



Royal University of Law and Economics

Final Report on

**Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding: The United
Nations' Role and limitation in Addressing the
Israeli-Palestinian Conflict**

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ABSTRACT

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of the most complex and persistent in modern history, with significant geographical, political, and humanitarian issues. This thesis examines the role and limitations of the United Nations (UN) in conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It explores the UN's historical involvement, the political and structural constraints it faces, and its challenges in enforcing resolutions and maintaining peacekeeping operations.

Key limitations discussed include the Security Council's veto power, divergent interests of member states, and the non-binding nature of many UN resolutions. These factors, combined with operational and resource limitations, hinder the UN's ability to act effectively. This analysis examines potential future scenarios, considering regional diplomacy, global power dynamics, and internal politics. While the conflict may continue to escalate due to mutual distrust and hardline stances, there is potential for diplomatic shifts toward peace, particularly through the influence of regional actors like the UAE and Bahrain. Global powers such as China and Russia might also alter conflict dynamics, either complicating or fostering peace efforts.

The study concludes that while the UN plays a crucial role in promoting dialogue and providing humanitarian aid, significant reforms and stronger international cooperation are needed to enhance its effectiveness. Recommendations include revisiting the UN's structural framework, strengthening enforcement mechanisms, increasing humanitarian support, and fostering more inclusive diplomatic initiatives.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

UN	United Nations
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
WFP	World Food Programme
ICC	International Criminal court
UAE	United Arab Emirates
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UXO	Unexploded ordnances
HNS	Humanitarian Notification Systems
IDF	Israel Defense Forces
WHO	World Health Organization
PA	Palestinian Authority
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
CBMs	Community-Based Monitoring System

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict, one of the most protracted and complex disputes in modern history, has roots that stretch back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The conflict is primarily centered around territorial claims, national identity, and sovereignty over the land known historically as Palestine. With the rise of Zionism, a nationalist movement advocating for the establishment of a Jewish homeland, and the simultaneous rise of Arab nationalism in response to European colonialism and the decline of the Ottoman Empire, tensions between Jewish and Arab populations in the region began to escalate.

In 1947, the United Nations proposed the partition of Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states, an initiative that led to the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948¹. This event was followed by the first Arab Israeli war, resulting in significant territorial changes and the displacement of many Palestinians. Over the subsequent decades, a series of conflicts, wars, and uprisings have perpetuated a cycle of violence and political instability, with both sides suffering significant casualties and hardships.

On October 7, 2023, Hamas launched its deadly attack on Israel², which prompted the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) to launch airstrikes and conduct ground operations inside the Gaza Strip. During an operation to free four hostages in central Gaza on June 8, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) recorded 274³ Palestinian deaths and hundreds of injuries. The whereabouts and health state of the more than one hundred Israeli and foreign captives kidnapped by Hamas on October 7 are unclear, and previous attempts to rescue them have mostly failed. Since October

¹ Gregory S. Mahler, *The Arab Israeli Conflict: An Introduction and Documentary Reader* (Taylor & Francis, 2023).

² "Israeli-Palestinian Conflict | Global Conflict Tracker," Global Conflict Tracker, n.d., <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/israeli-palestinian-conflict/>.

³ "Israeli-Palestinian Conflict | Global Conflict Tracker," Global Conflict Tracker, n.d., <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/israeli-palestinian-conflict/>.

2023, about two million Gazans more than 85 percent⁴ of the population have left their homes. Around 40,000⁵ people are thought to have died in Gaza, according to recent estimates from the Hamas-run Gazan Health Ministry, though it is difficult to confirm these figures because there is little foreign access to the region. At least 71⁶ individuals were killed when Israel launched a massive attack on south Gaza on July 13, specifically targeting two of the top Hamas commanders. Meanwhile, U.S. President Joe Biden's demands for a truce and the release of hostages have not been accepted by Israel or Hamas.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of the most lasting and intractable in modern history. Despite several attempts at mediation and resolution, peace remains elusive, and the war continues to cause tremendous human misery and political instability. The United Nations (UN), an international organization dedicated to ensuring global peace and security⁷, has been actively involved in resolving this conflict through a variety of means, including diplomatic mediation, peacekeeping operations, humanitarian assistance, and international lobbying. However, the impact of the UN's involvement has been limited, and the war continues without a permanent resolution.

Ineffectiveness of Diplomatic Efforts

Despite numerous UN resolutions and peace initiatives, there has been little movement towards a lasting peace deal. Key decisions, such as UN decisions 242 and 338⁸, have given frameworks for peace, but their implementation has met considerable challenges.

⁴ “Israeli-Palestinian Conflict | Global Conflict Tracker,” Global Conflict Tracker, n.d., <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/israeli-palestinian-conflict/>.

⁵ Ibid

⁶ “Supra under note 4

⁷ United Nations, “United Nations | Peace, Dignity and Equality on a Healthy Planet,” n.d., <https://www.un.org/en>.

⁸ C. McCrudden, “Human Dignity and Judicial Interpretation of Human Rights,” *European Journal of International Law* 19, no. 4 (September 1, 2008): 655–724, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ejil/chn043>.

UN's efforts in peace initiatives, including the Oslo Accords and Roadmap for Peace, have not resulted in a final resolution to the conflict. The ongoing construction of Israeli settlements, along with a lack of mutual confidence between the parties, complicates diplomatic attempts.

Humanitarian Crisis and Assistance

The continuous fighting has caused major humanitarian crises, especially in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) offers essential services, but it faces funding shortfalls, political pressures, and operational issues. The UN's humanitarian assistance has not adequately addressed the core causes of the war and alleviated widespread suffering.

Structural and Political Constraints

The UN's political dynamics, notably the use of veto power by permanent Security Council members, can delay decisive action. Divergent interests among member nations cause stalemate and poor policy execution. The UN's ability to enforce compliance with disputing parties is limited due to the non-binding nature of many decisions and the absence of enforcement measures.

Operational Challenges in Peacekeeping

UN peacekeeping missions in Israel-Palestine encounter obstacles such as unclear mandates, limited resources, and safety concerns for peacekeepers. Maintaining neutrality and impartiality in a politicized atmosphere is challenging, leading to charges of bias and compromising the credibility of UN missions.

1.3 Research Questions

This thesis focuses on the core question of “To what extent has the United Nations been effective in conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and what are the primary limitations that hinder its ability to achieve a lasting peace?”

Sub-research questions:

1. What key roles and initiatives has the United Nations undertaken in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and how effective have these efforts been in promoting conflict resolution and peacebuilding?
2. What are the primary limitations and challenges faced by the United Nations in addressing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
3. What strategies can be proposed to enhance the UN's role in achieving a lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians?

1.4 Research objective

The primary objectives of this research are to examine the historical and contemporary involvement of the United Nations in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, particularly its roles and initiatives from the 1900s to the present and to assess the effectiveness of the UN's efforts in conflict resolution and peacebuilding within this context, including diplomatic, humanitarian, and peacekeeping initiatives. Finally, the paper will continue to identify the key limitations and challenges faced by the UN in resolving the conflict, focusing on structural, political, and operational constraints.

1.5 Research Methodology

The present investigation utilizes a qualitative research design, incorporating an extensive examination of primary and secondary materials. These sources include books, scholarly articles, reports from international organizations and think tanks, and documents and

resolutions from the United Nations. To give thorough insights into the accomplishments and shortcomings of the organization's activities, the research will include case studies of UN operations. To place the UN's role in context and pinpoint best practices, comparative comparison with other international conflict resolution initiatives will be carried out.

1.6 Structure of the Research

The research is structured to systematically explore the United Nations' involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by divided into 5 chapters. The basis and initial part are Chapter 1 containing six points which are an introduction, research question, research objective, research methodology, scope of limitation, and literature review. Chapter 2 mainly focuses on foundation by providing a historical context of the conflict, tracing its roots from the early 20th century to the present day as of August 2024. Chapter 3 delves into the United Nations' role in conflict resolution, focusing on its diplomatic mediation efforts, key resolutions, and major peace initiatives. Chapter 4 addresses the limitations and challenges faced by the United Nations in addressing the conflict. Last but not least, Chapter 5 provides an analysis of the findings and offers future predictions regarding the UN's role in the conflict. After conclusion of the data collection and analysis, the paper will be providing some significant recommendations that are proposed to enhance the effectiveness of international efforts in particular the United Nations in peacebuilding and conflict resolution.

1.7 Scope and limitation

This research covers the period from the early 1900s to half of 2024 when the tensions started to escalating after the Hamas group of Palestine attacked Israel in October 2024. The study will examining the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by focusing mainly on the involvement of the United Nations in this prolonged struggle. The study will analyze key historical events, UN interventions, and their outcomes, focusing particularly on the organization's roles in diplomatic

mediation, humanitarian assistance, and peacekeeping. The study is broad in its historical scope but may not address every event in exhaustive detail, focusing instead on the most significant milestones and UN actions. The research centers on Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza Strip, with broader regional dynamics considered only when directly relevant to the conflict.

1.8 Significant of Research

Enhancing the efficacy of international efforts in conflict resolution and peacebuilding requires an understanding of the constraints and difficulties the UN has encountered in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This study intends to add to the larger conversation on international conflict resolution by pointing out the shortcomings and suggesting solutions, providing information that practitioners, academics, and politicians may use. The research's conclusions may also be relevant to other lengthy conflicts globally, offering the UN and other international bodies important takeaway.

1.9 Literature Review

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a deeply rooted and enduring struggle, has been the subject of extensive scholarly analysis, particularly concerning the role of the United Nations (UN) in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. The origins of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are traced back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries, with the rise of Zionism and Arab nationalism. Gelvin in his book “Modern Middle East: A History, emphasizes that the clash between these movements was exacerbated by European colonial influences and the decline of the Ottoman Empire⁹. The Balfour Declaration of 1917 and the British Mandate for Palestine, as discussed by Shlaim, intensified tensions due to conflicting promises to Jewish and Arab populations¹⁰.

⁹ Gelvin, J. L. *The Modern Middle East: A History*. Oxford University Press, 2005.

¹⁰ Shlaim, A. *The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World*. W. W. Norton & Company, 2001.

The UN has been a central player in attempts to resolve the conflict. The 1947 UN Partition Plan, which proposed separate Jewish and Arab states, was accepted by the Jewish community but rejected by Arab leaders, leading to the establishment of Israel and ensuing conflict¹¹. The Oslo Accords (1993) were initially seen as a breakthrough, establishing the Palestinian Authority and setting a framework for peace, but Finkelstein, in his journey of the Middle East Studies, argues that they failed to address key issues, resulting in continued impasse¹². The Roadmap for Peace (2003) also aimed to provide a framework for resolution but faced similar obstacles¹³.

The UN's humanitarian efforts, especially through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), have been crucial in providing aid to affected populations. Bocco, in his book called "A Historical Overview. Middle East Journal", notes the agency's role in delivering essential services, despite facing funding shortages and political pressures¹⁴. Said highlights that while UNRWA's assistance is vital, it has not sufficiently addressed the root causes of the conflict¹⁵.

Recent events have significantly impacted conflict dynamics. On October 7, 2023, Hamas launched a large-scale attack on Israel, resulting in numerous casualties and escalating the conflict to unprecedented levels¹⁶. The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) responded with extensive airstrikes and ground operations in Gaza. The attack and subsequent Israeli retaliation have led to severe humanitarian crises in Gaza, with significant civilian casualties and widespread displacement.¹⁷ These recent events have intensified scrutiny of the UN's role and

¹¹ United Nations. *Resolution 181: The Partition Plan*. United Nations, 1947.

¹² Finkelstein, N. *The Road to Oslo: The Protracted Palestinian-Israeli Negotiations*. International Journal of Middle East Studies, 35(1), 55-73, 2003.

¹³ Arafat, Y., Rabin, Y., & Peres, S. *Oslo Accords: Declaration of Principles*. United Nations, 1995.

¹⁴ Bocco, R. *UNRWA and the Palestinian Refugees: A Historical Overview*. Middle East Journal, 63(3), 403-420, 2009.

¹⁵ Said, E. W. *The Question of Palestine*. Vintage Books, 2012.

¹⁶ BBC. *October 2023 Hamas Attack on Israel*. Retrieved from [BBC], 2023

¹⁷ Al Jazeera. *Hamas-Israel Conflict: Recent Developments*. Retrieved from [Al Jazeera], 2023.

effectiveness in mediating the conflict and addressing humanitarian needs. Barnett and Mearsheimer & Walt highlight that the UN's capacity to manage such escalations is constrained by structural and political limitations, exacerbating the challenges of conflict resolution.¹⁸

This paper will further elaborate on the effectiveness of the UN' role to help solve the conflicts while also further underscores the constraints imposed by the UN's structural dynamics, such as the Security Council's veto power and divergent member interests. The non-binding nature of many UN resolutions and the reliance on voluntary compliance from conflicting parties further hinder effective resolution efforts. The paper also explains the need for a reevaluation of UN strategies and a more integrated approach to conflict resolution in the recommendation part to increase the UN peacebuilding efforts.

¹⁸ Barnett, M. *Eyewitness to a Genocide: The United Nations and the Rwandan Genocide*. Cornell University Press, 2005; Mearsheimer, J. J., & Walt, S. M. *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007.

CHAPTER II: HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict traces its roots to the late 19th, 20th centuries, and early 21st centuries, a period marked by the rise of nationalist movements among Jews and Arabs. These movements were influenced by various socio-political factors, including the decline of the Ottoman Empire and the impact of European colonialism.

2.1 Origins and Early Developments

2.1.1 Zionism and Arab Nationalism

Zionism: A nationalist movement among Jews, advocating for the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Theodor Herzl's publication of "The Jewish State" in 1896¹⁹ galvanized the Zionist movement, leading to increased Jewish immigration to Palestine.

Arab Nationalism: As a response to Zionism, Arab nationalism emerged, emphasizing the desire for independence and sovereignty among Arab populations in the Middle East.

2.1.2 British Mandate and Conflicting Promises

Balfour Declaration (1917): During World War I, Britain issued the Balfour Declaration, expressing support for the establishment of a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine. This declaration conflicted with promises made to Arab leaders for independence in exchange for their support against the Ottoman Empire²⁰.

British Mandate for Palestine (1920-1948): Following the war, the League of Nations granted Britain the mandate to govern Palestine²¹, leading to increased tensions between Jewish and Arab communities due to conflicting national aspirations.

¹⁹ "Herzl's Vision: Theodor Herzl and the Foundation of the Jewish State," *Choice Reviews Online* 52, no. 07 (February 24, 2015): 52–3879, <https://doi.org/10.5860/choice.188448>.

²⁰ Morris, B. (2004). *The birth of the Palestinian refugee problem revisited*. Cambridge University Press.

²¹ Rogan, E. L., & Shlaim, A. (Eds.). (2007). *The war for Palestine: Rewriting the history of 1948* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

2.2 Key Events and Turning Points

2.2.1 Arab-Jewish Tensions and Revolts (1936-1939)

The Arab-Jewish tensions that culminated in the Arab Revolt (1936-1939) were rooted in the deep-seated opposition of Arab Palestinians to Jewish immigration and land purchases. During this period, escalating tensions between Jewish and Arab communities were driven by the rapid increase in Jewish immigration and land acquisition in Palestine. The British Mandate authorities faced significant unrest as Palestinian Arabs, feeling increasingly marginalized, launched a revolt against both British rule and the expanding Jewish communities. This revolt, marked by strikes, protests, and violent clashes, was suppressed by the British authorities, who imposed martial law and employed military force. Despite its suppression, the Arab Revolt highlighted the profound animosities and set the stage for future conflicts, showcasing the growing polarization and division between the two communities.²² The revolt underscored the inability of the British Mandate authorities to address the underlying grievances of both communities, leading to an exacerbation of tensions and laying the groundwork for future violence.²³

2.2.2 UN Partition Plan and the Establishment of Israel

The UN Partition Plan of 1947 was a critical juncture in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Proposed by the United Nations, the plan aimed to divide Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states, with Jerusalem designated as an international city to ensure its neutrality and accessibility to all faiths. The plan was a response to escalating violence and the failure of previous attempts at compromise, seeking to provide a solution that would satisfy both Jewish and Arab aspirations. The Jewish community, which had been advocating for a homeland in

²² Khalidi, R. (1997). *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness*. Columbia University Press.

²³ Pappé, I. (2006). *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*. Oneworld Publications.

Palestine, accepted the plan, viewing it as a compromise that would lead to statehood and international recognition.²⁴ In contrast, Arab leaders rejected the plan, arguing that it was unjust and violated the rights of the Palestinian Arab majority. The subsequent declaration of the State of Israel on May 14, 1948, by David Ben-Gurion, marked the beginning of a new phase in the conflict. The declaration was followed by an invasion by neighboring Arab states, leading to the first Arab Israeli War. Israel's victory in this war resulted in significant territorial gains and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, an event referred to as the Nakba, or "Catastrophe."²⁵ This conflict not only entrenched divisions but also established a precedent for future disputes over territory and sovereignty.

2.2.3 Wars and Occupations

The Six-Day War of June 1967 was a pivotal event that dramatically reshaped the geopolitical landscape of the Middle East. Israel, facing a coalition of Egypt, Jordan, and Syria, launched a preemptive strike that resulted in the capture of several territories, including the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, East Jerusalem, the Sinai Peninsula, and the Golan Heights. This war significantly altered the regional balance of power and intensified the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as the newly occupied territories became focal points of resistance and negotiations. The expansion of Israeli control over these territories exacerbated existing tensions and introduced new complexities into the conflict.²⁶ The Yom Kippur War of 1973 further demonstrated the ongoing volatility of the region. On the Jewish holy day of Yom Kippur, Egypt and Syria launched a surprise attack on Israel, aiming to regain territories lost in the Six-Day War. Although the initial gains by the attacking forces were significant, Israel managed to repel the assault and secure its positions. The war ended in a military stalemate but led to

²⁴ Morris, B. (2001). *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881-2001*. Vintage Books.

²⁵ Segev, T. (2000). *One Palestine, Complete: Jews and Arabs Under the British Mandate*. Metropolitan Books.

²⁶ Oren, M. (2002). *Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East*. Oxford University Press.

renewed peace negotiations, illustrating the persistent cycle of conflict and diplomacy that has characterized the region's history.²⁷ These wars highlighted the deep-rooted nature of the conflict and underscored the challenges in achieving a lasting resolution.

2.2.4 Gaza conflicts

Gaza Conflicts: Since the 2005-2024 Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, the territory has seen multiple conflicts between Israel and Hamas, the militant group governing Gaza. These conflicts have resulted in severe humanitarian crises and periodic escalations in violence. Israel ordered more than one million Palestinian civilians in northern Gaza to evacuate ahead of a ground invasion that began on October 27th²⁸. Under pressure from its principal ally, the United States, Israel announced it would begin to withdraw soldiers from the Gaza Strip in January 2024²⁹. In mid-March, Israel conducted a two-week raid on al-Shifa Hospital, the largest medical center in Gaza. On April 1, Israel launched an airstrike on an Iranian consular building in Damascus, Syria, killing multiple senior Iranian military officers. Due to Hamas' rejection of the most recent cease-fire agreements mediated by Egypt and the United States, as well as Israel's restrictions on the amount of aid that can enter, Gaza is critically short on gasoline, water, and supplies. For Egypt and Jordan, who have taken in hundreds of thousands of Palestinians in the past but have refused to accept any more during the current conflict, the displacement of millions more Palestinians poses a difficulty.

Peace Proposals and Stalemates: Various peace proposals, including the 2003 Roadmap for Peace and the 2020 Abraham Accords³⁰, have aimed at resolving the conflict.

²⁷ Quandt, W. B. (2001). *Peace Process: American Diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict Since 1967*. University of California Press.

²⁸ "Israeli-Palestinian Conflict | Global Conflict Tracker," Global Conflict Tracker, n.d., <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/israeli-palestinian-conflict/>.

²⁹ "Israeli-Palestinian Conflict | Global Conflict Tracker," Global Conflict Tracker, n.d., <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/israeli-palestinian-conflict/>.

³⁰ "The Abraham Accords | StandWithUs."

However, fundamental issues such as the status of Jerusalem, security concerns, and the right of return for Palestinian refugees remain unresolved.

Territorial Disputes: The borders and sovereignty of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem remain contentious, with continued Israeli settlement expansion in the West Bank further complicating the situation. Captured by Israel in 1967³¹, the West Bank is sought by Palestinians for a future state, while Israeli settlements continue to expand, complicating negotiations. Gaza, which has been ruled by Hamas since Israel withdrew in 2005³² faces ongoing blockades and conflict with Israel, with disputes over sovereignty and security. The issue of East Jerusalem, which Israel annexed in 1967 and which the Palestinians view as their future capital, but Israel claims the entire city as its own, making it a contentious point in peace talks.

Humanitarian Issues: The conflict has led to significant humanitarian challenges, including restrictions on movement, economic hardships, and limited access to essential services for Palestinians. Blockades and repeated conflicts have resulted in severe shortages of necessities, restricted access to medical care, and widespread poverty. The destruction of infrastructure and homes has displaced many residents, creating a prolonged humanitarian crisis. Restrictions on movement, such as checkpoints and the separation barrier, limit access to essential services and disrupt daily life. The expansion of Israeli settlements has also led to the displacement of Palestinian communities and loss of agricultural land.

³¹ Dpi Web-Arabic, "Israeli Settlements in Gaza and the West Bank (Part I) - Question of Palestine," Question of Palestine, December 20, 2023, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-205221/>.

³² Dpi Web-Arabic, "Israeli Settlements in Gaza and the West Bank (Part I) - Question of Palestine," Question of Palestine, December 20, 2023, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-205221/>.

2.3 Latest development on Israel-Hamas Conflicts

The recent escalation in the Hamas-Israel conflict began on October 7, 2023, when Hamas launched a coordinated and large-scale attack on Israel. This offensive included a barrage of rockets and ground incursions into Israeli territory, resulting in significant casualties and property damage. The immediate response from Israel involved extensive airstrikes and ground operations aimed at neutralizing Hamas's military capabilities and retaliating for the attacks. This exchange of fire has led to severe consequences for civilians on both sides, with numerous deaths and injuries reported.³³

The humanitarian situation in Gaza has been particularly dire. The relentless bombardment and blockades imposed by Israel have caused widespread destruction of infrastructure, leading to severe shortages of food, water, and medical supplies. The destruction has displaced thousands of Gazans, exacerbating an already dire humanitarian crisis.³⁴ International organizations and foreign governments have called for ceasefires and urgent humanitarian aid, but the situation remains critical and fluid.³⁵

Who is Hamas?

Hamas is a Palestinian militant group that governs the Gaza Strip and was founded in 1987 during the First Intifada³⁶. Originating as an offshoot of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas combines political governance with militant activities. It is known for its resistance against Israeli occupation and its aim to establish an Islamic state in historical Palestine. The organization is classified as a terrorist group by Israel, the United States, the European Union,

³³ Britannica. "Israel-Hamas War." Accessed September 2, 2024. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Israel-Hamas-War>.

³⁴ BBC News. "Recent Attacks." Accessed September 2, 2024. <https://www.bbc.com/news/newsbeat-44124396>.

³⁵ Ibid

³⁶ BBC News. "Who is Hamas?" Accessed September 2, 2024. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-67039975>.

and other countries due to its attacks on Israeli civilians and its commitment to the destruction of the Israeli state³⁷.

Ceasefire Negotiations and Hostage Deal Between Israel and Hamas: A Complex Process

The ongoing negotiations between Israel and Hamas concerning a potential ceasefire and hostage exchange are emblematic of the deep-rooted tensions and challenges that define the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Central to these negotiations is Hamas' demand for the release of Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli custody in exchange for hostages currently detained by Hamas. This demand is critical for Hamas, serving as a strategic bargaining tool to secure concessions from Israel. However, Israel remains cautious, aware that acquiescing to such demands could set a precedent that may encourage future kidnappings and violence.³⁸

The negotiation process is further complicated by the entrenched mistrust between the two parties. Israel's primary objective in these talks is to ensure the safety of its citizens while simultaneously weakening Hamas' military and political influence. Conversely, Hamas seeks to leverage the hostages to achieve both political and tactical gains, including the release of prisoners and possibly easing of the blockade on Gaza. The broader geopolitical context also plays a significant role, as international actors, including the United States and regional powers, exert pressure on both sides to reach a resolution that could stem the violence and address the escalating humanitarian crisis in Gaza.³⁹

The humanitarian impact of the conflict is particularly dire, with significant civilian casualties, widespread displacement, and the destruction of critical infrastructure. Gaza, already

³⁷ Ibid

³⁸ CNN. "Israel-Hamas Ceasefire Negotiations: An Explainer on the Demands and Challenges." CNN, July 8, 2024. <https://edition.cnn.com/2024/07/08/middleeast/israel-hamas-ceasefire-hostage-deal-demands-explainer-mime-intl/index.html>.

³⁹ Ibid

under severe strain due to the blockade, faces an even more critical situation as the conflict drags on. The international community's efforts to mediate a ceasefire are crucial, yet the path to a sustainable peace agreement remains fraught with difficulties, given the divergent objectives of the involved parties.⁴⁰ The war was triggered after Hamas militants on Oct.7 stormed into southern Israel killing 1,200 people and taking more than 250 hostages by Israeli tallies. Since then, at least 40,691 Palestinians have been killed and 94,060 injured in Gaza, as of 11 months from the Hamas attacks that happened in October 2023⁴¹.

⁴⁰ Supra under not 24

⁴¹U.N. begins polio vaccination in Gaza as fighting rages, reuters, 92 Sep 2024. [https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-eastun-begins-polio-vaccination-gaza-fighting-rages-2024-09-01](https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/un-begins-polio-vaccination-gaza-fighting-rages-2024-09-01)

CHAPTER III: THE UNITED NATION'S ROLE IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The United Nations (UN) has played a pivotal role in conflict resolution since its establishment in 1945, utilizing diplomatic mediation and peacekeeping efforts to address international disputes and maintain global peace. These efforts have been essential in preventing the escalation of conflicts and in laying the groundwork for long-term peace in regions plagued by violence and instability. The UN's approach to conflict resolution is multifaceted, encompassing diplomatic initiatives, the deployment of peacekeeping forces, and the implementation of international legal frameworks designed to resolve disputes and protect human rights⁴².

3.1. Diplomatic Mediation and Peacekeeping Efforts

One of the core mechanisms of the UN's conflict resolution strategy is diplomatic mediation, which involves facilitating negotiations between conflicting parties to reach a peaceful settlement. The UN has been instrumental in mediating some of the world's most protracted conflicts, often acting as a neutral party that can bring adversaries to the negotiating table. A notable example of this is the Camp David Accords in 1978, where the UN played a supporting role in the peace talks between Egypt and Israel, ultimately leading to a historic peace agreement⁴³. The UN also frequently appoints special envoys and mediators to conflict zones, such as the ongoing efforts to mediate peace in the Syrian Civil War, where the UN has continuously sought to broker ceasefires and initiate dialogue between the Syrian government and opposition groups⁴⁴.

⁴² United Nations, "Charter of the United Nations," 1945.

⁴³ Camp David Accords, 1978.

⁴⁴ United Nations, "Syria: UN Special Envoy Calls for Ceasefire," 2021.

Peacekeeping is another vital tool in the UN's conflict resolution arsenal. UN peacekeeping missions are deployed to conflict zones to maintain ceasefires, protect civilians, and support the implementation of peace agreements. These missions often involve military personnel, police officers, and civilian staff from various countries, working together under the UN flag. One of the most successful UN peacekeeping missions was in Namibia, where the UN supervised the transition to independence from South African rule, ensuring free and fair elections in 1989 and maintaining peace during the process⁴⁵. UN peacekeepers are also deployed in ongoing missions in regions like the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan, where they work to stabilize areas affected by conflict, support humanitarian assistance, and protect vulnerable populations⁴⁶.

3.1.1. Key UN Resolutions

A. UN General Assembly Resolution (Partition Plan) 181

United Nations General Assembly Resolution 181, adopted on November 29, 1947, is one of the most consequential resolutions in the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Commonly known as the Partition Plan, Resolution 181 proposed the division of the British Mandate of Palestine into two separate states: one Jewish and one Arab, with Jerusalem designated as a *corpus separatum* under international administration due to its religious significance. The resolution was a response to the escalating tensions and violence between Jewish and Arab communities in Palestine, as well as growing international pressure to find a solution to the conflicting national aspirations of Jews and Arabs in the region⁴⁷.

⁴⁵ United Nations, "UN Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG)," 1989.

⁴⁶ United Nations, "UN Peacekeeping Operations: Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan," 2021.

⁴⁷ Admin, "General Assembly - Question of Palestine."

The adoption of Resolution 181 by a two-thirds majority in the General Assembly was a pivotal moment, as it provided international legitimacy to the idea of partitioning Palestine into two states.

Resolution 181 remains a significant reference point in discussions about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, symbolizing both the international community's early efforts to mediate a solution and the deep-seated divisions that have characterized the conflict.

B. UN General Assembly Resolution 194 (Right of Return)

United Nations General Assembly Resolution 194, adopted on December 11, 1948, is a pivotal resolution in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, particularly concerning the rights of Palestinian refugees. Passed in the aftermath of the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, which resulted in the displacement of a large number of Palestinian Arabs, Resolution 194 addresses several critical issues related to the conflict, including the protection of holy sites in Jerusalem, the demilitarization of the city, and most notably, the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes⁴⁸. The resolution also established the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine (UNCCP) with the goal of facilitating peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors and addressing the refugee crisis.

Over the years, Resolution 194 has been repeatedly reaffirmed by the United Nations, and the right of return for Palestinian refugees remains a central issue in discussions about a comprehensive peace settlement between Israel and the Palestinians.

C. UN Security Council Resolution 242

Adopted unanimously on November 22, 1967, UN Security Council Resolution 242 is one of the most significant documents in the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Passed in the aftermath of the Six-Day War, in which Israel captured the Gaza Strip, the Sinai Peninsula, the

⁴⁸ “United Nations General Assembly Resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948 (Right to Return - Human Rights Watch Policy Page).”

West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights, Resolution 242 sought to lay the groundwork for peace by establishing principles that would guide future negotiations between Israel and its Arab neighbors. The resolution remains a cornerstone of Middle Eastern diplomacy, though its interpretation and implementation have been the subject of ongoing debate.

In response to the war and the resulting territorial changes, the United Nations Security Council sought to address the immediate need for a ceasefire and establish a framework for peace.

Resolution 242 calls for the "termination of all claims or states of belligerency" and the "acknowledgment of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence of every state in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force." UN Security Council Resolution 242 has had a profound and lasting impact on the Middle East peace process. It established the "land for peace" formula that has underpinned numerous negotiations, including the Camp David Accords (1978) and the Oslo Accords (1993). The resolution's emphasis on mutual recognition and secure borders has also informed the peace treaties that Israel signed with Egypt in 1979 and Jordan in 1994.

However, the resolution's ambiguity, particularly regarding the extent of Israeli withdrawal, has also been a source of ongoing contention. Israel's interpretation of Resolution 242 has generally favored a partial withdrawal, allowing for the retention of some territories in exchange for peace.

D. UN Security Council Resolution 338

UN Security Council Resolution 338, adopted on October 22, 1973, during the Yom Kippur War, stands as a critical document in the ongoing efforts to achieve peace in the Middle East. The resolution, which was passed unanimously, called for an immediate ceasefire and urged all parties involved in the conflict to implement UN Security Council Resolution 242 (1967) "in all of its parts." This resolution is significant not only for its role in halting the

fighting during the Yom Kippur War but also for reaffirming the principles laid out in Resolution 242 as the basis for a comprehensive peace settlement between Israel and its Arab neighbors. The resolution was the result of intense negotiations, primarily between the United States and the Soviet Union, who were eager to prevent the conflict from spiraling further out of control.

The adoption of Resolution 338 marked a turning point in the Yom Kippur War, as it effectively brought the active phase of the conflict to an end and paved the way for the disengagement agreements between Israel and Egypt, as well as between Israel and Syria, in the months that followed. These agreements were brokered with significant involvement from the United States, particularly through the efforts of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, who engaged in "shuttle diplomacy" to mediate between the parties.

However, while Resolution 338 succeeded in halting the immediate hostilities, its impact on the broader Arab-Israeli conflict was more complex. The resolution's call for the implementation of Resolution 242 and for peace negotiations did not lead to a rapid resolution of the underlying issues.

E. UN General Assembly Resolution 3236

United Nations General Assembly Resolution 3236, adopted on November 22, 1974, marked a significant moment in the diplomatic landscape of the Middle East conflict. This resolution was pivotal in the recognition of the Palestinian people's rights and the United Nations' engagement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The resolution was introduced in the context of escalating tensions and violence in the Middle East, particularly after the Six-Day War in 1967 and the Yom Kippur War in 1973, which had further intensified the conflict. Resolution 3236 reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, particularly their right to self-determination, national independence, and sovereignty. It also recognized the right

of the Palestinian people to return to their homes and property from which they had been displaced and uprooted⁴⁹.

F. UN Security Council Resolution 476

The United Nations (UN) has played a significant role in attempting to resolve the protracted conflict between Israel and Palestine, particularly concerning the situation in the occupied territories. The UN Security Council has passed several resolutions aimed at addressing the root causes of the conflict, reaffirming international law, and calling for peace.

The resolution called on Israel to cease such actions, underscoring the international community's view that Jerusalem's final status should be determined through negotiations, rather than unilateral actions by Israel. The resolution passed with 14 votes in favor, with the United States abstaining.⁵⁰

G. UN Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016)

This resolution was a significant moment in the UN's approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Adopted in December 2016, it reaffirmed that Israel's establishment of settlements in Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, had no legal validity and constituted a flagrant violation of international law. Resolution 2334 called for an immediate cessation of all Israeli settlement activities and emphasized that any changes to the 1967 borders must be agreed upon by both parties through negotiations. The resolution passed with 14 votes in favor, with the United States abstaining a move that marked a departure from its usual practice of vetoing such resolutions.⁵¹

⁴⁹ United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 3236, A/RES/3236 (1974)

⁵⁰ United Nations Security Council Resolution 478, S/RES/478 (1980).

⁵¹ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2334, S/RES/2334 (2016).

3.1.2 Major Peace Initiatives

The Middle East, a region marked by prolonged conflict and geopolitical tension, has witnessed several significant peace initiatives aimed at resolving disputes and fostering long-term stability. Among these, the Camp David Accords (1978), the Oslo Accords (1993), and the subsequent peace treaties and negotiations stand out as landmark efforts. These initiatives, driven by a combination of international diplomacy and regional pragmatism, have shaped the course of the Arab-Israeli conflict, with varying degrees of success. This summary provides an overview of these key peace initiatives, their historical context, and their impact on the Middle East.

3.1.2.1 Camp David Accords (1978)

The Camp David Accords, signed on September 17, 1978, represent one of the most significant milestones in the history of Middle Eastern diplomacy. Brokered by U.S. President Jimmy Carter, these accords were the result of 13 days of intense negotiations between Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin at the presidential retreat of Camp David in Maryland. The agreements not only paved the way for the first peace treaty between Israel and an Arab nation but also established a framework that continues to influence diplomatic efforts in the region. The negotiations at Camp David were fraught with difficulties, as Sadat and Begin held fundamentally different visions for the future of the Middle East. Sadat's primary goal was the return of the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt, while Begin was focused on ensuring Israel's security and maintaining control over the West Bank. President Carter played a crucial role as mediator, using a combination of diplomatic pressure, personal appeals, and strategic compromises to keep the talks from collapsing. The accords ultimately produced two separate frameworks: one addressing the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel, and

another proposing a process for Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.⁵² Peace between Egypt and Israel: This agreement laid the groundwork for the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty, signed in March 1979. Key provisions included Israel's complete withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula, the establishment of full diplomatic relations between Egypt and Israel, and mutual recognition of sovereignty.

The second agreement aimed to address the broader Arab-Israeli conflict by proposing a process for Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This framework called for the establishment of a self-governing authority to oversee these territories during a transitional period of five years, after which the final status of the territories would be negotiated.

However, this part of the accords faced significant criticism and was less successful, as it did not lead to a resolution of the Palestinian issue.⁵³

Camp David Accords were a landmark achievement in Middle Eastern diplomacy, laying the foundation for peace between Egypt and Israel and offering a framework for addressing the broader conflict. While not without their limitations, the accords remain a testament to the power of diplomacy and the potential for negotiation to transform entrenched conflicts into opportunities for peace.

3.1.2.2 Oslo Accords (1993)

The Oslo Accords, signed on September 13, 1993, marked a significant turning point in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, representing the first direct, face-to-face agreement between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). The accords, negotiated secretly in Oslo, Norway, under the auspices of the Norwegian government, were intended to establish a framework for future negotiations and create a path towards lasting peace in a region

⁵² Quandt, William B. "Camp David and Peacemaking in the Middle East." *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 101, no. 3, 1986, pp. 357-377.

⁵³ Shlaim, Avi. "The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World." W.W. Norton & Company, 2001.

marred by decades of violence and mistrust. The accords resulted in mutual recognition between the PLO and Israel and outlined a phased approach to resolving the core issues of the conflict.

The accords also included provisions for security cooperation between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, with the PA taking responsibility for policing and security in areas under its control. The aim was to ensure stability and prevent violence during the transition period. This security arrangement was crucial for maintaining Israeli trust in the process, though it also led to tensions within Palestinian society.⁵⁴ The Oslo Accords were initially met with widespread international acclaim and hope that they would lead to a lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians. The image of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin shaking hands with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat on the White House lawn, with U.S. President Bill Clinton standing between them, became an iconic symbol of this newfound hope for peace.

The accords led to the creation of the Palestinian Authority and the first Palestinian elections in 1996, marking the beginning of Palestinian self-governance in parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. However, the Oslo process soon faced significant challenges. The phased approach to peace left key issues unresolved, leading to frustration and disillusionment on both sides. Israeli settlement expansion in the West Bank continued, undermining Palestinian confidence in the peace process. Additionally, the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin in 1995 by an Israeli extremist dealt a severe blow to the Oslo process, as his successor, Benjamin Netanyahu, adopted a more skeptical approach to the accords.⁵⁵ The failure to achieve progress on final status issues, coupled with the outbreak of the Second Intifada in 2000, led to the collapse of the Oslo process. By the early 2000s, the promise of Oslo had largely faded, with both sides entrenched in a cycle of violence and mistrust. Despite these setbacks, the Oslo Accords remain a significant diplomatic achievement, as they established a framework for

⁵⁴ Tessler, Mark. "A History of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict." Indiana University Press, 1994

⁵⁵ Bein, Yossi. "Touching Peace: From the Oslo Accord to a Final Agreement." Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999.

future negotiations and represented the first formal recognition between Israel and the PLO. Oslo Accords of 1993 were a pivotal moment in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, offering a framework for peace based on mutual recognition and phased negotiations.

3.1.2.3. Roadmap for Peace (2003)

The "Roadmap for Peace" (2003), crafted by the Quartet on the Middle East (the United States, the European Union, Russia, and the United Nations), was a significant diplomatic initiative aimed at resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Its relevance during the Hamas-Palestine conflict lies in its attempt to establish a framework for peace amidst growing tensions and violence.

The roadmap's significance during this period was twofold. First, it aimed to halt the cycle of violence that had been escalating, particularly with Hamas' increasing influence and militant activities in the Palestinian territories. Hamas, a group that gained notoriety for its resistance against Israel, fundamentally opposed the peace process outlined by the roadmap. They rejected the principles of negotiation and coexistence with Israel, viewing the roadmap as an attempt to undermine Palestinian sovereignty. This opposition exacerbated internal Palestinian divisions and further complicated the implementation of the peace process.

Second, the Roadmap for Peace set clear benchmarks for both Israel and the Palestinian Authority (PA), demanding an end to violence, the cessation of Israeli settlement activity, and the establishment of a viable Palestinian state.⁵⁶ However, Hamas' rise in popularity, especially after its electoral victory in 2006, challenged the PA's authority, making it difficult to meet the roadmap's requirements. The Palestinian political landscape became increasingly fragmented, with Hamas controlling Gaza and the PA governing the West Bank. This division weakened

⁵⁶ "OPT Socio-economic Report (September 2007) - UNSCO - Question of Palestine," Question of Palestine, March 12, 2019, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-195489/>.

the Palestinian negotiating position and made the implementation of the roadmap nearly impossible.⁵⁷

In essence, the Roadmap for Peace (2003) symbolized an ambitious but ultimately unfulfilled effort to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Its significance during the Hamas-Palestine conflict highlights the challenges of negotiating peace in an environment where key actors fundamentally reject the premise of coexistence. The ongoing violence and political fragmentation during this period serve as a reminder of the complexities involved in achieving lasting peace in the region.⁵⁸

3.1.2.4 A Two-State-Solutions

The Two-State Solution, a proposal envisioning Israel and Palestine as two sovereign states coexisting side by side, has long been regarded as the most viable resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.⁵⁹ However, in recent years, this vision has become increasingly strained, particularly in the context of the ongoing conflict between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority (PA), as well as between Hamas and Israel. The situation in 2024 reflects deepening divisions, growing tensions, and a bleak outlook for the realization of the Two-State Solution.

The internal Palestinian divide between Hamas, which controls Gaza, and the Palestinian Authority, which governs the West Bank, remains one of the most significant obstacles to the Two-State Solution. Hamas, an Islamist militant group designated as a terrorist organization by many countries, has consistently rejected the principles of the Two-State Solution as proposed by international actors. Instead, Hamas advocates for the establishment of an Islamic state in all historic Palestine, refusing to recognize Israel's right to exist.

⁵⁷ Hroub, Khaled. *Hamas: A Beginner's Guide*. Pluto Press, 2006.

⁵⁸ *The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: A People's War*. Routledge, 2008.

⁵⁹ United Nations. "A Performance-Based Roadmap to a Permanent Two-State Solution to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict." United Nations, 2003. <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-195489/>

In 2024, the divide between Hamas and the PA has only widened.⁶⁰ Efforts to reconcile the two factions, such as the 2017 Cairo Agreement and subsequent talks, have largely failed, leading to a de facto separation between Gaza and the West Bank. This division not only weakens the Palestinian position in negotiations but also complicates the possibility of forming a unified government that could effectively negotiate a peace agreement with Israel. The absence of a cohesive Palestinian leadership undermines the credibility of the Two-State Solution, as there is no single entity that represents all Palestinians.⁶¹

As of August 2024, it has witnessed a significant escalation in violence between Hamas and Israel, further eroding the prospects for a Two-State Solution. The conflict has been marked by rocket attacks from Gaza into Israeli territory and retaliatory airstrikes by Israel, resulting in significant casualties on both sides. These cycles of violence have led to increased suffering for civilians and have fueled further animosity and distrust.

Hamas' military actions are often portrayed as resistance against Israeli occupation, but they also serve to bolster its political standing within Gaza and among Palestinians disillusioned with the PA's inability to achieve meaningful progress towards statehood. The international community's response has been divided, with some condemning Hamas' actions as terrorism while others call for a more balanced approach that addresses the root causes of the conflict, including the ongoing Israeli occupation and settlement expansion in the West Bank.⁶²

Israeli settlement expansion in the West Bank has been a persistent challenge to the Two-State Solution. The construction of settlements, which are considered illegal under international law, has continued unabated, with reports in August 2024 indicating a surge in

⁶⁰ Shikaki, Khalil. "The Future of the Two-State Solution: A Look at the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in 2024." *Middle East Policy*, vol. 28, no. 3, 2024.

⁶¹ Hass, Amira. "Palestinian Leadership Crisis: Hamas and the Palestinian Authority in 2024." *Haaretz*, 2024.

⁶² Shikaki, Khalil. "The Future of the Two-State Solution: A Look at the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in 2024." *Middle East Policy*, vol. 28, no. 3, 2024.

new settlement approvals. These settlements effectively fragment the West Bank, making the creation of a contiguous Palestinian state increasingly difficult.

Moreover, the Israeli government's discussions around the potential annexation of parts of the West Bank have further fueled tensions. Although formal annexation has not been fully implemented, the mere possibility has been enough to stoke fears among Palestinians and the international community that the Two-State Solution is on the verge of collapse. The situation is exacerbated by the lack of a strong international consensus on how to address these developments, with some countries advocating for sanctions against Israel, while others push for renewed peace talks.

The Two-State Solution, once seen as the cornerstone of peace efforts in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, faces unprecedented challenges as of August 2024. The internal Palestinian divide between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority, the ongoing violence between Hamas and Israel, and the expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank have all contributed to the erosion of this vision. While the international community continues to advocate for a peaceful resolution, the realities on the ground suggest that the Two-State Solution is becoming increasingly difficult to achieve. Without significant changes in leadership, strategy, and international support, the dream of two states living side by side in peace may remain just that dream.

3.1.2.5. Peace Initiative during the Hamas-Palestine Conflicts

As of August 2024, the ongoing conflict between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority, along with the broader Israeli-Palestinian conflict, continues to evolve with significant developments impacting peace initiatives. Despite numerous efforts to mediate peace, the situation remains fraught with complexity, reflecting both regional and international dimensions.

Ceasefire Agreements and Mediations: several ceasefire agreements have been brokered, primarily through Egyptian and Qatari mediation. These agreements often result in temporary reductions in violence but rarely lead to long-term solutions. The most recent ceasefire, reached in early 2024, followed intense clashes in Gaza and was aimed at de-escalating the immediate violence.⁶³ These agreements usually involve concessions such as easing the blockade on Gaza and providing humanitarian aid but fail to address the root causes of the conflict.

Internal Palestinian Political Dynamics: The political rift between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority (PA) remains a critical barrier to peace. In 2024, the division between Hamas, which governs Gaza, and the PA, which administers the West Bank, persists. Efforts to reconcile the two factions have been ongoing, with sporadic talks facilitated by regional actors like Egypt and Turkey. However, these reconciliation attempts often stall due to deep-seated mistrust and conflicting agendas. The political fragmentation weakens the Palestinian negotiating position and complicates the implementation of any comprehensive peace plan.

International Diplomatic Efforts: International efforts to resolve the conflict continue, with renewed attention from the United Nations and the Quartet on the Middle East., the UN has been active in pushing for a renewed peace process, emphasizing the need for both parties to commit to negotiations. The European Union has also increased its diplomatic engagement, advocating for a return to direct negotiations and the implementation of a two-state solution framework. Despite these efforts, progress remains slow due to the entrenched positions of both sides and the lack of a unified Palestinian front.⁶⁴

Humanitarian Situation: The humanitarian situation in Gaza has reached critical levels, with ongoing blockades exacerbating the dire conditions. The international community has

⁶³ Gaza Ceasefire Agreement: Overview and Analysis." Al Jazeera, 2024.

⁶⁴ United Nations. "UN Report on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Latest Developments and Peace Initiatives." UN News, August 2024.

called for increased humanitarian aid and support for reconstruction efforts. However, the distribution of aid is often impeded by the security situation and restrictions imposed by both Hamas and Israel. The economic and social impact on Gaza's population continues to drive international concern and highlights the urgent need for a sustainable peace agreement.

The relationship between Israel and the Palestinian Authority remains tense. Israel's continued settlement expansion in the West Bank and military operations in Gaza contribute to the conflict's persistence. While some Israeli political leaders advocate for a negotiated settlement, others maintain a hardline stance, complicating efforts to achieve peace. The Israeli government's policies and actions often provoke strong reactions from Palestinian factions, including Hamas, further straining the prospects for dialogue.

The peace initiatives during the Hamas-Palestine conflicts as of August 2024 reflect the ongoing challenges in addressing one of the most enduring conflicts in the Middle East. While temporary ceasefires and international mediation efforts provide short-term relief, a comprehensive and lasting peace remains elusive. The deep-seated political divisions within Palestinian leadership, combined with ongoing Israeli policies and regional tensions, continue to hinder the path to a sustainable resolution. Addressing these complex issues requires a coordinated international effort and a renewed commitment from all parties to pursue a viable and inclusive peace process⁶⁵.

3.2. Humanitarian Assistance and Support

The United Nations (UN) has played a critical role in providing humanitarian assistance and conflict protection in the Palestinian territories, especially in the ongoing and complex conflict in Gaza and the West Bank. The UN's efforts are multifaceted, involving a

⁶⁵ Finkelstein, Norman G. *Method and Madness: The Hidden Story of Israel's Assaults on Gaza*. OR Books, 2015.

range of activities from delivering emergency aid to advocating for ceasefires and addressing the broader political dimensions of the conflict.

One of the primary UN agencies involved in providing aid to Palestinians is the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). UNRWA has been essential in delivering basic services such as education, health care, and food assistance to millions of Palestinian refugees, particularly in Gaza, where the humanitarian situation is dire. As of 2023, around 1.2 million⁶⁶ Palestinians in Gaza rely on food aid from UNRWA, illustrating the depth of the crisis. The agency also provides primary health care to nearly 2 million⁶⁷ refugees across its areas of operation.

In addition to providing humanitarian aid, the UN has been actively involved in efforts to protect civilians and advocate for an end to the conflict. The UN has consistently called for ceasefires during periods of intensified violence, such as the recent conflicts in Gaza. The Secretary-General of the UN and other high-ranking officials have urged the international community to support efforts for an immediate ceasefire and the unconditional release of hostages held by Palestinian armed groups. These calls have been part of a broader push to de-escalate the situation and move towards a political solution that addresses the root causes of the conflict⁶⁸.

The international community, including the United Nations and various humanitarian organizations, has called for an immediate cessation of hostilities and greater efforts to protect civilians. However, efforts to broker peace have so far been unsuccessful, as both sides remain

⁶⁶ “Assistance to the Palestinian People - Report of the Secretary-General,” United Nations Palestine, July 5, 2024. <https://palestine.un.org/en/273319-assistance-palestinian-people-report-secretary-general>

⁶⁷ “Stop Israel’s Violent Campaign Against Us,” United Nation Relief and Weeks Agency for Palestine Refugee, n.d., <https://www.unrwa.org/>

⁶⁸ “‘This Terrible War Must End’, Secretary-General’s Chef De Cabinet Urges Security Council, Amid Growing Calls for Immediate Ceasefire to End Bloodshed in Gaza | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases,” July 17, 2024, <https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15767.doc.htm>.

entrenched in their positions, with Israel continuing its military campaign and Hamas refusing to disarm or negotiate under current conditions.

The conflict's future remains uncertain, with fears that it could spill over into a broader regional conflict involving other countries and militant groups. As of now, the Israel-Hamas Palestine conflict is one of the most significant and tragic humanitarian crises in the world, with no end in sight⁶⁹.

Moreover, the ongoing violence, including attacks by both Israeli forces and Palestinian armed groups, further complicates the situation. The UN has condemned actions by both sides that violate international law, including the indiscriminate rocket fire by Hamas and the excessive use of force by Israeli military operations, which have resulted in high civilian casualties⁷⁰. The United Nations continues to play a vital role in providing humanitarian assistance and advocating for the protection of civilians in the Palestinian territories. However, the complexity of the conflict, coupled with the political and security challenges, makes it difficult for the UN to achieve its broader goals of conflict resolution and peacebuilding. While the humanitarian support provided by agencies like UNRWA is indispensable, the path to lasting peace in the region requires sustained international effort and a commitment to addressing the underlying causes of the conflict.

3.2.1. Role of United Nation Relief and works agency for Palestine refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)

Since 1949, UNRWA has been instrumental in providing aid, protection, and advocacy for Palestinian refugees, primarily in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria.

⁶⁹ “Israeli-Palestinian Conflict | Global Conflict Tracker,” Global Conflict Tracker, n.d., <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/israeli-palestinian-conflict?authuser=2>.

⁷⁰ “Israel and Palestine,” Human Rights Watch, January 11, 2024, <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2024/country-chapters/israel-and-palestine>.

Established after the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict, UNRWA has supported nearly 5.7 million⁷¹ registered Palestinians across its five operational areas.

UNRWA is a Middle Eastern agency that provides essential services in education, healthcare, social services, and emergency relief. It operates one of the largest school systems in the region, providing free basic education to over half a million Palestinian children. The curriculum promotes tolerance, human rights, and peaceful coexistence, reflecting UNRWA's mission of fostering stability and human dignity. UNRWA offers primary healthcare services through 140 centers⁷², providing preventive care, treatment, and maternal and child healthcare to Palestinian refugees. These services are crucial in a region where access to healthcare is often limited due to conflict and economic hardship. UNRWA's health program ensures necessary medical attention, vaccinations, and health education.

UNRWA provides social services, including financial and food assistance for vulnerable refugees, especially those living in extreme poverty or facing disabilities. Emergency relief operations are crucial during conflicts or economic crises, providing basic needs like food and shelter. UNRWA has been a lifeline during conflicts in Gaza and Syria, providing essential aid and support to displaced and vulnerable populations. UNRWA is a crucial agency that advocates for Palestinian refugees' rights and needs globally. It works to keep the issue of Palestinian refugees within the global agenda, aiming for a just and durable solution in line with international law and UN resolutions. This advocacy involves engaging with international stakeholders, governments, and civil society organizations to mobilize support and resources.

⁷¹ M.I, "The Power of the Image: Preserving UNRWA's Past and Present for the Future - Question of Palestine," Question of Palestine, June 13, 2024, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/unrwa-13june2024/>.

⁷² M.I, "The Power of the Image: Preserving UNRWA's Past and Present for the Future - Question of Palestine," Question of Palestine, June 13, 2024, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/unrwa-13june2024/>.

UNRWA faces financial constraints and political pressures, causing challenges in maintaining its services. Despite these, it continues to adapt and respond to the needs of Palestinian refugees, providing critical support amid ongoing conflict and uncertainty. Critics question UNRWA's mandate and long-term role. In 2024⁷³, the UNRWA's role becomes critical due to escalating conflicts in the Gaza Strip and West Bank, worsening the humanitarian situation for Palestinian refugees, with thousands more displaced and in urgent need of assistance.

In the recent war on Hamas by Israel, the West Bank and Gaza have experienced a resurgence of hostilities, leading to increased military operations and infrastructure destruction. UNRWA has been actively responding to this crisis by providing emergency relief, healthcare, and shelter to affected families. The agency's schools and health centers have been particularly vulnerable, with damaged or destroyed facilities complicating their ability to deliver essential services. UNRWA has distributed food, water, and medical supplies to displaced families and offered psychosocial support to traumatized children and adults. In Gaza, where access to essential goods and services is limited, UNRWA has operated emergency shelters for families whose homes have been destroyed.

Moreover, the ongoing conflict has strained UNRWA's resources, causing financial shortfalls and increasing demand for emergency United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).⁷⁴ relief. The destruction of infrastructure further strained its capacity. Despite these challenges, UNRWA continues to advocate for Palestinian refugees' rights and needs, urging the international community for increased support and assistance.

⁷³ M.I., "The Power of the Image: Preserving UNRWA's Past and Present for the Future - Question of Palestine," Question of Palestine, June 13, 2024, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/unrwa-13june2024/>.

⁷⁴ Ibid

3.2.2 Ongoing Humanitarian Efforts

The United Nations has been at the forefront of providing humanitarian assistance to Palestinians, particularly in Gaza, where ongoing conflict and blockade conditions have created a significant need for aid. The UN's involvement is multifaceted, addressing various critical areas, including food security, healthcare, education, and housing. This section explores the UN's ongoing efforts, particularly during the recent conflict, and highlights how these efforts are helping to mitigate the severe humanitarian crisis in the region.

One of the primary areas where the UN has focused its efforts is food security. The blockade on Gaza has led to severe restrictions on the import of food and other essential goods, resulting in widespread food insecurity. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), nearly 70 percent of Gaza's population is food insecure⁷⁵. In response, the UN, through its World Food Programme (WFP), has implemented several initiatives to ensure that the most vulnerable populations have access to food. The WFP provides food vouchers and cash-based transfers that allow families to purchase food locally, which not only addresses immediate hunger but also supports the local economy⁷⁶. In 2023 alone, the WFP assisted over 1 million people in Gaza with food assistance⁷⁷. The UN also supports local agricultural initiatives to enhance food production within Gaza. These efforts are aimed at reducing dependence on imported food and creating more sustainable food systems. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN has been working with local farmers to improve agricultural practices and increase crop yields⁷⁸. This support includes providing seeds,

⁷⁵ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). "Gaza: Food Insecurity Report." 2023.

⁷⁶ World Food Programme (WFP). "WFP in Gaza: Food Assistance Overview." WFP, 2023.

⁷⁷ United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). "Economic Impact of the Gaza Blockade." 2023.

⁷⁸ World Food Programme (WFP). "Strengthening Local Food Systems in Gaza." WFP, 2023.

tools, and training to farmers, as well as rehabilitating agricultural land damaged by the conflict⁷⁹.

Healthcare in Gaza has been severely compromised by the ongoing conflict and blockade. The destruction of medical facilities, shortages of essential medicines, and the overwhelming number of casualties during periods of intensified conflict have placed immense strain on the healthcare system. The World Health Organization (WHO), in collaboration with other UN agencies, has been instrumental in providing emergency medical supplies and supporting the health infrastructure in Gaza⁸⁰. During the recent conflict, the UN coordinated the delivery of critical medical supplies, including trauma kits, surgical instruments, and medicines, to hospitals and clinics in Gaza⁸¹. The WHO also supported the deployment of mobile health clinics to reach populations in remote areas who were cut off from regular healthcare services⁸². These mobile clinics provided essential health services, including maternal and child healthcare, vaccinations, and mental health support. Mental health is a particularly pressing issue in Gaza, where prolonged exposure to conflict has led to high levels of psychological distress among the population. The WHO has been leading efforts to address mental health needs by training healthcare workers in psychological first aid and providing psychosocial support to those affected by the conflict. In response to these challenges, the UN has provided temporary housing solutions, including prefabricated housing units and financial assistance for families to rent accommodation⁸³. The UN has also advocated for the lifting of restrictions on the import of construction materials to facilitate the reconstruction of homes and

⁷⁹ Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). "Supporting Gaza's Farmers: A Path to Sustainable Agriculture." FAO, 2023.

⁸⁰ World Health Organization (WHO). "Health Conditions in Gaza: A Report on the Humanitarian Impact of the Conflict." 2023.

⁸¹ United Nations. "UN Supplies Critical Medical Aid to Gaza Hospitals." UN News, 2023.

⁸² United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). "Mobile Health Clinics in Conflict Zones." OCHA, 2023.

⁸³ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). "Temporary Housing Solutions for Gaza's Displaced Families." UNDP, 2023.

critical infrastructure⁸⁴. The UN's involvement in housing goes beyond providing immediate shelter. It also includes efforts to ensure that housing solutions are sustainable and resilient to future conflicts. For example, the UN Development Programme has been working on projects to build and repair homes using locally sourced materials and sustainable construction practices⁸⁵. These initiatives aim to create housing that is not only safe and adequate but also capable of withstanding the harsh conditions of the conflict environment. Access to clean water and proper sanitation is another critical issue in Gaza, where infrastructure has been heavily damaged by the conflict. The UN, through agencies such as UNICEF and OCHA, has been working to restore and maintain water and sanitation services in Gaza⁸⁶. This includes repairing damaged water and sewage systems, providing water tanks and purification tablets, and ensuring that displaced populations have access to clean water and sanitation facilities⁸⁷. Water scarcity in Gaza is exacerbated by the blockade, which restricts the import of necessary equipment and materials to maintain and repair water infrastructure. The UN has been advocating for the easing of these restrictions to ensure that the population has access to safe drinking water⁸⁸. In addition, UNICEF has been involved in initiatives to improve water management and reduce water wastage in Gaza, including the rehabilitation of wells and the construction of water desalination plants⁸⁹. The protection of vulnerable populations, particularly women and children, is a key priority for the UN in Gaza. The ongoing conflict has increased the risk of violence, exploitation, and abuse, particularly for those living in

⁸⁴ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). "Advocacy for the Lifting of Construction Material Restrictions in Gaza." UNDP, 2023.

⁸⁵ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). "Sustainable Housing Initiatives in Gaza." UNDP, 2023.

⁸⁶ UNICEF. "Restoring Water and Sanitation Services in Conflict-Affected Areas." UNICEF, 2023.

⁸⁷ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). "Ensuring Access to Clean Water in Gaza." OCHA, 2023.

⁸⁸ United Nations. "Water Scarcity and Blockade-Related Challenges in Gaza." UN News, 2023.

⁸⁹ UNICEF. "Improving Water Management and Reducing Waste in Gaza." UNICEF, 2023.

overcrowded shelters or displacement camps⁹⁰. The UN Population Fund and other UN agencies have been working to provide protection and support services to those at risk⁹¹. The UN has also implemented programs to raise awareness of gender-based violence and provide training to local organizations on how to identify and support survivors of violence⁹². Children, who are particularly vulnerable to the effects of conflict, are a major focus of the UN's protection efforts. In addition to providing basic needs such as food, water, and shelter, the UN has been working to ensure that children have access to education and psychosocial support⁹³. UNICEF has been involved in programs aimed at protecting children from recruitment by armed groups and ensuring that they have safe spaces to play and learn⁹⁴. The UN's efforts in Gaza are not without challenges. The ongoing conflict and the blockade create a complex and constantly shifting environment that makes it difficult to plan and implement long-term solutions⁹⁵. Access to certain areas is often restricted, and the security situation can change rapidly, putting both the people in need and the aid workers at risk⁹⁶. Despite these obstacles, the UN remains committed to providing humanitarian assistance to the people of Gaza. However, the success of these efforts depends heavily on the support of the international community. Adequate funding and political backing are essential to ensure that the UN can continue its work and address the needs of those affected by the conflict⁹⁷. The situation in Gaza serves as a stark reminder of the importance of global solidarity in addressing

⁹⁰ United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). "Protecting Vulnerable Populations in Conflict Zones." UNFPA, 2023.

⁹¹ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). "Support Services for Women and Children in Gaza." 2023.

⁹² United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). "Programs to Combat Gender-Based Violence in Gaza." UNFPA, 2023.

⁹³ UNICEF. "Protecting Children from Conflict-Related Risks in Gaza." UNICEF, 2023.

⁹⁴ UNICEF. "Creating Safe Spaces for Children in Gaza." UNICEF, 2023.

⁹⁵ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). "Challenges in Delivering Aid in Gaza." 2023.

⁹⁶ United Nations. "Security Risks for Aid Workers in Conflict Zones." UN News, 2023.

⁹⁷ United Nations. "The Role of International Community in Supporting Gaza." UN News, 2023.

humanitarian crises. The UN continues to call on member states and other stakeholders to increase their support for humanitarian efforts in Gaza, emphasizing that these efforts are not just about providing immediate relief but also about laying the foundation for a more peaceful and stable future for the region⁹⁸.

In conclusion, the UN's role in Gaza is vital in addressing the ongoing humanitarian crisis. Through coordinated efforts in food security, healthcare, education, housing, and protection, the UN is making a significant impact on the lives of many Palestinians. However, the situation remains precarious, and continued support from the international community is essential to ensure that the UN can continue its work and help build a better future for the people of Gaza⁹⁹.

⁹⁸ United Nations. "Global Solidarity and Humanitarian Efforts in Gaza." UN News, 2023.

⁹⁹ United Nations. "The UN's Continued Commitment to Gaza." UN News, 2023.

CHAPTER IV: LIMITATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN ADDRESSING THE CONFLICT

The United Nations (UN) plays a critical role in international peace and security, but it faces several limitations in effectively addressing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. These limitations are deeply rooted in the political and structural makeup of the UN, as well as operational challenges that hinder the organization's ability to enforce resolutions and maintain peace.

As of early September 2024, the United Nations continues to grapple with the complexities of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict¹⁰⁰, facing significant challenges in achieving lasting peace and stability in the region. Despite ongoing efforts, several limitations hinder the UN's effectiveness in addressing the conflict.

4.1. Political and Structural Constraints

The UN is often hampered by its own political and structural constraints, which affect its ability to mediate in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

4.1.1. Security Council Veto Power

One of the most significant political constraints is the veto power held by the five permanent members of the UN Security Council China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States¹⁰¹. The veto power in the UN Security Council has long been a contentious issue, especially regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Since 1970, the United States has used its veto power over 40 times to block resolutions critical of Israel. This persistent

¹⁰⁰ "Secretary-General Underscores Two-State Solution Only Way to End Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, One-State Formula Inconceivable, in Day-Long Debate | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases," January 23, 2024, <https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15569.doc.htm>.

¹⁰¹ "Secretary-General Underscores Two-State Solution Only Way to End Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, One-State Formula Inconceivable, in Day-Long Debate | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases," January 23, 2024, <https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15569.doc.htm>.

use of the veto prevents the Security Council from taking decisive actions that could pressure Israel to comply with international law and UN resolutions. In the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the United States has frequently exercised its veto power to block resolutions that are critical of Israel or that propose actions perceived as unfavorable to Israeli interests. This use of the veto has significantly limited the Security Council's ability to take meaningful action to address the conflict or hold parties accountable for violations of international law. As a result, the Security Council often remains paralyzed on this issue, unable to pass resolutions that could pressure parties towards a peaceful resolution.

4.1.2. Divergent Interests of Member States

The conflicting interests of UN member states also contribute to the organization's difficulty in addressing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The UN is composed of 193 member states¹⁰², each with its own national interests, alliances, and foreign policy objectives. When it comes to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, these divergent interests often manifest in differing approaches to how the conflict should be resolved. For example, Arab and Muslim-majority countries, along with some non-aligned nations, strongly support Palestinian statehood and criticize Israeli policies, while others, particularly Western states allied with Israel, may focus more on Israel's security concerns and oppose measures perceived as one-sided. The 2024 debates in the UN reflect these divisions, as countries continue to prioritize their national interests over collective action, further hampering the UN's ability to mediate effectively.

4.2. Limited Enforcement Capabilities

The UN's effectiveness in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is further constrained by its limited enforcement capabilities.

¹⁰² "Secretary-General Underscores Two-State Solution Only Way to End Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, One-State Formula Inconceivable, in Day-Long Debate | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases," January 23, 2024, <https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15569.doc.htm>.

4.2.1. Non-binding Nature of Resolutions

Many of the resolutions passed by the UN General Assembly and even some by the Security Council are non-binding. This means they do not have the force of law and member states are not legally obligated to comply with them. In the case of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, non-binding resolutions often call for actions such as a halt to settlement construction, the return of refugees, or the establishment of a Palestinian state¹⁰³. However, because these resolutions are non-binding, Israel and other states involved in the conflict may choose to ignore them without facing direct legal consequences. This significantly weakens the UN's ability to influence the behavior of the parties involved and to bring about a resolution to the conflict. This problem was evident in 2024 when several resolutions addressing the humanitarian crisis in Gaza¹⁰⁴ and the expansion of Israeli settlements were passed but had little effect on the ground.

4.2.2. Dependence on Voluntary Cooperation

The UN's enforcement capabilities are severely limited by its reliance on the voluntary cooperation of member states¹⁰⁵. The UN relies heavily on the voluntary cooperation of member states, particularly in peacekeeping operations. This reliance can lead to inefficiencies and a lack of resources, undermining the effectiveness of its missions. Without the willingness of states to comply with UN directives, the organization's resolutions often remain unimplemented¹⁰⁶. In the Israeli-Palestinian context, this has been a major obstacle. Both Israel and the Palestinian authorities, along with their respective allies, have at times resisted UN

¹⁰³ "Ongoing Hostilities in Gaza Fuelling Regional Instability, Special Coordinator Warns Security Council, Underling Need for Viable Political Horizon | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases," June 25, 2024, <https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15743.doc.htm>.

¹⁰⁴ "End The War and Recognize Palestine, Security Council Urged," UN News, January 25, 2024, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/01/1145862>.

¹⁰⁵ "End The War and Recognize Palestine, Security Council Urged," UN News, January 25, 2024, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/01/1145862>.

¹⁰⁶ "End The War and Recognize Palestine, Security Council Urged," UN News, January 25, 2024, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/01/1145862>.

interventions, particularly when these interventions are perceived as biased or infringing on their sovereignty. This lack of cooperation not only undermines the effectiveness of UN resolutions but also diminishes the organization's credibility as a neutral mediator.

4.3. Challenges in Peacekeeping Operations

UN peacekeeping missions, which are intended to help maintain peace and security in conflict zones, face challenges in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

4.3.1. Operational and Resource Limitations

UN peacekeeping missions often face significant operational challenges, including inadequate funding, logistical difficulties, and insufficient personnel. These limitations have been particularly evident in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, where the UN has struggled to deploy effective peacekeeping operations. For example, the UN's ability to monitor ceasefires and protect civilians in conflict zones like Gaza is constrained by these resource shortages¹⁰⁷. The complex security environment in the region, combined with the need for long-term engagement, places a heavy burden on the UN's resources. As a result, the organization's ability to maintain peace, protect civilians, and monitor ceasefire agreements is often compromised, limiting the overall effectiveness of its peacekeeping efforts. These limitations hinder their ability to maintain peace and security effectively in volatile regions like the Middle East. These challenges become worst in this crisis, as the need for more robust peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance grows amid escalating violence and displacement¹⁰⁸.

4.3.2. Maintaining Political Neutrality

The UN's commitment to political neutrality can sometimes limit its effectiveness in conflict zones. However, in the Israeli-Palestinian context, maintaining neutrality while

¹⁰⁷ "End The War and Recognize Palestine, Security Council Urged," UN News, January 25, 2024, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/01/1145862>.

¹⁰⁸ "End The War and Recognize Palestine, Security Council Urged," UN News, January 25, 2024, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/01/1145862>.

addressing the root causes of the conflict is particularly challenging¹⁰⁹, given the highly politicized nature of the situation. The polarized nature of the conflict, with deep-rooted historical grievances and strong nationalistic sentiments on both sides, makes it difficult for the UN to act without being perceived as biased by one party or the other. Accusations of bias can undermine the credibility and legitimacy of UN operations, making it harder to gain the trust and cooperation of the parties involved. This challenge is further complicated by the influence of powerful member states¹¹⁰, whose interests may align with one side of the conflict, both of Israel and Palestinian groups have accused the UN of bias at various points, complicating the organization's efforts to mediate and provide humanitarian assistance.

The situation has remained tense recently, with increased hostilities and a deepening humanitarian crisis in Gaza. The UN has repeatedly called for a ceasefire and renewed efforts toward a two-state solution¹¹¹ as the only viable path to peace. However, ongoing violence, including illegal settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the humanitarian disaster in Gaza, underscores the limitations of the UN's current approach. Despite passing multiple resolutions in 2024¹¹², including those addressing the need for humanitarian aid and the protection of civilians, the UN continues to struggle with enforcement and securing compliance from the involved parties. Calls for more decisive action and accountability measures against Israel have been raised by various UN members, yet achieving consensus remains difficult due to the structural and political constraints within the organization.

¹⁰⁹ "Ongoing Hostilities in Gaza Fuelling Regional Instability, Special Coordinator Warns Security Council, Underling Need for Viable Political Horizon | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases," June 25, 2024, <https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15743.doc.htm>.

¹¹⁰ "Ongoing Hostilities in Gaza Fuelling Regional Instability, Special Coordinator Warns Security Council, Underling Need for Viable Political Horizon | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases," June 25, 2024, <https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15743.doc.htm>.

¹¹¹ "Secretary-General Underscores Two-State Solution Only Way to End Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, One-State Formula Inconceivable, in Day-Long Debate | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases," January 23, 2024, <https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15569.doc.htm>.

¹¹² "End The War and Recognize Palestine, Security Council Urged," UN News, January 25, 2024, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/01/1145862>.

4.3.2.1 The Impact of Strong Alliances on the Hamas-Israel Conflict

The alliances surrounding the Hamas-Israel conflict significantly influence the dynamics and outcomes of the ongoing war. The conflict has not only escalated tensions between Israel and Hamas but has also drawn in regional powers and global actors, each aligned with different sides.

Iran's Strategic Support to Hamas and Hezbollah

Iran's alliance with Hamas and Hezbollah has empowered these groups militarily and politically. Iran supplies advanced weaponry, training, and financial resources, which enhance Hamas's capability to sustain prolonged conflicts with Israel. For instance, Hezbollah's arsenal has grown significantly due to Iranian support, with over 130,000 rockets now threatening Israel from Lebanon¹¹³. This military backing emboldens Hamas to take aggressive actions, knowing it has the material and strategic support from a powerful regional ally. Iran's support also provides Hamas with strategic depth. The backing of Hezbollah and the Houthis allows Hamas to threaten Israel with the possibility of a multi-front war. This forces Israel to divert its military resources and complicates its defense strategies, potentially overwhelming the Israel Defense Forces (IDF)¹¹⁴.

Egypt and Jordan

The humanitarian crisis in Gaza, exacerbated by Israeli military actions, has put significant pressure on Egypt and Jordan, both of which fear mass displacement of Palestinians into their territories¹¹⁵. This has strained their relations with Israel, challenging their historical role as mediators and potentially destabilizing their internal security. The tension between Israel

¹¹³ Bruce Riedel, "Hezbollah and the Axis of Resistance in 2024," *Brookings*, January 16, 2024, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/hezbollah-and-the-axis-of-resistance-in-2024/>.

¹¹⁴ Bruce Riedel, "Hezbollah and the Axis of Resistance in 2024," *Brookings*, January 16, 2024, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/hezbollah-and-the-axis-of-resistance-in-2024/>.

¹¹⁵ "How The Israel-Hamas War Impacts Regional Relations," United States Institute of Peace, n.d., <https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/10/how-israel-hamas-war-impacts-regional-relations>.

and these neighboring countries also reflects the broader Arab world's reaction, where even countries that were moving towards normalization with Israel, like Saudi Arabia, have had to reconsider their positions due to public and political pressure¹¹⁶.

United States and Saudi Arabia

The United States remains Israel's most significant ally, providing extensive military aid and diplomatic backing. However, the Biden Administration has faced challenges in balancing its support for Israel with growing international concerns over the humanitarian impact of the conflict¹¹⁷. This includes criticisms over Israel's military strategies and their implications for Palestinian civilians, which have caused some friction in the US-Israel relationship. The US's handling of this conflict is critical not just for its Middle Eastern policy but also for its global standing. Balancing support for Israel while advocating for humanitarian concerns reflects the broader challenges the US faces in maintaining its alliances while promoting its values on the international stage¹¹⁸. Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia, which was moving towards normalizing relations with Israel, has put these talks on hold due to the conflict. The war underscores the persistent centrality of the Palestinian issue in regional politics, despite previous efforts to sideline it in favor of broader strategic alliances¹¹⁹. These alliances and the external pressures they create are shaping the course of the conflict, making any resolution more complex and increasing the risk of a broader regional war.

In Televised appearance, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declared that Israel was at War and threatened to turn all the places where Hamas is organized and hiding into cities of

¹¹⁶ "How The Israel-Hamas War Impacts Regional Relations," United States Institute of Peace, n.d., <https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/10/how-israel-hamas-war-impacts-regional-relations>.

¹¹⁷ "Report to Congress on Israel and Hamas Conflict," USNI News, June 5, 2024, accessed August 18, 2024, <https://news.usni.org/2024/06/05/report-to-congress-on-israel-and-hamas-conflict>.

¹¹⁸ "Report to Congress on Israel and Hamas Conflict," USNI News, June 5, 2024, accessed August 18, 2024, <https://news.usni.org/2024/06/05/report-to-congress-on-israel-and-hamas-conflict>.

¹¹⁹ "How The Israel-Hamas War Impacts Regional Relations," United States Institute of Peace, n.d., <https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/10/how-israel-hamas-war-impacts-regional-relations>.

ruins. The fallout from the Israel-Hamas war is being felt throughout the Middle East and the world. The Weatherhead Centre for International Affairs hosted a discussion on "The War in Israel/Palestine: Geopolitical Dimensions"¹²⁰. The discussion covered several of the reasons and implications of the conflict, including how it affects regional alliances and the global economy. The tension between Israel and these neighboring countries also reflects the broader Arab world's reaction, where even countries that were moving towards normalization with Israel, like Saudi Arabia, have had to reconsider their positions due to public and political pressure¹²¹.

The Study has shown different aspect of the war, it has been going on since October 7, when terrorists from Hamas attacked Israel, killing 1,200 people and kidnapping 253¹²². Since then, the Israeli offensive in Gaza has killed an estimated 28,000 Palestinians.

F. Gregory Gause, professor of international affairs and John H. Lindsey '44 Chair of the Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University said,

*"The enormous violence with which [the conflict] began and the enormous media attention gives the sense that something big is changing,"*¹²³.

Moreover, despite "the enormous human suffering and loss," Gause believes the war "will end up changing very little" of the current underlying geopolitics of the region. "The key geopolitical fact that defined the region before Oct. 7 is the role of Iranian actors" in countries that are either weakened or at war, such as Yemen, he pointed out¹²⁴. Noting the unchanged

¹²⁰ Gazetteterrymurphy and Gazetteterrymurphy, "Looking at Causes, Measuring Effects of Israel-Hamas War," Harvard Gazette, February 28, 2024, <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2024/02/looking-at-causes-measuring-effects-of-israel-hamas-war/>.

¹²¹ Ibid

¹²² Gazetteterrymurphy and Gazetteterrymurphy, "Looking at Causes, Measuring Effects of Israel-Hamas War," Harvard Gazette, February 28, 2024, <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2024/02/looking-at-causes-measuring-effects-of-israel-hamas-war/>.

¹²³ "MSN," n.d., <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/israel-hamas-war-netanyahu-s-legacy-hangs-in-the-balance/ar-AA1p7dY>.

¹²⁴ "MSN," n.d., <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/israel-hamas-war-netanyahu-s-legacy-hangs-in-the-balance/ar-AA1p7dY>.

status quo around the Iranian nuclear program, he put forward the theory that, if anything, Iran's role has been heightened. Experts on the Middle East claim that Iran has a long history of supplying and training several proxy militias in the region, including those in Gaza and the West Bank.

Political analyst and public opinion specialist Dahlia Scheindlin of Tel Aviv University stated that the conflict has impacted Israel's relations with the US and other countries in the area. She brought up Israel's accords with Jordan and Egypt, its neighbours.

"These are obviously not happy relationships, which is why they are in danger." Scheindlin stated.¹²⁵

She did point out that there might be a larger change in American and Israeli perspectives on the conflict. Scheindlin stated.

The biggest issues now are Netanyahu has been facing conflict with the Israeli hostages's families in 2024.¹²⁶ Since Hamas has been holding his son Matan captive in Gaza for the last ten months, Einav Zangauker has been one of the most vocal opponents of the Israeli prime minister in recent times.

*"Do you really think both the public and the hostages' families are stupid?" In conversations with Netanyahu, senior Israeli negotiators apparently expressed a same view, as per security sources cited by TV station N12. "Netanyahu "doesn't want a deal at this time. "He no longer cares about the captives." The Israeli public's stance on reaching a settlement with Hamas and freeing the captives is radically different from this."*¹²⁷

¹²⁵ "MSN," n.d., <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/israel-hamas-war-netanyahu-s-legacy-hangs-in-the-balance/ar-AA1p7dY>.

¹²⁶ "MSN," n.d., <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/israel-hamas-war-netanyahu-s-legacy-hangs-in-the-balance/ar-AA1p7dY>.

¹²⁷ Ibid

According to a July Israel Democracy Institute survey, 56% of Israelis think that in exchange for the release of the Israeli prisoners, Israel should consent to ending the conflict and withdrawing its forces completely from the Gaza Strip¹²⁸. According to 29.5% of respondents, they would only consent to a brief end to hostilities in exchange for hostages¹²⁹.

Impact on Regional Stability

The alliances supporting both Hamas and Israel have heightened the risk of a broader regional conflict. The involvement of multiple state and non-state actors, backed by powerful regional allies like Iran, makes the conflict not just a bilateral issue but a potential flashpoint for regional war¹³⁰. This complicates any peace efforts and increases the stakes for all involved parties. Despite efforts by regional powers like Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia to mediate and stabilize the situation, the deepening alliances and conflicting interests have made it difficult to reach a consensus¹³¹. This has implications for future diplomacy in the region, as traditional peacemakers find their roles increasingly challenged

4.3.3 Limited International Condemnation of Israeli Action (Superpower are friend with Israel)

The international response to Israel's actions during the Hamas-Israel conflict has been notably muted, largely due to the strong alliances Israel maintains with superpowers, particularly the United States. This relationship has significantly influenced the degree and nature of international condemnation that Israel faces.

¹²⁸ "Supra under note 152"

¹²⁹ "Supra under note 152"

¹³⁰ Bruce Riedel, "Hezbollah and the Axis of Resistance in 2024," *Brookings*, January 16, 2024, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/hezbollah-and-the-axis-of-resistance-in-2024/>.

¹³¹ "How The Israel-Hamas War Impacts Regional Relations," United States Institute of Peace, n.d., <https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/10/how-israel-hamas-war-impacts-regional-relations>.

US-Israel Alliance and Diplomatic Shielding

In international forums such as the United Nations, the US has consistently used its veto power to block resolutions that are critical of Israel's military actions in Gaza. This pattern continued in 2024, where despite widespread concern over civilian casualties and humanitarian issues in Gaza, the US maintained its position, arguing that Israel's actions were in self-defense against Hamas's aggression¹³².

The Biden administration deviates from the international community in that, although opposing a significant attack in Rafah, it maintains that Israel, its close friend, has not broken any red lines in its current actions.¹³³

WASHINGTON (AP) - Israel's onslaught in the southern Gaza city of Rafah has been ordered to stop by a U.N. court, which has further strained relations between the two countries over a military operation that is being condemned worldwide but that American officials characterize as targeted and restricted for the time being.

A U.N. court has ruled that Israel must cease its assault of the southern Gaza city of Rafah. This decision has further soured relations between the two nations over an international outcry against the military operation, which American officials describe as targeted and limited for the time being¹³⁴. Israel is required to stop attacking the city of Rafah in southern Gaza, according to a ruling by a U.N. court. Due to a global uproar over the military operation which

¹³² "Report to Congress on Israel and Hamas Conflict," USNI News, June 5, 2024, accessed August 18, 2024, <https://news.usni.org/2024/06/05/report-to-congress-on-israel-and-hamas-conflict>.

¹³³ "UN Court Order Demanding That Israel Halt Its Gaza Offensive Further Isolates the US Position," U.S. News, May 25, 2024, accessed August 1, 2024, <https://www.usnews.com/news/politics/articles/2024-05-25/un-court-order-demanding-israel-to-halt-gaza-offensive-further-isolates-us-position>.

¹³⁴ "UN Court Order Demanding That Israel Halt Its Gaza Offensive Further Isolates the US Position," U.S. News, May 25, 2024, accessed August 1, 2024, <https://www.usnews.com/news/politics/articles/2024-05-25/un-court-order-demanding-israel-to-halt-gaza-offensive-further-isolates-us-position>.

American officials characterize as targeted and restricted for the time being this move has further strained ties between the two countries¹³⁵.

Speaking undercover to discuss the administration's internal assessment of the situation, a State Department official stated that the operation in Gaza had not yet moved into the core heart of Rafah that gets us to the densest of dense areas. The White House revealed that it was stopping the shipping of some 3,500 bombs, including large explosives weighing 2,000 pounds, which the Biden administration claimed were killing civilians¹³⁶.

"If they go into Rafah, I'm not supplying the weapons that have been used historically to deal with Rafah," President Joe Biden stated in a CNN interview¹³⁷.

To exert pressure on Israel, U.S. officials had indicated that a significant operation would be a red line that would be harmful to the ongoing negotiations to free Israeli captives held by Hamas and force Biden to reduce the number of weapons he would give Israel¹³⁸.

According to the U.S. Agency for International Development, to stop the famine that the leaders of USAID and the U.N. World Food Program refer to as having begun in the north and to prevent it from spreading to the south, Gaza needs a continuous supply of food and other help, which amounts to 600 trucks every day.

Hundreds of trucks carrying food, water, and other supplies for starving Palestinians were buy in by Israel through Kerem Shalom, the other primary border crossing, but according to humanitarian organizations and the United Nations, Israeli military activities pose a risk to these supplies¹³⁹. Gaza has received a little quantity of relief by sea, even though a U.S. pier

¹³⁵ "UN Court Order Demanding That Israel Halt Its Gaza Offensive Further Isolates the US Position," U.S.News, May 25, 2024, accessed August 1, 2024, <https://www.usnews.com/news/politics/articles/2024-05-25/un-court-order-demanding-israel-to-halt-gaza-offensive-further-isolates-us-position>.

¹³⁶ "UN Court Order Demanding That Israel Halt Its Gaza Offensive Further Isolates the US Position," U.S.News, May 25, 2024, accessed August 1, 2024, <https://www.usnews.com/news/politics/articles/2024-05-25/un-court-order-demanding-israel-to-halt-gaza-offensive-further-isolates-us-position>.

¹³⁷ Ibid

¹³⁸ "Supra under note 163"

¹³⁹ "Supra under note 163"

has begun to bring in some supplies, but not nearly enough since the Israeli attack began. Prominent global humanitarian organizations applauded the ICJ decision for the anticipated increase in pressure¹⁴⁰. The court ruling, which not only calls for an end to the offensive but also increases humanitarian aid to the area and grants war crimes investigators access to Gaza, is practically unenforceable.

Israel did not appear to be planning to reverse course following Friday's decision. Following an attack on Israel on October 7th that claimed the lives of over 1,200 people—roughly 25% of whom were soldiers and captured another 250, the Gaza War broke out¹⁴¹. The Health Ministry reports that at least 35,000 Palestinians have died in Gaza; it does not differentiate between militants and civilians¹⁴².

4.3.4 Limited Action from Other Global Powers

On the other hand, Other global powers, including the European Union and the United Kingdom, have expressed concern over the situation but have largely refrained from taking concrete actions against Israel. This restraint is partly due to their own strategic interests in maintaining strong relations with Israel, a key ally in the Middle East. Additionally, these powers often align with the US in broader geopolitical strategies, further limiting their willingness to challenge Israeli actions directly¹⁴³. The limited international condemnation, heavily influenced by Israel's alliances with superpowers, has significant implications for global perceptions of the conflict. Many countries in the Global South, as well as non-governmental organizations, view this lack of accountability as a double standard in international relations. They argue that Israel is shielded from consequences due to its powerful allies, undermining

¹⁴⁰ “Supra under note 163”

¹⁴¹ “Supra under note 163”

¹⁴² “Supra under note 163”

¹⁴³ “Report to Congress on Israel and Hamas Conflict,” USNI News, June 5, 2024, accessed August 18, 2024, <https://news.usni.org/2024/06/05/report-to-congress-on-israel-and-hamas-conflict>.

the credibility of international law and the UN's role in maintaining global peace and security¹⁴⁴. This dynamic contributes to the broader diplomatic deadlock, where meaningful international pressure on Israel is lacking, thereby reducing the likelihood of a negotiated settlement to the conflict. The strong superpower alliances thus play a dual role: while they empower Israel to act decisively in its security interests, they also constrain the international community's ability to address the humanitarian and legal concerns arising from the conflict¹⁴⁵.

4.3.5 Constraints on Humanitarian Assistance to Palestinians

The delivery of humanitarian assistance to Palestinians, particularly in Gaza, has been severely constrained due to the ongoing conflict between Hamas and Israel. These constraints are influenced by several factors, including military blockades, insecurity for humanitarian workers and civilian, the destruction of infrastructure, and political considerations shaped by Israel's alliances with key global powers. Severe access restrictions coupled with persistent insecurity have made the environment in which humanitarian actors operate non-permissive and unstable. All sides in the conflict must allow humanitarian organizations to safely handle the previously unheard-of levels of need in Gaza.

Military Blockades and Security Concerns

One of the primary constraints on humanitarian aid is the Israeli blockade of Gaza, which has been in place for years but intensified during the 2024 conflict¹⁴⁶. The blockade restricts the movement of goods and people into and out of Gaza, severely limiting the availability of essential supplies such as food, medicine, and fuel. Israel justifies these

¹⁴⁴ "IISS Experts Assess the Hamas-Israel War and Its International Implications," IISS, October 10, 2023, accessed August 18, 2024, <https://www.iiss.org/online-analysis/online-analysis/2023/10/iiss-experts-assess-the-hamas-israel-war-and-its-international-implications>.

¹⁴⁵ "IISS Experts Assess the Hamas-Israel War and Its International Implications," IISS, October 10, 2023, accessed August 18, 2024, <https://www.iiss.org/online-analysis/online-analysis/2023/10/iiss-experts-assess-the-hamas-israel-war-and-its-international-implications>.

¹⁴⁶ "Report to Congress on Israel and Hamas Conflict," USNI News, June 5, 2024, accessed August 18, 2024, <https://news.usni.org/2024/06/05/report-to-congress-on-israel-and-hamas-conflict>.

restrictions on security grounds, arguing that Hamas could divert humanitarian goods for military purposes, such as constructing tunnels or manufacturing weapon¹⁴⁷. The blockade has made it exceedingly difficult for international organizations to deliver aid. Despite efforts by groups like the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and the International Red Cross, the scope of their operations has been significantly curtailed¹⁴⁸. Access to affected areas is often delayed or denied, and the distribution of aid is frequently disrupted by ongoing hostilities. For instance, in 2024, multiple aid convoys were unable to reach Gaza due to intensified airstrikes and ground operations by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), which further exacerbated the humanitarian crisis¹⁴⁹.

In April, Israeli authorities denied humanitarian organizations access to areas where UN assessments indicated coordination with Israeli forces was necessary, including for life-saving activities¹⁵⁰. They denied 10% of requested missions in Gaza, including food assistance, emergency medical and health support, medical evacuations, and critical water, sanitation, and hygiene assistance¹⁵¹. Moreover, a humanitarian organization faced significant delays imposed by the Israeli army, totaling over six hours and 30 minutes during a coordinated mission to Al Awda and Kamal Adwan hospitals in northern Gaza¹⁵². The mission aimed to deliver essential medical supplies and fuel to support 10,000 people for two weeks and refer injured patients from northern Gaza to southern Gaza¹⁵³. The organizations attempted the mission again four days later, but faced seven hours of delays again, disrupting the delivery of essential supplies

¹⁴⁷ Ibid

¹⁴⁸ Supra under note 157

¹⁴⁹ Supra under note 157

¹⁵⁰ “Humanitarian Access Snapshot - Gaza Strip | 1-30 April 2024 - Occupied Palestinian Territory.”

¹⁵¹ Ibid

¹⁵² Supra under note 161

¹⁵³ Supra under note 161

and fuel. This has exacerbated the humanitarian needs of affected people, particularly emergency medical and health missions.

Israeli authorities have restricted the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) from operating convoys north of the Israeli forces checkpoint in northern Gaza. UNRWA was one of three agencies providing food assistance in the region, where over 300,000 people are projected to face Famine levels¹⁵⁴. Humanitarian movements crossing from southern to northern Gaza have faced significant delays, with 41 missions experiencing over two hours of delays¹⁵⁵. The Israeli authorities have also restricted humanitarian movements due to strict checkpoint operating hours and timeframes, often forcing organizations to abandon their mission.

Insecurity for humanitarian workers and civilian

Access and activities are compromised by the intense hostilities in Gaza, which include aerial bombardment and military actions that seriously endanger civilians and humanitarian workers. To stop harm or damage, a Humanitarian Notification System (HNS) is in place to notify parties of the location of humanitarian premises and movements¹⁵⁶. While the HNS supports compliance with international humanitarian law responsibilities by helping to educate parties about humanitarian presence, it does not change the obligations itself. Humanitarian partners voluntarily utilize HNS.

On 1 April, seven aid workers employed by World Central Kitchen were killed in targeted airstrikes by the Israeli army¹⁵⁷. Between October 2023 and April 2024, at least 254 aid workers were killed in Gaza, including 185 UN staff members and 27 Palestine Red

¹⁵⁴Supra under note 161

¹⁵⁵ Supra under note 161

¹⁵⁶ Supra under note 161

¹⁵⁷ Supra under note 161

Crescent Society staff and volunteers¹⁵⁸. Persistent hostilities, air strikes, and a breakdown of law and order continue to pose significant security threats to humanitarian personnel and assets, prompting multiple humanitarian organizations to temporarily pause, suspend, or delay operations.

Destruction of Infrastructure

The conflict has led to widespread destruction of infrastructure in Gaza, further complicating the delivery of humanitarian assistance. Israeli airstrikes have targeted roads, bridges, and key facilities such as hospitals and water treatment plants, under the justification of targeting Hamas militants or military infrastructure. This destruction not only hampers immediate aid delivery but also creates long-term challenges in rebuilding and maintaining essential services. The critical infrastructure in Gaza was so heavily damaged that even when aid could be delivered, there were significant challenges in distributing it effectively to the population in need¹⁵⁹. The UN Mine Action Service estimates that 37.5 million metric tons of conflict-generated debris are present, with 3.2 million MT attributed to damaged roads¹⁶⁰. The debris contains unexploded ordnance (UXO), which might cause at least 10% of the fired ammunition to fail, and clearing all explosive risks from Gaza might take up to 14 years¹⁶¹. The streets and public spaces of Khan Younis are highly contaminated with UXO, including unexploded bombs at important crossroads and school grounds. The rubble also contains around 800,000 MT of asbestos, which poses significant health and safety risks¹⁶².

The infrastructure damage extends travel time for humanitarian movements, resulting in severe delays, mission postponements, and increased security threats. Urgent measures to

¹⁵⁸ Supra under note 161

¹⁵⁹ “Report to Congress on Israel and Hamas Conflict,” USNI News, June 5, 2024, accessed August 18, 2024, <https://news.usni.org/2024/06/05/report-to-congress-on-israel-and-hamas-conflict>.

¹⁶⁰ Supra under note 161

¹⁶¹ Supra under note 161

¹⁶² Supra under note 161

restore and reopen roads for humanitarian convoys are critical to ensuring that help reaches those in most need.

For Example: Incidents during coordinated missions a humanitarian organization attempted to transport 18,000 litres of fuel to Gaza city on 9 April¹⁶³. However, they had to wait at a holding point near the Israeli military Salah Ad Din checkpoint. The fuel tanker experienced mechanical troubles, preventing it from resuming. A UN vehicle was dispatched to explain the situation to Israeli troops. A Palestinian guy with a gunshot wound to the head was discovered alive, but fast losing blood. The group, in collaboration with OCHA, obtained authorization from Israeli officials to administer first aid and transport the injured guy to an ambulance. Live bullets were shot from the checkpoint, striking the fuel tanker's windscreen. The approval was never granted, and the man died after over two hours without medical treatment.¹⁶⁴

Political Constraints and International Dynamics

Political factors also play a crucial role in constraining humanitarian assistance. The strong alliance between Israel and the United States has led to a situation where international diplomatic pressure on Israel to ease restrictions is limited. The US's diplomatic support for Israel often means that calls for increased humanitarian access are tempered or diluted in international forums, such as the United Nations. This diplomatic backing allows Israel to maintain its blockade and security measures without facing significant repercussions from the international community¹⁶⁵. Moreover, the political complexity of the conflict, with Hamas being labeled a terrorist organization by many Western countries, complicates the flow of aid. Donor countries and international organizations often face legal and logistical hurdles in ensuring that their assistance does not inadvertently support Hamas. This concern has led to

¹⁶³ Supra under note 161

¹⁶⁴ Supra under note 161

¹⁶⁵ "Report to Congress on Israel and Hamas Conflict," USNI News, June 5, 2024, accessed August 18, 2024, <https://news.usni.org/2024/06/05/report-to-congress-on-israel-and-hamas-conflict>.

strict conditions on aid delivery, further limiting the resources that can be provided to the civilian population in Gaza¹⁶⁶.

The constraints on humanitarian assistance to Palestinians are the result of a combination of security measures, insecurity for humanitarian workers and civilian, infrastructural damage, and the political dynamics shaped by Israel's strong alliances. These factors together have created a severe humanitarian crisis in Gaza, where the needs of the civilian population are increasingly difficult to meet. The international community's ability to respond is hampered by the same alliances that enable Israel to conduct its military operations with relative impunity, highlighting the complex interplay between conflict, politics, and humanitarian action.

¹⁶⁶ "Report to Congress on Israel and Hamas Conflict," USNI News, June 5, 2024, accessed August 18, 2024, <https://news.usni.org/2024/06/05/report-to-congress-on-israel-and-hamas-conflict>.

CHAPTER V: ANALYSIS AND FUTURE PREDICTION

The conflicts have undeniably persisted for a long time, making it difficult to envision their full trajectory in the future. However, various scenarios for analysis and prediction exist.

5.1 Analysis

The future trajectory of the Israel-Palestine conflict is highly uncertain, and several factors will influence whether the situation improves or deteriorates and peace efforts. While the conflict's persistence is influenced by entrenched positions and regional power dynamics, changes in international engagement and diplomacy may also play a significant role in its outcomes. The conflict between Israel and Palestine may worsen due to strongly entrenched positions and mutual distrust between the parties involved. Without substantial international pressure, Israel's unwavering posture on security and its ongoing settlement development in the West Bank are unlikely to change much¹⁶⁷. At the same time, Hamas remains resolute in its resistance against what it sees as occupation and injustice. Thus, the cycle of violence might continue due to perceived security threats, political necessity, or attempts to maintain strategic advantages. However, there are factors that could lead to de-escalation. Abraham Accords, which established normalization agreements between Israel and Arab nations like Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates, imply that a regional diplomatic strategy may promote more moderate stances and push for renewed dialogue¹⁶⁸. This engagement might provide opportunities for peace initiatives, if they used it wisely.

Furthermore, the participation of regional and international powers is crucial for the possibility of diplomatic advancement. Also, both China and Russia have shown increasing interest in the Middle East and could act as alternative mediators in the conflict¹⁶⁹. China, with

¹⁶⁷ "Report to Congress on Israel and Hamas Conflict," USNI News, June 5, 2024, accessed August 18, 2024, <https://news.usni.org/2024/06/05/report-to-congress-on-israel-and-hamas-conflict>.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid

¹⁶⁹ "Supra under note 194"

its focus on economic development and stability through the Belt and Road Initiative, might adopt a more neutral stance and encourage a diplomatic resolution¹⁷⁰. Russia, with its established presence in Syria and ties to Iran could also play a more active role, either by mediating or influencing one side, altering the conflict dynamics. The United Nations and other international organizations could potentially play a more significant role if they can overcome the political divisions within their member states.

Moreover, powerful countries' roles in the conflict could shift based on changing geopolitical interests. The United States will likely continue to play a major role as Israel's key ally, but future US administrations might balance their support for Israel with stronger advocacy for Palestinian rights, depending on domestic political changes and public opinion¹⁷¹. Russia and China's expanding regional interests may lead to further involvement. While Russia might assert itself as a key player in peace negotiations or crisis management by using its regional alliances and influence, China might push for stability and economic cooperation. The European Union may potentially increase its diplomatic efforts, but its power is often limited by its reliance on humanitarian aid and lack of a military presence¹⁷².

In summary, the Israel-Palestine conflict is likely to remain unstable and cyclical violence in the short to medium term, driven by entrenched positions and complex regional dynamics. However, there is potential for positive diplomatic shifts if regional players, China and Russia, and international organizations like the UN, commit to a multilateral approach to conflict resolution¹⁷³. The key to progress is whether these individuals can prioritize stability and peace over political advantages while engaging all parties in meaningful dialogue.

¹⁷⁰ "Supra under note 194"

¹⁷¹ "IISS Experts Assess the Hamas–Israel War and Its International Implications," IISS, October 10, 2023, accessed August 18, 2024, <https://www.iiss.org/online-analysis/online-analysis/2023/10/iiss-experts-assess-the-hamas-israel-war-and-its-international-implications>.

¹⁷² Ibid

¹⁷³ "Supra under note 198"

5.2 Future Predictions

The future of the Israel-Palestine conflict could go in several directions, ranging from continued violence to potential peace, depending on internal, regional, and global dynamics.

The most likely scenario is continued deadlock with frequent outbreaks of violence. Deep-rooted mistrust and strong political positions make compromise difficult. Without significant changes, both sides will likely continue retaliatory attacks and military actions, while the humanitarian crisis worsens and extremism spreads¹⁷⁴.

There is also a chance for a diplomatic breakthrough if global and regional powers push for negotiations. Countries like the UAE, which normalized relations with Israel, could encourage talks. Major powers like the U.S., China, and Russia could also take on larger roles, promoting peace to secure their interests in the region¹⁷⁵. If the violence escalates, it may lead to a larger regional conflict. Neighboring countries and regional powers, like as Iran or Hezbollah in Lebanon, could involve, turning the fight into a bigger proxy war. This scenario would further destabilize the Middle East, involving more powerful international states. If there is political change, the United States may reconsider its attitude, resulting in more balanced policies toward both Israel and Palestine. If the United States and other global powers coordinate their efforts through the United Nations or other organizations, there could be new opportunities for peace¹⁷⁶. A multilateral approach may be more effective in addressing core issues. The conflict may force changes in how the international community handles such long-term disputes. Failure to settle it may result in global governance reforms, involving more regional players and potentially changing the way international law and peace processes are managed¹⁷⁷.

¹⁷⁴ “Supra under note 194”

¹⁷⁵ “Supra under note 194”

¹⁷⁶ “Supra under note 194”

¹⁷⁷ “Supra under note 19”

The Israel-Palestine conflict could continue as a stalemate or see new diplomatic efforts, but much depends on the willingness of global and regional powers to engage meaningfully. While peace is possible, it requires overcoming deep political divides and prioritizing dialogue over conflict.

5.2.1 Possibility of a Ceasefire

The potential for a lasting ceasefire in the Israel-Palestine conflict in 2024 is fraught with significant challenges¹⁷⁸. Despite numerous attempts to break peace, the complex interplay of entrenched positions, external influences, and internal political dynamics continues to undermine efforts to establish a sustainable ceasefire.

Entrenched Positions and Deep-Rooted Distrust

A major obstacle to a lasting ceasefire is the entrenched positions of both Israel and Hamas, fueled by a profound distrust that has developed over decades of conflict. Israel regards Hamas as a terrorist organization with an unwavering commitment to its destruction, making any long-term agreement difficult without substantial security guarantees, including Hamas's disarmament¹⁷⁹. On the other hand, Hamas insists that any ceasefire include the lifting of blockades and a stop to Israeli military measures, viewing this as critical to the Palestinian people's existence and dignity¹⁸⁰. This mutual mistrust sustains a cycle of violence in which ceasefires are often temporary and fragile, breaking down as soon as either side feels a threat or an opportunity to advance its position.

External Influences and Superpower Alliances

External state, particularly Israel's alliance with the United States and Hamas's ties with Iran, significantly shape the conflict's dynamics and complicate ceasefire efforts. The United

¹⁷⁸ "Supra under note 194"

¹⁷⁹ "Supra under note 194"

¹⁸⁰ "Supra under note 194"

States provide critical military and diplomatic support to Israel, reinforcing its military superiority and encouraging it to adopt an aggressive security measure rather than seeking compromise¹⁸¹. In contrast, Iran's support for Hamas emboldens the group by providing it with financial, military, and strategic assistance¹⁸². This external support encourages both sides to continue military engagement, as each believes it can rely on its allies for support rather than making compromise. The influence of these alliances creates a diplomatic deadlock, where ceasefires are generally short-lived and lack the conditions necessary for long-term peace.

Internal Political Dynamics and Domestic Pressures

Internal political dynamics within Israel and Gaza further the possibilities for a ceasefire. In Israel, the government is under pressure from right-wing forces and public opinion that largely oppose concessions to Hamas, seeing such gestures as a capitulating to terrorism¹⁸³. This internal political context makes it difficult for Israeli leaders to support long-term ceasefires, especially if they are regarded as compromising national security. Meanwhile, Hamas is under political pressure within Gaza, as more radical factions and a struggling civilian population increasingly question its leadership and strategy¹⁸⁴. These internal conflicts make it difficult for Hamas to fully commit to a ceasefire, especially if doing so is seen as a betrayal of their resistance efforts.

Humanitarian Crises and Economic Strain

The severe humanitarian conditions in Gaza, including shortages of food, medicine, and basic services, create a volatile environment that both pressures and complicates ceasefire negotiations¹⁸⁵. While these crises often result in temporary ceasefires to allow aid, the

¹⁸¹ Bruce Riedel, "Hezbollah and the Axis of Resistance in 2024," *Brookings*, January 16, 2024, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/hezbollah-and-the-axis-of-resistance-in-2024/>.

¹⁸² "Supra under note 194"

¹⁸³ "Supra under note 194"

¹⁸⁴ "Supra under note 194"

¹⁸⁵ "Supra under note 194"

underlying political and security issues remain unresolved, leading to repeated breakdowns in agreements. In 2024, humanitarian ceasefires were repeatedly interrupted by renewed hostilities, highlighting how ceasefires are often used as tactical pauses rather than true steps toward peace¹⁸⁶. Economic devastation further destabilizes Gaza, undermining any attempts to build long-term peace and creating a cycle where conflict feeds into humanitarian need and vice versa

Challenges of International Mediation

International mediators such as Egypt, Qatar, and the United Nations play an important role, but their efforts have limitations. Mediators can often negotiate temporary pauses in fighting, but without broader, more inclusive peace talks that address fundamental issues like borders, the status of Jerusalem, and security arrangements, these ceasefires lack durability¹⁸⁷. The mediators' limited leverage over both parties, along with the influence of powerful friends, often leads to cease-fires that are more about conflict management than resolution. The result is a fragile and fragmentary approach that fails to create the groundwork for long-term peace.

The likelihood of a lasting ceasefire in the Israel-Palestine conflict remains low due to a combination of deep-rooted distrust, the influence of powerful alliances, domestic political pressures, and the ongoing humanitarian crisis. Although temporary ceasefires may provide momentary relief, a sustainable agreement will require a comprehensive approach that addresses the core issues driving the conflict, alongside significant changes in the domestic and international political landscape.

5.2.2 Potential Role of the UN in Future Peace Processes

The United Nations (UN) has historically played a significant role in the Israel-Palestine conflict, primarily through its peacekeeping efforts, humanitarian aid, and diplomatic efforts. Looking forward, the UN's potential involvement in future peace negotiations could be

¹⁸⁶ “Supra under note 194”

¹⁸⁷ “Supra under note 198”

influenced by a combination of its diplomatic limits, peacebuilding expertise, and international legitimacy¹⁸⁸. However, the effectiveness of the UN's role will largely depend on overcoming existing challenges, such as political biases, restrictions in its scope, and the influence of powerful member nations.

Mediator and Facilitator in Peace Negotiations

The United Nations could play an important role as a mediator in future peace processes by facilitating dialogue between conflicting parties and brokering negotiations. Given its objective attitude and considerable experience in conflict resolution, the UN is well-positioned to bring Israel, Hamas, and other Palestinian factions to the negotiating table¹⁸⁹. the UN might collaborate closely with other international and regional actors, including as the United States, Egypt, and the European Union, to establish a multilateral framework that promotes substantial dialogue. The UN's unique ability to provide a neutral platform may help bridge the gap between conflicting narratives and foster an environment conducive to constructive discussions.

Monitoring and Verification of Ceasefires

The UN can also play an important role in monitoring and verifying ceasefires, ensuring that all sides follow the terms of any agreement negotiated. By deploying UN observers or peacekeeping forces to conflict zones, the organization can provide an independent method to monitor ceasefire implementation and respond to violations quickly. This could help build trust between the parties, which is essential for any long-term ceasefire. In recent conflicts, the UN's monitoring efforts have often been viewed as credible and impartial, a perception that could boost its effectiveness in future engagements¹⁹⁰.

¹⁸⁸ "Supra under note 198"

¹⁸⁹ "Supra under note 194"

¹⁹⁰ "Supra under note 198"

Supporting Humanitarian Assistance and Reconstruction

The UN's extensive network of humanitarian agencies, including the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), UNICEF, and the World Food Programme (WFP), positions it as a vital player in addressing the humanitarian needs of Palestinians. In future peace processes, the UN could focus on coordinating and expanding humanitarian aid, particularly in Gaza, where the needs are acute due to ongoing blockades and military actions¹⁹¹. Additionally, the UN could lead efforts in post-conflict reconstruction, helping rebuild essential infrastructure such as hospitals, schools, and housing. These efforts are crucial not only for immediate relief but also for creating the conditions necessary for long-term peace and stability.

Promoting Confidence-Building Measures

Confidence-building measures (CBMs) are essential for reducing hostilities and paving the way for peace negotiations. The UN could facilitate CBMs such as prisoner exchanges, the easing of movement restrictions, and the establishment of humanitarian corridors¹⁹². By supporting these activities, the UN can help reduce tensions on the ground and build goodwill between Israel and the Palestinian territories. Moreover, the UN's involvement in these measures would offer international legitimacy to efforts that might otherwise be viewed with suspicion by either side.

Addressing Core Issues Through International Resolutions

The UN's ability to draft and pass resolutions through the Security Council and the General Assembly allows it to influence the international legal and political framework surrounding the conflict. In future peace processes, the UN could push for resolutions that address core issues such as borders, the status of Jerusalem, and the right of return for

¹⁹¹ "Supra under note 194"

¹⁹² "Supra under note 194"

Palestinian refugees¹⁹³. Although such resolutions may face vetoes or political resistance, they still play an important role in setting the terms of international discourse and applying pressure on the parties to comply with international law.

Challenges and Limitations

Despite its potential, the UN faces significant challenges that could undermine its effectiveness in future peace processes. The organization's actions are often hampered by the political interests of its member states, particularly those with veto power in the Security Council. For example, the United States' close alliance with Israel frequently results in vetoed resolutions that are perceived as unfavorable to Israeli interests¹⁹⁴. This dynamic limits the UN's ability to act decisively and impartially, often leaving it unable to enforce its own resolutions. Similarly, accusations of bias against Israel, mainly from some Western nations and against Palestinians from others, make UN complicated to standing as a neutral arbiter.

The UN has the potential to significantly influence future peace processes between Israel and Palestine through mediation, monitoring, humanitarian assistance, and the promotion of confidence-building measures. However, its effectiveness will depend on negotiating the complex political landscape defined by member states' interests and ensuring that its initiatives are backed by the necessary international support and commitment. To play a significant role in achieving long-term peace, the UN must work to strengthen its reputation as a neutral party while also limiting its strengths to solve both immediate and long-term conflicts.

5.2.3 Long-Term Outcomes

The long-term outcomes of the Israel-Palestine conflict will likely depend on a combination of regional dynamics, international pressure, and the willingness of both parties to negotiate. The most likely long-term outcome, given the current trajectory, is a continuation of

¹⁹³ "Supra under note 194"

¹⁹⁴ "Supra under note 194"

the prolonged stalemate characterized by frequent escalations of violence followed by fragile ceasefires¹⁹⁵. This pattern shows the strong distrust between Israel and Hamas, as well as the larger Palestinian leadership, making a comprehensive peace agreement difficult to achieve. The status quo may include ongoing blockades, military activities, and intermittent rocket assaults, with both sides maintaining their entrenched positions¹⁹⁶. The UN's role in this scenario would likely remain focused on humanitarian aid, ceasefire monitoring, and diplomatic engagement aimed at managing rather than resolving the conflict.

A more optimistic scenario involves gradual progress towards a two-state solution, with sustained international mediation. This would require significant compromise from both sides, supported by strong international pressure and incentives. The role of regional players like Egypt, Jordan, and the Gulf states, alongside the UN, could be critical in facilitating negotiations and peacebuilding efforts. Another possible outcome could be a shift toward a one-state reality or a confederation model, where Israelis and Palestinians share governance while maintaining distinct communities¹⁹⁷. This strategy would require a complete rethinking of current frameworks and a major effort to build trust and cooperation.

The UN's role could evolve depending on the global political climate. The organization could lead renewed peace efforts, focusing on enforcing international law and protecting human rights. However, its effectiveness would depend on strong support from major global powers, overcoming political deadlock, and commitment from the conflicting parties to engage in meaningful dialogue. The future of the Israel-Palestine conflict could take several pathways, from ongoing conflict to potential peace. The UN, along with global and regional actors, will play a crucial role in shaping these outcomes. However, achieving long-term peace will require

¹⁹⁵ “Supra under note 194”

¹⁹⁶ “Supra under note 194”

¹⁹⁷ “Supra under note 198”

both local and international commitment to overcoming deep-seated mistrust and political divisions.

5.2.4 Impact on Global Governance and International Law

The Israel-Palestine conflict, especially its developments in 2024, continues to have far-reaching consequences for global government and international law. As one of the most enduring and visible conflicts in modern history, it challenges the principles of international law, tests the limits of global institutions like the United Nations, and influences how state and non-state actors perceive their rights and responsibilities on the world stage. The conflict's impact on global governance and international law is multifaceted, affecting the credibility of international institutions, the enforcement of legal norms, and the broader international community's approach to conflict resolution.

One significant impact of the conflict is the erosion of key international legal norms, particularly those related to the laws of war, human rights, and the protection of civilians. Both Israel and Hamas have been accused of violating international humanitarian law, with reports of indiscriminate attacks on civilian populations, destruction of civilian infrastructure, and blockades that exacerbate humanitarian crises¹⁹⁸. The ongoing violations have raised questions about the effectiveness of international legal mechanisms to hold parties accountable, as investigations and condemnations by entities such as the International Criminal Court (ICC) often face significant political pushback and lack enforceability¹⁹⁹. This affects the global legal order, as it sets a sample that violations can occur with limited consequences and reducing the deterrent effect of international law.

The conflict also poses challenges to the credibility and effectiveness of the United Nations, particularly its capacity to enforce resolutions and maintain peace and security. The

¹⁹⁸ “Supra under note 194”

¹⁹⁹ “Supra under note 194”

frequent use of veto power by permanent Security Council members, most notably the United States in defense of Israel, often results in the paralysis of UN action, undermining its perceived impartiality and effectiveness²⁰⁰. This situation reflects broader issues within global governance, where power dynamics among major states can obstruct multilateral decision-making, reducing the UN's ability to address conflicts objectively²⁰¹. As a result, the UN's involvement is frequently restricted to humanitarian aid and brief ceasefire discussions rather than substantive conflict resolution, undermining its power in global governance.

Conflict influences how states interpret and apply international law, particularly in areas such as self-defense, occupation, and the use of force. Israel's justification of its military actions under the right to self-defense, as recognized by Article 51 of the UN Charter, is often challenged due to the length of the occupation and the civilian toll of military operations²⁰². In contrast, Hamas's actions are framed as resistance against occupation but frequently violate international legal norms against targeting civilians²⁰³. The uncertainty and selective interpretation of international law in this context set concerning precedents for other conflicts, where states and non-state actors may similarly manipulate legal justifications to defend actions that violated established norms.

The conflict has an impact on global diplomacy, serving as a litmus test for the international community's ability to mediate and resolve long-standing disputes. The repeated failures to achieve a long-term peace agreement in Israel-Palestine highlight the limitations of current diplomatic frameworks and raise broader questions about the effectiveness of international mediation efforts²⁰⁴. The involvement of powerful states, regional players, and

²⁰⁰ "Supra under note 198"

²⁰¹ "Supra under note 198"

²⁰² "Supra under note 194"

²⁰³ "Supra under note 194"

²⁰⁴ "Supra under note 198"

international organizations often complicates rather than resolves the conflict, as differing agendas and interests can lead to conflicting policies and approaches. This dynamic weakens broader global governance efforts to maintain international peace and security, casting doubt on the efficacy of established diplomatic mechanisms.

The resolution of the Israel-Palestine conflict has broader implications for global stability and the international community's approach to other protracted conflicts. The perceived impunity of Israel and Hamas' conduct, along with the limited power of international authorities to enforce accountability, may encourage other states or groups involved in wars to disregard international rules²⁰⁵. This weakening of accountability can contribute to a more unstable and divided global order, undermining international law and making conflict resolution more difficult²⁰⁶. The conflict serves as a cautionary example of how unresolved disputes can continue to instability and weaken the overall structure of global governance.

²⁰⁵ “Supra under note 194”

²⁰⁶ “Supra under note 194”

CONCLUSION

The United Nations' role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is determined by its duty to promote international peace and security, but it is limited by political, structural, and operational constraints. The Security Council's veto power and the different interests of member states have often paralyzed decision-making, preventing effective and unified action. The UN's enforcement capabilities are further weakened by the non-binding nature of many of its resolutions and its dependence on voluntary cooperation from member states, which limits its ability to force compliance from parties involved in the conflict.

Despite these limits, the UN continues to play an important role in peacekeeping and humanitarian efforts. However, its operations face significant resource and operational challenges, including maintaining neutrality in a highly divided environment. Recent developments in 2024 highlight the complexity of the conflict and the limitations of the UN's current strategy, calling for a re-evaluation of its strategies and a potential shift toward more decisive and coordinated international action.

Moving forward, the conflict's trajectory will likely depend on various factors, including changes in local leadership, shifts in regional dynamics, and the international community's ability to present a unified front. While a lasting solution remains elusive, there is a clear need for innovative approaches, stronger enforcement mechanisms, and genuine political will from all parties involved to move towards a peaceful resolution. The UN, while limited, still has a critical role to play in fostering dialogue, providing humanitarian aid, and advocating for international law and human rights. To achieve significant progress, there must be a concerted effort to overcome the existing barriers and work collaboratively towards a long-term peace. While there are opportunities for peace, achieving it requires overcoming deep-seated divisions and strong, coordinated international action. The future of the conflict will depend on both local

and global actors' ability to engage in meaningful dialogue and prioritize stability and peace over geopolitical interests.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the analysis of the United Nations' role and limitations in addressing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the effectiveness of international efforts in peacebuilding and conflict resolution:

1. **Reform of the UN Security Council Structure:** The use of veto power by the permanent members of the UN Security Council, particularly in situations involving human rights violations and conflicts, should be reconsidered. Reforming the veto system to either limit its use or require a supermajority for decisions on critical issues could reduce the paralysis caused by conflicting interests. This would allow the UN to take more decisive and consistent actions in conflicts like the Israeli-Palestinian situation.
2. **Strengthening Enforcement Mechanisms:** The UN should explore ways to enhance the binding nature of its resolutions, particularly those related to international law and human rights. Establishing a clear consequence for non-compliance and leveraging international cooperation for enforcement could improve adherence to resolutions and agreements. Greater involvement from regional bodies like the Arab League and the European Union could also support these efforts.
3. **Enhancing Peacekeeping and Monitoring Capacities:** To address operational and resource limitations, the UN should invest in strengthening its peacekeeping and monitoring missions. This includes securing more reliable funding, enhancing logistical support, and deploying specialized personnel capable of dealing with complex, localized issues. A stronger mandate for peacekeeping forces, including clearer rules of engagement and more robust protection measures for civilians, could enhance the UN's ability to manage tensions on the ground.

4. **Promoting Inclusive Diplomatic Initiatives:** Future peace initiatives should include all relevant stakeholders, including civil society organizations, women, and youth from both Israeli and Palestinian communities. Encouraging grassroots peacebuilding efforts and fostering dialogue across different levels of society could create a more conducive environment for official peace negotiations. The UN, along with other international actors, should facilitate these inclusive processes to build broader support for peace.
5. **Increasing Humanitarian Support and Accountability:** Given the humanitarian impact of the conflict, the UN should prioritize increasing humanitarian aid and ensuring access to affected populations. This includes advocating for unhindered access for humanitarian organizations and monitoring human rights violations by all parties. Establishing independent accountability mechanisms to investigate violations and ensure justice for victims would also enhance the UN's credibility and effectiveness in conflict resolution.
6. **Engaging Regional and Global Powers in a Coordinated Approach:** The UN should work towards creating a more unified international approach by engaging key regional and global powers to exert collective pressure for peace. Diplomatic efforts should focus on building consensus among major actors, such as the United States, Russia, the European Union, and regional powers, to support a sustainable and just solution. Multilateral negotiations could be more effective if there is coordinated international support for clearly defined peace objectives, such as the two-state solution or a viable alternative.

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