



The Israel–Palestinian Conflict and Its Implications on Regional Stability in The Middle East

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ABSTRACT

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict remained one of the most protracted and complex conflicts in modern history, exerting profound humanitarian, political, and security implications on the Middle East. This study examined the impact of the ongoing conflict on regional stability, humanitarian conditions, and geopolitical dynamics. Guided by Intractable Conflict Theory, the study analyzed how deep-rooted grievances, identity-based hostilities, territorial disputes, and external interventions contributed to the persistence and escalation of violence. A historical research design and secondary were utilized to explore patterns of conflict and their broader consequences. The findings revealed significant humanitarian crises, including thousands of deaths, displacement, destruction of critical infrastructure, and worsening socio-economic conditions in Gaza and the West Bank. The conflict also generated cross-border instability, triggering refugee flows, heightened security concerns, and diplomatic tensions among neighboring states. Furthermore, the involvement of regional powers particularly Iran's support for Hamas intensified the conflict's complexity and prolonged its intractability. The study concluded that lasting peace remained elusive due to entrenched narratives, power asymmetries, and competing regional interests. It recommended enhanced international mediation, coordinated regional diplomacy, and comprehensive strategies

to address both humanitarian needs and the underlying drivers of the conflict.

Keywords: Israel-Palestine Conflict; Hamas; Middle East; Humanitarian Crisis

I. Introduction

Conflict constitutes one of the key analytical lenses through which international relations can be understood. It is an inevitable feature of human society, arising from the diverse interests, values, and aspirations that shape social interactions. Karl Marx posited that conflict is an intrinsic component of human existence and argued that it serves as a driving force for socio-economic and political transformation. This perspective contrasts sharply with the functionalist theory, which emphasizes harmony, stability, and cooperation among social groups as prerequisites for societal progress. According to Collier and Hoeffler (2004), conflict is a dynamic process of opposition and confrontation that emerges when individuals or groups perceive a divergence in interests, goals, or values and believe that these objectives cannot be pursued simultaneously. In the context of international relations, conflict denotes a situation in which the actions or interests of states or non-state actors are fundamentally incompatible, leading to discord. The contemporary global system has witnessed numerous conflicts, including the Congo Crisis of 1960, the war in Yemen, the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war, and the persistent Israel-Palestinian conflict among others.



The Israel–Palestine conflict is a complex, deeply rooted geopolitical and cultural struggle centered on the land historically known as Palestine, which today encompasses the modern state of Israel, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip (Said, 1992). For thousands of years, this region has been inhabited by diverse populations, including Jews, Christians, and Muslims, each attaching significant historical, religious, and cultural meaning to the land. This layered history contributes to the conflict’s intensity, as both Israelis and Palestinians lay claims to the same territory based on religious heritage, historical presence, and national identity. One of the major diplomatic approaches to resolving the conflict has been the two-state solution, a proposal to create two independent states—Israel and Palestine—living side by side in peace. Although the United Nations formally proposed such a partition in 1947, the idea itself dates back to the early 20th century, with multiple plans seeking to divide the British Mandate of Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab political entities (Morris, 2008). The 1947 UN Partition Plan was accepted by Jewish leaders but rejected by Arab leaders, leading directly to the 1948 Arab–Israeli War and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians. A widely referenced basis for the two-state model is the pre-1967 borders—also known as the Green Line which demarcated the boundary between Israel and the territories it captured during the 1967 Six-Day War, including the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem (Morris, 2008). Many contemporary peace proposals envision a Palestinian state comprising the West Bank and Gaza Strip, with East Jerusalem—sacred to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—serving as its capital.

In modern times, the origins of the conflict can be traced to the late 19th and early 20th centuries with the rise of competing nationalist movements: Zionism, which aimed to establish a Jewish homeland, and Arab nationalism, which sought political independence from European colonial rule and defended the Arab identity of Palestine (Gelvin, 2014). The question of Palestinian statehood remains unresolved, as Palestine’s quest for full international recognition continues to face political and diplomatic obstacles. Notably, in 2012, the United Nations General Assembly granted Palestine non-member observer state status, signaling partial but significant international recognition of Palestinian nationhood (UNGA, 2012, (Smith, 2010; Cleveland & Bunton, 2016). Politically, Palestinian governance remains divided. The Palestinian Authority (PA), created

under the 1993 Oslo Accords, administers parts of the West Bank and is led by Mahmoud Abbas, who also chairs the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). In contrast, the Gaza Strip has been under the control of Hamas since 2007 following internal Palestinian political conflict. Israel maintains substantial control over the West Bank and blockades Gaza, further complicating the political and administrative landscape (Gelvin, 2014, Morris, 2001; Khalidi, 2006).

The Israel–Palestine conflict has far-reaching implications for regional stability in the Middle East. Its impact manifests across several dimensions, including severe humanitarian crises, rising levels of terrorism and radicalization, strained regional alliances, proxy conflicts involving major powers, and significant disruptions to economic activities and development. The conflict continues to influence political relations among Middle Eastern states, shape global diplomatic alignments, and contribute to periodic escalations of violence that threaten broader regional security. It is against this complex backdrop that this paper seeks to examine the implications of the Israel–Palestine conflict for regional stability in the Middle East, with particular attention to its humanitarian, political, and security dimensions.

Concept of Conflict

Conflict is a fundamental aspect of human interaction and social organization, arising from differences in interests, values, goals, and perceptions among individuals, groups, or states. It is considered an inevitable feature of human society because people and social entities often pursue competing objectives within limited resources or divergent ideological frameworks. Scholars in the social sciences generally view conflict not merely as a destructive phenomenon, but as a dynamic process that can generate both negative and positive outcomes depending on how it is managed (Deutsch, 1973). From a sociological perspective, conflict theory, pioneered by Karl Marx, posits that conflict is inherent in social relations and stems primarily from inequalities in power, wealth, and access to resources. Marx argued that conflict serves as an engine for social change and historical development, as marginalized groups challenge the dominant structures of power. This view contrasts with functionalist thinkers such as Emile Durkheim and Talcott Parsons, who emphasize harmony, stability, and cooperation as the basis of social order. Functionalists argue that social institutions work collectively to maintain equilibrium, therefore



prioritizing consensus over confrontation (Ritzer, 2011).

In political science and international relations, conflict is understood more specifically as a situation in which the actions, interests, or objectives of actors—whether individuals, groups, or states—are incompatible or mutually obstructive. Collier and Hoeffler (2004) define conflict as a dynamic process of opposition arising when parties perceive that their interests cannot be realized simultaneously. Within international relations, conflict usually involves states or non-state actors engaging in diplomatic, economic, or military confrontation to protect or advance their interests. Such conflicts may manifest as interstate wars, civil wars, insurgencies, proxy conflicts, or prolonged political disputes fueled by nationalism, territorial claims, ideological competition, or resource scarcity (Waltz, 2001). Psychological perspectives highlight the cognitive and emotional dimensions of conflict, noting that misperceptions, stereotypes, fear, and mistrust often escalate tensions between parties. This approach suggests that conflict is not always rooted in material interests but can be driven by identity, values, and historical grievances (Burton, 1990).

Overall, the concept of conflict encompasses a broad range of interactions marked by disagreement, opposition, or incompatibility. While conflict can lead to violence, instability, and social disintegration, it can also catalyze reforms, strengthen institutions, and foster societal transformation when addressed constructively. Thus, conflict is best understood not only as a challenge but also as a potential driver of change within human societies and the international system.

Historical Overview of the Israel–Palestinian Conflict

In the past century, a multitude of local, regional, and international actors have influenced the evolution of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. Oren (2011) stated that a comprehensive analysis of contemporary events is difficult without thoroughly examining the historical background. This historical overview encompasses the period of the British Mandate preceding the establishment of Israel, the subsequent escalation of oppression and violence against Palestinians, resistance against settler colonialism, and different actors that played a role over the last century. Scholars such as Khalidi (2020) and Pappé (2006) emphasize that the roots of the conflict lie not only in competing nationalisms but also in deliberate political decisions made by colonial powers, especially Britain, which

structured the political and demographic realities that shaped later conflict dynamics. The letter written by British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour to Lionel Walter Rothschild, commonly known as the Balfour Declaration, contained the following statement: “His Majesty’s Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object (Burak, 2023). Burak noted that during its period of control, Britain facilitated a significant Jewish immigration process to Palestine, including those fleeing Nazi Germany, and initiated land confiscation (Burak, 2023). This period aimed at a substantial demographic transformation and intensified pressure on the Palestinian population. Historians such as Morris (2004) and Shlaim (2014) confirm that the demographic engineering undertaken during the Mandate era fundamentally altered the political landscape. Oren (2011) noted that between 1936–1939, there was an Arab Revolt. The newly formed Arab Higher Committee called for a general strike and boycott among the Palestinian population. Despite the resistance from peasants and the general populace, the British Mandate responded with house demolitions, mass arrests, and killings. Contemporary analyses (Smith, 2021; Seikaly, 2016) highlight that this revolt represented the first major Palestinian uprising against both British colonial rule and Zionist settlement expansion.

Between 1939–1948 there was a Jewish Terror Campaign. During this phase, Zionist militants created several terrorist organizations. One of them went by the name of Irgun. This terrorist organization proclaimed a revolt, on 1 February 1944, against the British mandatory government. The leader of this organization was Menachem Begin, who later became the Prime Minister of Israel. Begin was described by the British government as the “leader of the notorious terrorist organization.” Among the terror actions orchestrated by Irgun was the bombing of the offices of the British Mandate’s Immigration Department and the Income Tax Offices in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and Haifa, followed by a series of attacks on police stations in which six policemen were killed (Oren, 2011). Researchers such as Bowyer-Bell (1996) and Flapan (1987) also recorded these attacks as part of a broader campaign aimed at weakening British authority. Menachem Begin later ordered an attack on the British military and administrative headquarters at the King David Hotel, destroying the building’s southern wing, and



91 people, mostly British, were killed. Another terrorist leader, Yitzhak Shamir, who became the seventh prime minister of Israel, serving two terms, had orchestrated several terror operations through the Stern Gang. One key target was Lord Moyne, the British Resident Minister in the Middle East, who was assassinated. Shamir was also among the plotters behind the assassination of the United Nations representative in the Middle East, Count Folke Bernadotte, who was killed in September 1948 (Oren, 2011). These activities are widely recognized in declassified British archives and scholarly works such as those by Horne (2019).

In 1947, the United Nations (UN) came up with a Partition Plan for Palestine. The partition of the land between Palestinians and Jews was proposed through United Nations Resolution 181. The Palestinian people objected to the plan because it allocated approximately 55% of the land to the Jewish state, which included the fertile coastal areas. At that time, the Jewish population was roughly equivalent to 33% of the Palestinian population (Council on Foreign Relation, 2024). Finkelstein (2012) argue that the Resolution disproportionately rewarded the Zionist movement despite Jewish ownership of only about 7% of the land at the time. After the plan, the first Arab-Israeli War broke out. Between 1947–1949, the Arab-Israeli War and Nakba unfolded. The Nakba, meaning “catastrophe” in Arabic, refers to the forced displacement and dispossession of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians during and after the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. It led to the establishment of the State of Israel and the displacement of an estimated 700,000 to 800,000 Palestinians, creating a large population of Palestinian refugees who lost their homes and property (Council on Foreign Relation, 2024). Masalha (2012) and Abu-Lughod (2007) document the systematic nature of these expulsions. The total share of Palestinian land was reduced to approximately 22%, which now corresponds to the occupied territories of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Between 1949 and 1967, what is now recognized as the Gaza Strip within contemporary Palestinian territory was under the control of Egyptian forces, initially from the Kingdom of Egypt and subsequently, starting in 1958, from the United Arab Republic (Council on Foreign Relation, 2024).

In 1964, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was founded to represent the Palestinian people and advocate for self-determination and the establishment of a Palestinian state. Over time, the PLO evolved, officially recognizing Israel and engaging in peace

negotiations, with its main faction, Fatah, founded as a political party in 1965. Sayigh (1997) noted that the PLO became an influential actor shaping Palestinian identity and national aspirations. In 1967, the Six-Day War or the Third Arab-Israeli War broke out. The Six-Day War of 1967 was a brief but significant conflict between Israel and a coalition of Arab states, including Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Iraq. Israel captured territories including the Sinai Peninsula, Gaza Strip, West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights (Council on Foreign Relation, 2024). Gelvin (2014) highlighted that this war marked the beginning of the contemporary occupation, reshaping the geopolitical landscape and intensifying Palestinian dispossession. In 1978, the Camp David Accords were signed as a series of negotiations between Israel and Egypt mediated by the United States. The accords led to a peace treaty between Israel and Egypt in 1979, the first between Israel and an Arab state. They also established a framework for autonomy for the Palestinian territories, although the Palestinian issue was not fully resolved at that time. Critics such as Said (1984) argue that the Accords sidelined Palestinians and cemented the occupation.

In 1978, Israel invaded Lebanon in what was known as “Operation Litani.” It was prompted by what is known as the Coastal Road massacre in Israel and aimed to push Palestinian resistance groups, particularly the PLO, away from the Israeli border. Israeli forces advanced into southern Lebanon, creating a buffer zone along the Litani River. The operation led to the establishment of UNIFIL and marked the beginning of a series of conflicts in the region (Burak, 2023). Fisk (2001) and Norton (2007) emphasized the long-term destabilizing influence of Israel’s presence in Lebanon. Between 1982–2000, Israel’s second invasion of Lebanon unfolded. Also known as the 1982 Lebanon War, it began when Israel launched a full-scale military invasion with the primary objective of driving the PLO out of Lebanon and establishing an occupied zone in the south. This invasion resulted in the expulsion of the PLO from Lebanon and led to the emergence of Hezbollah as a resistance group sponsored by Iran (Burak, 2023). After two decades of guerrilla operations, Israel withdrew from most of Lebanon in 2000, although clashes continued intermittently. Blanford (2011) and Takeyh (2000) highlight that this period constituted a major transformation in regional resistance movements.

Hamas is a Palestinian political and militant organization established in 1987 during the



First Intifada (1987–1993), with Sheikh Ahmed Yassin among its founders. Known for its Muslim Brotherhood ideology, it has governed the Gaza Strip since 2007, following its electoral victory and subsequent conflict with Fatah. It is recognized as a legitimate political entity by some and designated a terrorist organization by others. The Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, its military wing, expanded significantly after 2007. Milton-Edwards and Farrell (2010) emphasized that Hamas' rise reflects wider frustrations with the failures of the peace process, continued occupation, and socio-economic hardships in Gaza. The emergence of Hamas also deepened internal Palestinian political divisions, shaping the political landscape of the modern conflict.

On October 7, 2023, Hamas's Qassam Brigades launched a coordinated and unprecedented incursion into southern Israel from the besieged Palestinian enclave of Gaza, operating under the codename "Al-Aqsa Flood" operation. The offensive involved multiple vectors of attack, including land infiltrations, paragliding operations, and maritime incursions, in addition to the launch of thousands of rockets targeting civilian and military sites across southern and central Israel (Council on Foreign Relations, 2024). The scale and intensity of this assault marked a significant escalation in the conflict, surpassing previous engagements in terms of coordination and casualties. According to reports, the operation resulted in a substantial loss of life on both sides, including civilians and combatants, and numerous injuries that overwhelmed regional hospitals and emergency response units. In addition to mass casualties, Hamas operatives captured several Israeli soldiers and civilians, creating a complex hostage situation. These captives are widely perceived as leverage in potential future negotiations or prisoner exchanges, which adds another layer of strategic calculation to the conflict (Council on Foreign Relations, 2024). The unprecedented nature of this attack has drawn comparisons to earlier episodes of intensified hostilities, such as the Second Intifada (2000–2005), but experts note that the scale of cross-border infiltration and simultaneous missile strikes represents a novel operational capability for Hamas (Milton-Edwards & Farrell, 2010; Roy, 2011).

In response, Israel launched retaliatory strikes across Gaza, targeting military infrastructure, tunnels, and positions associated with Hamas. However, these strikes have also impacted civilian areas, including hospitals, schools, and residential neighborhoods, leading to widespread destruction and displacement. Human rights

organizations and international legal experts have condemned some of these actions, citing potential violations of international humanitarian law, particularly the principles of proportionality and distinction in armed conflict (Council on Foreign Relations, 2024; Finkelstein, 2012). The escalation of violence has thus exacerbated the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, intensifying food and medical shortages and undermining efforts to provide relief to the affected population.

Causes of the Israel–Palestine Conflict

The Israel–Palestine conflict is rooted in a combination of historical, political, religious, and socio-economic factors. Its causes are multidimensional, reflecting local grievances and broader regional and international dynamics.

i. Historical Claims and Territorial Disputes:

One of the primary causes of the conflict is competing historical claims to the land of Palestine. Jewish historical ties to the land date back thousands of years, while Palestinians, predominantly Arabs, have lived in the region for centuries. The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, following the United Nations Partition Plan, led to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians in an event known as the Nakba ("catastrophe"), creating deep-seated resentment and unresolved territorial disputes (Gelvin, 2014; Oren, 2011).

ii. **Zionism and Arab Nationalism:** The rise of Zionism, a nationalist movement advocating for a Jewish homeland, and Arab nationalism, seeking independence from colonial rule, further fueled tensions. Zionist immigration to Palestine, especially during the early 20th century and following the Holocaust, led to demographic changes and competition for land and resources. Arab nationalist movements resisted what they perceived as settler colonialism, resulting in clashes, uprisings, and the Arab Revolt of 1936–1939 (Gelvin, 2014; Khalidi, 2017).

iii. **Religious Significance:** Religious claims over Jerusalem and other holy sites have intensified the conflict. Jerusalem holds profound spiritual significance for Jews, Christians, and Muslims, making sovereignty and access to these sites a persistent source of contention. Disputes over control of religious sites, particularly



- the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Western Wall, continue to spark violence and uprisings (Said, 1992; Morris, 2008).
- iv. **Refugee Crisis and Displacement:** The mass displacement of Palestinians during the 1948 Arab-Israeli War and subsequent wars, including the Six-Day War of 1967, created a protracted refugee crisis. Millions of Palestinians live in refugee camps in Gaza, the West Bank, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria, fueling grievances, social unrest, and intergenerational trauma.
 - v. **External Interference and Regional Politics:** The involvement of regional and international powers has also been a major cause of conflict escalation. States such as Iran, the United States, and neighboring Arab countries have supported different factions politically, financially, or militarily. This external interference often prolongs hostilities, strengthens armed groups, and complicates peace negotiations.

In summary, the Israel–Palestine conflict is caused by a complex interplay of historical grievances, territorial disputes, nationalist movements, colonial legacies, religious claims, refugee crises, regional interference, political fragmentation, and security dilemmas. Understanding these causes is essential for designing strategies for conflict resolution and promoting regional stability in the Middle East.

Empirical Studies

Several scholars have examined the Israel–Palestine conflict and its impact on regional stability in the Middle East, highlighting security, economic, and humanitarian dimensions. Enodien, Eze, and Karibi-Botoye (2024) investigated the conflict's effects on Middle Eastern regional stability. Their study revealed that the protracted hostilities have caused thousands of civilian casualties, extensive displacement, and the destruction of critical infrastructure, including hospitals, schools, and banks. The authors noted that the involvement of regional powers, particularly Iran, has further complicated the conflict by supporting Hamas, thereby prolonging hostilities. They recommended that the international and regional community adopt comprehensive strategies to dismantle support networks and curb terrorism.

Gelvin (2014) conducted a historical analysis of the Israel–Palestine conflict, emphasizing how national movements—Zionism

and Arab nationalism—shaped the socio-political landscape of the region. Gelvin argued that the conflict not only affects the local population but also has significant implications for neighboring countries, especially regarding refugee flows, economic strain, and regional security alliances. Shlaim (2014) examined the consequences of recurring escalations in the conflict, focusing on the interplay between local disputes and broader geopolitical interests. The study highlighted how interventions by external actors, including Iran and the United States, influence the military and political capabilities of local actors like Hamas and the Palestinian Authority, often exacerbating instability in neighboring states such as Lebanon, Jordan, and Egypt.

Oren (2011) explored the historical evolution of the conflict, including the British Mandate period, the Arab Revolt, the 1948 Nakba, and subsequent wars, such as the Six-Day War of 1967. Oren emphasized that historical grievances, territorial disputes, and external support for both Israel and Palestinian factions have consistently undermined regional security and contributed to cycles of violence. Burak (2023) analyzed the humanitarian and infrastructural impact of recent escalations, including Israeli military operations in Gaza between 2008 and 2021. The study documented the destruction of civilian infrastructure, massive casualties, and the impediment of reconstruction efforts due to blockades, highlighting the conflict's destabilizing effect on Gaza and its ripple effects on the wider Middle East.

Hoffman (2016) examined the strategic dimensions of the Israel–Palestine conflict, focusing on the role of non-state actors such as Hamas and Hezbollah. The study found that the militarization of these groups, often backed by regional powers like Iran, has contributed to the protraction of the conflict and posed serious security challenges to neighboring states. Hoffman emphasized that these dynamics not only escalate local violence but also have implications for global counterterrorism efforts. Gordon (2018) analyzed the economic and humanitarian consequences of repeated escalations in Gaza. The study documented severe disruptions to local markets, destruction of infrastructure, and increased unemployment, which in turn amplified social instability. Gordon argued that economic degradation in Gaza contributes to cycles of radicalization and insecurity, affecting broader regional stability in the Middle East.



Khalidi (2017) conducted a historical-empirical study on Palestinian displacement and refugee flows. The research highlighted how the Nakba of 1948 and subsequent military operations have created enduring refugee populations, not only in Gaza and the West Bank but also in Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria. Khalidi concluded that unresolved refugee issues exacerbate tensions in host countries, thereby threatening regional peace and security. Roy (2019) investigated the impact of Israeli settlement expansion in the West Bank on regional political dynamics. The study found that settlement policies have heightened tensions with Palestinians and fueled resentment among neighboring Arab states. Roy emphasized that the expansion undermines prospects for a two-state solution, intensifies conflict cycles, and complicates peace negotiations, with significant implications for regional stability.

Impact of the Conflict on Humanitarian Crisis

The Israel–Palestine conflict has produced a severe and ongoing humanitarian crisis, affecting millions of lives across Gaza, the West Bank, and Israel. UN Secretary-General António Guterres highlighted the gravity of the situation in a report to the Security Council, noting that hostilities in Gaza and Israel have created “appalling human suffering, physical destruction, and collective trauma,” prompting his exceptional invocation of Article 99 of the UN Charter. Despite these warnings, the conflict continues unabated, exacerbating the humanitarian catastrophe (UN, 2024). According to the Ministry of Health in Gaza, over 38,000 Palestinians have been killed, with approximately 87,000 injured and thousands reported missing, many of whom are women and children. On the Israeli side, over 1,500 civilians and foreign nationals have been killed, with more than 7,000 injured and 125 hostages still held in Gaza (BBC, 2024).

Between October 7, 2023, and July 17, 2025, the Gaza Health Ministry reported that 58,380 Palestinians, including 138 children, were killed in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem. The majority of these deaths occurred during Israeli security operations or exchanges with Palestinian armed groups, with 540 killed by Israeli forces, 10 by Israeli settlers, and 7 by perpetrators whose identities remain uncertain (UN, 2024). During the same period, 22 Israelis, including nine members of the Israeli security forces, were killed by Palestinians in Israel and the occupied West Bank (UN, 2024). These figures highlight the indiscriminate nature of violence and the persistent

threat to civilian life on both sides of the conflict. The displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians continues to create long-term challenges, as many live in refugee camps in Gaza, the West Bank, and neighboring countries under precarious conditions, lacking access to clean water, food, and healthcare (Khalidi, 2017).

The humanitarian infrastructure in Gaza is nearing total collapse. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, 2024) reported that public order has broken down entirely, and the risk of regional spillover is increasing as exchanges of fire along the Blue Line between Hizbullah and Israel continue. According to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (2024), nearly half a million people in Gaza face catastrophic levels of food insecurity. Access to clean water, sanitation, hygiene, and healthcare services has been severely restricted due to fuel shortages, while communicable diseases are spreading rapidly. Humanitarian operations face deadly risks, with convoys often unable to safely deliver aid, particularly through the crucial Kerem Shalom crossing. Attacks on aid workers, shelters, and health facilities, combined with rampant lawlessness and criminality, have further compounded the crisis (UN, 2024). Israeli measures have also undermined the Palestinian Authority and destabilized the economy, exacerbating the humanitarian situation. In June 2024, the Israeli security cabinet approved steps including the legalization of five Israeli outposts in the West Bank, the advancement of thousands of settlement housing units, and demolitions in parts of Area B. While Israel also lifted the suspension of partial clearance revenues collected on behalf of the Palestinians and renewed banking indemnities critical for fiscal stability, these measures remain insufficient to alleviate the deepening humanitarian crisis (UN, 2024; UNHCR, 2024).

In summary, the conflict has triggered a multifaceted humanitarian catastrophe encompassing mass casualties, displacement, food insecurity, public health crises, destruction of infrastructure, and economic instability. The ongoing violence, combined with restrictions on humanitarian access, underscores the urgent need for international intervention and coordinated efforts to provide relief, protect civilians, and restore basic services in the affected areas.

Implications on Political and Security Administration

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has profound implications for political governance and



security administration both within the immediate region and in the wider Middle East. Politically, the protracted nature of the conflict has entrenched divisions within Palestinian leadership, primarily between Hamas in Gaza and the Palestinian Authority (PA) in the West Bank. This internal political fragmentation undermines coherent governance, weakens institutional capacity, and complicates the implementation of laws and administrative policies. For instance, repeated Israeli military operations in Gaza disrupt local governance structures, including schools, hospitals, and municipal services, which are essential for maintaining civil order (Gelvin, 2014; UN, 2024).

In Israel, the ongoing conflict shapes domestic political priorities and security policies. The government has increasingly prioritized military expenditure, border security, and intelligence operations, sometimes at the expense of social and economic programs. Policymakers face pressure to maintain a strong security posture in the face of attacks by Hamas, Hezbollah, and other militant groups, leading to a securitization of governance that affects political decision-making and the allocation of national resources (Khalidi, 2021).

Security administration in the region is heavily influenced by militarization and the need to counter both conventional and asymmetric threats. Israel's defense forces conduct continuous intelligence operations, aerial surveillance, and targeted military strikes to prevent incursions and attacks, while Palestinian security forces face challenges in controlling militancy within Gaza and the West Bank. The presence of non-state actors such as Hamas and Hezbollah further complicates traditional security management, forcing regional governments to adopt both military and diplomatic strategies simultaneously (Oren, 2011).

The conflict also impacts international security administration and cooperation. Neighboring states such as Egypt, Jordan, and Lebanon are forced to engage in border control, refugee management, and counter-terrorism measures to prevent the conflict from spilling over. Cross-border security coordination, including with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and other peacekeeping missions, reflects the increasing regionalization of security governance. However, these measures are often hampered by political tensions and differing national interests, highlighting the challenge of implementing cohesive regional security frameworks (International Crisis Group, 2022). Furthermore, the conflict has weakened public trust

in governance structures. Both Palestinian and Israeli civilians experience disruption of essential services, insecurity, and displacement, which erodes confidence in political leaders' ability to ensure safety and uphold the rule of law. In Gaza, for example, repeated military incursions have paralyzed administrative institutions, while in Israel, frequent rocket attacks on civilian areas compel local authorities to prioritize emergency response over long-term development (UN, 2024; BBC, 2024).

In summary, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has far-reaching implications for political stability and security administration. It exacerbates internal political divisions, drives militarization, stresses governance institutions, complicates regional security cooperation, and diminishes public trust in government. The protracted nature of the conflict underscores the need for integrated political and security solutions that address governance weaknesses, ensure civilian protection, and facilitate long-term institutional stability.

Implication of the Conflict on the Stability of the Middle East

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict represents a significant threat to the stability of the Middle East, with potential for broader regional escalation. UN Secretary-General António Guterres has emphasized that the risk of a regional spillover remains extremely high, warning that a full-scale conflict between Israel and Hizbullah could be catastrophic for Lebanon and the wider Middle East (UN, 2024). Since the outbreak of hostilities on 7 October 2023, over 304 Palestinians, including 79 children, have been killed in the occupied West Bank, where settler violence persists as a grave concern (UN, 2024). During the same period, at least eight Israelis, including members of the Israel Defense Forces, were killed in attacks in the West Bank and West Jerusalem. Daily exchanges of fire across the Blue Line, coupled with strikes deeper into Lebanese territory, further heighten the risk of a wider regional conflict (UN, 2024).

Humanitarian observers have raised alarm over the forcible displacement of Palestinians within Gaza and the escalating violence by armed Israeli settlers in the West Bank. Itay Epshtain, Senior Humanitarian Law and Policy Consultant at the Norwegian Refugee Council, warned that Israel's military operations push civilians closer to Gaza's southern border, raising the prospect of mass deportations to Egypt. Moreover, he highlighted that certain government officials indirectly



encourage settler violence, while military forces sometimes facilitate or participate in these attacks. Such dynamics threaten not only Palestinian lives but also regional peace and security (UN, 2024).

From the Israeli perspective, authorities stress the persistent threat posed by militant groups seeking to target civilians. Israel's representatives argued that rocket attacks from Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen, particularly by Iranian-backed Hezbollah, have displaced tens of thousands of Israeli civilians along the northern border. They warned that continued attacks could escalate into a full-scale war, with Israel prepared to defend its population. Officials highlighted what they perceive as selective international attention, where violence against Israelis receives less condemnation compared to attacks on other civilians in the region (UN, 2024). Regional powers have further complicated the conflict. Iran remains Hamas's most significant external supporter, providing financial aid, military training, and weapons. Reports indicate that Hamas receives up to \$70 million annually from Iran, and around 500 Hamas fighters were trained in Iran prior to the October 7, 2023 attacks, illustrating the depth of Iran's involvement in sustaining the conflict (International Crisis Group, 2022; BBC, 2024). This support allows Hamas to maintain operational capabilities and strengthens Iran's influence across the Levant by backing groups opposed to Israel.

Lebanon's contribution to the conflict primarily occurs through Hezbollah, a Shiite militant group with ideological and tactical alignment with Hamas. While Hezbollah and Hamas differ in religious orientation—Hezbollah being Shiite and Hamas Sunni—they share opposition to Israel and coordinate on strategic and military fronts. The Lebanese government does not openly support Hamas; however, the presence of Hezbollah and sympathetic groups provides a conducive environment for Hamas's activities. Hezbollah's leader, Hassan Nasrallah, has repeatedly expressed support for the Palestinian cause, contributing to a regional security dilemma whereby localized conflicts risk escalating into broader interstate confrontations (UN, 2024).

The cumulative effect of these factors demonstrates how the Israeli-Palestinian conflict transcends local boundaries and destabilizes the wider Middle East. The interplay of territorial disputes, external state support, and armed non-state actors exacerbates volatility in Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, and beyond. The sustained militarization, refugee flows, and proxy interventions underscore the urgent need for multilateral diplomatic efforts

aimed at conflict resolution, the prevention of humanitarian collapse, and stabilization of the region.

Consequences of the Israel-Palestine Conflict

The Israel-Palestine conflict has produced severe and multifaceted consequences, affecting political, social, economic, and humanitarian dimensions in the region.

a. Loss of Life and Human Suffering

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has led to devastating loss of life and immense human suffering. Civilians, including women and children, bear the brunt of hostilities, often caught in crossfire, airstrikes, and ground operations. According to UN reports (2024), tens of thousands of Palestinians have been killed or injured since the escalation of violence in October 2023, with many more unaccounted for. Similarly, Israeli civilians face continuous threats from rocket attacks and incursions, resulting in fatalities and injuries. Beyond the immediate physical harm, generations of people endure long-term trauma and psychological distress. Displacement is widespread, as families are forced to flee homes in Gaza, the West Bank, and border towns in Israel, creating humanitarian crises and a cycle of vulnerability for future generations (BBC, 2024). The psychological impact extends beyond individuals to entire communities, eroding social cohesion and fostering mistrust and fear among populations that have endured repeated waves of conflict.

b. Economic Devastation

The conflict has severely undermined the economic stability of the region. Repeated military operations, airstrikes, and ground invasions have destroyed critical infrastructure, including schools, hospitals, power plants, water facilities, and businesses, particularly in Gaza. The destruction limits the ability of local economies to function, exacerbating unemployment and poverty. According to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (2024) and UNHCR (2024), almost half a million people in Gaza face catastrophic food insecurity, while access to essential goods and services remains severely restricted due to blockades, damaged supply chains, and destruction of commercial infrastructure. In Israel, border towns and areas near conflict zones face economic disruption as businesses close, transportation is restricted, and labor productivity is affected by security concerns. The economic devastation directly impacts daily life, limiting access to healthcare, education, and basic necessities, while



creating long-term structural damage that will take years, if not decades, to repair.

c. **Social Displacement and Refugee Crises**

The ongoing conflict has generated massive displacement and refugee crises, particularly among Palestinians. Large numbers of families have been forced to flee their homes due to military operations, airstrikes, and destruction of residential areas. Many seek refuge in overcrowded shelters within Gaza, the West Bank, or neighboring countries, facing dire living conditions, limited access to healthcare, clean water, and food (UNHCR, 2024). The refugee situation fuels intergenerational poverty and vulnerability, as displaced children often miss schooling and access to basic services. Social displacement also exacerbates tensions in host communities and heightens the risk of social unrest. Prolonged displacement creates a cycle of dependency on humanitarian aid while impeding long-term development and reconstruction.

d. **Humanitarian Aid Challenges**

The delivery of humanitarian aid in conflict zones faces numerous obstacles, including restricted access, safety risks for aid workers, and logistical challenges. Humanitarian convoys frequently cannot reach civilians due to military operations, blockades, or attacks near critical crossings (UN, 2024). Medical facilities, shelters, and food distribution points are often targeted or damaged, making it difficult to provide life-saving support. The restricted movement of goods and personnel exacerbates shortages of essential supplies, including food, medicine, and fuel, leaving civilians vulnerable to malnutrition, disease, and further displacement.

e. **Militarization and Arms Proliferation**

The conflict has fueled militarization on both sides, leading to the proliferation of weapons and armed groups. Palestinian militant organizations, including Hamas, continue to acquire weapons through regional backers like Iran, while Israel maintains a highly advanced military arsenal (International Crisis Group, 2022). The presence of heavily armed groups and advanced military technologies escalates the risk of violence, prolongs hostilities, and reduces prospects for peaceful negotiation. Militarization also diverts resources away from essential development needs, further entrenching cycles of conflict and insecurity.

Theoretical Framework

This study adopts the Intractable Conflict Theory as its theoretical framework. Intractable

conflicts are conflicts that are prolonged, resistant to resolution, and characterized by deep-rooted issues, high levels of hostility, and complex interdependencies among the parties involved (Azar, 1990; Coleman, 2006). Such conflicts are often entrenched due to historical grievances, identity-based disputes, territorial claims, and perceived existential threats, making them difficult to resolve through conventional negotiation methods (Bar-Tal, 2013). Intractable Conflict Theory emphasizes that parties in such conflicts often perceive their adversaries as threats to their survival or core values, which intensifies mistrust and escalates hostility over time (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, & Miall, 2016). These conflicts are further complicated by cycles of retaliation, collective memory of past violence, and external interventions that can reinforce the positions of conflicting parties. According to Fisher, Ury, and Patton (2011), addressing intractable conflicts requires a deep understanding of the underlying causes, including historical narratives, cultural and religious identities, and power asymmetries.

Applying Intractable Conflict Theory to the Israel-Palestine conflict, the prolonged struggle between Israel and Palestine can be understood as an identity-based and territorial conflict that has persisted for decades. Core issues, such as control over Jerusalem, borders, refugees' right of return, and security concerns, are central to the conflict and have contributed to its intractable nature (UN, 2024; Council on Foreign Relations, 2024). Both sides perceive existential threats: Israel views Hamas and other Palestinian factions as security threats, while Palestinians perceive Israeli occupation, settlements, and military actions as existential and structural oppression.

The theory is particularly appropriate for this study as it highlights the entrenched nature of the conflict and the complex interplay of historical grievances, territorial disputes, religious identity, and power asymmetries. It also explains why efforts at negotiation, peace treaties, and international interventions have often failed to produce lasting solutions. By using Intractable Conflict Theory, the study is able to analyze the persistence of hostilities, the recurring cycles of violence, and the broader implications of the conflict on regional stability, humanitarian conditions, and political administration in the Middle East.

II. Methodology

The study adopted a historical research design, which involves the systematic examination of past events to understand present developments



and potentially anticipate future trends. This design is particularly suitable for analyzing the Israel-Palestine conflict, given its long-standing historical and socio-political dimensions. The study relied on secondary sources of data, defined as data collected or authored by other researchers or institutions for purposes other than the current study (Asika, 2006). According to Selltitz, Wrightsman, and Cook (1977), secondary data are valuable because they are often collected periodically, providing longitudinal insights, and their use does not require direct interaction with the individuals about whom the information is concerned. For data analysis, the study employed content analysis, a method that systematically interprets textual and documentary materials to identify patterns, themes, and insights relevant to the subject matter. This approach enabled the researcher to synthesize information from multiple sources and draw informed conclusions about the causes, impacts, and broader implications of the conflict.

III. Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study reveal that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has profound humanitarian, regional, and geopolitical implications. The conflict has precipitated a severe humanitarian crisis in Gaza and the occupied West Bank. Between October 7, 2023, and July 17, 2025, a total of 58,380 Palestinians, including 138 children, were killed in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, with the vast majority of casualties occurring during Israeli security operations (UN, 2024). Civilians, particularly women and children, remain highly vulnerable, suffering from injury, displacement, trauma, and loss of livelihoods. The scale of human suffering highlights the urgent need for targeted humanitarian interventions and protection measures.

The conflict also has significant implications for the stability of the Middle East. Neighboring countries sharing borders with Israel and Palestine face challenges such as refugee flows, mass deportations, and increased security threats. The risk of regional escalation remains high, given frequent cross-border hostilities and the potential for involvement by neighboring states. These dynamics demonstrate how localized conflicts can quickly escalate, destabilizing the broader region politically, socially, and economically.

The complexity of the conflict is further compounded by external involvement from regional powers. The continued financial, military, and logistical support provided by Iran to Hamas has strengthened the group's operational capabilities

against Israel. This external backing prolongs hostilities and adds layers of geopolitical tension, reflecting how intractable conflicts are often sustained by outside actors pursuing their strategic interests. Such involvement complicates peace efforts and further entrenches divisions between the conflicting parties.

Overall, the study confirms that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is multifaceted, producing severe humanitarian crises, threatening regional stability, and drawing in external actors with competing agendas. These findings align with Intractable Conflict Theory, which suggests that deeply rooted conflicts are sustained by historical grievances, identity-based disputes, and external interference, making resolution difficult without addressing the underlying causes.

IV. Conclusion

The study reveals that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains one of the most enduring and intractable conflicts in modern history, with profound implications for both the humanitarian landscape and regional stability. The conflict has resulted in widespread human suffering, including thousands of deaths, severe injuries, displacement, and psychological trauma, particularly among civilians such as women and children. The destruction of critical infrastructure—including hospitals, schools, and power facilities—has exacerbated the humanitarian crisis, undermining basic services in Gaza and the occupied West Bank.

Beyond the immediate human toll, the conflict poses a significant threat to the stability of the Middle East. Neighboring countries have been affected by refugee flows, security challenges, and heightened political tensions. The involvement of regional actors, most notably Iran's support for Hamas, has further complicated the conflict, demonstrating how local disputes are deeply intertwined with broader geopolitical interests. The findings underscore the entrenched and multifaceted nature of the conflict, aligning closely with the principles of Intractable Conflict Theory. Historical grievances, identity-based disputes, territorial claims, and power asymmetries have entrenched hostilities and made conventional negotiation strategies largely ineffective. The conflict continues to influence regional politics, security dynamics, and international relations, acting as a catalyst for broader instability.

Despite intermittent attempts at ceasefires and peace negotiations, the conflict persists as a central source of tension in the Middle East. Its



resolution is critical not only for the protection of human life and the alleviation of humanitarian crises but also for achieving long-term regional peace, political stability, and sustainable diplomatic engagement. Addressing the underlying causes of the conflict, including historical injustices, territorial disputes, and power asymmetries, remains essential for creating conditions conducive to a lasting and just peace in the region. Based on these the study recommended amongst others:

- a. The international community, including the United Nations and regional organizations, should intensify diplomatic efforts to facilitate dialogue between Israel and Palestine. Mediation should aim not only at ceasefires but also at addressing the root causes of the conflict, such as territorial disputes, settlements, and refugees' rights.
- b. Regional actors providing financial, military, or logistical support to conflicting parties should be engaged through diplomatic channels to curtail external influences that exacerbate the conflict. Efforts should focus on promoting regional stability and cooperation rather than perpetuating hostilities.
- c. Programmes aimed at fostering mutual understanding, tolerance, and reconciliation among Israelis and Palestinians should be expanded. This includes peace education initiatives that address historical grievances, identity-based tensions, and collective narratives that perpetuate hostility.
- d. The international community should actively engage the parties involved in the conflict to enforce a ceasefire and establish humanitarian corridors, ensuring urgent relief reaches children, women, and the sick who are disproportionately affected.
- e. Sustainable peace requires addressing structural issues such as governance, political representation, and equitable resource distribution. Both Israel and Palestine, with international support, should commit to negotiated political frameworks that respect the rights, security, and aspirations of all parties.
- f. Both international and regional actors should strengthen efforts to combat terrorism globally. Beyond merely proscribing terrorist organizations, comprehensive strategies should be implemented to limit their operational

capacity and influence, thereby enhancing the safety and security of affected populations.

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