

**UNITED NATION'S NON-AGGRESSIVE POLICIES AND WORLD PEACE: THE
CASE OF PALESTINE/ISRAELI CONFLICT**

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ABSTRACT

The study is an attempt to investigate and cross-examine the United Nations' non-aggressive policies (laws) and the World Peace using the Palestine and Israeli conflicts as a case study. The study equally noted that this conflict has been one of the most confronted conflict in the 20th century even till date. Secondary sources was used for the collection of data which helped in annoying the changing variable and dynamic of the conflicts (war). Also the position of the United Nations was ascertained vis-a-vise its policies which are non-aggressive and unable his control and punished any country that go contrary to its policies which is the maintenance of world peace. The study concluded that for the world peace to be achieved especially in the Middle East region the United Nations should apply its policies and make it more aggressive on any country that goes contrary to its policies. This aggressive policy if upheld will be able to control these two parties (Palestine and Israel) and lasting solution will be achieved between these Nations.

KEYWORDS: Conflicts, Aggression, Homeland, Security, Middle East.

INTRODUCTION

The History and Background of United Nations

United Nation came into existence following the failure of the League of Nation to stop the Second World War. From its inception in 1945, this global organization has tried through its various agencies to engender global peace, political and economic stability, collective security and respect for human right, multilateral co-operatives and diplomatic procedures (Charles, 2007). As a global body, it tackles various issues such as climate change, nuclear proliferation and indiscriminate use of atoms, arms race, political hegemony dictatorships and epidemic and disease eradication. It has also to its credit reduced the incidents of state to state aggressions, intrusions and the forceful annexation of poor states by powerful States and controlled global conflicts through negotiations, mediation, conciliation and arbitration. To a large extent, the global body has been the main actor resisting the

possible outbreak of a third world war in spite of states misconceptions, misperceptions, religious and ideological, intolerance human rights violation, terrorism and other crimes against humanity (Palmer & Perkins, 2007).

In spite of these landmarks, its areas of inadequacies cannot be ignored. There are some of aspects of its code of conduct that are calling for urgent reforms and modifications, to justify the very essence of its existence. One of such issues is the use of non-aggressive policies in the ongoing war between Palestine/Israeli conflicts.

The Palestine-Israeli conflict has its origin deeply rooted in history and had been known as the longest running and most violent conflict in the world due to anti-semitic sentiments in Europe towards the end of the 19th century, the Jews in Europe decided to establish what they regarded as a homeland. Though, there had been pockets of migrations earlier into Palestine occupied territories – who lived in peace with the local population before settling in Palestine.

The consequence of the Jewish return to a promise homeland in the Middle-East precisely the Palestine occupied territory sparked conflicts on land, borders and human rights being felt by the Palestinians.

It will be recall that Great Britain took control of the area known as Palestine in World War One (WW1, 1914-1918) following the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, which had ruled that part of the Middle East.

Tensions between the Jewish and Arab populations deepened when the United Kingdom (UK) agreed in principle to the establishment of a “National home in Palestine for Jewish people – a pledge which come to be known as the Balfour Declaration. The Jews had historical links in the territory, but Palestinian Arabs also had a claim dating back centuries, this greatly opposed the settlement plans and move. The British had to protect the rights of the Palestinian Arabs living in the territory.

At first, this immigration created a no problems. However, a more and more Zionists immigrated to Palestine – mainly with the express wish of taking over the land for a Jewish state, the indigenous population became increasing alarmed. Eventually, fighting broke out with escalating waves of violence. Hitler’s rise to power, combines with Zionist activities to sabotage efforts to place Jewish refugees in Western countries led to increased Jewish immigration to Palestine, and conflict grew. The period 1920 – 1940 witnessed increased Jewish arrival into the Palestine territory. The six million Jews who died during the Holocaust gave urgency to this new homeland for the Jews.

In 1947, the United Nations decided to intervene and this made the conflict more complex. Rather than adhering to the principle of self-determination of the people”, in which the people create their own state and sustain of government, the UN chose to revert to the medieval strategy whereby an outside power divides up other people land.

Under considerable Zionist pressure, the United Nations recommended giving away 55% of Palestine to Jewish State – despite the fact that this group represented only about 30% of the total population, and owned under 7% of the land. It is this division that have remained the source of an unending conflict in the Middle East in general and Israeli-Palestinian region

in particular. Over the years, series of wars had been fought which has resulted in series of loss of lives, destruction of properties and redesigning of the map of the region. However, the most memorable war was the 1947-1949 war. By the end of the war, Israel had conquered 78 percent of Palestine; three-quarters of a million Palestinians had been made refugees, over 500 towns and villages had been obliterated; and a new map was drawn up, in which every city, river and hillock received a new, Hebrew name, as all vestiges of the Palestinian culture were to be erased. The United Nations could not enforce its laws on Israel to relinquish the occupied territory back to the Palestinians.

As more wars were fought, Israel kept on confiscating and appropriating Palestinian lands with impunity. However, as they are bound by the United Nations conventions, Israel could not totally obliterate Palestine from the world map. According to international law, it is inadmissible to acquire territory by war, therefore the Palestinian lands are treated as occupied territories and do not belong to Israel.

There seem to be two primary issues at the core of the continuing Israeli-Palestinian conflict. First, there is the inevitably destabilizing effect of trying to maintain an ethnically preferential state, particularly when it is largely of foreign origin. The original population of what is now Israel was 96 percent Muslim and Christian, yet, these refugees are prohibited from returning to their homes in the self-described Jewish state.

Second, Israel's continued military occupation and confiscation of privately owned land in the West Bank, and control over Gaza, are extremely oppressive, with Palestinians having minimal control over their lives, according to international law, an occupying force is responsible for the protection of the civilian population living under its control. Israel, however, ignores this requirement, routinely committing violations of the Geneva Conventions, a set of principles instituted after World War II to ensure that civilians would "never again" as they had under Nazi occupation.

Israel forces regularly confiscate private land, imprison individuals without process – including children – and physically abuse them under incarceration, demolish family homes, bulldoze orchards and crops; place entire towns under curfew; destroy shops and businesses; shoot, maim, and kill civilians – and Palestinians are without a United Nations using its power to stop any of it.

In addition to the occupation of the Palestinian land, Israel has made it almost impossible to implement the Oslo peace accords to 1993 where the occupied territories were supposed to finally become a Palestinian state. Israel's fear is based on Hama's avowed stand not to allow the existence of the state of Israel. This relation with Israel has continuously created room for an unending conflict in the region.

Over the years, efforts to bring a lasting peace in the area have not been able to come to fruition due to mainly distrust between the two parties involved and unfortunately, the United Nations increasingly finds it very difficult to forcefully implement its resolution in order to maintain regional peace in the area giving the impression that the United Nations is a toothless bulldog. This and other factors, especially as it relates to the principle of non-aggression as they affect the occupation of Palestinian land by Israel and the recent bombing

and destruction of Gaza as well as the United Nations inability to force Israel to stop the wanton destruction, will be examined in this paper.

THIS CURRENT ISRAELI-GAZA CRISIS: 2021-2025

On 8th July, 2024, an escalation of the Gaza-Israel conflict began when Israel launched Operation Protective Edge in the Hamas-governed Gaza Strip. This stated aim was to stop rocket attacks from the Gaza Strip, which several non-Hamas affiliated groups in Gaza had engaged in launching joint response to an Israeli crackdown on Hamas members in the West Bank. After an Israeli Air Force airstrike killed 7 Hamas members Hamas itself fired rockets into Israel (Al Jazeera, 31 July). The escalation followed a series of events, which included the continued blockade of the Gaza Strip by the Egyptian and Israeli government (Diab, 2014), the formation of a unity government by Fatah and Hamas in soled peace talks, the kidnapping and murder of three Israeli teenagers (for which Israel blamed Hamas), the subsequent kidnapping and murder of a Palestinian teenager, and the arrest by Israel of nearly all of Hama's West Bank Leaders. On the night of 6 July, an Israeli air raid on the house of a Hamas operative in Khan Yunis killed seven people. The following day Hamas referred to the incident as a "Massacre" and claimed that all Israelis has become legitimate targets and assumed formal responsibility for launching rocket attacks on Israel.

After a period of fifty days attacks on both Israel and the Gaza Strip, over 2000 Gazans were killed, 66 Israeli soldiers and five Israeli civilians, lost their lives (Reuters, Baz Raner). Palestinians rocket fire targets major Israeli cities, the war ended after series of consultations with Egypt, Israel and other regional powers brokered a ceasefire agreement.

EFFORTS TO END THE CRISIS

According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the current crisis has been rated as the deadliest which has claimed several lives, mostly children and women. The United Nations General Assembly has not done much to condemn the wanton massacre of civilians, except when the secretary General of the UN, Banki Moon, warned that the bombing of civilian targets must stop. This warning came after UN schools had been shelled by the Israeli armed forces. Notwithstanding, some countries and individuals have made some diplomatic efforts to negotiate ceasefire between Hamas and the Israeli government.

Several diplomatic efforts were made to resolve the conflict. These attempts included efforts by United States Secretary of State, John Kerry, to broker a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas. Also, the meeting in Paris with EU foregin ministers and their counterparts of Qatar and Turkey. Commentators have noted the Kerry's failure to achieve permanent results and the weakening of ties between the Israeli cabinet and the Obama administration. Egypt has brokered a number of ceasefires between Hamas and Israel (Federman, 2014) and both parties have always found reasons to breach the ceasefire agreement, blaming the other party.

During the present conflict, the impartiality of UN agencies operating in a Gaza has fallen under question. Critics allege that the agencies have lost their neutral standing and question their position as unbiased parties.

THE PRINCIPLE OF NON-AGGRESSION AND THE ISRAELI-GAZA CONFLICT

The non-aggression principle (NAP), also called the non-aggression axiom, the zero aggression principle (ZAP), the anti-coercion principle, or the non-initiation of force principle – is a moral stance which asserts that aggression is inherently illegitimate. NAP and property rights are closely linked, since what aggression is depends on what a person's rights are (Kinsella, 2009). NAP is the foundation of libertarian philosophy (Barnet, 2011; Kinsella, 2011).

Some supporters justify the state of the grounds that anarchism implies that the non-aggression principle is optional because the enforcement of laws is open to competition (Stefan, 2012). They claim competing law enforcement would always result in war and the rule of the most powerful. Anarcho-capitalists usually respond to this argument that this presumed outcome of coercive competition is not likely because of the very high cost, in lives and economics of war. They claim that war drains those involved and leaves non-combatant parties as the most powerful, economically and militarily, ready to take over (Long, 2008). Therefore, anarcho-capitalists claim that in practice, and in more advanced societies with large institutions that have a responsibility to protect their vested interests, disputes are most likely to be settled peacefully (Long, 2008).

Anarcho-capitalists also point out that a state monopoly of law enforcement does not necessarily make NAP present throughout society as corruption and corporatism, as well as lobby group clientelism in democracies, favour only certain people or organizations. Anarcho-capitalists generally argue that the state violates the non-aggression principle by its nature because governments use force against those who have not stolen private property, vandalized private property, assaulted anyone or committed fraud. Panarchists view a state as compatible with NAP as long as citizenship is not compulsory and all its citizens supports its governance voluntarily. Statists, on the other hand, claim a state has legal jurisdiction over a certain area of land, or even owns that land. In that case, NAP is not violated if a state imposes rules and regulations, any, as long as people entering the area are aware of these conditions and those already inside who disagree with unilaterally changed conditions are free to leave. The anarcho-capitalist argument that persons both in the land area owned or regulated by a state never were able to agree with the state's conditions and have no obligation to comply usually is countered by the statist argument that as the parents agreed to submit their child to these conditions of stay the child can only hold its parents responsible, not the state.

The principle of non-aggression is one of the basic principles of the UN Charter. Article 2 of the Charter states: “All members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any member or State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations”.

The principle of non-aggression is extremely important in international relations. Many states not only proclaim their recognition of it but also strive to conclude special agreements with other states in order to emphasize the international legal force of the principle of non-aggression. When concluding such agreements, both parties obligate themselves to refrain from attacking one another individually or jointly with other countries.

The principle of non-aggression has also been established in numerous multilateral agreements (for example, the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928, which the USSR joined, the

Saavedra Lamas Pact of 1933, and the Saadabad Pact of 1937, which was concluded by Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan). All of these agreements played an important part in forming the principle of non-aggression, which was later formulated in the UN charter. Yet this principle is being ignored in the Israeli-Gaza conflict or it is being obscurely interpreted.

According to Richard Falk, "...with cynical disregard of the realities of this latest one-sided confrontation between Israel and Palestine, instead of condemning such recourse to massive violence as 'aggression' that violates the UN Charter and fundamental international law principles, the reaction of Western diplomats and mainstream media has so far perversely sided with Israel, citing and bland rationalization repeatedly stressed by Netanyahu that 'every nation has the right to defend itself'. ...from the UN Secretary General to the President of the United States, the main insistence has been that Hamas must stop all rocket attacks while Israel is requested ever so politely to show "maximum restraint". He goes on to say that "This international reaction to this latest crisis confirms for all with eyes to see that geopolitical alignments, not law or justice, dominates the diplomacy of leading Western states and the UN, when it comes to the Middle East, and especially if it concerns Israel-Palestine, and never more so than in relation to Gaza". Israel has consistently met calls for restraint and a ceasefire with contempt and the United Nations seem important in the face of Israeli defiance.

The government of Saudi Arabia revealed their true sentiments of their assessment of the value of the United Nations Security Council by refusing to take a seat on the prestigious international council, according to a report from Reuters. Apparently, the Middle Eastern government's rejection of membership in the U.N. Security Council was mainly due to their assessment of the failure of the international body and the broader international community to effectively act on critical Middle East issues. The kingdom condemned what it called international double standards on the Middle East, and seemingly views the Security Council, which is chartered to maintain international security and peace throughout the world.

Saudi Arabia, like most countries has criticized the UN Security Council for not taking effective action to prevent the Israeli military aggression against Gaza. "The Security Council statement on Israel's attack on the Gazans was not up to the expectations of its members and the stature of the international body," said Abdullah al-Muallami, the kingdom's permanent representative to the UN. Most countries of the world have condemned the bombardment of Gaza by Israel, except the United States of America, who has been supplying Israel with arms and arguing that Israel has a right to protect herself.

Palestinian UN Ambassador Riyad Mansour accused the council of dragging its feet and said Saturday's statement had only been agreed after the Arab Group, the QIC and the Non-Aligned Movement threatened to push for a resolution on the issue.

On 25 July, Kazakhstan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement Thursday, expressing its deep concern over the exacerbation of crisis in Gaza Strip, which entailed the deaths of innocent civilians. "Further escalation of violence will result in a destabilization of the situation in the Middle East, and also will blow up efforts of the conflicting parties and the whole international community which are focused on long-term peace making and regional stability," said the statement, "We call on Israelis and Palestinians to take urgent and effective measures to stop bloodshed and resume peace negotiations", it added. The statement

said Kazakhstan supports the initiative and agreed-upon steps of the international community, including those under the aegis of the United Nations on resolving long-term conflict.

Despite these wide condemnation of the conflict and a call by the international community to stop these bombings, despite the fact that what Israel is doing is morally wrong, the United Nations is finding it difficult to enforce ceasefire between Israel and Hamas. This seems to boil down to the fact that the principle of non-aggression and collective peace is interpreted subjectively by the United Nations. It could hold when Iraq was seen as a belligerent in Kuwait, but not in the Gaza. This shows that the principle of non-aggressiveness is dependent on national interest.

CONCLUSION

The policy of non-aggression as outlines in the United Nations charter aims to prevent and resolve conflicts through peaceful means and to safeguard the supposedly weak nations yet the Israeli-Palestinian conflict poses significant challenges in achieving this goal. Through peacekeeping missions, diplomatic interventions, and humanitarian assistance, the UN has provided platforms for negotiation and conflict management, demonstrating the importance of non-violent approaches in international disputes. However, the persistence of political tensions, territorial disputes, and mutual distrust highlights the limitations of non-aggressive strategies when underlying issues are unresolved. Ultimately, the case of Palestine/Israel underscores that while the UN's non-aggressive policies are vital for mitigating conflict and fostering temporary stability, sustained world peace requires the cooperation of conflicting parties, regional actors, and the international community to address root causes and achieve lasting solutions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Having seen how the non-aggression policy hinders UN's efforts in providing lasting resolutions to the Palestine/Israeli war the following recommendations has been reached:

- The United Nations should enforce its resolutions and influence the cooperation of member states.
- The United Nations enforcement mechanism should be binding on member states.
- The United States, a permanent member of the Security Council, should not use its veto power to block resolutions critical of Israel, thus, hindering the UN's ability to take decisive actions.
- Sanctions should be used by the UN's Security Council against the conflicting States.
- Israel should be forced to fully implement the UN resolutions and be held responsible for actions that undermine the possibility of a two-state solution, such as settlement construction in occupied territories.
- There should be a push for a humanitarian ceasefire which is necessary to prevent further loss of civilian life on a mass scale.
- The United Nations Security Council should take concrete steps to counter permanent, undemocratic Israeli control of Palestinian territory.
- The United States should substantially expand support for the Palestinian people and leaves who seek peace with Israel.

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