

# MIDDLE-EAST HUMANITARIAN CRISIS : A NEED FOR UNITED NATIONS PEACE-BUILDING ENFORCEMENTS

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## **Abstract**

*The State of Israel has been in the midst of armed conflicts for many decades with Palestine's Hamas while Lebanon's Hezbollah and Yemen's Houthi have been involved in solidarity conflict. The fresh conflicts began in October 7, 2023 when Hamas launched an unprecedented attack on Israel which took the lives of over 1000 Israelis. The conflicts have intensified with the Hezbollah and Houthi attacking Israel. Israel had carried out attacks on Lebanon and Yemen in retaliation. This ongoing conflict has greatly affected these countries' stability, peace, and security, threatening further humanitarian crises. This article discusses the source of the conflict, the current situation of the conflict, and ways to resolve the conflict. In discussing the above, this article adopts a theoretical and doctrinal study of primary and secondary sources as contained in the United Nations Charter, international treaties, conventions and protocols, journal articles, books, newspapers, and materials sourced from the internet. The article argues that though, the United Nations General Assembly in September 2024 resolved that Israel should vacate Palestinian territory, there is a need for peace-building intervention and enforcement by the United Nations to forestall further humanitarian crises in the Middle East.*

**Keywords :** United Nations; Crisis; Peace-Bilding; Enforcements; Middle-East

## **INTRODUCTION**

Armed conflict has been an issue of concern to the United Nations especially on the raging conflicts involving Israel with Palestine (Hamas) and its allies in Lebanon (Hezbollah) and Yemen (Houthi). On October 7, 2023, Hamas fighters moved across the Gaza border in an attack that left 1,200 Israelis dead. Israel's counterattack into Gaza killed more than 41,000 in the subsequent months.<sup>1</sup> On October 1, 2024, almost one year after, Israel launched limited ground raids against Hezbollah in Lebanon after two weeks of bombing that killed over 1,000 people, and key Hezbollah

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<sup>1</sup> RAND., 'A Year After the October 7 Start of the Israel-Hamas Conflict'

<https://www.rand.org/pubs/commentary/2024/10/a-year-after-the-october-7-start-of-the-israel-hamas.html>

accessed 5 October 2024.

leaders, including Hassan Nasrallah, and displaced a million.<sup>2</sup> In retaliation for the death of Hassan Nasrallah, Iran launches missiles toward Israel on October 1, 2024.<sup>3</sup> Since the outbreak of conflict between Israel and the Palestinian militant group, Hamas in October 2023, Hezbollah has fired hundreds of rockets and drones from Lebanon targeting northern Israel.<sup>4</sup> On Sunday 29 September 2024, Israel said it bombed Houthi targets in Yemen in response to missiles fired by the militants at Israel.<sup>5</sup> The conflict between Israel and Palestine's Hamas has been on for decades, and there have been several efforts by the United Nations to resolve the dispute. The most recent attempt is the resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2024, demanding Israel to end its “unlawful” presence in the Palestinian territory within a year.<sup>6</sup> Patterns of the vote to this resolution saw 124 member states in favour, 14 against, and 43 abstained.<sup>7</sup>

At the beginning of the meeting, Philémon Yang (Cameroon), President of the General Assembly, reiterates that:

“Without justice and the rule of law, Israelis and Palestinians alike will not attain what they long for most: peace and security. The Assembly must not lose sight of the many lives lost, the staggering humanitarian challenges, and the infrastructural destruction that continues to take place, particularly in Gaza in the past several months.”<sup>8</sup>

The United Nations was established to promote peace and security among nations. Article 1(1) of the Charter of the United Nations provides for one of its purposes:

“To maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace.”<sup>9</sup>

It is from the above that this article is birthed. It has eight sections, the first section is the introduction, the section discusses the concept of armed conflict, the third

<sup>2</sup> [BREAKING: IDF Enters Lebanon In a Bid to Eliminate Hezbollah, High Alert After Netanyahu's Move | Watch \(msn.com\)](#) accessed 1 October, 2024.

<sup>3</sup> AL Monitor., ‘Iran launches missile attack on Israel, Israeli military says’ <https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2024/10/iran-launches-missile-attack-israel-israeli-military-says> accessed 1 October 2024.

<sup>4</sup> Irene Nasser., Dana Karni., Helen Regan., and Sophie Tanno. ‘Israel intercepts Hezbollah ballistic missile near Tel Aviv in first such attack’ [https://www.cnn.com/2024/09/25/middleeast/israel-rocket-lebanon-tel-aviv-intl-hnk/index.html?iid=cnn\\_buildContentRecirc\\_end\\_recirc](https://www.cnn.com/2024/09/25/middleeast/israel-rocket-lebanon-tel-aviv-intl-hnk/index.html?iid=cnn_buildContentRecirc_end_recirc) accessed 1 October 2024.

<sup>5</sup> Reuters, ‘Israel strikes Houthi targets in Yemen, killing at least four people’ <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israel-launches-strikes-yemeni-houthi-targets-2024-09-29/> accessed 1 October 2024.

<sup>6</sup> A/ES-10/L.31/Rev.1 .United Nations tenth emergency special session; agenda item 5: “Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory” <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/ltid/n24/266/48/pdf/n2426648.pdf> accessed 1 October 2024.

<sup>7</sup> Maziar Motamedi., ‘UN votes against Israel’s occupation of Palestine: Will it change anything?’ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/9/19/unga-resolution-against-palestine-occupation-will-it-change-anything#:~:text=Most%20countries%20have%20backed%20a,Wednesday%2C%20is%20not%20legally%20binding> accessed 1 October 2024.

<sup>8</sup> United Nations Press., ‘General Assembly Mulls Over Resolution Demanding End of Israel’s Occupation of Palestinian Land within 12 Months’ <https://press.un.org/en/2024/ga12625.doc.htm> accessed 1 October 2024.

<sup>9</sup> Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations contains seven sections that provide for the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

section discusses Israel and Palestine, the fourth section discusses the origin of Hamas, the fifth section discusses Lebanon and Hezbollah, the sixth section discusses Yemen and Houthi, the seventh section discusses the source and present state of the conflict, the eighth section is the conclusion and recommendation.

## RESEARCH METHOD

*This research uses research based on the analysis of the law so that it is referred to as a normative research. This article discusses the source of the conflict, the current situation of the conflict, and ways to resolve the conflict. In discussing the above, this article adopts a theoretical and doctrinal study of primary and secondary sources as contained in the United Nations Charter, international treaties, conventions and protocols, journal articles, books, newspapers, and materials sourced from the internet. This research is based on a method of data annalists by collecting facts and looking at how the law works as a tool in resolving conflicts.*

## DISCUSSION

### 1. ARMED CONFLICT

Armed conflict can be categorised into two types under International Humanitarian Law international armed conflict and non-international armed conflict. For this section, we shall be discussing international armed conflict as it relates to Israeli-Palestinian and allies conflict.<sup>10</sup> According to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), there is no central authority under international law classifying a certain situation as an armed conflict, parties to a conflict are to identify the legal framework applicable to the conduct of their military operations.<sup>11</sup> The position of the ICRC is the true position. Several efforts are made to define the concept of armed conflict but there is no agreed definition.

Blank describes an international armed conflict as any conflict between two states involving their armed forces, no matter how minor or short-lived, even if one or both states deny the existence of the conflict.<sup>12</sup> To Blank, if it is established that there is a conflict between two states involving their armed forces, no matter how brief, it is an international armed conflict.

In May 2005, the Executive Committee of the International Law Association (ILA) approved a mandate for the Use of Force Committee to produce a report on the meaning of war or armed conflict in international law. The report was motivated by the United States' position following the attacks of September 11, 2001.<sup>13</sup> The Committee found no multilateral treaty that provides a generally applicable definition of armed conflict, therefore the meaning of armed conflict is to be found in customary international law as evidenced by state practice and *opinio juris*, as well as subsidiary sources, judicial decisions, and scholarly commentary.<sup>14</sup> The

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<sup>10</sup> The Palestinian's Hamas allies are Iran, Lebanon's Hezbollah, and Yemen's Houthi.

<sup>11</sup> ICRC., "Armed Conflict" Defined in International law"? International Committee of the Red Cross Opinion Paper 2024 p.5.

<sup>12</sup> Laurie R. Blank., 'Irreconcilable Differences: The Thresholds for Armed Attack and Irreconcilable Differences: The Thresholds for Armed Attack and International Armed Conflict' (2020) 96(1) *Notre Dame Law Review*. pp.249-290,258.

<sup>13</sup> International Law Association., *Final Report on the Meaning of Armed Conflict in International Law*. The Hague Conference (2010).p.1 [https://www.rulac.org/assets/downloads/ILA\\_report\\_armed\\_conflict\\_2010.pdf](https://www.rulac.org/assets/downloads/ILA_report_armed_conflict_2010.pdf) accessed 6, October 2024.

<sup>14</sup> *ibid.* p. 2.

Committee in its report identified two essential minimum criteria upon which armed conflict depends, which are: (i) the existence of organised armed groups and (ii) engagement in the fighting of some intensity.<sup>15</sup>

On the protection of civilians during armed conflict, Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I)<sup>16</sup> Its Article 48 provides that:

“In order to ensure respect for and protection of the civilian population and civilian objects, the Parties to the conflict shall at all times distinguish between the civilian population and combatants and between civilian objects and military objectives and accordingly shall direct their operations only against military objectives.”

The civilian population is protected from armed attack and enjoys general protection against dangers arising from military operations.<sup>17</sup> Article 52 of the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts makes it clear that civilians shall not be the object of attack and, where there is doubt that a civilian environment is being used for military purpose, it shall be assumed that it is civilian environment. It specifically provides that:

“1. Civilian objects shall not be the object of attack or reprisals. Civilian objects are all objects which are not military objectives as defined in paragraph 2.

2. Attacks shall be limited strictly to military objectives. In so far as objects are concerned, military objectives are limited to those objects which by their nature, location, purpose, or use make an effective contribution to military action and whose total or partial destruction, capture, or neutralization, in the circumstances ruling at the time, offers a definite military advantage.

3. In case of doubt whether an object which is normally dedicated to civilian purposes, such as a place of worship, a house or other dwelling, or a school, is being used to make an effective contribution to military action, it shall be presumed not to be so used.”

The international instrument recognises the protection of women and children during armed conflicts.<sup>18</sup>

It is clear from the above that there is no single definition of what armed conflict is but certain situations must exist to identify the armed conflict situation which is the existence of armed groups and intensity of fighting just as it exists in the Israel-Palestine and allies armed conflict.

## **2. THE STATES OF ISRAEL AND PALESTINE**

The modern-day Israel is a part of the partition of the British's former Palestinian mandate. It is located in the Middle East, along the eastern coastline of the Mediterranean Sea, bordered by Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt. It lies at the centre of three continents: Europe, Asia, and Africa. It entered history when the Jewish people forsook its nomadic way of life, settled in the Land, and became a

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<sup>15</sup> *ibid.* p.32

<sup>16</sup> Done at Geneva on 8 June 1977 Entry into Force: 7 December 1978 United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 1125, p. 3; reg. No. 17512.

<sup>17</sup> Article 51 of the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts.

<sup>18</sup> See Articles 76 and 77 of the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts.

nation.<sup>19</sup>

On November 29, 1947, the United Nations adopted Resolution 181 (also known as the Partition Resolution) that would divide Great Britain's former Palestinian mandate into Jewish and Arab states in May 1948 when the British mandate was billed to end. Under the resolution, the area of religious significance surrounding Jerusalem would remain a *corpus separatum*<sup>20</sup> under international control administered by the United Nations.<sup>21</sup> The State of Israel was established in May 1948.<sup>22</sup> On May 14, 1948, David Ben-Gurion, the head of the Jewish Agency, proclaimed the establishment of the State of Israel and this was recognised by U.S. President Harry S. Truman on the same day.<sup>23</sup> The State of Israel was admitted to the United Nations (UN) as its 59th member on 11 May 1949.<sup>24</sup>

Under section A of the Resolution 181,<sup>25</sup> The preambles provide an insight into the foundation of the Israel-Palestine issue. The preambles state that:

“Having met in special session at the request of the mandatory Power to constitute and instruct a special committee to prepare for the consideration of the question of the future government of Palestine at the second regular session;

Having constituted a Special Committee and instructed it to investigate all questions and issues relevant to the problem of Palestine, and to prepare proposals for the solution of the problem, and Having received and examined the report of the Special Committee (document A/364) including a number of unanimous recommendations and a plan of partition with economic union approved by the majority of the Special Committee,

Considers that the present situation in Palestine is one that is likely to impair the general welfare and friendly relations among nations;

Takes note of the declaration by the mandatory Power that it plans to complete its evacuation of Palestine by 1 August 1948;

Recommends to the United Kingdom, as the mandatory Power for Palestine, and to all other Members of the United Nations the adoption and implementation, with regard to the future government of Palestine, of the Plan of Partition with Economic Union set out below;...”

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<sup>19</sup> Mission of Israel to the UN in Geneva., ‘Land of milk and honey’ <https://embassies.gov.il/UnGeneva/AboutIsrael/Pages/AboutIsraelgeneralinfo.aspx> accessed 7 October, 2024.

<sup>20</sup> Corpus separatum is a Latin term referring to a city or region that is given a special legal and political status different from its environment, but which falls short of being sovereign, or an independent city-state

<sup>21</sup> Office of the Historians., ‘Creation of Israel 1948’ <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/creation-israel> accessed on 7 October 2024.

<sup>22</sup> UN Trade and Development., ‘Background: The Question of Palestine’ <https://unctad.org/topic/palestinian-people/The-question-of-Palestine#:~:text=While%20the%20State%20of%20Israel,by%20Jordan%20and%20Egypt%2C%20respectively.> accessed 28 September 2024.

<sup>23</sup> Office of the Historians., ‘Creation of Israel 1948’ <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/creation-israel> accessed on 7 October 2024.

<sup>24</sup> <https://embassies.gov.il/hague-en/aboutisrael/amongnations/Pages/ISRAEL%20AMONG%20THE%20NATIONS-%20United%20Nations.aspx#:~:text=The%20State%20of%20Israel%20was,member%20on%2011%20May%201949> accessed 7 October 2024.

<sup>25</sup> Resolution 181 (II). Future government of Palestine. Resolution adopted on the Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Palestinian Question. <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-185393/> accessed 7 October 2024.

Resolution 181 was a robust document on the partition of Palestine into two states of Arabs and Jews. Chapter 1 provides rights to holy places, religious buildings, and sites.<sup>26</sup> Chapter 2 deals with religious and minority rights. Chapter 3 provides for citizenship, international conventions, and financial obligations. Section 1 of Chapter three laid down the process of citizenship of the partition when it provides that:

“1. Citizenship. Palestinian citizens residing in Palestine outside the City of Jerusalem, as well as Arabs and Jews who, not holding Palestinian citizenship reside in Palestine outside the City of Jerusalem shall, upon the recognition of independence, become citizens of the State in which they are resident and enjoy full civil and political rights. Persons over the age of eighteen years may opt, within one year from the date of recognition of the independence of the State in which they reside, for citizenship of the other State, providing that no Arab residing in the area of the proposed Arab State shall have the right to opt for citizenship in the proposed Jewish State and no Jew residing in the proposed Jewish State shall have the right to opt for citizenship in the proposed Arab State. The exercise of this right of option will be taken to include the wives and children less than eighteen years of age of persons so opting.

Arabs residing in the area of the proposed Jewish State and Jews residing in the area of the proposed Arab State who have signed a notice of intention to opt for citizenship of the other State shall be eligible to vote in the elections to the Constituent Assembly of that State, but not in the elections to the Constituent Assembly of the State in which they reside.”

Resolution 181 cited above shows that Israel came into existence from the partition between Palestine’s Arabs and Jews. The partition plan did not bring peace to Palestine, and the prevailing violence spread into the Middle East. One of the two States (Israel) envisaged in the partition plan proclaimed its independence and, in a series of successive armed conflicts, its territorial control expanded to occupy all of Palestine. The Palestinian Arab State envisaged in the partition plan never appeared on the world’s map for over thirty years.<sup>27</sup>

The Palestine National Council (PNC) at its nineteenth extraordinary session held at Algiers, Algeria from 12 to 15 November 1988 declared independence of historic significance to the Palestine people. One of the documents adopted by the PNC session, "The Declaration of Independence", proclaimed the establishment of a Palestinian State. The document referred to several international legal instruments in which the establishment of a Palestinian State had been made.<sup>28</sup> It pointed out

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<sup>26</sup> Section 1 and 2 of the chapter 1 provides that:

1. Existing rights in respect of Holy Places and religious buildings or sites shall not be denied or impaired.

2. In so far as Holy Places are concerned, the liberty of access, visit, and transit shall be guaranteed, in conformity with existing rights, to all residents and citizens of the other State and of the City of Jerusalem, as well as to aliens, without distinction as to nationality, subject to requirements of national security, public order, and decorum. Similarly, freedom of worship shall be guaranteed in conformity with existing rights, subject to the maintenance of public order and decorum.

<sup>27</sup> United Nations., ‘Origins and Evolution of the Palestine Problem: 1917-1947 (Part I) [https://www.un.org/unispal/history2/origins-and-evolution-of-the-palestine-problem/part-i-1917-1947/#Origins\\_and\\_Evolution\\_of\\_the\\_Palestine\\_Problem\\_1917-1947\\_Part\\_I](https://www.un.org/unispal/history2/origins-and-evolution-of-the-palestine-problem/part-i-1917-1947/#Origins_and_Evolution_of_the_Palestine_Problem_1917-1947_Part_I) accessed 28 September 2024.

<sup>28</sup> United Nations., ‘The Origins and Evolution of the Palestine Problem, part IV: 1984-1988’

that:

“Despite the historical injustice done to the Palestinian Arab people in its displacement and in being deprived of the right to self-determination following the adoption of General Assembly resolution 181 (II) of 1947, which partitioned Palestine into an Arab and a Jewish State, that resolution nevertheless continues to attach conditions to international legitimacy that guarantee the Palestinian Arab people the right to sovereignty and national independence. “

The establishment of the State of Palestine was immediately welcomed by the international community. Within a month, independent Palestine was recognised by almost 80 States in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America.<sup>29</sup> Right now, Palestine is a “Permanent Observer State” at the United Nations, which status allows it to participate in all of the Organisation’s proceedings, except for voting on draft resolutions and decisions in its main organs and bodies, from the Security Council to the General Assembly and its six main committees.<sup>30</sup>

### 3. HAMAS

Hamas which stands for Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya (Islamic Resistance Movement) is the largest and most capable militant group in the Palestinian territories and one of the territories' two major political parties.<sup>31</sup> Hamas' strength is concentrated in the Gaza Strip and areas of the West Bank. Hamas has a military wing known as the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades that has conducted many anti-Israel attacks in both Israel and the Palestinian territories since the 1990s.<sup>32</sup>

It rejects the existence of Israel with violence, it claims that Israel is occupying Palestine and in October 2023, Hamas attacked southern Israel, killing nearly 1,200 people and taking more than 200 hostages. In response, Israel declared a war aimed at eradicating the group.<sup>33</sup> One year later, the conflict rages on.

### 4. LEBANON AND HEZBOLLAH

Lebanon, officially the Republic of Lebanon is bounded to the north and east by Syria, to the south by Israel, and the west by the Mediterranean Sea.<sup>34</sup> Lebanon's capital is Beirut, and the country is 10,452 sq km in size with a population of 5.2 million, its two major languages are Arabic and French.<sup>35</sup>

Hezbollah which means "The Party of God" is a radical Shiite terrorist organisation that was founded by the Islamic Republic of Iran amid the Lebanese Civil War in 1982. It was established as an attempt to counter Israel's invasion of Lebanon, and

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<https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-210229/> accessed 10 October 2024.

<sup>29</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> United Nations., ‘Palestine’s current status’ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/04/1148351> accessed 7 October 2024.

<sup>31</sup> Counter Terrorism Guide, HAMAS

<https://www.dni.gov/nctc/groups/hamas.html#:~:text=HAMAS%20strength%20is%20concentrated%20in,Palestinian%20territories%20since%20the%201990s>. accessed 28 September, 2024.

<sup>32</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> Kali Robinson., ‘What is Hamas?’ <https://www.cfr.org/background/what-hamas> Accessed 11, October, 2024.

<sup>34</sup> Maksoud, Clovis F. et.al. ‘Lebanon’. Encyclopedia Britannica, 11 Oct. 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Lebanon>. Accessed 11 October 2024.

<sup>35</sup> BBC News., ‘Lebanon country profile’ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14647308> accessed 11 October 2024.

to export the Iranian revolution to the country.<sup>36</sup> To Rabasa et.al<sup>37</sup> Hezbollah is perhaps the best known and the most capable of the Islamist militant organisations that employ terrorism yet are not affiliated with al-Qaeda.<sup>38</sup>

Hezbollah is often described as a state within the state here. It is a heavily armed militia, said to be stronger than the Lebanese army, a political movement with representation in parliament, and a social movement with significant support.<sup>39</sup> While the military wing of the party carries out operations against Israel and Israeli interests, the socio-political wing of Hezbollah maintains a large network of charitable organisations and, since 1992, has fielded candidates in legislative and municipal elections in Lebanon.<sup>40</sup> Hezbollah is more than just an ordinary party with an armed component; instead, it is a faction in the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps.<sup>41</sup>

On 25 August 2024, Israel and Hezbollah engaged in one of the most intense exchanges of fire which has been ongoing since October 2023. Early that morning, more than 100 Israel Defense Forces (IDF) jets launched airstrikes on approximately 40 locations in southern Lebanon.<sup>42</sup> Hezbollah's conflict with Israel has come a long way. Israel has repeatedly fought Hezbollah since the group's inception in the early 1980s.<sup>43</sup> Till this moment, the conflict is still ongoing.

## 5. YEMEN AND HOUTHI

Yemen, officially the Republic of Yemen was created after communist South Yemen merged with North Yemen in 1990.<sup>44</sup> The capital is Sanaa and its area is 528,000 sq km with a population of 30.9 million, the country's language is Arabic.<sup>45</sup> Yemen is bounded to the south by the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea and to the west by the Red Sea.<sup>46</sup>

The Houthi is an Iran-backed Islamist group based in Yemen.<sup>47</sup> The Houthi movement, known as Ansar Allah (Supporters of God), has been involved in a civil war that has raged in Yemen for nearly a decade. It emerged in the 1990s, when its leader, Hussein al-Houthi, launched "Believing Youth," a religious revival

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<sup>36</sup> Shai Oseran., 'Hezbollah-Hamas Cooperation:: Motivations, Manifestations and Future Outlook' (2013) International Institute for Counter-Terrorism (ICT). p.2. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep09436> accessed 7 October 2024.

<sup>37</sup> Rabasa, Angel, et al. "Hezbollah and Hamas." *Beyond Al-Qaeda: Part 2, The Outer Rings of the Terrorist Universe*, RAND Corporation, 2006, pp. 5–24. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/mg430af.9>. accessed 6 Oct. 2024.

<sup>38</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>39</sup> Hugo Bachega., 'This Israeli ground offensive has felt almost inevitable' <https://www.bbc.com/news/live/cg4qx62kkxxt> accessed 1 October 2024.

<sup>40</sup> Rola El Hussein., 'Hezbollah and the Axis of Refusal: Hamas, Iran, and Syria' (2010) 31(5) *Third World Quarterly*. pp.803-815, 804.

<sup>41</sup> Hilal Khashan., 'Hezbollah's Short sighted Strategy for the War in Gaza' (2024) 26(2) *Insight Turkey*. pp.35-44, 36.

<sup>42</sup> Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project., 'Mapping the 25 August Israel and Hezbollah attacks | ACLED Insight'. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep62787> accessed 7 October 2024.

<sup>43</sup> Seth G. Jones., et.al 'The Coming Conflict with Hezbollah' (2024) *Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)*. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep58462> Accessed 6, October 2024.

<sup>44</sup> BBC News ., 'Yemen Country profile' <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14704852> accessed October 11, 2024.

<sup>45</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>46</sup> Burrowes, Robert and Wenner, Manfred W.. 'Yemen'. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 10 Oct. 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Yemen>. Accessed 11 October 2024.

<sup>47</sup> Sophie Tanno., 'Israel strikes Yemen for the first time following deadly Houthi drone attack. Here's what we know' <https://www.cnn.com/2024/07/21/middleeast/israel-strikes-houthi-rebels-explainer-intl/index.html> accessed October 1, 2024.

movement for a century-old subsect of Shia Islam called Zaidism.<sup>48</sup>

Houthi attacks on Israel are retaliatory attacks in support of Palestine, in July 2024, a drone attack was launched on Israel killing one Israeli and injuring several others,<sup>49</sup> On October 7, 2024, Houthi fired two missiles at Central Israel which Israel said was intercepted.<sup>50</sup> In the present day Yemen, Houthi controls the capital Sanaa and other important areas of the country.

## 6. THE CAUSE AND PRESENT STATE OF THE CONFLICT

There are several causes of conflicts that are not always easy to identify, this assertion is corroborated by Dunne<sup>51</sup> who opines that:

“The causes of conflict are as varied as its nature and the roots of war are multifaceted, with important historical contexts. Several potential factors can be identified which include colonial legacy; military governments and militaristic cultures; ethnicity and religion; unequal development; inequality and poverty; bad leadership, polity frailties and inadequacies; external influences; greed/opportunity/feasibility; and natural resources. Very few conflicts are simple, they are often a combination of factors and this fact can have important implications in achieving peace and the success of post-conflict reconstruction policies.”<sup>52</sup>

To Dunne, all these factors are important in the success of post-conflict reconstruction policies on return to peace. The roots of the Israel-Palestine conflict can be traced back to the late 19th century with the emergence of the Zionist movement, which resolved to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Since then, the region has been embroiled in conflicts, occupations, and revolts.<sup>53</sup>

On October 7, 2023, Hamas launched an unprecedented, large-scale surprise attack on Israel, killing over 1,400 Israelis and taking over 240 hostages. Israel immediately announced their decision to destroy Hamas, launched retaliatory airstrikes on the Gaza Strip, and carried out a complete blockade, cutting off food and fuel supplies until Hamas released the hostages taken.<sup>54</sup>

Thousands of people have died in this conflict and people are still dying. As of October 3, 2024, Iran has continued to attack Israel in solidarity with Hamas.<sup>55</sup> Iran's missile has struck an important Israeli airbase (Nevatim airbase), piercing a hangar where advanced F-35 fighter jets were kept.<sup>56</sup> Israeli officials acknowledged the

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<sup>48</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> Reuters., ‘Yemen's Houthis say they fired two missiles at central Israel, Israel says missile intercepted’ <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israeli-military-says-it-intercepts-missile-fired-yemen-2024-10-07/> accessed 11 October, 2024.

<sup>51</sup> J Paul Dunne., ‘Armed Conflict’ (2012) Copenhagen Consensus Center.p.2  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep25508>. Accessed 6 October. 2024.

<sup>52</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> Murat Sofuoglu., ‘What October 7 means in the history of Israel-Palestine conflict’ <https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/what-october-7-means-in-the-history-of-israel-palestine-conflict-18215925> accessed 6 October 2024.

<sup>54</sup> Jang Ji-Hyang., ‘Israel-Hamas War: Analysis and Prospects’ (2024) *Asan Institute for Policy Studies*.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep56955>. accessed 6 October. 2024.

<sup>55</sup> Palestine's Hamas, Lebanon's Hezbollah, and Yemen's Houthi.

<sup>56</sup> [Iran's Missile Barrage Burn Down F-35 Hangars At Israeli Base| Satellite Images Show Destruction | Watch \(msn.com\)](https://www.msn.com) accessed 3 October 2024.

damage, they however described the impact as ineffective.<sup>57</sup> The United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres has condemned Iranian strikes on Israel. Addressing the UN Security Council, he said it was high time to stop what he referred to as the "deadly cycle of tit-for-tat violence" in the Middle East.<sup>58</sup>

Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and other Arab movements like Hezbollah and the Houthis all owe their military capabilities to Iran.<sup>59</sup> Iran justifies the decision as retaliation for the deaths of Hamas political leader Ismail Haniyeh, Hezbollah's Hassan Nasrallah and Abbass Nilforoushan, Iran Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)<sup>60</sup> Senior military adviser in Lebanon.<sup>61</sup>

The attacks and counter-attacks are being justified as self-defence which the Charter of the United Nations allows. The Article 51 of the Charter provides that:

"Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations until the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to maintain international peace and security. Measures taken by Members in the exercise of this right of self-defense shall be immediately reported to the Security Council and, shall not in any way affect the authority and responsibility of the Security Council under the present Charter to take at any time such action as it deems necessary in order to maintain or restore international peace and security."

It has not been established if any of these so-called self-defences have been reported to the United Nations Security Council. Attacks and counterattacks are still going on. The Israeli army reported that at least 180 rockets were launched from Lebanon toward northern Israel on Friday, October 4, 2024, bringing the total to 700.<sup>62</sup> In a related development, three people were slightly injured as a result of a Hezbollah rocket impact in the northern Arab village of Deir al-Asad, in the Galilee region of Israel.<sup>63</sup> The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said on Saturday, October 5, 2024, that more than half a million people are now displaced in Lebanon, and 285,000 have left the country.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Geoff Brumfiel., 'Satellite images show dozens of Iranian missiles struck near Israeli air base' <https://www.npr.org/2024/10/04/nx-s1-5140058/satellite-images-dozens-iranian-missiles-struck-near-israeli-air-base> accessed 5 October 2024.

<sup>58</sup> Michael Sheils McNamee., 'UN chief condemns Iran attack after Israel ban' <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy43j9944lno.amp> accessed 5 October 2024.

<sup>59</sup> Salem, Paul, et al. 'Expert Views: What Is Needed to End the War in Gaza?' (2024) Middle East Institute.p.17. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep58721>. Accessed 6 Oct. 2024.

<sup>60</sup> IRGC is a multi-service primary branch of the Iranian Armed Forces different from the country's traditional Army. While the Iranian Army protects the country's sovereignty, IRGC is largely aimed at defending the Islamic Republic of Iran against internal and external threats.

<sup>61</sup> Babak Kamari., 'What calculations stand behind Tehran's massive missile strike on Israel?' <https://www.msn.com/en-xl/africa/top-stories/what-calculations-stand-behind-tehran-s-massive-missile-strike-on-israel/ar-AA1rzQMc?ocid=msedgntp&pc=DCTS&cvid=fb3043a25a4c4344a6757cbc5df4dada&ei=34> accessed 3 October 2024.

<sup>62</sup> Adi Hashmonai and Yaniv Kubovich., 'IDF: 180 Rockets Fired From Lebanon at Northern Israel, Totaling 700 Since Rosh Hashanah Eve' <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-10-04/ty-article/.premium/idf-180-rockets-fired-from-lebanon-at-northern-israel-totaling-700-since-wednesday/00000192-58dc-d9af-a3fb-dfdd5df90000?v=1728150119281> accessed 5, October 2024.

<sup>63</sup> Emmanuel Fabian., '3 lightly injured in a rocket strike on Deir al-Asad' [https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog\\_entry/3-lightly-injured-in-rocket-strike-on-deir-al-asad/](https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/3-lightly-injured-in-rocket-strike-on-deir-al-asad/) Accessed 5, October, 2024.

<sup>64</sup> The German Press Agency, DPA., 'UN: More than half a million people displaced in Lebanon'

The conflict continues to rage on with attacks from Hezbollah, Hamas, Houthi, and Iran, and counter-attacks from Israel. Israel has not assured the Biden administration that it won't target Iran's nuclear facilities in retaliation for the Iranian ballistic missile strikes on Israel.<sup>65</sup>

On October 6, 2024, Israeli forces in Lebanon uncovered more equipment and infrastructure prepared by Hezbollah for an imminent October 7th-like operation to invade northern Israel and slaughter its inhabitants.<sup>66</sup> In a related development on Monday morning of 7 October 2024, enormous blasts were seen in parts of Beirut while Israel's military has announced at least 10 people were injured after rockets were fired at the port city of Haifa in Northern Israel.<sup>67</sup> Palestinian militants in Gaza have also fired a barrage of rockets into Israel on Monday, 7 October 2024 as mourners marked the anniversary of the Oct. 7 attack. Hamas also said it attacked Israeli forces in different parts of Gaza. The Israeli military from its side, said it launched a wave of artillery and airstrikes overnight and into Monday to thwart what it said was an imminent attack. It said it targeted Hamas launch posts and underground militant infrastructure.<sup>68</sup>

On Tuesday 8 October 2024, Benjamin Netanyahu, Israel's Prime Minister warned Lebanon that it could face destruction if the country does not detach itself from Hezbollah. He said in a video address "I say to you, the people of Lebanon, free your country from Hezbollah so that this war can end."<sup>69</sup> On Thursday, 10 October 2024, An Israeli attack in central Beirut killed at least 22 and wounded another 117 people.<sup>70</sup> In the same vein, Gaza's civil defence agency said at least 30 people were killed by Israeli strikes throughout the day in northern Gaza's Jabaliya town and refugee camp on Friday 11 October 2024.<sup>71</sup>

The conflict took a dangerous turn with the Israeli military acknowledging striking a United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) headquarters in Naqoura,

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[https://www.yahoo.com/news/un-more-half-million-people-134915795.html?guccounter=1&guce\\_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2x1LmNvbS8&guce\\_referrer\\_sig=AQAAAFy-6AAJdJdk4mcHfpKiPOR6tMEBCpH097GyBbn6cL\\_VjS0DW\\_tID-VSHJcoyyqBPxJvy3IeFslaoJeZkLd9LBzhC375YNa-Z5DtE2WHqsQbpb2CYDqWWpXi0b-nHtQIoVuollkcaE2vRviypIfnxIS\\_k7f5M4wm2OOsUPyca-9y](https://www.yahoo.com/news/un-more-half-million-people-134915795.html?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2x1LmNvbS8&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAFy-6AAJdJdk4mcHfpKiPOR6tMEBCpH097GyBbn6cL_VjS0DW_tID-VSHJcoyyqBPxJvy3IeFslaoJeZkLd9LBzhC375YNa-Z5DtE2WHqsQbpb2CYDqWWpXi0b-nHtQIoVuollkcaE2vRviypIfnxIS_k7f5M4wm2OOsUPyca-9y) Accessed 5, October 2024.

<sup>65</sup> Kylie Atwood and Jennifer Hansler., 'Israel has given no assurances it won't target Iran's nuclear facilities, top State Department official tells CNN' <https://amp.cnn.com/cnn/2024/10/04/politics/state-department-israel-no-assurances-irans-nuclear-facilities> accessed 5, October 2024.

<sup>66</sup> Hana Levi Julian., 'IDF Uncovers Hezbollah Ordnance, Vehicles in Lebanon Ready for Oct. 7-Style Attack on Northern Israel' <https://www.jewishpress.com/news/middle-east/lebanon/idf-uncovers-hezbollah-ordnance-vehicles-in-lebanon-ready-for-oct-7-style-attack-on-northern-israel/2024/10/06/> accessed 7, October 2024.

<sup>67</sup> Laura Grassby., 'Israel pounds parts of Beirut with airstrikes as IDF confirms rockets fired at northern port city of Haifa with at least 10 injured' <https://www.skynews.com.au/world-news/global-affairs/israel-pounds-parts-of-beirut-with-airstrikes-as-idf-confirms-rockets-fired-at-northern-port-city-of-haifa-with-at-least-10-injured/news-story/ccd6da25915183662710ff3ee74278e> accessed 7, October, 2024.

<sup>68</sup> The Associated Press., 'Middle East latest: Palestinian militants in Gaza fire rockets into Israel as it marks Oct. 7' <https://www.britannica.com/news/439645/d3d272d83e70d420ba547dbd7e09ef52> accessed 7 October 2024.

<sup>69</sup> Benjamin Netanyahu's video message to the people of Lebanon on Tuesday 8, October 2024. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qoN-B6mn0JI> Accessed 9, October 2024.

<sup>70</sup> Alastair McCreedy, et.al 'Updates: Israeli strikes hit central area of Lebanon's Beirut, killing 22' Aljazeera News, 10 October, 2024. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/liveblog/2024/10/10/live-israel-kills-medics-in-lebanon-as-siege-on-north-gaza-enters-6th-day> accessed 11 October 2024.

<sup>71</sup> The Guardian., 'Middle East crisis live: Israeli strikes kill 61 Palestinians in Gaza, medics say; 'thousands' trapped in Jabaliya' <https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2024/oct/11/middle-east-crisis-live-cu-israel-iran-lebanon-blog-news-updates-hezbollah-hamas-unifil?filterKeyEvents=false&page=with:block-670994118f081a18004e504e#block-670994118f081a18004e504e> accessed 11 October 2024.

southern Lebanon, on Friday, 11, October 2024, resulting in injuries to two peacekeepers who were transferred to hospitals in Lebanon.<sup>72</sup> With the UN peacekeepers in Lebanon hit by Israel, this has become an international conflict in the Middle East and the end of this conflict is not yet in sight. United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon has said that "Any deliberate attack on peacekeepers is a grave violation of international humanitarian law", adding that it was following up with the Israeli military.<sup>73</sup>

In another development, Hamas leader, Yahya Sinwar was killed on Thursday, 17 October, 2024 in Gaza Strip, this was confirmed by the IDF. The IDF added that there was no sign of the presence of hostages in the area in which Sinwar was killed.<sup>74</sup> As at Wednesday 23 October 2024, which was the 383<sup>rd</sup> day since the beginning of the conflict, there was no sign it would come to an end.

Houthi has continued to hit Israel and vice-versa. On Thursday, 27 December, 2024, the Israeli airstrike hit a Yemen airport. U.N.'s top humanitarian official in Yemen, Julien Harneis told U.N. reporters that the two airstrikes on Thursday took place in his presence and in the presence of about fifteen others in the VIP lounge at the international airport in Yemen's capital, Sanaa, which include the head of the U.N. World Health Organization.<sup>75</sup> The airstrike destroyed the airport control tower as a Yemenia Airways plane was landing, this also said to affected a crew of the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service.<sup>76</sup>

## CONCLUSION

There is a need to bring this conflict to an end; it is at the detriment of the civilian population. This was confirmed in the UN Secretary General's report to the Security Council in May 2024 where he reported on how the Israel-Palestine armed conflict saw to the destruction of critical infrastructures in Gaza which left 23 hospitals and 56 healthcare centres out of service, 11 bakeries destroyed, 370 educational facilities damaged and at least 88 United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) shelters hit, as well as widespread damage to agricultural infrastructure, including wells, farms, and warehouses. The situation has worsened since the above report. Article 2(4) of the Charter of the United Nations prohibits member states from using threats or force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state in their international relations. Article 2(4) empowers the United Nations Security Council to ensure International peace and security. The Article provides that: In order to ensure prompt and effective action by the United Nations, its Members confer on the Security Council,

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<sup>72</sup> Eugenia Yousef., Eyad Kourdi, and Sophie Tanno., 'Israel acknowledges striking UN peacekeeping base as international condemnation grows' <https://edition.cnn.com/world/live-news/israel-war-iran-palestine-lebanon-10-11-24/index.html> accessed 11 October 2024.

<sup>73</sup> Kabir Yusuf., 'Two peacekeepers injured as Israel attacks UN base in Lebanon' <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/744044-two-peacekeepers-injured-as-israel-attacks-un-base-in-lebanon.html> accessed 11 October, 2024.

<sup>74</sup> Bar Peleg & Josh Breiner., 'Israel Confirms It Has Killed Hamas Leader Yahya Sinwar, Mastermind of the Oct. 7 Attack' [https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-10-17/ty-article/.premium/israeli-army-checking-whether-hamas-leader-sinwar-among-three-terrorists-killed-in-gaza/00000192-9aad-d9c2-a7f3-9eaf8e920000?utm\\_source=mailchimp&utm\\_medium=Content&utm\\_campaign=israel-at-war&utm\\_content=3d059e85e3](https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-10-17/ty-article/.premium/israeli-army-checking-whether-hamas-leader-sinwar-among-three-terrorists-killed-in-gaza/00000192-9aad-d9c2-a7f3-9eaf8e920000?utm_source=mailchimp&utm_medium=Content&utm_campaign=israel-at-war&utm_content=3d059e85e3) accessed 19 October, 2024.

<sup>75</sup> Edith M. Lederer, 'Israeli airstrikes hit a Yemen airport as a jet with hundreds onboard was landing, UN official says' Yahoo News, December, 28, 2024 <https://www.yahoo.com/news/israeli-airstrikes-hit-yemen-airport-235631386.html?guccounter=2> accessed 28 December, 2024.

<sup>76</sup> *ibid.*

primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and agree that in carrying out its duties under this responsibility the Security Council acts on their behalf; and In discharging these duties the Security Council shall act in accordance with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations. The specific powers granted to the Security Council for the discharge of these duties are laid down in Chapters VI, VII, VIII, And XII. This current issue has passed the level of peacekeeping, it is now at the level of enforcement of peace in the Middle East.

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