Morocco will never cause you any evil or problems. Nor will my country put you in peril or under threat. That is because what affects you affects us, and what befalls you harms us” (31 July 2021).

Adding that:

“...the security and stability of Algeria and the tranquility of its people are inseparable from the security and stability of Morocco, and vice versa: what affects Morocco will also affect Algeria, for the two countries are like one and the same body” (31 July 2021).

The mention of the gas pipeline project between Nigeria and Morocco in this period is even more frequent and the significance of its mention holds even more serious connotations as well as implications. The war that broke in 2022 between Russia and Ukraine has caused an energy crisis in Europe. It led it to seek other states other than Russia for gas. Algeria has considerable gas reserves and it does export it to Europe. However, it is not enough to cover all of Europe’s energy needs. Through the second gas pipeline project between Nigeria and Algeria, it will indeed be able to do so. This will result in Europe’s dependence on Algeria, and by extension the rise of its political influence which is something that gives it an advantage in the status quo against Morocco. The King hopes that the gas pipeline project between Nigeria and Morocco will be “reinforcing Africa's energy sovereignty” not just Morocco's (20 June 2022). This statement links this section to the next one which deals with the continued efforts of African rapprochement.

5.3.6. African Rapprochement Code

This code has been covered almost the same as in the pre-AA period. It did fall in rank at the expense of the other two codes, but those codes were dealing with a historical event for Morocco, which is why they took the first two spots. The King

continued to state his efforts to further strengthen the country's ties with Africa. Indeed it appears that Morocco's plans are working. As it has been mentioned, at one point in history the SDAR had the support of almost 70 percent of the African Union members. As of the time of working on this study, the number stands at approximately around 40 percent. Some African states have cut ties with the SDAR while others have in addition supported Morocco's autonomy plan over the WS. Some of them went as far as opening consulates in cities located in the disputed area supporting the Moroccaness of the Sahara. On this matter, the King states that:

“...a number of sister nations have opened consulates general in the cities of Laayun and Dakhla, thereby explicitly and unequivocally recognizing the Moroccaness of the Sahara. They are, thus, attesting to the security, stability and prosperity enjoyed by the inhabitants of our southern provinces” (07 November 2020).

Adding that:

“...the vast majority of the international community refuses to endorse the views peddled by the other parties. As a result, the number of countries which do not recognize the fictitious entity now stands at 163, or 85% of UN Member States” (07 November 2020).

As it has been already stated the King's statements in this period have significantly covered topics and issues related to Africa as a union. Topics such as drought, where he pledges his “...determination and concrete mobilization to tackle the problem of drought, which constitutes a structural challenge in our African continent.” (09 May 2022). Climate change, in which he criticizes the lack of funding given to African countries to deal with such a problem. He states that “despite this alarming situation, up to 2020 our continent had received only 12% of global climate funding.” (17 February 2023) As well as health, in which he hopes that the Union could “develop a common strategy to reduce health risks in Africa” (16 November 2022). Along with various other topics and issues that he makes statements about that concern Africa.

Until this point, the two previous sections dealt with presenting instances in statements that characterized the themes of the codes chosen for this study. Both periods of Morocco's stance were brought to light. The following section will deal with the comparison of the two periods, highlighting the most important aspects of each one.

6. COMPARISON AND DISCUSSION

6.1. Comparing the Two Periods

The two periods are interconnected by a shared conflict, the Palestine/ Israel conflict in the context of the Cold War with Algeria. With the help of the close analysis of the King's statements in these two periods in their context, some statements make one period stand out while others make the two periods similar. The way in which the Palestine/ Israel conflict is perceived and handled, the role of the need for Morocco's territorial integrity in the context of its Cold War with Algeria in each period and the interaction in their relationship with African states, and lastly the way Morocco handled all of the above via active neutrality are aspects that will be compared. The figure and the table presented below are of the codes by the percentage and the number of statements they appeared in throughout the study's time frame of six years. Both are extracted from the NVivo10 software (NVivo10 2024).

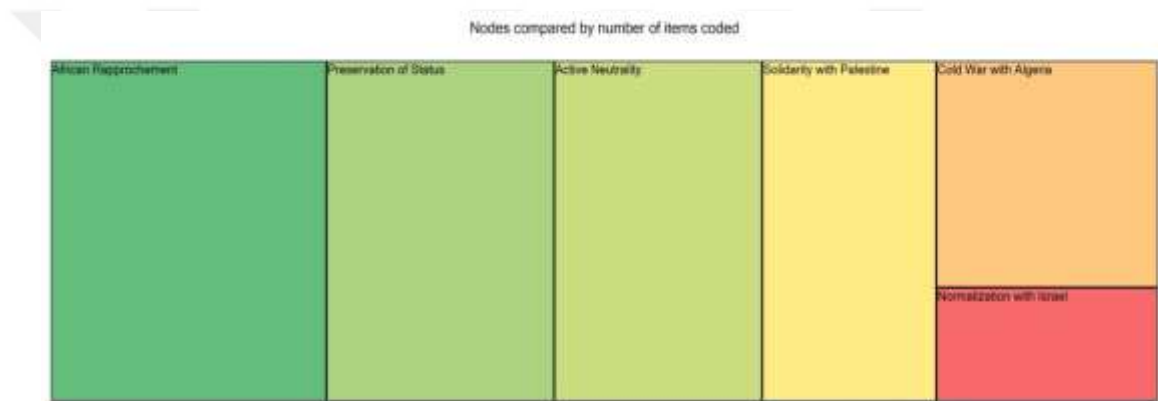


Figure 5. Codes compared by percentage of statements of the two periods (NVivo10)

Source: Retrieved from NVivo10 (NVivo 2024).

Table 6. Codes compared by number of statements of the two periods (NVivo10)

	Number of coding references	Number of items coded
African Rapprochement	62	41
Preservation of Status	95	34
Active Neutrality	114	31
Solidarity with Palestine	81	26
Cold War with Algeria	44	22
Normalization with Israel	27	11

Source: Retrieved from NVivo10 (NVivo 2024).

At the beginning of this study, it was assumed that there would be many differences between the two periods in Morocco's handling of the Palestine/ Israel conflict. As presented in previous sections dealing with the development of each period about the study's codes, it was noticed that there are aspects that are similar across the

two periods and other aspects that are particularly unique to a specific period. The following will present key insights regarding the two periods.

The two periods seem to be similar in terms of how the King addressed the codes that were chosen for this study. The only code that was different, being absent in the pre-AA period but appearing in the post-AA period is the “Normalization with Israel” code. It appears that the normalization efforts were taking place also in the pre-AA period. The King remembers the efforts in 2018 of Senior Advisor of US president, Jared Kushner that sought “to achieve this historic turning point in favor of Morocco's territorial integrity and this promising development for peace in the Middle East” (MAP News, 22 December 2020). However, it could not be coded in the pre-AA period because there was no mention of this in detail as well as the normalization was not yet official in any of the King’s statements during the pre-AA period.

By establishing relations with Israel officially, in the aftermath of the Abraham Accords, Morocco has fully established itself as a legitimate third party in the Palestine/Israel conflict via active neutrality. Such a stance is moderate in nature because it is uncommon among the MENA region states. Some states are adopting either non-moderate or aggressive policies regarding this conflict such as Algeria as stated in the literature review. Morocco’s actions in the aftermath of the Abraham Accords are understood by the theory put forth for this thesis. The theory in question is defensive realism via active neutrality. Morocco sought such a stance regarding the conflict because of its security aspirations (W.S. issue). It chooses to beget such security by taking moderate policies. One of these policies is its two-state solution advocacy, which is one of the three aspects of the policy of active neutrality defined for this thesis. The other two aspects are its call for religious harmony (particularly between Muslims and Jews) and maintaining relations with both parties of the conflict. The latter has been fulfilled in the aftermath of the Abraham Accords as stated before. Such preference for moderate policies by Morocco can be detected in the King’s statements regarding not only the conflict but also the country’s Cold War with Algeria. The following will tackle such preferences more in detail.

Concerning the term neutrality, out of all the statements by the King, the mention of this term is only made once. The mention is made in the 2018 pre-AA period message to the fifth edition of the International Conference on Al-Quds. This edition took place in the wake of the US decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital and move the US embassy over there. Morocco was against such a decision. The King states that:

“The issue of Al-Quds does not concern a specific faith, people or country. It is a question that concerns two peoples and two states. Its settlement requires genuine political will, concerted efforts and the involvement of international sponsors, relying on their experience, clout, neutrality and the ability to exert influence” (26 June 2018).

It is very telling that the term is only used once because usually, the King’s statements do reiterate certain terms, expressions, and ideas whenever the opportunity presents itself. However, the term that is used instead to describe Morocco’s attitude

toward the conflict is “balanced”. He uses this term in both periods. In the pre-AA it is used in the royal office statement concerning the US embassy move to Jerusalem:

“...the King reaffirmed his firm commitment to continue working with the US administration to provide a balanced stand that would restore trust and revive the peace process between the Palestinian and Israeli parties”(14 May 2018).

While in the post-AA period, it is used also in the royal office statement concerning the US decision to recognize the Moroccanness of WS:

“...the King referred to the consistent and balanced positions of the Kingdom of Morocco on the Palestinian question, stressing that Morocco supports a solution of two states living side-by-side in peace and security and that negotiations between the Palestinian and Israeli sides remain the only way to achieve a final, lasting and comprehensive settlement of this conflict” (10 December 2020).

One explanation could be that neutrality as a term holds a negative connotation because it suggests a certain degree of indifference towards a given conflict. This is something that does not represent Morocco’s attitude. It has been used by the King in the same reaction to the event mentioned earlier regarding the US embassy movement decision. He used this term to refer to what the third parties have to be in their mediation of the Palestine/Israel conflict.

That is why this study is describing Morocco’s stance on this conflict of a specific type of neutrality; active neutrality. In such neutrality, the third party is active in its pursuit to reach a deal that will be satisfactory for all the parties involved, including itself. Morocco’s intent to help solve this conflict is serious in both periods. It knows what it feels like to have an unresolved issue that is related to a state’s territorial integrity. One could agree that out of all the states in the MENA region Morocco has constantly shown its resolve for the two-state solution. This is evident in the statements of the parties of the conflict. They see Morocco as a balanced and credible party in terms of its stance on the matter.

Although Morocco is seeking to maintain this “balanced” stance, it is however leaning towards the Palestinian side in the conflict. This is yet another aspect that was defined for the policy of active neutrality. The idea is that the third party indeed tries to maintain relations with both parties of the conflict but it can be detected that it favors one party. This is apparent in Morocco’s support of the Palestinian cause, which resulted in creating a separate code for it (Solidarity with Palestine Code). One manifestation of this aspect of Morocco’s active neutrality can be observed in how the King mentions the US and Israel’s recognition of the Moroccanness of the Sahara. There is an interesting occurrence of how the King mentions the two in the speeches addressed to the Moroccan people. First, there is no mention of the resumption of relations with Israel in the speeches of 2021 as well as the remainder of the post-AA period. Its mentions are only made as a royal office announcement. One mention of US recognition in the Green March speech of 2021, in which he comments on such matter by stating that:

“... we value the sovereign decision of the United States of America, whereby it has recognized Morocco's full sovereignty over its Sahara” (06 November 2021).

While on the other hand, the Israel's recognition is not expressed as the US'. In which the King state it in this way:

“Seriousness also manifests itself in the way we deal with the question of our territorial integrity. It is that seriousness, coupled with the legitimacy of our cause, which led to a series of decisions to recognize Morocco's sovereignty over its southern provinces - the latest being that of the State of Israel - as well as to open consulates in Laayun and Dakhla, not to mention the growing support for the Autonomy Initiative” (29 July 2023).

The King follows the above by addressing the Palestinian cause and where it stands with regards to these events in which he links the two statements with the theme of seriousness.

“In keeping with the same sense of seriousness and resolve, I reaffirm Morocco's unwavering position regarding the just cause of Palestine and the legitimate right of our Palestinian brothers and sisters to set up their independent State, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and to make sure all peoples in the region enjoy security and stability” (29 July 2023).

It is apparent that the King is choosing his words very carefully when addressing these developments. One thing that can be detected is that while the mention of the US recognition is direct, the Israeli one is indirect. In addition, the former only covers the “Preservation of Status” code directly. In the latter, the statement covers four codes directly. The King presents the statement as a ‘package’, meaning that at first, he presents the term ‘Seriousness’ about Morocco’s territorial integrity which is coded as “Preservation of Status”. Second, he presents the news by stating that Israel’s recognition is just one of the latest events to contribute to Morocco’s territorial integrity, this covers both the previous code and the “Normalization with Israel” code. Third, he made the most important aspect of this statement; he reiterates his unchanged stance on Morocco’s support of Palestine which covers the “Solidarity with Palestine” code. While adding “...all peoples in the region enjoy security and stability” which covers the “Active Neutrality” code.

The reason why the King is addressing the two recognitions in different manners is for two very obvious reasons. The first one being that, the two are not on par with each other in terms of value. Morocco sees the US one more valuable and holds great political power in the international system. The second reason is the controversy surrounding the Israeli one. As stated before, normalization with Israel is negatively perceived in the Arab world including Morocco. The King is well aware of such sensitivities, and presents it in a way that takes into consideration such aspects. For the Moroccan people, the Sahara is of great importance because it is related to the very notion of their sovereignty. But at the same time, their countries’ support for the Palestinian cause is as important as the King himself has stated. That is why one of the

aspects of this thesis' definition of active neutrality is that the state leans towards one of the parties of the conflict however it has to maintain good relations with both of them.

That is why Morocco appears to be willing to do the two at the same time via active neutrality. It assures Morocco's sovereignty and supports the Palestinian cause in an active manner. Morocco sees that the previous situation was leading the peace talks nowhere. By having relations with both parties of the conflict it solidifies itself as a serious advocate of the two-state solution as the most realist solution to reach peace.

It has been observed in both periods that every time Israel is mentioned, the King refers to the need to reach a peaceful resolution to the conflict. Even in the royal statement about Israel's decision regarding the WS. In which he sees it as:

"...an opportunity to promote the prospects of peace for all peoples in the region, bearing in mind the content of the Tripartite Declaration signed on 22 December 2020 by the Kingdom of Morocco, the United States of America and the State of Israel, including the principles which should guide the settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict" (19 July 2023).

Morocco's attitude towards the conflict remained the same throughout the whole study's timeframe. However, its attitude towards Israel changed. Such a change of attitude towards Israel can be seen in the King's statement in the same royal office announcement reacting to Israel's recognition:

"The momentum characterizing our ties is unprecedented, be it in terms of the exchange of visits by officials and the business community, the development of the bilateral framework, the diversification of our cooperation or the consolidation of trade relations" (19 July 2023).

To describe the developments the relations between Morocco and Israel had leading up to this event, the King does not use the word "change" per se; he uses instead the word "unprecedented". Such description does entail that the relation is in fact witnessing certain characteristics that were not present in the pre-AA period.

The royal office announcement adds that the reason for such ties is:

"...the deep human bonds that exist between the Kingdom of Morocco and the State of Israel - notably through the Jewish community of Moroccan origin - have been serving as a catalyst" (19 July 2023).

As it has been stated before, Morocco also justifies such resumption of ties with Israel due to the religious and cultural bonds that the two states share which is something that the King reminds the Palestinian president when he was informing him of the normalization agreement in 2020. In which the royal office states that:

"...the Sovereign noted that the King of Morocco enjoys a special status and that He has distinguished relations with the Jewish community of Moroccan origin, including hundreds of

thousands of Moroccan Jews living in Israel” (10 December 2020).

The King also addressed the allegations that Morocco has “changed” its stance on the conflict. Such allegations are made by Arab states like Algeria who were very much against the Abraham Accords. Yet again he does not address Algeria by name but he refers to it as:

“Some people claim that Morocco is being attacked because it has changed its political and strategic direction, or because of the way it is handling some diplomatic issues. That is simply not the case” (20 August 2021).

In the next paragraph, the King does however admit that Morocco has indeed changed but on its own terms stating that:

“Morocco has, indeed, changed, but not in the way they want it to. Morocco does not accept that its best interests be trampled on. At the same time, my country is keen to have strong, constructive and balanced relations, especially with our neighbors” (20 August 2021).

The King also states that the rules of “game” changed, and that Morocco is playing by the new rules:

“They do not want to recognize that the rules of the game have changed - that our countries are able to manage their own affairs and use their energies and resources for the benefit of their peoples” (20 August 2021).

Adding that:

“In fact, some reports have really crossed the line. Instead of calling for Morocco's efforts for balanced development in the region to be supported, they made recommendations to impede Morocco's progress, arguing that its development creates an imbalance among Maghreb countries” (20 August 2021).

With regard to the tensions that were taking place between Morocco and Algeria, the King in both periods, addressed Algeria by name when calling for the amendment of relations between the two states but indirectly when reacting to its acts of aggression against Morocco. However, one thing that was present in the post-AA period was the King's mention of a ‘third party’ that was trying to cause the proliferation of such tensions. “I do not wish to blame or lecture anyone. In fact, we are brothers, who have been separated by an intruding entity, which should not be allowed to come between us” (31 July 2021). It is unclear which party/state the King refers to here. However, an educated guess could be made. One party he could be referring to here is the Polisario front, since it is the entity that is the source of the division between the two countries. Another party that he could be referring to is Europe, since in another statement; the King addresses attempts by some European countries to divide the Maghreb region. In the yearly speech of the Revolution of the King and the People Day, the King states that:

“Regrettably, a few countries, especially European ones, which are traditional partners, fear for their economic interests, markets and spheres of influence in the Maghreb region...Some of their leaders fail to understand that the problem does not lie in the systems of Maghreb countries, but in their own. These are systems which continue to feed on the past and cannot stay abreast of new developments” (20 August 2021).

The King’s statements that cover the “Cold War with Algeria” code are yet another manifestation of the theory that was put forth for this thesis. As it can be observed in the above statements, the King is “...keen to have strong, constructive and balanced relations, especially with our neighbors” (20 August 2021). In such statement he refers to Algeria in particular. As established in the methodology chapter, one of the key ideas of defensive realism is that states seek security via moderate policies. Morocco, as apparent in the King’s statements, believes its policies are non-aggressive. On the contrary they are moderate because Morocco does indeed want a balance of power to be present in the Maghreb/North Africa region. It is not seeking to be the hegemon of such region. It is maximizing security, not power. It wants to strengthen its position in the status quo. Its being fully committed to active neutrality with regards to the Palestine/Israel conflict is not contradictory to its wish of a balance of power with Algeria, although the latter thinks the opposite.

As it has been observed, Morocco has been consistent about its stance on the Palestine/Israel conflict in the context of its Cold War with Algeria. Although there was no change in its support of the Palestinian cause throughout the study time frame, there was a change in its relations with Israel in the post-AA period. In addition, its active neutral role by extension witnessed a natural evolution. This means that Morocco in the post-AA period is a fully credible third party because it is maintaining relations officially with both parties of the conflict. In the following section, a discussion of how Morocco’s foreign policy can be better understood via the Defective Realism theory of International Relations.

6.2. Discussion

The study aimed to look into two questions. How can active neutrality as a foreign policy orientation explain Morocco’s foreign policy decisions during the Abraham Accords of 2020? As related; in what sense, active neutrality can make sense of evolution of Moroccan foreign policy? In this section, further discussion of the findings will be presented in light of Morocco’s foreign policy and how it is better understood via the Defective Realism theory of International Relations.

However first, this section will present a discussion that seeks to compare similarities and differences between this thesis’ findings and the literature that is reviewed. As has been stated before, such a topic is a new one, therefore there is not a sizeable amount of literature that addresses directly what this thesis is studying. However, there are enough studies that tackle somehow the same topic. The similarities with these studies will be presented first then the differences afterwards. Gallagher's (2023), Gozkaman's (2022), and Doherty's (2017) studies share the same idea with this thesis of the use of active neutrality for peace promotion. In these studies, we look into

how Morocco, Turkiye, and Ireland's active neutrality policy is a way for these states to remain a credible third party in the conflicts between two parties. Yet another aspect of similarities can be detected in Milani's (2007) study. Both of our studies view active neutrality as a security-maximizing policy against a neighboring state that is viewed as a security threat. In the case of his study, Iraq was a security threat to Iran during the 1990s. As for this study, Morocco views Algeria as such. Both states believed that taking sides in the conflict they had to have a stance on was not the appropriate policy for their security interests. Voytyuk's (2023) study also shares the same sentiment about the importance of the planned gas pipeline project between Morocco and Nigeria during the Cold War with Algeria. This is evident in the frequency of the mention of such a project by the King in his statements. As for the differences, Devine (2006) and Austin (1998) do not agree that realism is a suitable international relations theory to study neutrality. As stated in the literature review, they believe liberalism or even a non-IR theory would be more appropriate for such types of studies.

As covered in the previous section, Morocco's policy regarding the Palestine/Israel conflict did not have a dramatic change, but rather it did witness an evolution. This study discovered that Morocco's stance towards this conflict throughout the study's time frame was consistent meaning it was having active neutrality throughout the study's time frame. The only thing that changed is Morocco's attitude towards Israel. This attitude change is the resumption of relations with it. Even though Morocco did not fulfill the whole manifestations of this foreign policy in the pre-AA period, it did however voice its advocacy of the two-state solution. Such a stance is the most important manifestation of active neutrality in this conflict.

Given its geographical situation, Morocco tries to maintain good relations with three political spheres. The first one is in the Muslim/Arab/Maghreb sphere in the MENA region, the second one is in Africa via the African Union and the third one is in the West (the US and Europe particularly France). Morocco is taking an active neutrality policy toward the Palestine/Israel conflict, in which it plays an active role in making sure to recognize the Palestinian right to a state while normalizing relations with Israel. And at the same time, it assures its own security and preservation of its sovereignty.

Morocco seeks to protect its current sovereign existence. It wants to maintain the countries' support of its claims of WS in addition to trying to get more countries' support. The normalization of relations with Israel is just one of its efforts to realize such goal. As well as before, it re-entered the African Union after leaving it in 1980 due to the Union's acceptance of the SADR (the political entity that claims independence and rights over WS). Morocco's decision to re-enter the Union in 2017 has been welcomed by its members since several of them have either ended their diplomatic relations with the SADR and in some cases they started supporting Morocco's plan over WS. The importance of Africa as a geopolitical sphere is evident in the frequency of "African Rapprochement" code in the King's statements throughout the study's time frame. It was the most mentioned code in comparison to the other ones. This further illustrates defensive realism theory's analysis of Morocco's foreign policy philosophy. It is trying to maintain its sovereignty by maximizing security in the form of gaining international support for its autonomy plan over the WS. Such an approach is moderate since it is not seeking such a goal via aggressive policies.

Morocco's foreign policy stances exemplified in its active neutrality adoption towards the Palestine/Israel conflict are moderate approaches in the context of its Cold War with Algeria. Such sentiments can be detected in the King's statements in the post-AA period stating that: "...my country is keen to have strong, constructive and balanced relations, especially with our neighbors" (MAP news, 20 August 2021).

Kenneth Waltz states that "In anarchy, security is the highest end. Only if survival is assured can states safely seek such other goals as tranquility, profit, and power" (Waltz 1979, 126). Morocco is situated between two countries that support SADR independence, Algeria and Mauritania. This led it to seek the outside world's economic, military, and political support. Algeria is an energy power which gives it a degree of status in terms of its relation with Europe and the international system, given the fact that Europe receives from it natural gas via a pipeline running through Morocco. Algeria in 2021 refrained from renewing the Maghreb–Europe Gas Pipeline (GME) contract. The pipeline in question as mentioned before runs through Morocco to Spain.

The Russo-Ukraine war has further given Algeria's natural gas importance vis-a-vis Europe since the latter was seeking other countries for energy to end its dependence on Russia's energy sources. The tension between Morocco and Algeria is described as the Maghreb's version of the Cold War (Zoubir 2020, 179) in which during the Cold War actual itself, Morocco was leaning towards the Western block while Algeria was more sympathetic to the Eastern Bloc (Ghettas 2017, 13) given the fact it was led by socialist leaders who were trying to establish a socialist state of the newly independent Algeria during the 60s (Ottaway and Ottaway 2022, 2).

The two countries got into an arms race, which created a constant cycle of reaction, which just made the two countries get more arms, which led to a security dilemma in the region. Since the two countries got their independence, the relationship between the two countries has been witnessing tensions that started with the Sand War of 1963 due to a colonial border issue, which ended in the same year and resulted in keeping the status quo.

The Cold War between the two countries via the WS issue, an arms race between the two countries further approves that defensive realism is how the relationship between the two countries operates. The relation between the two also plays a big role in how this political philosophy is adopted by Morocco. Algeria presents a serious opposition to Morocco's goal of achieving autonomy over the disputed territory. Algeria is the SADR's most outspoken supporter; the support is not only political, in which the Algerian government officially states that Morocco's presence in the WS is an illegal occupation. In addition, it also supports it economically and allegedly militarily. In the WS war of 1976 that happened after the departure of Spain from the WS, Algeria supported the Polisario Front, which resulted in Morocco cutting diplomatic ties with it that lasted till 1988.

The proclamation of US President Trump in late 2020, has further worsened the relations between the two countries. Algeria is in opposition to this proclamation which along with other reasons has led it to cut its diplomatic relations with Morocco in late 2021. The two countries also have exchanged many accusations; Morocco accuses

Algeria of helping Brahim Ghali; whom it regards as a ‘terrorist’, to get to Spain to get medical attention, he is the current president of the SADR (The Independent, 2021).

On the other hand, Algeria who does not shy away from expressing its opposition to Israel about the territorial dispute it has with Palestine, expressed its discontent when Morocco announced in 2020 normalization of its relations with Israel, which Algeria perceived as a security threat as can be detected in a statement by the Algerian prime minister in 2020: “When we tell citizens there are operations overseas targeting the stability of the country, here is the proof.” Such a statement is reflected in the defensive realist thinking which believes when one country seeks to maximize its security as Morocco was doing by normalizing relations with Israel; a state that Algeria has no diplomatic ties with, Morocco unintentionally decreases the security of Algeria (Jervis 1978, 169). Algeria also accused Morocco in 2021 of using Pegasus (spyware) to track the phones of Algerian nationals, including those of politicians and high-ranking military officials (Bachir, 2021); while also blaming it for the wildfires that happened in Algeria in the summer of 2021 (Ahmed and Jechtimi, 2021). As it has been stated, the King always calls for the amendment of the relationship between the two countries. Particularly after these events in which he reiterated his wish for better ties with Algeria as stated in his Throne Day Speech of 2021.

The greater context of the Abraham Accords should also be addressed since it concerns the MENA region and the study’s case is situated in the heart of it. The context that is being referred to here is the Saudi Arabia and Iran Cold War. It was reported that the next countries in line to normalize relations with Israel was Saudi Arabia. If it did so it would be considered a provocation to Iran, since the latter is Israel’s number one threat to its existence as stated by the Israeli head of state.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Active neutrality as one of many foreign policies a state adopts to address a conflict in a pragmatic way if the conflict affects the state's security interests indirectly. The case study had the same response throughout the study time frame with an evolution instead of a change occurring following the Abraham Accords. With the help of the defensive realist theory, the reason that has been detected for such evolution of policy is its goal to maximize security via active neutrality.

This thesis defines active neutrality as one of many foreign policies a state adopts in a situation where it is pushed to take a stance on a conflict, due to its indirect effect on it. It is a policy taken where maintaining relations with the main parties of the conflict is needed to preserve/strengthen the state's security interests. In such situation, the state in question does indeed lean towards one of the parties of the conflict. However, it maintains a balanced attitude towards the conflict in order to remain a credible third party for both of the parties of the conflict.

This thesis used a comparative analysis of qualitative content analysis method to answer the thesis' questions. The study compared two periods of the Morocco's policy stance towards the Palestine/Israel conflict in the context of its Cold War with Algeria. The periods are before and after the Abraham Accords. To provide an answer to the question of how can active neutrality as a foreign policy orientation explain Morocco's foreign policy decisions during the Abraham Accords of 2020? As related; in what sense, active neutrality can make sense of evolution of Moroccan foreign policy?

The thesis consisted of four main chapters. The first chapter; Literature Review, dealt with a presentation as well as a discussion of the literature and debate regarding neutrality as a concept in international relations. In addition, a mention of its different types and manifestations as a foreign policy in notable cases throughout history will be discussed. The second chapter established the theoretical framework of defensive realism as well as the methodology of qualitative content analysis that was used to address the questions laid out in the introduction. The third chapter acted as the presentation of the findings accompanied with analysis as well as a comparison of the two periods code by code. In the fourth and last chapter, a discussion of the findings in the context of the literature was provided.

In a defensive realist world order, states seek to maximize their security rather than their power, and maintain as well as strengthen their position in the status quo of order. According to the theory, the latter is achieved via 'moderate' policies to avoid conflict escalation. Morocco adopted active neutrality as a foreign policy to address a conflict that indirectly affects their security interests. It used active neutrality because it differs from the other types of neutrality in the sense that their number one concern is to maintain their interests via moderate policies. The interests are of a security nature. Defensive realism was used as a guiding theory to explain the use of active neutrality to address the conflict that Morocco had to deal with. The theory suggests that it is because of security interests that led them to develop their policies towards the conflicts in such a way. Defensive realists contend that within the international system, no system assures certainty of security; such anarchy encourages states to adopt policies characterized as 'defensive' and 'moderate' in nature. Kenneth N. Waltz states that the

“first concern of states is not to maximize power but to maintain their position in the system” (Waltz 1979, 126). Therefore there is a desire to maintain the status quo, with that in mind, if a state is seeking security via aggression it will not be the right policy because aggression will lead to possible military engagement in the conflict.

Morocco’s active neutrality about the Palestine/Israel conflict, as part of the historical Abraham Accords between Arab countries and Israel, plays into Morocco’s normalization of relations with Israel as a security maximizing foreign policy, to assure the legitimacy of its autonomy over the Western Sahara. Morocco managed to gain the US’ recognition of its claims, which is an important development in the Western Sahara dispute.

The thesis concludes that some policy changes, especially with regards to normalization with Israel is detected in the post-AA in the foreign policy speeches coded. The essence of this change signals more of a smooth transition instead of a dramatic policy change. Therefore, one can suggest that active neutrality policy orientation is built in a continuing manner of which indicators can be detected in both periods focused on in this thesis. Other than that, the thesis could not detect any other changes, particularly with regard to its solidarity with Palestine; it appears that Morocco has been consistent with its stance on the conflict throughout the study’s time frame. Morocco’s normalization with Israel in exchange for the US’ recognition of the Moroccaness of the Sahara, is explained by the defensive realist theory as a way for Morocco to maximize its security via active neutrality; a policy that is regarded as moderate in the context of its Cold War with Algeria.

7.1. Concluding Discussion

Morocco’s active neutrality is a moderate policy per defensive realism theory. In this day and age, regional conflicts are on the rise. States are more and more dependent on each other. They are pushed to take a stance on conflicts. I believe active neutrality is the most pragmatic policy; a country can adopt to deal with a conflict that indirectly affects its security interests. By maintaining good relations with all parties of the conflict, a state will manage to make “the best of a bad situation”. Given the fact that realist International Relations theory believes states are rational actors, having survival as the ultimate goal is what makes them important actors in an international system that is characterized by anarchy.

In the early stages of the thesis work, the interest was regarding Switzerland’s neutrality, and how it managed to uphold such foreign policy throughout history, while situated in the heart of Europe during the two world wars. One of the other original reasons why I chose neutrality as a topic of research, was wondering if neutrality would have helped Ukraine avoid getting into a war with Russia and how it would go about it. After reading an article by realist political scientist, John Mearsheimer regarding Russia’s invasion of Crimea (Mearsheimer 2014), in which he talks about how Russia’s actions are understandable when presented with its geopolitical context. According to Mearsheimer, Russia was trying to curb NATO’s enlargement eastward. The latter’s actions have caused a security risk for it. In the article, Mearsheimer warns of further escalation of Russia’s action if NATO’s enlargement persists. Lo and behold, his prophecy came true, unfortunately. The war between Russia and Ukraine has been

going on for almost two years now, with no signs of it ending or slowing down. Türkiye; a NATO member, has condemned Russia's invasion of Ukraine. However, it seems to be adopting active neutrality concerning the conflict. It is taking the initiative of the peace talks between the two countries. Since the conflict was recent as well as still ongoing; I chose to focus on other conflicts to take as case studies. I believe future research could be done on the matter, which will try to find out how Ukraine would have adopted active neutrality. Maintaining relations with both Russia and the West via moderate policies to achieve its security interests. Another research could be done as a counterargument to the previous research, in which it tries to study how it was impossible or rather unrealistic for Ukraine to adopt active neutrality.

7.2. Directions for Further Research

This thesis was done in the hope of contributing to the existing literature and debate on neutrality, by bringing more light on a specific type of neutrality that is more active than the other types of neutrality. Further research could be done on other examples of countries adopting active neutrality, to see if they also have the same security interests. As well as to study in which type of power active neutrality is more prevalent. Also, more research should be done to see if this policy has any drawbacks in these same countries that were taken as case studies.

The Moroccan case study in particular needs more examination to see how the public feels about the normalization with Israel, given the fact that the Moroccan people are one of the most outspoken supporters of the Palestinian cause in the Arab/Muslim world. However, when it comes to the Western Sahara conflict, it is a 'redline' for them. They believe that the Sahara is Moroccan. They have celebrated the US recognition of the Moroccan claims over it. A development took place while this thesis was in the works. An ongoing war has been happening between Hamas and Israel since the 7th of October 2023. It started with Hamas attacking Israel. One of the reasons why the timing of this war is important is because many political commentators have said that Hamas was trying to affect the second phase of the Abraham Accords, in which Saudi Arabia was going to be the next Arab/Muslim country that would normalize relations with Israel. The war has put the Arab/Muslim countries' governments in a weird situation, on one hand, they have normalized relations with Israel but at the same time, they have condemned its actions against the people of the Gaza Strip which Israel is in the process of invading. As mentioned before the Palestinian cause does not only concern the Palestinian people but it also seems to be the cause of the Arab/Muslim world. It has been this way since the formation of the state of Israel. Even though today there is less engagement with the cause it is still present in the Arab/Muslim consciousness. This is apparent in the fact, that since the beginning of the war, the world particularly the Arab/Muslim world, has witnessed numerous mass protests against Israel's actions, calling "Free Palestine" as well as calling the international community to intervene against Israel. Morocco was one of the leading countries in protests, which were happening at the same time as the teachers' strike protests. The Moroccan government has issued statements calling for a ceasefire while reinstating its support for the Palestinian people's right to a state via the two-state solution. As of writing this thesis, no statements were made regarding the future of Morocco's relations with Israel. I believe the escalation of the Palestinian/ Israel conflict in the ongoing war will not reverse the Abraham Accords results, at least in the case of Morocco; since it indirectly

affects its security interests in its Cold War with Algeria concerning the Western Sahara. Morocco seems to be more and more disillusioned with the Arab political block, particularly the Maghreb/North African region block. It seems that it is seeking other ways to achieve its aspirations; recently it is the African Union that Morocco is trying to make a place for itself by having good relations as well as investing in African countries. However, given the fact the war is still ongoing, it is rather early to provide a fully informed opinion on how the war will affect Morocco's case of active neutrality towards the Palestine/Israel conflict.



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APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Type of the Statements by the King

No	Date	Document Title	Type of Document	Web Link
1	05 December 2017	HM King Mohammed VI held, today, a phone conversation with president of the Palestinian authority, His Excellency Mahmoud Abbas.	Royal Office Statement	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/statement-royal-office-1
2	29 January 2018	Full Text of HM the King's Message to 30th AU Summit	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/full-text-hm-kings-message-30th-au-summit
3	16 March 2018	HM the King Sends Message to Participants in Crans Montana Forum (Full Text)	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/hm-king-sends-message-participants-crans-montana-forum-full-text
4	21 March 2018	HM the King Sends Speech to AU Extraordinary Summit on Continental Free Trade Area, Full Text	Speech	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/hm-king-sends-speech-au-extraordinary-summit-continental-free-trade-area
5	01 April 2018	Full Text of HM the King's Message to President of State of Palestinian, President of Palestinian National Authority	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/full-text-hm-kings-message-president-state-palestinian-president-palestinian
6	14 May 2018	HM the King Sends Message to Palestinian Pres. Over Implementation of US Administration's Decision to Recognize Al Quds as Capital of Israel	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-sends-message-palestinian-pres-over-implementation-us-administrations

7	22 May 2018	HM the King Holds Phone Conversation with President of State of Palestine, Royal Office	Royal Office Statement	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-holds-phone-conversation-president-state-palestine-royal-office
8	28 May 2018	HM the King Gives Instructions to Set up FAR Field Hospital in Gaza, Foreign Ministry	Royal Office Statement	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-gives-instructions-set-far-field-hospital-gaza-foreign-ministry
9	29 May 2018	HM the King Personally Chairs, Supervises and Kicks off Operation to Deliver Humanitarian Aid to Brotherly Palestinian People	Royal Office Statement	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-personally-chairs-supervises-and-kicks-operation-deliver-humanitarian-aid
10	11 June 2018	Joint Communiqué Following the Official Working and Friendship Visit to Morocco by Nigerian President (Full Text)	Royal Office Statement	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/joint-communiqu%C3%A9-following-official-working-and-friendship-visit-morocco-nigerian
11	26 June 2018	Full Text of HM the king's Message to Participants in the Fifth International Conference on Al-Quds	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/full-text-hm-kings-message-participants-fifth-international-conference
12	02 July 2018	HM the king Addresses the 31st Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the AU (Full Text)	Speech	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-addresses-31st-ordinary-session-assembly-heads-state-and-government-au
13	20 August 2018	Full Text of Royal Speech on 65th Anniversary of the Revolution of the King and the People	Speech	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/full-text-royal-speech-65th-

				anniversary-revolution-king-and-people
14	10 September 2018	HM the King Sends Message to Participants in 2nd International Conference on Intercultural and Interfaith Dialogue	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/hm-king-sends-message-participants-2nd-international-conference
15	25 September 2018	HM the King Sends Message to High-Level Meeting on Action for Peacekeeping	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/hm-king-sends-message-high-level-meeting-action-peacekeeping
16	27 September 2018	HM the King Sends Message to High-Level Round Table on "The Power of Education in Preventing Racism and Discrimination: the Case of Anti-Semitism"	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/hm-king-sends-message-high-level-round-table-power-education-preventing
17	27 September 2018	HM the king Sends Message to Participants in 2nd 'Women in Africa' Initiative Summit (Full Text)	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-sends-message-participants-2nd-women-africa-initiative-summit-full-text
18	06 November 2018	HM the King Delivers Speech to Nation on 43rd Anniversary of Green March (Full Text)	Speech	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-delivers-speech-nation-43rd-anniversary-green-march-full-text
19	15 November 2018	HM the King Congratulates Palestinian Pres. on his Country's National Day	Royal Office Statement	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-congratulates-palestinian-pres-his-country%E2%80%99s-national-day

20	24 November 2018	Full Text of HM the King's Message on Launch of 'African Cities without Street Children Campaign'	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/full-text-hm-kings-message-launch-african-cities-without-street-children-campaign%E2%80%99
21	29 November 2018	HM the King Sends Message to Chairman of Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/hm-king-sends-message-chairman-committee-exercise-inalienable-rights
22	03 December 2018	HM King Mohammed VI Sends Message to COP24 Convened in Poland (Full Text)	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/hm-king-mohammed-vi-sends-message-cop24-convened-poland-full-text
23	10 December 2018	HM the King Sends Message to Intergovernmental Conference on Global Pact for Migration	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-sends-message-intergovernmental-conference-global-pact-migration
24	25 February 2019	HM the King Sends Speech to 1st Arab-European Summit	Speech	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-sends-speech-1st-arab-european-summit
25	25 February 2019	HM the King Sends Speech to 1st Conference of the Climate Commission for Sahel Region	Speech	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-sends-speech-1st-conference-climate-commission-sahel-region
26	16 March 2019	HM the King Sends Message to Participants in 5th Crans Montana Forum in Dakhla	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-sends-message-participants-

				5th-crans-montana-forum-dakhla
27	30 March 2019	Full Text of Speech of HM the King on the Occasion of Pope Francis Visit to Morocco	Speech	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/full-text-speech-hm-king-occasion-pope-francis-visit-morocco
28	05 April 2019	HM the king Sends Message to Participants in Annual Meeting of Islamic Development Bank (Full Text)	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-sends-message-participants-annual-meeting-islamic-development-bank-full
29	13 April 2019	HM the King Sends Message to Extraordinary Summit of Community of Sahel-Saharan States, Full Text	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/hm-king-sends-message-extraordinary-summit-community-sahel-saharan
30	29 July 2019	HM the King Delivers a Speech to the Nation on Occasion of Throne Day (Full Text)	Speech	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-delivers-speech-nation-occasion-throne-day-full-text-0
31	23 September 2019	HM the King Sends Message to Climate Action Summit	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/hm-king-sends-message-climate-action-summit
32	06 November 2019	HM the King Delivers Speech to Nation on 44th Anniversary of Green March	Speech	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/hm-king-delivers-speech-nation-44th-anniversary-green-march
33	29 November 2019	HM the king Sends Message to Chairman of Committee on Exercise of Inalienable Rights of Palestinian	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-sends-message-chairman-

		People		committee-exercise-inalienable-rights-palestinian
34	12 December 2019	HM the King Sends Message to Participants in Commemoration Ceremony of OIC 50th Anniversary	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/hm-king-sends-message-participants-commemoration-ceremony-oic-50th
35	20 December 2019	HM the King Sends Message to Participants in 1st National Conference on Advanced Regionalization	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/hm-king-sends-message-participants-1st-national-conference-advanced
36	07 January 2020	HM the King Sends Message to 33rd International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement, Full Text	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/hm-king-sends-message-33rd-international-congress-school-effectiveness
37	15 January 2020	Medina of Essaouira: HM the King, Commander of the Faithful, Visits 'Bayt Dakira', a Spiritual and Patrimonial Space for Preservation and Enhancement of Judeo-Moroccan memory	Royal Activity	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/medina-essaouira-hm-king-commander-faithful-visits-bayt-dakira-spiritual-and
38	07 November 2020	HM the King Delivers Speech to Nation on 45th Anniversary of Green March	Speech	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/hm-king-delivers-speech-nation-45th-anniversary-green-march
39	16 November 2020	"His Majesty King Mohammed VI had a telephone conversation today with the Secretary General of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres.	Royal Office Statement	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/statement-royal-office-47
40	30 November	HM the King Sends Message To Chair of Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-sends-

	2020	People		message-chair-committee-exercise-inalienable-rights-palestinian
41	10 December 2020	"His Majesty King Mohammed VI, may God assist him, had a telephone conversation today with His Excellency Mr. Donald Trump, President of the United States of America.	Royal Office Statement	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/statement-royal-office-53
42	10 December 2020	"HM King Mohammed VI had this Thursday a telephone conversation with His Excellency Mahmoud Abbas Abu Mazen, President of the Palestinian National Authority.	Royal Office Statement	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/statement-royal-office-54
43	22 December 2020	"His Majesty King Mohammed VI, may God be with him, accompanied by HRH Crown Prince Moulay El Hassan, received on Tuesday, December 22, 2020, at Rabat Royal Palace, a delegation made up of:..."	Royal Office Statement	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/statement-royal-office-55
44	25 December 2020	His Majesty King Mohammed VI, may God assist Him, had today a telephone conversation with the Prime Minister of the State of Israel, Mr. Benjamin Netanyahu.	Royal Office Statement	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/statement-royal-office-56
45	16 June 2021	Congratulatory Message from HM the King to Naftali Bennett on His Election as Prime Minister of Israel	Royal Activity	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/congratulatory-message-hm-king-naftali-bennett-his-election-prime-minister-israel
46	31 July 2021	HM the King Delivers a Speech to the Nation on Throne Day	Speech	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/hm-king-delivers-speech-nation-throne-day
47	11 August 2021	HM the King Gives Instructions to Interior and Foreign Ministers to Express to Algerian Peers Morocco's Readiness to Help Algeria Combat Forest Fires	Royal Activity	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-gives-instructions-interior-and-foreign-ministers

				express-algerian-peers
48	12 August 2021	Condolence Message from HM the King to Algerian Pres. Following Forest Fires That Claim Several Victims	Royal Activity	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/condolence-message-hm-king-algerian-pres-following-forest-fires-claim-several
49	20 August 2021	Full Text of Royal Speech on 68th Anniversary of the Revolution of the King and the People	Speech	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/full-text-royal-speech-68th-anniversary-revolution-king-and-people
50	08 October 2021	HM the King Delivers Speech at Parliament Opening	Speech	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/hm-king-delivers-speech-parliament-opening
51	01 November 2021	HM the King Sends Speech to 26th UN Climate Change Conference (Full Text)	Speech	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-sends-speech-26th-un-climate-change-conference-full-text
52	06 November 2021	HM the King Delivers Speech to Nation on 46th Anniversary of Green March	Speech	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/hm-king-delivers-speech-nation-46th-anniversary-green-march
53	29 November 2021	HM the King Sends Message to Chairman of Committee on Exercise of Inalienable Rights of Palestinian People	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/hm-king-sends-message-chairman-committee-exercise-inalienable-rights-1
54	17 January 2022	Message of Condolences from HM the King to Family of Late Wajih Hassan Ali Kassem, Former Ambassador of Palestine to Morocco	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/message-condolences-hm-king-family-late-wajih-

				hassan-ali-kassem-former-ambassador
55	18 February 2022	HM the King Sends Speech to 6th European Union-African Union Summit	Speech	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/hm-king-sends-speech-6th-european-union-african-union-summit
56	18 April 2022	Rabat - HM King Mohammed VI on Monday held a telephone conversation with his brother HM King Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein of Jordan, says a statement released by the Royal Office.	Royal Office Statement	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/statement-royal-office-76
57	09 May 2022	HM the King Sends Speech to Summit of Heads of State and Government on Drought and Sustainable Land Management (Full Text)	Speech	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/hm-king-sends-speech-summit-heads-state-and-government-drought-and
58	15 June 2022	HM the King Addresses Message to Participants in UNESCO's 7th International Conference on Adult Education (Full Text)	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-addresses-message-participants-unescos-7th-international-conference-adult
59	20 June 2022	HM the King Addresses Message to Participants in Launching Conference of Africa Sovereign Investors Forum (Full Text)	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-addresses-message-participants-launching-conference-africa-sovereign
60	05 July 2022	HM the King Sends Message to Meeting of African Caucus of Finance Ministers, Central Bank Governors of African Countries Members of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/hm-king-sends-message-meeting-african-caucus-finance-ministers-central
61	30 July 2022	HM the King Delivers a Speech to the Nation on Throne Day (Full Text)	Speech	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-

				delivers-speech-nation-throne-day-full-text
62	06 November 2022	HM the King Delivers Speech to Nation on 47th Anniversary of Green March	Speech	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-delivers-speech-nation-47th-anniversary-green-march
63	15 November 2022	HM the King Congratulates President of State of Palestine on National Day	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-congratulates-president-state-palestine-national-day
64	16 November 2022	HM the King Addresses Message to Participants in First African Conference on Health Risk Reduction (Full text)	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-addresses-message-participants-first-african-conference-health-risk
65	22 November 2022	HM the King Addresses Message to Participants of 9th Global Forum of United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (Full text)	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-addresses-message-participants-9th-global-forum-united-nations-alliance
66	28 November 2022	HM the King Addresses Message to Participants in 17th UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/hm-king-addresses-message-participants-17th-unesco-intergovernmental
67	29 November 2022	HM the King Addresses Message to Chairman of UN Committee on Exercise of Inalienable Rights of Palestinian People	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-addresses-message-chairman-un-committee-exercise-inalienable-rights
68	09 December	HM the King Addresses Speech to 1st China-Arab Summit Held in Saudi	Speech	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/hm-

	2022	Arabia (Full Text)		king-addresses-speech-1st-china-arab-summit-held-saudi-arabia-full
69	12 February 2023	HM the King Addresses Message to Participants of High-Level Conference on Protection, Support of Al Quds	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/hm-king-addresses-message-participants-high-level-conference-protection
70	17 February 2023	HM the King Addresses Message to Participants in 2nd Conference of Heads of State and Government of Climate Commission for Sahel Region	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-addresses-message-participants-2nd-conference-heads-state-and-government
71	13 March 2023	"The General Secretariat of the Justice and Development Party (PJD) recently issued a statement containing irresponsible excessive views and dangerous approximations concerning the relations between the Kingdom of Morocco and the State of Israel, against the background of the latest developments in the occupied Palestinian territories.	Royal Office Statement	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/statement-royal-office-86
72	14 March 2023	Kigali: HM the King Addresses Message on Occasion of Presenting CAF President's Outstanding Achievement Award 2022	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/kigali-hm-king-addresses-message-occasion-presenting-caf-president%E2%80%99s
73	24 March 2023	Ramadan: HM the King Receives Congratulatory Message from President of Israel	Royal Activity	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/ramadan-hm-king-receives-congratulatory-message-president-israel

74	29 April 2023	HM the King Addresses Message to Participants in Annual Joint Meetings of Arab Financial Institutions	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-addresses-message-participants-annual-joint-meetings-arab-financial
75	13 June 2023	HM the King Addresses Message to Participants in Parliamentary Conference on 'Interfaith Dialogue: Working Together for Our Common Future' (Full Text)	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-addresses-message-participants-parliamentary-conference-interfaith
76	08 July 2023	HM the King Addresses Message to Participants in Colloquium on 'Fatwa Rules in African Context' (Full Text)	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/hm-king-addresses-message-participants-colloquium-fatwa-rules-african
77	17 July 2023	His Majesty King Mohammed VI, may God assist Him, has received a letter from the Prime Minister of the State of Israel, His Excellency Mr. Benjamin Netanyahu.	Royal Activity	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/statement-royal-office-90
78	19 July 2023	His Majesty the King: Israel's Decision to Recognize Kingdom's Sovereignty over its Sahara and to Favorably Consider Opening a Consulate in Dakhla Is 'Both Just and Far-Sighted'	Message	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/his-majesty-king-israels-decision-recognize-kingdoms-sovereignty-over-its-sahara
79	29 July 2023	HM the King Delivers Speech to Nation on Throne Day (Full text)	Speech	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-delivers-speech-nation-throne-day-full-text-0
80	02 August 2023	Throne Day: HM the King Receives Congratulatory Message from Israeli Prime Minister	Royal Activity	https://www.mapnews.ma/en/activites-royales/throne-day-hm-king-receives-congratulatory-message-israeli-prime-minister