

# The Effectiveness of International Law in Limiting Humanitarian Disasters in the Palestine-Israel Conflict



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## ARTICLE INFO

### Article history

Received: July 21, 2024

Revised: November 26, 2024

Accepted: December 19, 2024

### Keywords

Humanitarian Disaster;  
International Community;  
International Law;

## ABSTRACT

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which has persisted for decades and involved multiple Arab and Western nations, has led to a severe humanitarian crisis. Despite numerous United Nations (UN) resolutions aimed at ending the conflict, these efforts have largely been ineffective. The situation escalated further following the Hamas attack on Israel on October 7, 2023, worsening the humanitarian catastrophe and raising concerns over violations of the 1949 Geneva Conventions. This has led the international community to question whether a resolution to the conflict is achievable. This study employs normative legal research using a Juridical and Case Approach, along with a literature review, to critically assess the effectiveness of international law in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The findings suggest that a legal resolution may be pursued through adherence to the 1949 Geneva Conventions, strengthening the UN's role, and recognizing the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court (ICC). However, while these measures are legally significant, their practical implementation remains challenging. Many states do not recognize the ICC or have not ratified key treaties, and UN initiatives often face obstacles due to Security Council vetoes. These challenges highlight the complexities of applying international legal mechanisms to a deeply entrenched geopolitical conflict, emphasizing the need for further legal and diplomatic efforts.



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## 1. Introduction

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has engaged numerous Arab and Western nations for over five decades and stands as one of the most protracted global issues. The international world has acknowledged the protracted and increasingly intense fight that has persisted for six decades. The initiation of this conflict was prompted by the United Nations's resolution to rescind British authority over the Palestinian territories and partition them into two separate states: one for the Israeli Jewish community and another for the Palestinian Arab majority. The Palestinians, who historically reside in the region, are demonstrating against the decision made by the United Nations (UN). Consequently, the protests that precipitated a more extensive confrontation were instigated by Israel's apprehension regarding its attempt to exert authority over the entirety of the Palestinian territory.

The protracted conflict has caused many casualties and prolonged suffering for the Palestinian people. This has led to regional disputes throughout the Middle East. A broader confrontation involving neighboring countries such as Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Iran, and other Middle Eastern countries was triggered by the Israeli invasion. As of April 24, 2024, no less than 34,488 Palestinians were killed in Gaza, 14,500 of whom were children and 9,500 women. Another 77,643 people were reported injured, and 75% of them are estimated to be women<sup>1</sup>

The battle escalated significantly when Hamas forces launched an attack on Saturday, October 7, 2023, resulting in casualties. According to a release from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), on June 10, 2024, the number of Palestinian deaths in the Gaza Strip increased for the 248th day. According to the study, there were 36,171 deaths in the Gaza Strip and 519 deaths in the West Bank. A total of 15,162 children fell prey to the situation, while a significant number of other youngsters were also taken from their homes. A total of 10,018 women lost their lives in Israeli assaults, with an additional 7,000 women reported as missing. According to mass media sources, around 1,000 Palestinian youngsters in Gaza were killed during the initial 100 days of the conflict. There are around 1.2 million Palestinian refugees, some of whom have been forced to flee multiple times in search of secure locations. A total of 108 journalists were officially verified to have died.<sup>2</sup>



Diagram of the Development of Palestinian and Israeli Conflict Victims (Palestine Central Bureau of Statistics)

International Humanitarian Law plays an important role in the conflict between Israel and Palestine, which aims to protect civilians during armed conflict. Although human rights abuses are still taking place in Palestine by the Israeli army, International Humanitarian Law provides a legal framework to protect civilians and uphold basic human rights conventions. Although many obstacles must be overcome in order for International Humanitarian Law to be truly successful in the current war, such as the one between Israel and Palestine, international humanitarian law remains essential to protect civil society and reduce

<sup>1</sup> OHCHR, *Onslaught of Violence against Women and Children in Gaza Unacceptable: UN Experts*, 2024.

<sup>2</sup> Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, *Presents the Conditions of the Palestinian Population on the Occasion of the World Population Day*, 2024.

the intensity of hostilities.<sup>3</sup> Even if the systems in place to ensure that international law is complied with are sometimes seemingly ineffective, the existence of legal frameworks such as International Humanitarian Law is essential to prevent humanitarian disasters and advance humanitarian efforts.

Research indicates that the failure of International Law to mitigate the humanitarian crisis in Palestine-Israel is significantly affected by the intricate dynamics of the conflict. Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International report that, despite the framework of International Humanitarian Law designed to safeguard civilians, violations of human rights persist by both parties, particularly due to Israeli military operations that frequently lead to considerable civilian casualties.<sup>4</sup> A report by the International Crisis Group indicates that the international community's failure to implement sanctions against these infractions exacerbates conflict and deteriorates the humanitarian conditions in Gaza and the West Bank.<sup>5</sup> Political instability and inconsistent international backing hinder the effective implementation of International Law. Consequently, it is essential to modify international law enforcement systems to enhance their responsiveness to civilian protection demands in this conflict and avert further humanitarian tragedy.

The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict is closely intertwined with the function of International Law, which is consistently scrutinized in the context of this conflict. International law, although theoretically capable of preventing this war, is significantly weaker in practice than a country's national law. In this disagreement, the resolution should have been sought at the UN General Assembly session. However, it is important to note that the UN General Assembly lacks legislative authority, and its resolutions are non-binding. While arbitration, judicial bodies, and international courts exist to address conflicts, their jurisdiction is restricted as they lack the comprehensive ability to decide all issues between countries, and their decisions are not binding. Put simply, the International Court can only have the authority to make legal decisions if all parties involved agree to it.<sup>6</sup> While the UN Security Council has the authority to enforce international law, the veto power

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>4</sup> Lina Qassem-Hassan and Raphael Walden, 'A Palestinian and an Israeli Physician Speak out for Medical Ethics', *The Lancet*, 402.10413 (2023), 1619–20 [https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(23\)02403-0](https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(23)02403-0)

<sup>5</sup> Husam Dweik and others, 'Perspectives of Palestinian Physicians on the Impact of the Gaza War in the West Bank', *SSM - Qualitative Research in Health*, 6 (2024), 100504 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssmqr.2024.100504>

<sup>6</sup> Rawa Almakky, 'The Role of International Organisations In The Development of International Law: An Analytical Assessment of The United Nations', *Law and World*, 9.28 (2023), 40–66 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.36475/9.4.4>

held by the five-member nations is widely acknowledged to be a choice driven more by political considerations rather than purely legal ones.<sup>7</sup>

Furthermore, the findings of this study will provide insights into the efficacy of international law in mitigating humanitarian catastrophes in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. The research will commence by elucidating the historical background of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. Subsequently, it will delve into the application of international law in Israel and Palestine. Lastly, it will examine the potential resolutions that international organizations can propose to mediate the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. Ultimately, this research aims to examine the involvement of international organizations in facilitating the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, which is confronted with substantial obstacles. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has a complex historical background. What is the effectiveness of international law in restraining the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and how can international legal institutions contribute to resolving the Israeli and Palestinian disputes? Therefore, the main focus of the research is how the role of international law in reducing the humanitarian disaster in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that occurred in the latest conflict, namely on October 7, 2023, then the role of the UN and clarifying the jurisdiction of the ICC in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Numerous studies have investigated the function of international law in alleviating humanitarian crises in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Researchers have evaluated the efficacy of international legal frameworks, including the 1949 Geneva Conventions and the 1977 Additional Protocols, in governing armed conflicts and safeguarding civilian populations.<sup>8</sup> Research has examined the function of international organizations, such as the United Nations (UN) and the International Criminal Court (ICC), in ensuring adherence to humanitarian law. Nonetheless, current literature underscores considerable enforcement difficulties stemming from political constraints, insufficient state collaboration, and the recurrent use of Security Council vetoes that obstruct decisive UN intervention.<sup>9</sup> Research conducted by legal scholars and international relations specialists indicates that although legal frameworks are established, their implementation is inconsistent, permitting ongoing violations of humanitarian law.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Shaymaa AlWaheidi, 'Promoting Cancer Prevention and Early Diagnosis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory', *Journal of Cancer Policy*, 35 (2023), 100373 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcpo.2022.100373>

<sup>8</sup> Sarah Arnd-Linder, Ayelet Harel-Shalev, and Shir Daphna-Tekoah, 'The Political Is Personal - Everyday Lives of Women in Israel/Palestine', *Women's Studies International Forum*, 69 (2018), 76-84 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2018.05.006>

<sup>9</sup> Marco Allegra and Erez Maggor, 'The Metropolitanization of Israel's Settlement Policy: The Colonization of the West Bank as a Strategy of Spatial Restructuring', *Political Geography*, 92 (2022), 102513 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2021.102513>

<sup>10</sup> Jess R Nachman, 'Decolonial Queering Sport and Movement in Palestine', *Women's Studies International Forum*, 109 (2025), 103054 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2025.103054>

Furthermore, comparative studies on international conflict resolution demonstrate that legal processes alone are inadequate for preventing humanitarian disasters without robust political will and enforcement measures. Numerous case studies, such as the conflicts in Bosnia, Rwanda, and Syria, illustrate the difficulties of enforcing international law in highly politicized conflicts.<sup>11</sup> Although tribunals like the ICTY and ICTR have effectively prosecuted war criminals in the aftermath of conflicts, analogous mechanisms have encountered considerable challenges in the Israeli-Palestinian context due to jurisdictional concerns, state recognition, and geopolitical considerations. The deficiency in enforcement creates apprehensions over the efficacy of international law in averting humanitarian crises, highlighting the necessity for enhanced multilateral collaboration and accountability frameworks.

This research is important because the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not only a protracted geopolitical issue, but also continues to cause a massive humanitarian disaster. With the latest escalation in October 2023, it is increasingly urgent to review the effectiveness of international law in preventing and mitigating the impact of the conflict. Furthermore, there is still uncertainty about the jurisdiction of the ICC to prosecute war crimes in the region, making this debate important to unravel further. In addition, this research makes a scientific contribution by trying to find gaps in the application of international law and how international organizations, such as the UN and the ICC, can be more active in seeking a more effective resolution. Thus, this research is relevant to answering pressing questions about the effectiveness of international law in containing the humanitarian disaster and contributing to the resolution of the ongoing conflict in Israel-Palestine

## 2. Research Method

The research employs a normative legal methodology with an International Law perspective, focusing on the examination and analysis of applicable legislation now in effect. Normative legal research is a form of legal inquiry that utilizes secondary material to substantiate its conclusions.<sup>12</sup> In addition, related to the research topic, the author examines the perspective of International Humanitarian Law on the effectiveness of international law in limiting humanitarian disasters in the Palestine-Israel conflict, based on the 1949 Geneva Convention. This study uses a normative legal research method because the focus of the study is on the analysis of legal doctrines, principles, and rules contained in international legal instruments, especially the 1949 Geneva Convention. This method was chosen to explore how existing legal norms can be applied and complied with in the context

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<sup>11</sup>Rina Kedem and others, 'The Role of Environmental Professionals in Post-Conflict Transboundary Cooperation: The Cases of Israel and Jordan', *Environmental Science & Policy*, 151 (2024), 103623 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envsci.2023.103623>

<sup>12</sup>Kostiantyn Gorobets, 'The International Rule of Law and the Idea of Normative Authority', *Hague Journal on the Rule of Law*, 12 (2020), 227–249 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/s40803-020-00141-3>

of armed conflict, as well as to evaluate the consistency of international law in limiting the humanitarian impact of the conflict.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### *History and Development of the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict*

The UN decided to divide the state of Palestine into two parts, namely Jews and Palestinians, in Resolution 181, issued in November 1947. Thirteen countries reject the existence of Israel. Ten are "neutral" countries—that is, they do not support either—the resolution, while thirty-three countries have recognized Israel as a state.<sup>13</sup> Although Palestine and other Arab countries rejected the decision, the Jews rejected it. Israel, led by David Ben Gurion, proclaimed independence over the land granted to them through Resolution 181 on May 14, 1948, one day before the British mandate expired. As a result, Israel became an independent state of Israel. The Arab League officially protested the UN the next day against Israel's existence.

Israel has implemented a peace plan to create an independent state for Palestine under certain conditions. The territory designated by the UN Special Committee for Palestine (UNSCOP) as a Palestinian state has been attacked by coalition forces from Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Iraq. Because the Arab countries were unhappy with Israeli settlements in Palestine, they attacked and occupied the land intended for an independent Palestinian state. This led to the start of the Arab-Israeli War in 1948.<sup>14</sup>

However, in this conflict, the Arab League partnership is ineffective. After successfully repelling the onslaught launched against them, the Israeli forces quickly took control of the land they had seized. Due to the occupation of Arab coalition forces in the area that was supposed to be allocated to the Palestinian state, Israel now also controls large parts of the territory. Thus, Egypt has gained control over a small part of the Southwest (Gaza). But Jordan holds sovereignty over a small portion of the East (Nablus, the West Bank, and parts of Jerusalem and Hebron). Palestine has never claimed sovereignty over its state since the beginning of this conflict.<sup>15</sup>

About 70,000 Palestinians have permanently settled outside the Israeli-occupied territories during this conflict. As a result of the defeat of the Arab army, some of the residents left Palestine. Some Palestinians chose to stay out of fear of the bad impact the Israeli army might have. Arab-Muslim residents who chose to remain in

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<sup>13</sup> Laura Panza and Eik Leong Swee, 'Fanning the Flames: Rainfall Shocks, Inter-ethnic Income Inequality, and Conflict Intensification in Mandate Palestine', *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 206 (2023), 71–94 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jebo.2022.11.032>

<sup>14</sup> Sabel R., *Is International Law Relevant? In: International Law and the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022) <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108762670.002>

<sup>15</sup> Rachel Noah Hefetz, 'Understanding Conflict Penalty: Dominant Themes and the Case of the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict', *Sage Journals*, 27.4 (2023), 619–37 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/13624806231175861>

the Israeli-controlled territories later became Israeli citizens, and now they are the largest minority in the Jewish state, accounting for about 20% of the total population. The 1949 ceasefire agreement between Israel and surrounding Arab countries ended the conflict. The deal also seals Israel's new globally recognized borders, known as the "green line." The land that Israel occupied in the 1948 War was included in the newly closed borders of the state of Israel (part of the territory previously designated as the State of Palestine).<sup>16</sup>

The Fatah movement established in 1957, originally arose as a secular nationalist movement influenced by Marxist principles and the Algerian revolution. Its objective was to emancipate Palestine via armed conflict, establishing itself as a pivotal entity in Palestinian resistance against Israel. The evolution of Fatah, especially its eventual acknowledgement of Israel and involvement in peace negotiations, is significantly pertinent to the efficacy of international law. By transitioning from violent opposition to political negotiation, Fatah associated itself more closely with international legal frameworks, including the United Nations-backed Oslo Accords of the 1990s.<sup>17</sup> This transition demonstrates the capacity of international law to promote conflict settlement, at least temporarily, using diplomacy and legal accords instead of military engagement. Nonetheless, despite these endeavors, the overall humanitarian condition has not markedly improved, highlighting the constraints of international law amid persistent tensions and political intricacies.

The formation of Hamas in 1987 introduced a new dynamic that hampered the application of international law in mitigating humanitarian crises. Hamas, an Islamist movement with strong ties to the Muslim Brotherhood, upheld a stringent policy of armed resistance against Israel, dismissing peace accords such as those brokered by Fatah. This strategic gap illustrates a significant challenge for international law: although legal frameworks can impact state actors and diplomatic entities such as Fatah, they are less efficacious against non-state players like Hamas, who remain focused on armed engagement.<sup>18</sup> Hamas' refusal to acknowledge Israel and its persistent employment of violence, including assaults on civilians, has resulted in multiple breaches of international humanitarian law, intensifying the humanitarian catastrophe. Consequently, Fatah's development illustrates the capacity of international law to facilitate conflict resolution, whereas

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<sup>16</sup> Aziz Ullah and others, 'Impacts of Geographical Conflicts on Risk Tango between Oil and Equity Markets: An Empirical Evidence from Oil-Importing and Exporting Nations', *The North American Journal of Economics and Finance*, 78 (2025), 102419 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.najef.2025.102419>

<sup>17</sup> Erling Lorentzen Sogge, 'The Factionalization of Palestinian Customary Justice: Sulh Politics in the Balata Refugee Camp', *Third World Thematics: A Twq Journal*, 6.1-3 (2021), 105-122 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/23802014.2022.2089364>

<sup>18</sup> Dag Tuastad, 'Hamas and the Clans: From Islamisation of Tribalism to Tribalization of Islamism?', *Third World Thematics: A Twq Journal*, 6.1-3 (2021), 88-104 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/23802014.2022.2135759>

Hamas' conduct underscores the law's inadequacies in restraining violence and securing adherence from non-state actors.

The establishment of Hamas in 1987 signified a pivotal transformation in the Palestinian resistance movement. In contrast to Fatah, which ultimately shifted towards political engagement, Hamas persisted in its commitment to military resistance, motivated by its Islamic ideology. Its objective to create an Islamic state and deny any acknowledgement of Israel distinguishes it from other forces. Hamas' obstinacy in rejecting foreign diplomatic initiatives and its employment of violence, particularly against civilians, render it a formidable entity for the global community. The efficacy of international law, including the Geneva Conventions, in mitigating humanitarian catastrophes is significantly challenged by Hamas' tactics, which frequently contravene these regulations. This encompasses the targeting of civilian zones and the employment of human shields, exacerbating the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip and complicating foreign intervention initiatives.<sup>19</sup>

The significance of Hamas' involvement is elucidated when seen within the framework of the overarching historical conflict, exemplified by the 1967 Six-Day War. The war significantly transformed the geopolitical environment, resulting in Israel's acquisition of the Gaza Strip, West Bank, and East Jerusalem—regions that are currently pivotal to the conflict. The global community has persistently denounced Israel's occupation of these regions; nonetheless, the Six-Day War also facilitated the emergence of movements such as Hamas. The Israeli occupation created an environment conducive to Hamas's rise by portraying itself as the protector of Palestinian rights through religious and militant strategies.<sup>20</sup> The failure of international law to handle issues arising from the Six-Day War, including unlawful settlements and military occupation, exemplifies the overarching difficulties encountered by legal frameworks in tackling enduring and entrenched conflicts, such as that between Israel and Palestine.

In the period before 1967, Palestinians in West Cliff (referring to the West Bank) were recognized for their elevated educational attainment, entrepreneurial endeavors, and professional proficiency, setting them apart from Jordanians residing in East Cliff (presumably referring to East Bank, Jordan). The Palestinian preeminence in critical sectors such banking, shipping, insurance, and food processing, along with their prominence in the bureaucratic domain, conferred substantial influence in the region. This socio-economic progress of Palestinians has also established their significance to Jordan's national identity, a notion emphasized by academics such as Mark Tessler. The arrival of Palestinians after the Israeli takeover of the West Bank in 1967 generated conflict in Jordan. The

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<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, P. 88-104

<sup>20</sup> Diego Jahnata Nasir Faeq, 'The Historical Antecedents of Hamas', *International Journal of Social Science Research and Review*, 3.3 (2020), 26–35 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.47814/ijssrr.v3i3.49>



Palestinian refugee issue not only strained the finances of host nations such as Jordan but also posed a political danger to the Jordanian monarchy.<sup>2122</sup>This fragile equilibrium underscores the manner in which the conflict produced humanitarian dilemmas that international law found difficult to address. The Geneva Conventions and other frameworks fail to sufficiently address the enduring socio-political consequences of forced migration and occupation for both Palestinians and neighboring countries.

This situation is strongly related to the discourse around the Israeli West Bank barrier, constructed in 2016. The construction of the barrier, commonly known as the "separation wall," was rationalized by Israel as a security measure to avert terrorist attacks. The wall has faced extensive criticism for worsening the humanitarian crisis by limiting Palestinian access to employment, education, healthcare, and their own territory. The wall effectively divides Palestinians in the West Bank, isolating localities and undermining the Palestinian economy. The International Court of Justice has classified the barrier as unconstitutional, asserting that it contravenes human rights and international humanitarian law. This illustrates the persistent inadequacy of international legal frameworks in averting or alleviating the humanitarian crises resulting from Israeli policies and practices, especially in the occupied areas. The legal obstacles that failed to address the refugee crisis in 1967 continue to manifest in the current issues of territorial and human rights breaches, exemplified by the separation wall.

The establishment of the Israeli West Bank barrier in 2016, amidst escalating tensions between Israel and Palestine in late 2015, illustrates the profound entrenchment of the conflict and the intricate socioeconomic dynamics that propel it. The barrier, implemented by Israel as a security measure, has faced extensive criticism for its humanitarian repercussions on Palestinians, who endure significant limitations in accessing their land, employment, healthcare, and education. This infrastructure is characterized as a tangible representation of the persistent occupation, exacerbating the socio-economic isolation of Palestinian populations.<sup>23</sup> The conflict's dynamics during this period were characterized by conflicting narratives in media outlets, which significantly influenced public opinion. Palestinian media underscored their quest for legitimacy and authority in opposition to Israeli hegemony, whilst Israeli media frequently prioritized security issues. These anecdotes illustrate the significant human repercussions of the battle,

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<sup>21</sup> Walaa. Alqaisiya, 'Beyond the Contours of Zionist Sovereignty: Decolonisation in Palestine's Unity Intifada.', *Political Geography*, 103 (2023), 102844  
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2023.102844>

<sup>22</sup> Richard English, 'From the Six-Day War to the Gaza Tragedy', *Does Counter-Terrorism Work?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2024), pp. 121–45  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780192843340.003.0007>

<sup>23</sup> Abdelrahman Alasttal and others, 'The Role of The United Nations In Protecting The Right To Development In Occupied Palestine', *Legality: Jurnal Ilmiah Hukum*, 31.1 (2023), 138–56  
<https://doi.org/10.22219/ljih.v31i1.25836>

especially for ordinary civilians such as Aaron and Sara, whose lives are dominated by the stark reality of military service, political demands, and the persistent state of warfare.

The ongoing conflict precipitated the 2021 Israel-Palestine crisis, characterized by intensified bloodshed and unprecedented humanitarian disasters. The crisis, also known as the Unity Intifada, witnessed Palestinians protesting against the legitimacy of Israeli settlements, particularly in East Jerusalem. Although international law, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention, explicitly prohibits the establishment of colonies in occupied lands, its efficacy in restraining such activities or mitigating humanitarian repercussions has been mostly inadequate. The 2021 crisis underscored the deficiencies of international systems in preventing human rights atrocities on both sides. Gaza, specifically, endured severe military aggression by Israel, accompanied by allegations of war crimes, devastation of civilian infrastructure, and breaches of humanitarian law.<sup>24</sup> The persistent conflict, from the 2016 West Bank barrier to the 2021 escalation, highlights the inadequate ability of international law to govern state conduct in this area and to mitigate the human cost of the ongoing Israel-Palestine conflict.

In 2021 Israel-Palestine crisis, referred to as the Unity Intifada, was a substantial intensification of the enduring conflict, grounded in historical grievances and current political tensions. The insurrection was propelled by Palestinian demonstrations opposing Israeli settler actions in East Jerusalem and overarching issues of territorial legitimacy. Notwithstanding explicit stipulations in international law—specifically the Fourth Geneva Convention, which forbids the relocation of the occupying power's civilian populace into occupied territories—Israel's settlement activities persisted, leading to significant humanitarian consequences for Palestinians. These activities exemplify the difficulties of enforcing international law in contexts where dominant powers can avoid accountability. The international community's response, however vociferous in denouncing the violence, did not result in effective legal measures to prevent or alleviate the human suffering associated with the conflict.<sup>25</sup>

The lack of effectiveness of international law to avert additional escalations became increasingly apparent during the 2023-2024 Israel-Hamas conflict. In October 2023, as fighting escalated, Hamas executed substantial assaults on Israeli citizens, prompting Israel to retaliate with considerable military force, hence elevating the conflict's savagery. The conflict led to extensive civilian losses, with both factions charged with breaching international humanitarian law, including the

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<sup>24</sup> Marco Longobardo, 'The Legality of Closure on Land and Safe Passage Between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank', *Asian Journal of International Law*, 11.1 (2021), 50–88 <https://doi.org/DOI:10.1017/S2044251320000272>

<sup>25</sup> Islam Hassouneh and others, 'The Effect of Conflict on Palestine, Israel, and Jordan Stock Markets', *International Review of Economics & Finance*, 56 (2018), 258–66 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iref.2017.10.028>

targeting of civilians and the employment of excessive force. Although legal frameworks like the Rome Statute of the ICC exist to bring offenders accountable for war crimes, their enforcement has been patchy. The persistent cycle of violence, from the 2021 crisis to the 2023-2024 conflict, highlights the inadequacy of international law in mitigating humanitarian catastrophes in the region. In the absence of effective enforcement measures, the conflict escalates, resulting in catastrophic repercussions for people on both sides.<sup>26</sup>

In 2023-2024 Israel-Hamas war signifies a significant intensification of the conflict, underscoring the inadequacy of international law in preventing or mitigating humanitarian crises. The extensive assaults by Hamas on Israeli people, include mass executions and abductions, are unequivocal breaches of international humanitarian law, particularly the Geneva Conventions, which forbid the targeting of civilians and the taking of hostages. Israel's response, characterized by extensive bombardment of Gaza resulting in numerous Palestinian civilian casualties, raises significant questions under international law, specifically pertaining to proportionality and distinction in armed conflict. Notwithstanding legal systems designed to avert such crimes, including the laws of war and human rights treaties, enforcement is inadequate, mostly due to political limitations and the absence of a robust international legal process to ensure accountability for all parties involved.<sup>27</sup>

The lack of ability of international law to avert humanitarian catastrophes, shown by the 2021 crisis and the ongoing 2023-2024 conflict, highlights fundamental deficiencies. Although entities such as the United Nations and the International Criminal Court possess procedures to tackle war crimes and safeguard civilians, their efficacy is frequently constrained by political circumstances. The persistent conflict illustrates that in the absence of robust enforcement or significant involvement, violations will persist, creating cycles of violence. The escalating civilian casualties, illegal detentions, and recurrent application of lethal force highlight the pressing necessity for a more robust international legal framework to both avert humanitarian crises and guarantee accountability in one of the globe's protracted conflicts.

In July, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) received submissions from 54 states and three intergovernmental organizations regarding the advisory opinion requested by the UN General Assembly in December 2022 regarding the legal status of the Israeli occupation expansion and the legal consequences of its violations against the Palestinian people. The ICJ will commence public hearings on the request for advisory opinions on February 19, 2024. In December 2024, South Africa initiated legal proceedings against Israel at the International Court of Justice,

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<sup>26</sup>Aslan Denis, 'The Dynamics of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Historical Contexts and Contemporary Realities', *Endless: International Journal Of Future Studies*, 6.3 (2023), 144–51. <https://endless-journal.com/index.php/endless/article/view/209>

<sup>27</sup> Daniel Byman, 'A War They Both Are Losing: Israel, Hamas and the Plight of Gaza', *Survival*, 66.3 (2024), 61–78 <https://doi.org/10.1080/00396338.2024.2357484>

alleging that Israel's military operations in Gaza contravene its obligations under the 1948 Genocide Convention. To safeguard the Palestinian population and ensure Israel's adherence to the Convention, they urged the World Court to promptly implement temporary remedies.

### *Application of International Law in the Limitation of War Between Israel and Palestine*

International law plays a crucial role in endeavors to restrict violence and conflict, particularly the protracted dispute between Israel and Palestine. The Geneva Conventions, together with Additional Protocol I and Protocol II, are key international legal treaties pertaining to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. These instruments provide regulations for safeguarding civilians and combatants during times of war. Additionally, there is the Rome Statute, a legislative framework that governs the safeguarding of human rights. The purpose of these guidelines is to guarantee that, in the event of an unavoidable war, the actions performed by the parties involved adhere to acceptable humanitarian standards.

The relevance of International Law to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is intricately connected to two main aspects concerning armed aggression and warfare.<sup>28</sup> International Humanitarian Law, a significant field of law, originates from the 1949 Geneva Conventions and the 1977 Additional Protocols I and II. Another notable field is International Criminal Law, which revolves around the Rome Statute and is upheld by the ICC. The difference between the Geneva Conventions and the Rome Statute lies in their unique objectives, scopes, enforcement mechanisms, years of entry into force, and the countries of the signatories. The main purpose of the Geneva Conventions is to protect those impacted by battle, while the major goal of the Rome Statute is to primarily focus on prosecuting those who are accountable for serious crimes committed during armed conflicts. The Geneva Conventions provide protection for civilians, prisoners of war, and everyone affected by conflict, including injured, sick, or missing soldiers. Conversely, the Rome Statute specifically addresses genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. The Geneva Conventions do not have a permanent international enforcement mechanism, in contrast to the Rome Statute, which is subject to adjudication by the ICC. The Geneva Convention was officially approved and established as legally binding in 1949, while the Rome Statute was ratified and legally enforceable in 2002. The Geneva Convention has been ratified by 196 countries, while the Rome Statute has only been approved by 123 countries.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Imad Imran and others, 'Analyzing The Applicability and Limitations Of International Law In Resolving The Israel-Palestine Territorial Dispute', *International Journal of Contemporary Issues in Social Sciences*, 2.4 (2023), 172–80. <https://ijciss.org/index.php/ijciss/article/view/130>

<sup>29</sup> Agung Tri Wicaksono, Achmad Arbi' Nur Badrotin Jabbar, and AH. Fajruddin Fatwa, 'Problematika ICC Dalam Menjatuhkan Sanksi Kepada Israel Dalam Perspektif Hukum Internasional', *Jurnal Hukum, Politik Dan Ilmu Sosial*, 3.1 (2023), 207–24 <https://doi.org/10.55606/jhpis.v3i1.3210>

In the current Palestine-Israel conflict, both have violated the Geneva Laws even though both countries have ratified the Geneva Conventions and should be legally bound by the Geneva Laws.<sup>30</sup> Then, there should be no reason for the Palestinians and Israelis to violate the 1949 Geneva Conventions because they have already recognized the ratification of the Convention. However, the scale of the conflict that continues to grow continues to make this conflict cause losses, whether it is the increase in civilian casualties of non-combatants, the damage to public facilities, and humanitarian disasters because they have become the object or target of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, so it can be said that both sides have violated and ignored the provisions of the 1949 Geneva Convention.

The 1949 Geneva Conventions expressly prohibited attacking civilians. As referred to in Article 4 of the 1949 Geneva Convention, the persons protected by this Convention are those who are in a situation of conflict and emergency or fall into the hands of one of the Parties to the conflict. In addition, it is further elaborated in Article 13, which states that the protection of civilians applies to all residents of countries affected by conflict, without any adverse differences based on ethnicity, nationality, religion, or political situation, and is aimed at reducing the suffering caused by war.<sup>31</sup>

Then, the role of health workers and health facilities that is urgently needed in this conflict to provide assistance and treatment to victims of this conflict, but this is inevitable because health workers and health facilities are instead targeted in this conflict. In fact, the Geneva Convention in 1949 and the Additional Protocol in 1977 stated that medical personnel must be respected and protected at all times and are prohibited from being used as objects/targets of war. Geneva stated that in any conflict that occurred, there was a ban on attacking medical clinics by expecting an enemy in the medical clinic.

Then, 9 months have passed since the war between Israel and Palestine took place since the surprise attack was carried out by Hamas from Palestine to Israel, and for this action, Israel carried out a counterattack, which continues to this day. The attacks carried out by Israel against Palestine are considered immoral, and some rules have been regulated in the International Humanitarian Law, such as carrying out attacks on non-combatants, such as civilians, health workers, journalists, destroying civilian buildings, hospitals, places of worship, the use of phosphorus bombs and so on. The violations that have been violated in the

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<sup>30</sup> Eric A. Heinze, 'International Law, Self-Defense, and the Israel-Hamas Conflict', *Parameters*, 54.1 (2024), 71–85 <https://doi.org/10.55540/0031-1723.3273>

<sup>31</sup> Firdha Sifana and others, 'Analisis Konflik Israel-Palestina Ditinjau Dari Perspektif Instrumen HAM Internasional', *Media Hukum Indonesia*, 2.3 (2024), 20–27 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.11464763>

Palestinian-Israeli conflict are not only violations of the Convention but also violations of the principles of international humanitarian law.<sup>32</sup>

The existence of this principle of distinction is to know which side is allowed to enter the battle because by knowing who belongs to the combatant group, they must understand that one of the obligations of the combatants is to be involved in the war, no matter if they have to injure or even kill, because if they do not do this, then they will be attacked by paying attention to the target they will be attacked attack. From this explanation, it can be seen that the principle of differentiation will minimize deliberate violations of humanitarian law committed by combatants. In this case, Israel is considered to have violated the principle of distinction, where the attacks carried out on Palestine are not only carried out against Palestinian combatants but also against non-combatants.<sup>33</sup>

Israel's actions that do not distinguish between the parties who can be attacked are considered to have violated the principle of discrimination stipulated in the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 in Article 31, which contains a prohibition on torture in the form of corporal punishment or abuse of corporal punishment. Then, Supplementary Protocol I of 1977 Article 48 ensures respect and protection for the civilian population and civilian objects. Regarding attacks on journalists serving in conflict areas, they have been regulated, and the last is in Articles 13 and 51. This article explains the obligation to provide protection to civilians from military attacks, as well as the prohibition of conducting attacks without discriminating between targets. The convention also provides for the protection of journalists, namely in Article 79 in paragraph 1, explaining that journalists who perform duties in conflict areas must be considered civilians, and in paragraph 2, if they are protected under this protocol as long as they do not commit actions that could harm their position as civilians. Lastly, regarding the protection of medical personnel, it has been regulated in the Geneva Convention, Chapter IV, Article 24 has been explained if medical personnel carry out their duties to search, transport, treat the injured, and prevent diseases, and for clergy on duty must be protected and respected under any conditions.<sup>34</sup>

During a military war, the public has the legal right to access information pertaining to the current situation. Therefore, the media possess the entitlement to report on the circumstance. Journalists have frequently found themselves caught in

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<sup>32</sup> Mutaju Isaack Marobhe, Jonathan Mukiza Kansheba, and Ziaul Haque Munim, 'Geopolitical Uncertainty and Shipping Stock Returns: An Event Study of the Israel-Hamas Conflict', *Journal of Transport Geography*, 123 (2025), 104122 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jtrangeo.2025.104122>

<sup>33</sup> Nurlita Pratiwi, 'Pelanggaran Prinsip-Prinsip Hukum Humaniter Internasional Dalam Agresi Militer Israel Ke Palestina', *Jurnal Hukum Indonesia*, 3.2 (2024), 58–66 <https://doi.org/10.58344/jhi.v3i2.721>

<sup>34</sup> Tri Mahwati and Ana Nanda, 'Analysis of the Palestinian and Israeli Conflict in the Perspective of International Humanitarian Law', *International Law Discourse in Southeast Asia*, 1.1 (2022), 23–42 <https://doi.org/10.15294/ildisea.v1i1.56873>

the midst of armed conflicts during training exercises. Without a doubt, these circumstances present a serious danger to the capacity of journalists to carry out their responsibilities efficiently. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to prioritize the protection of individual journalists who report from areas of violence. The armed forces participating in the war have a duty to avoid causing harm or using violence against journalists who are conscientiously doing their vital function of providing the public with current information about the continuing conflicts.<sup>35</sup>

The primary objective of the 1949 Geneva Convention III is to establish the legal standing of those who are classified as Prisoners of War (POW). According to the Geneva Convention III, the state that detains individuals is obligated to provide proper care of its captives. The individuals in question are combatants of the opposing state who are currently held as prisoners. Prisoners who are combatants from an enemy state are afforded legal protection and are ensured the continuation of their rights. A journalist might be referred to as a war reporter after he possesses an identity card that serves as evidence of his credentials. As to Article 79 of Additional Protocol 1 (1977), journalists who are considered "independent" are regarded as civilians during armed conflict. They are entitled to all the rights and privileges that International Humanitarian Law grants to civilians. Thus, regardless of whether they are incarcerated or apprehended by him, they are shielded from the repercussions of animosity and capricious actions by the conflicting parties.<sup>36</sup> However, journalists covering the Palestinian and Israeli wars still face a significant number of casualties. The war has breached the Principle of Differentiation.

War will not bring profits but will only bring losses to the parties to the conflict, one of which is the presence of prisoners of war. International Humanitarian Law stipulates that all persons captured by the opposing side have the right to be treated as prisoners of war. The status of prisoners of war does not only apply to combatants who are unable to continue fighting but also applies to civilians who have been captured by the enemy to obtain the status of prisoners of war as stipulated in Articles 4A and 4B of the Geneva III Convention. Another impact caused by the ongoing war will make it difficult for people living in conflict areas to survive because of the destruction of objects that move in terms of food, and the destruction of the surrounding environment results in the difficulty of people to

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<sup>35</sup> Yordan Gunawan and others, 'Journalist Protection on the Battlefield Under the International Humanitarian Law: Russia-Ukraine War', *Jurnal Hukum Unissula*, 39.1 (2023), 1–11 <https://doi.org/10.26532/jh.v39i1.24685>

<sup>36</sup> Yordan Gunawan et al., 2023, "Journalist Protection on the Battlefield Under the International Humanitarian Law: Russia-Ukraine War," *Jurnal Hukum Unissula* 39, no. 1: 1–11, <https://doi.org/10.26532/jh.v39i1.24685>

grow crops. So, in this case, assistance from other countries is needed as a form of solidarity between nations.<sup>37</sup>

During the war between Israel and Palestine, both sides have arrested civilians who are then used for prisoner exchanges. This happened when a ceasefire was reached, which would be carried out from November 24, 2023, to November 28, 2023, and then received an additional two times, which was divided into two days and one day. During the prisoner exchange, many prisoners from Palestine were reported to have suffered injuries both physically and mentally. Reporting from The Cradle, the Israeli army electrocuted the detainees, used matches to burn their skin, and forbade them to eat and drink. Evidence of torture carried out by Israel was also supplemented by the statement of one of the Palestinian prisoners named Maysoon Musa Al-Jabali, who stated that if the Israeli prison authorities arbitrarily tortured women, they did not hesitate to spray poison gas. In addition to torture, she also experienced little feeding. In addition to torturing prisoners of war, Israel also blocks humanitarian aid, as the ruler occupying Gaza under the Geneva Conventions is obliged to ensure that civilians get access to basic necessities and must facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid, but this is not done by Israel.<sup>38</sup> From this incident, it is clear that Israel does not obey the principle of humanity in the Law of Humanity, even though in the principle of humanity, there is the idea that every human being must be able to show respect and concern for others even to the sworn enemy at the same time. Humanity is important for humans because this is what distinguishes humans from animals.<sup>39</sup>

In International Humanitarian Law, it has been stipulated that the target can only be a military object, but it does not exclude the possibility that a civilian object can be used as a military target if certain conditions are met. From this situation, it can be known that the principle of interest implies that the military can use all its power in war only to defeat the military object of the opponent.<sup>40</sup>

The United Nations Humanitarian Agency (OCHA) has reported a series of attacks carried out by Israel. It is known that the attacks destroyed 450 buildings, resulting in as many as 250,000 Palestinians having lost their homes. Amnesty International has also documented war crimes committed by Israel against attacks

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<sup>37</sup> Xuefan Dong, Chen Wang, and Ying Lian, 'Public Attitudes toward the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in China: A Text Mining Analysis', *Telematics and Informatics*, 98 (2025), 102243 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tele.2025.102243>

<sup>38</sup> Miriam Bradley, 'From Armed Conflict to Urban Violence: Transformations in the International Committee of the Red Cross, International Humanitarianism, and the Laws of War', *European Journal of International Relations*, 26.4 (2020), 1061–83 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066120908637>

<sup>39</sup> Dalia Alazzeah and Shahzad Uddin, 'Accountability and Sovereignty: Financial Controls in the Palestine-Israel Indigenous-Settler Relationship', *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, 101 (2025), 102784 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpa.2024.102784>

<sup>40</sup> LaiaLai Balcells Balcells and Jessica A. Stanton, 'Violence Against Civilians During Armed Conflict: Moving Beyond the Macro- and Micro-Level Divide', *Annual Review of Political Science*, 24 (2021), 45–69 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-041719-102229>



on residential homes without prior warning. Furthermore, Israel also carried out attacks on hospitals in Palestine, such as the Indonesian Hospital, Al-Ahli Al-Arabi Hospital, Al-Quds Hospital, and Al-Shifaa Hospital. As a result of the attack, many patients had to be immediately evacuated to other hospitals that were still safe from Israeli attacks. However, in the evacuation process, of course, there were problems related to very limited transportation as a result of the attack, plus the road terrain that was already filled with building debris made it difficult for vehicles to pass. After the hospital, attacks continued to be carried out on schools, universities, and religious sites such as mosques and churches. A separate reason for the Israeli attack is due to the allegation that the civilian object was used as a military base for Hamas, such as the news related to an Indonesian hospital that is suspected of being a headquarters for Hamas. However, the Israeli allegation is not proven true.<sup>41</sup>

The Civilian objects must be distinguished from military objects, where military targets generally include armed forces, military aircraft, warships, and buildings or objects proven to provide assistance in warfare, regardless of whether these objects are civilian in nature. If no evidence supports the claim that a civilian object has contributed to military efforts, the object must be protected from any form of attack by the opposing side. This principle is outlined in Annex I, Protocol I, Article 52, which emphasizes the general protection of civilian objects that should not be targeted during war. Furthermore, there are limitations on military attacks based on factors such as location, purpose, or use of objects, which must contribute to military actions in order to be considered legitimate targets. Even in cases where civilian objects are suspected of aiding military operations, such objects cannot be automatically considered as military targets without clear evidence. Article 57 of Protocol I further elaborate that military attacks must focus solely on military objects and combatants, and all efforts must be made to avoid civilian casualties and damage to civilian objects. Lastly, attacks on places of worship, which violate protections under international law, are addressed in Article 53 of Protocol I (1977), which provides specific protection for cultural objects and places of worship, prohibiting their use as targets in armed conflicts.<sup>42,43</sup>

International humanitarian law delineates restrictions governing the attributes and manufacture of weapons, stipulating the requisite criteria for their legitimate use in compliance with humanitarian principles. According to Article 36 of the Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, the responsible state shall

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<sup>41</sup> Nasir Khan, Sami Mejri, and Shawkat Hammoudeh, 'How Do Global Commodities React to Increasing Geopolitical Risks? New Insights into the Russia-Ukraine and Palestine-Israel Conflicts', *Energy Economics*, 138 (2024), 107812 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eneco.2024.107812>

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.* h.63

<sup>43</sup> Luigi Daniele, 'Incidental Harm in International Humanitarian Law and Its Contra Legem Antonyms in Recent Discourses on the Laws of War', *Journal of Conflict and Security Law*, 29.1 (2024), 21–54 <https://doi.org/10.1093/jcsl/krae004>

assess whether weapons comply with humanitarian law and other international regulations during their production.<sup>44</sup> This section mandates obligations for states. Similarly, for a weapon to be considered "lawful," it must have the ability to distinguish between combatants and non-combatant civilians. This principle emphasizes the necessity of safeguarding civilian populations during armed conflict, and any failure to maintain such differentiation may lead to breaches of international humanitarian law, complicating accountability for states that utilize indiscriminate or unlawful weaponry.<sup>45</sup>

### *Resolution of International Legal Organizations in Mediation of the Israel-Palestine Conflict*

The Israel-Palestine conflict is a long-lasting and complex conflict that has persisted for a substantial duration in modern history. These disputes involve several issues such as territorial disputes, religious conflicts, and human rights concerns, making them difficult to resolve. This disagreement carries significant implications, not just for the two countries directly engaged, but also for the stability of the surrounding area and the security of the entire world. Therefore, the world community attaches great significance to attaining a fair and ecologically conscientious solution. The UN, as a significant worldwide institution, can actively participate in resolving the Palestine-Israel issue, with the main goal of protecting humanity from the impending threat of war. The UN Charter has extensive provisions for the maintenance of global peace and security.<sup>46</sup>

With this in mind, the UN is expected to take collective measures effectively in an effort to prevent and avoid threats to peace, suppress acts of aggression or other violations against peace, and work on the Path of Peace. In the context of international peacekeeping and security efforts, the United Nations (UN) Charter outlines several principles relevant to resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. One of the key principles is the peaceful settlement of international disputes. The UN Charter specifies the steps that both member and non-member states must take when involved in a dispute. This principle is enshrined in Article 2, Paragraph 3, in conjunction with Chapters VI and VIII of the Charter. Before escalating a dispute to the UN, the involved parties are obligated to seek resolution through peaceful means, including negotiation, inquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial

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<sup>44</sup> Yordan Gunawan, Mohammad Haris Aulawi, and Andi Rizal Ramadhan., 'Command Responsibility of Autonomous Weapons Systems under International Humanitarian Law.', *Jurnal Cita Hukum (Indonesian Law Journal)*, 7.9 (2019), 355  
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.15408/jch.v7i3.11725>

<sup>45</sup> Fadhlan Nur Hakiem, Lolita Deby Mahendra Putri, and Nurbani Adine Gustianti, 'Dampak Normalisasi Hubungan Diplomatik Israel Dan Negara-Negara Arab Terhadap Kebijakan Luar Negeri Indonesia Di Timur Tengah', *Jurnal Dinamika Global*, 8.2 (2023), 305–18  
<https://doi.org/10.36859/jdg.v8i2.1883>

<sup>46</sup> Tamer Qarmout, 'Predictable in Their Failure: An Analysis of Mediation Efforts to End the Palestinian Split', *International Peacekeeping*, 31.3 (2024), 283–308  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13533312.2024.2338410>

settlement, or engagement with regional organizations or arrangements. These mechanisms aim to facilitate a peaceful resolution in accordance with international law and diplomatic processes.<sup>47</sup> Second, the principle of prohibiting the use of threats or force is a fundamental concept established in Article 2, Paragraph 4 of the UN Charter. As an organization committed to maintaining global peace and security, the UN relies on its members' adherence to these principles and the effectiveness of its institutions in ensuring compliance. Analyzing Article 2, Paragraph 4 in the context of the UN's practical implementation highlights three key aspects. First, it involves defining what constitutes a "threat or use of force." Second, it examines the limitations imposed on the use of force in "international relations." Third, it identifies the specific circumstances under which the use of force may be justified without violating the provisions of Article 2, Paragraph 4. Understanding these aspects is crucial for assessing the role of international law in conflict resolution and the enforcement of global peace and security.<sup>48</sup>

Third, the general principles of cooperation in maintaining international peace and security play a crucial role in the UN's efforts to foster global stability. The UN General Assembly addresses various international issues, including peacekeeping and security, by formulating principles of cooperation through extensive deliberations and the adoption of resolutions. These resolutions provide guidance for member states in several key areas, including establishing general principles for political relations, such as frameworks and procedures for achieving disarmament, developing and refining international legal rules to adapt to emerging global challenges, and strengthening UN bodies while enhancing mechanisms for maintaining international peace and security. Through these efforts, the General Assembly plays a fundamental role in shaping international norms and promoting multilateral collaboration to address security challenges effectively.<sup>49</sup>

Then The UN General Assembly plays a vital role in resolving international issues through intensive discussions and the adoption of resolutions. The UN General Assembly establishes cooperative norms among nations, offering direction to all UN member states in their political interactions, including disarmament initiatives. The enacted resolutions demonstrate the international community's commitment to preserving global stability through the promotion of disarmament to mitigate threats to world peace. The General Assembly functions as both a

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<sup>47</sup> Natasha Carmi, Mey Alsayegh, and Maysoon Zoubi, 'Empowering Women in Water Diplomacy: A Basic Mapping of the Challenges in Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan', *Journal of Hydrology*, 569 (2019), 330–46 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhydrol.2018.12.011>

<sup>48</sup> Daniel E Orenstein and Steven P Hamburg, 'To Populate or Preserve? Evolving Political-Demographic and Environmental Paradigms in Israeli Land-Use Policy', *Land Use Policy*, 26.4 (2009), 984–1000 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2008.12.003>

<sup>49</sup> Ho-Won Jeong, Charles Lerche, and Silvia Susnjic, 'Conflict Management and Resolution', in *Encyclopedia of Violence, Peace, & Conflict (Second Edition)*, ed. by Lester Kurtz, Second Edition (Oxford: Academic Press, 2008), pp. 379–90 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-012373985-8.00033-7>

discussion platform and a normative entity that aids in the establishment of worldwide behavior norms.<sup>50</sup>

Moreover, the UN General Assembly plays a crucial role in developing international legal frameworks and advancing efforts to maintain peace and security. This includes initiatives to strengthen UN entities responsible for global stability and conflict resolution. Through its resolutions and deliberations, the UN serves as the primary platform for the international community to address security concerns, reinforce its institutional framework, and promote peaceful conflict resolution strategies. With the re-escalation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which has persisted for 248 days, the role of the UN is more critical than ever in facilitating a resolution. This ongoing conflict has sparked opposition, particularly concerning humanitarian principles and the protection of civilian populations, which have long been central to limiting wartime casualties. The rationale for these restrictions in war is based on several factors: the extensive human suffering caused by war necessitates limitations on military conduct; the atrocities committed during war contradict human civilization, demanding that armed conflicts be constrained in accordance with human dignity; and the growing influence of humanitarian principles in shaping the laws of war.<sup>51</sup>

The intensifying conflict between Palestine and Israel necessitates a proactive intervention from the UN in mediating and resolving the persistent problem. This conflict, enduring for 248 days, contravenes humanitarian principles and infringes upon the standards of civilian protection. The extended unrestricted fighting has resulted in rising losses, necessitating the imposition of constraints on the conflict. The destruction inflicted upon humanity and the suffering experienced by people underscore the pressing necessity to restrict armed conflicts in alignment with human dignity and humanitarian values.<sup>52</sup>

The international community's response to the Palestine-Israel conflict has become progressively negative, with allegations that both parties are intensifying the hostilities. Global attention centres on breaches of international humanitarian law, which regulates civilian protection and the limitation of violence in armed conflict. Critical enquiries emerge regarding the potential continuation of the conflict in the absence of a definitive resolution, as well as the prosecution of war criminals from both factions under international law. The global community

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<sup>50</sup> S Prisca Delima, 'Ethnic Conflicts and Cooperation', in *Encyclopedia of Violence, Peace, & Conflict (Third Edition)*, ed. by Lester R Kurtz, Third Edition (Oxford: Academic Press, 2022), pp. 678–88 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-820195-4.00250-8>

<sup>51</sup> Jeremy Allouche, 'State Building, Nation Making and Post-Colonial Hydropolitics in India and Israel: Visible and Hidden Forms of Violence at Multiple Scales', *Political Geography*, 75 (2019), 102051 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2019.102051>

<sup>52</sup> Ofira Gruweis-Kovalsky and Yossi Katz, 'The Relocation of the Israeli Foreign Ministry in 1953 and the Jerusalem Question', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 46 (2014), 80–91 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhg.2014.04.002>

requires accountability, and the United Nations' function in upholding justice and enforcing legal standards is vital for de-escalating conflict and averting future escalation.<sup>53</sup>

The ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict has triggered strong reactions from the international community, with each side being accused of escalating the situation. This has raised critical questions about the future of the conflict and whether those responsible for war crimes can be brought to justice. In cases of violations of humanitarian law, three alternative enforcement mechanisms exist to hold war criminals accountable. First, under the 1949 Geneva Conventions and the 1977 Additional Protocols, states that have ratified these treaties are required to enact national laws imposing criminal penalties on individuals who commit or order serious violations, as stipulated in Article 49, Paragraph 1 of the 1949 Geneva Convention. Second, war crimes can be prosecuted through ad hoc tribunals, as seen historically in the trials following World War II. The Nuremberg Tribunal prosecuted Nazi war criminals in Germany, while the Tokyo Tribunal held Japanese war criminals accountable. More recently, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) were established to address war crimes in their respective regions. Third, the International Criminal Court (ICC), established by the Rome Statute in 1998, serves as a permanent institution for prosecuting the most serious crimes, including genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and crimes of aggression. The ICC operates under the principle of complementarity, meaning it can only exercise jurisdiction when national courts are unwilling or unable to prosecute those responsible. These mechanisms play a crucial role in enforcing international humanitarian law and ensuring accountability for war crimes.<sup>54</sup>

In cases of humanitarian law abuses, three enforcement options exist to penalize war criminals. Countries that have ratified the 1949 Geneva Conventions and the Additional Protocols of 1977 are obligated to enact national legislation that enforces criminal penalties for grave breaches of the Conventions. This approach underscores the significance of state accountability in the enforcement of international law via national judicial systems, guaranteeing that war crime perpetrators can be adequately prosecuted in their respective nations.<sup>55</sup>

Furthermore, there exist ad hoc systems employed under particular circumstances, exemplified by the Tokyo and Nuremberg tribunals that convicted

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<sup>53</sup> Joshua S Krasna and Hadar Lasry, 'Israel and the Emerging Strategic Architecture in the Middle East', *Orbis*, 67.2 (2023), 208–27 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.orbis.2023.03.005>

<sup>54</sup> Yaniv Belhassen, Natan Uriely, and Ortal Assor, 'The Touristification of a Conflict Zone: The Case of Bil'in', *Annals of Tourism Research*, 49 (2014), 174–89 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2014.09.007>

<sup>55</sup> Melissa McCracken, 'International Waters: Conflict, Cooperation, and Transformation', in *Reference Module in Earth Systems and Environmental Sciences* (Elsevier, 2024) <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-443-14082-2.00051-X>

war criminals following World War II. Ad hoc tribunals have been formed to adjudicate war crimes in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. Finally, the ICC, created by the Rome Statute in 1998, is a permanent tribunal with the authority to punish the gravest offences, including genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and aggression. The ICC acts as an adjunct to national courts, prosecuting cases where states are either unwilling or incapable of administering justice, so guaranteeing that perpetrators of grave offences are held accountable.

From the three humanitarian law enforcement mechanisms that have been mentioned, we can analyze one by one the possibilities to prosecute Israel should be held accountable for the war crimes it has committed. The initial mechanism, stipulating that nations that ratify the 1949 Geneva Convention and the 1977 Additional Protocol must enact domestic legislation that imposes efficient criminal penalties on wrongdoers, is challenging to implement due to Israel's ongoing failure to ratify the 1949 Geneva Convention. Israel's national law fails to effectively punish the perpetrators of crimes, as its priorities the protection of its own citizens who have committed these crimes.<sup>56</sup>

An alternative is to create a dedicated ad hoc Court specifically designed to handle the adjudication of Israeli crimes committed in Palestine. The UN Security Council possesses the power to issue a resolution for the creation of this Court, just as it did for the establishment of the ICTY and the ICTR. The UN Security Council, as the principal body responsible for maintaining worldwide peace and security, possesses the authority to detect possible threats to peace, violations of peace, and acts of aggression. The international community can continue to support the creation of a United Nations Security Council-backed tribunal to address Israeli war crimes. However, the difficulty lies in the fact that this resolution necessitates the unanimous approval of all five permanent members of the UN Security Council, specifically the United States of America, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, and the People's Republic of China. It is expected that the United States of America, which has always provided assistance to Israel, will refuse to accept the measure.<sup>57</sup>

From the United States' rejection of the resolution to a new controversy over the veto in the UN Security Council, the use of the veto in rejecting a peaceful resolution of the conflict is not the only time, but this case adds to the controversial list of veto rights in the eyes of UN member states and the international community. The reason is that with this veto right, the holders of the veto right can arbitrarily cancel the resolution proposed in conflict resolution. The structural reform of the UN Security Council is a form of solution to the dictatorship that has this veto. In addition, the abolition of the veto right is also caused by the principle of ownership and non-intervention owned by the holder of the veto right, which is

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<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.* h.935

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.* h.931

contrary to the principle of Sovereign Equality, which is also adopted in the UN charter. It is felt that the interests of other countries are also the same as the interests of the countries that hold the right of veto.<sup>58</sup>

The abuse of the veto right is also the basis for why this veto right should be abolished. Starting from the arbitrariness of the veto holder, the absence of certain criteria in the veto right to be able to cancel a resolution, as well as the injustice to other UN member states as a result of the veto decision that can invalidate all existing decisions so that the veto right must be abolished or at least there is no restriction on what kind of resolution criteria can only be rejected by the veto holder.

Moreover, war crimes committed by Israel fall directly under the jurisdiction of the ICC, a permanent judicial institution that has been functioning since 2002. Nonetheless, the ICC's jurisdiction is confined to countries that have formally ratified the 1998 Rome Statute. It is important to highlight that Israel has not ratified the 1998 Rome Statute. The imposition of penalties on Israel stems from the Israeli government's assertion that it has not officially ratified the Rome Statute and, thus, does not recognize the jurisdiction of the ICC. This presents a considerable legal and diplomatic obstacle, as Israel's non-recognition of the ICC diminishes the prospects for international legal accountability, restricting the international community's options to address alleged violations via the ICC and complicating initiatives to impose sanctions or pursue other forms of international justice.<sup>59</sup>

Then, Israel stated that Palestine should not be able to join the ICC because Israel considers that Palestine is not classified as a state.<sup>60</sup> The Palestinian nation's membership in the ICC on April 1, 2015, represented a key advancement in its legal approach to pursue justice for purported offenses during the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.<sup>61</sup> Article 12, paragraph (2) of the Rome Statute stipulates that the ICC possesses jurisdiction over crimes perpetrated inside the territories of member states, irrespective of the nationality of the offenders. This clause has enabled Palestine to seek accountability for breaches of international humanitarian law by Israel, a non-member state, via its declaration to the UN Secretary-General. By invoking Article 12, paragraph (3), Palestine conferred jurisdiction to the ICC over crimes perpetrated within its territory, so reinforcing its legal standing to solicit investigations.

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<sup>58</sup> M. A. Teguh, 'Relevansi Hak Veto PBB Dengan Prinsip Kedaulatan Yang Dianut Oleh PBB', *Jurnal Education and Development*, 9.1 (2021) <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.37081/ed.v9i1.2307>

<sup>59</sup> Eytan Gilboa, 'The Palestinian Campaign against Israel at the United Nations Human Rights Council', *Israel Affairs*, 27.1 (2021) <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/13537121.2021.1864849>

<sup>60</sup> Youla O. Aguw Armando Christofel Wirajaya, Michael G. Nainggolan, 'Penyelesaian Sengketa Palestina Dan Israel Menurut Hukum Internasional (Study Kasus Perampasan Wilayah Palestina Di Israel)', *Lex Et Societatis*, 7.4 (2020) <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.35796/les.v8i4.30909>

<sup>61</sup> ICC, *State of Palestine*, 2022.

This legal framework is pertinent to the efficacy of international law in mitigating humanitarian disasters in the Palestine-Israel conflict. Although Palestine's membership in the ICC offers a framework for resolving breaches of international law, its efficacy in mitigating humanitarian crises is constrained. The ICC's capacity to implement its decisions relies on the collaboration of member states and international entities, which is frequently absent in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict due to political opposition and Israel's denial of ICC jurisdiction. Consequently, although international law provides a possible avenue for responsibility and justice, political and diplomatic obstacles diminish its immediate efficacy in averting or alleviating humanitarian disasters in the region. Essentially, while Palestine's ICC membership enhances the legal framework for addressing war crimes, the practical constraints of international law in this conflict underscore the challenges of enforcement and the overarching difficulty in employing legal mechanisms to resolve deeply rooted political disputes.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The development of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict certainly tests the effectiveness of international law in limiting humanitarian disasters in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and depends heavily on consistent application and fair enforcement by the international community. Resolutions issued by organizations such as the UN provide an important legal framework for directing actions and policies aimed at reducing violence and protecting human rights. However, major challenges still exist in terms of compliance and acceptance by the parties to the conflict, which are often influenced by their respective political and security interests. Although international laws such as the 1947 Geneva Conventions and the Rome Statute offer clear principles regarding civil protection and respect for human rights, their implementation on the ground is often hampered by the lack of effective enforcement mechanisms and the reluctance of parties to the conflict to comply. For example, despite various resolutions demanding the cessation of illegal settlements and the recognition of Palestinian rights, the reality on the ground shows continued non-compliance, which worsens the humanitarian condition. The role of the international community, especially the UN, which consists of influential countries and includes non-governmental organizations, is very important in supporting the application of international law. Through diplomatic pressure, sanctions, and humanitarian assistance, the international community can encourage parties to conflict to respect international law and work toward a peaceful settlement. In addition, support for local initiatives that promote peace and reconciliation is also important to create an environment conducive to the protection of human rights.



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