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## UNRAVELING HUMAN RIGHTS CHALLENGES IN PALESTINE: ASSESSING THE UNITED NATIONS' ROLE AND PATHWAYS TO IMPROVEMENT

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### Abstract

Amidst the protracted Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Palestinian territories grapple with a myriad of entrenched human rights violations. This paper delves into the critical examination of the United Nations' (UN) role in addressing these pervasive issues. The primary objective is to assess the efficacy of UN mechanisms in documenting and addressing human rights abuses perpetrated within Palestine. Through meticulous research and analysis, this paper seeks to identify the persistent challenges hindering effective UN intervention, including political deadlock, structural impediments, and geopolitical complexities. Furthermore, it aims to uncover potential avenues for enhancing the UN's impact, such as bolstering accountability mechanisms, fostering dialogue between Israel and Palestine, and promoting adherence to international law. By offering nuanced insights and pragmatic suggestions, this research endeavors to contribute to the ongoing discourse on safeguarding human rights and advancing peace and justice in the Palestinian territories.

Keywords: Human rights violations, Israel, Palestine, United Nations.

### INTRODUCTION

The situation in Palestine has long been characterized by widespread human rights violations, including infringements on the right to life, freedom of movement, and access to essential services. The United Nations (UN) has been actively engaged in addressing these violations through various mechanisms, resolutions, and agencies. However, the effectiveness of these efforts remains a subject of debate, necessitating a comprehensive examination of the UN's role in mitigating human rights abuses in Palestine. According to international human rights groups, as well as reports from the U.S. Department of State and other relevant entities, Israel faces numerous allegations of human rights violations (Gilboa, 2021). Reported violations include accusations of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other abuses, particularly against the Palestinian population. Examples of reported violations encompass unlawful killings, arbitrary detentions, restrictions on Palestinian residents of Jerusalem, infringements on privacy and family life, limitations on peaceful assembly, and access restrictions to the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound. Additionally, allegations extend to punishment of family members for alleged offenses, curbs on freedom of expression and media, harassment of non-governmental organizations, threats against Palestinians, targeted killings, and violations of Palestinian labor rights (Al-Zoughbi, 2020). In the early 1990s, the first documented cases of Palestinian organ harvesting emerged (Nuriely, 2024). Subsequently, Israeli officials faced accusations of complicity in forcibly removing organs from Palestinians. During this period, reports surfaced alleging that Israeli medical personnel had extracted organs from Palestinian individuals without obtaining consent from their families. Furthermore, it was revealed that a Palestinian organ had been utilized in Israel's inaugural heart transplant. Increasingly, Israeli physicians are denouncing the illicit organ trade, condemning the unauthorized extraction of organs from Palestinians.

The official "Master Plan for the Development of Samaria and Judea until 2010" (1983) extensively addresses the issue of geographical fragmentation and Palestinian authority in Israel. This plan, aligned with the Green Line, advocated for a network of interconnected Jewish settlements within a specified region. Its primary objective was to disrupt transportation routes connecting Palestinian communities in the northern and southern areas (Kerzhner, 2022). Ariel Sharon's comparison of the concrete wall surrounding Qalqilya to the Bantustan model under apartheid illustrates this concept. The term often used to describe this phenomenon is "enclavization", frequently synonymous with "ghettoization".

According to Young's social linkage model of accountability and justice theory, the UN takes responsibility for the situation in Palestine (Aziz, 2023). Near the West Bank, Gaza, Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria, among other locations, the UN has undertaken significant efforts to assist Palestinian refugees. In 1949, the UN General Assembly (UNGA) established the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) to address the humanitarian, health, and educational needs of the Palestinian people (Malme, 2023). The main focus of the UN Relief and Works Agency is to address the needs of Palestinian refugees who were displaced from their homes as a result of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948. This highlights the necessity for the UN to intervene in this matter.

A World Bank study found that creating economic islands in the West Bank and Gaza would slow down the economy, making it harder for Palestinians to work together and build a stable state (Nijim, 2023). Upon examining the Susya area case, it becomes apparent that Ottoman soldiers utilized the Separation Barrier to seize extensive land crucial for future settlement endeavors, encroaching upon the territory inhabited by Bedouin shepherds. The cost of expanding the wall in 2009 amounted to approximately \$3.587 billion. Erecting a similar barrier along the Green Line, spanning 313 kilometers, would achieve the same objective at a relatively lower cost. The numerous settlements situated west of the barrier would be encircled, irrespective of resistance from settler activists. This measure includes constraining settlement expansion and restricting inhabitants' access to Israel. This pivotal decision lies at the core of the present disparity (Shamir, 2013).

The conflict began with Israeli military soldiers conducting nighttime raids into Palestinian homes. Their missions included home searches, detaining suspects, photographing children for potential future legal proceedings, and mapping the layout of houses. Clad in full battle gear and masks, accompanied by dogs, they aggressively approach doors and forcibly enter homes, often tearing off hinges. Police officials photograph minors and create maps of residential areas during these raids, in addition to seeking out and apprehending suspects. Computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices are often targeted for theft and vandalism. Many belongings of residents are packed and removed during these operations.

During the period of martial rule, spanning from June 1967 to 2015, Israeli forces conducted approximately 65,000 nighttime raids on Palestinian homes across the West Bank, excluding

East Jerusalem (El Masri, 2020). As part of the institutional framework of the occupation, the term "foreign civilians" is used to designate Palestinians in military trials overseen by Jewish Israeli judges. This law consists of four components: the first pertains to "incommunicado" confinement, the second addresses the right to legal representation, the third concerns the use of coercion during questioning, and the fourth deals with the disclosure of "confidential evidence." Administrative detention, historically employed against individuals not legally accountable, has been extensively utilized against Palestinians without charges or trials until August 2023. Israel justifies this practice based on security concerns, although it has faced allegations of violating the Fourth Geneva Convention's prohibition on arbitrary detention of prisoners of war by forcibly detaining at least 105 Palestinians under its "unlawful combatant's law". Previous accusations by Palestinians have implicated Israeli police in torture during interrogations (Farber, 2023).

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study adopts a systematic approach utilizing secondary sources to evaluate the effectiveness of United Nations interventions in addressing human rights violations in Palestine. The research methodology involves a comprehensive review of articles, books, and conference papers focused on the history, human rights abuses, and UN involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Analysis of UN resolutions, reports, and media coverage is conducted to assess the strategies employed and outcomes achieved. Through literature and data synthesis, trends, themes, and gaps in existing research are identified, aiming to align UN actions with Palestinian demands and rights. Ethical considerations and limitations, including potential biases in source materials, are carefully addressed to ensure the reliability and impartiality of the study's findings. Ultimately, this approach seeks to contribute valuable insights to scholarly and policy discussions focusing on Palestinian human rights and international interventions.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Scholars have extensively researched the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, examining diverse dimensions such as international involvement, human rights violations, and humanitarian crises. This multifaceted analysis delves into the complexities of the conflict, shedding light on the roles

played by major world powers, diplomatic maneuvers, and the impact on vulnerable populations. Through rigorous investigation, researchers aim to unravel the intricate dynamics of the conflict and its far-reaching consequences for both Israelis and Palestinians. By scrutinizing issues like human rights abuses and the humanitarian fallout, scholars contribute to a nuanced understanding of the conflict's root causes and potential pathways to resolution. Their studies serve as critical resources for policymakers, activists, and global citizens striving to address the enduring challenges and foster peace in the region.

Khan (2022) examines the role of the UN in Palestine, emphasising its significance in the region and the intricate dynamics between major world powers. His study explores Israeli strategies to assert authority over the Palestinian population and sheds light on the UN involvement in addressing the conflict.

Ramnath (2020) focuses on the aftermath of World War II and its impact on decolonization, highlighting the influence of the United States (US) within the UN and Israel's receipt of covert military assistance from NATO member states.

Nacrour and Ghorri (2021) analyze Israel's diplomatic efforts to strengthen relations with European Union member states and NATO, while also exploring the role of international organizations like the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in addressing human rights violations in Palestine.

Ahmad (2023) delves into the objectives of the OIC and its role in addressing human rights issues in Palestine and Kashmir, highlighting the challenges faced by the organization in advocating for vulnerable populations.

Shamshad and Arshad (2021) discuss the commercial and economic ties between Israel, the US, and OIC members, emphasizing the complexities of international relations in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the importance of addressing human rights concerns.

Masudi et al., (2022) examine human rights violations in Palestine, particularly due to the Israeli embargo, emphasizing the moral responsibility of nations to protect vulnerable populations and addressing the resulting humanitarian crisis.

Lin et al., (2022) focus on the humanitarian crisis in Palestine, specifically addressing food insecurity and access to clean water. Their study underscores the dire living conditions faced by Palestinians and the role of organizations like UNRWA in providing relief to Gaza refugees.

McKee (2021) explores the water crisis in Palestine, highlighting extensive pollution and scarcity of drinkable water, with significant health implications for Palestinian children. His study emphasizes the urgent need for sustainable solutions to address water shortages.

In short, the literature examined illuminates the complex and multifaceted Israeli-Palestinian conflict, underscoring its profound ramifications for regional stability and human rights. The insights gleaned from these studies emphasize the pressing need for ongoing initiatives aimed at addressing the underlying causes of the conflict and fostering meaningful dialogue and reconciliation among the involved parties. It is evident that achieving a comprehensive and equitable resolution is crucial for establishing lasting peace and justice in the region. Therefore, concerted efforts must be made to confront entrenched grievances, promote understanding, and pave the way for constructive engagement and cooperation. By heeding the lessons learned from scholarly research, policymakers, activists, and stakeholders can work collaboratively towards building a future where all individuals in the region can live in dignity, security, and harmony.

### **Historical Background of the Palestinian Issue**

Understanding the obstacles hindering progress in Palestine is essential for devising effective solutions to longstanding issues. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict marked by decades of tension, violence, and political impasse, remains a primary barrier to peace and development in the region. The ongoing occupation of Palestinian territories, coupled with socio-economic disparities and governance challenges, exacerbates the situation, impeding the realization of Palestinian rights and aspirations. The roots of the Palestinian predicament trace back to pivotal historical events, such as the Balfour Declaration of 1917, which laid the foundation for Zionist aspirations in Palestine. This declaration, issued by the British government to Lord Rothschild of the Zionist organization, signified a turning point in the region's trajectory, setting the stage for decades of contention and strife (Marin, 2021). Initially intended to bolster the Zionist cause in Palestine, the Balfour Declaration of 1917 also aimed to extend British influence in the Middle East and dissolve the Ottoman Empire. However, its implementation had far-reaching consequences for the indigenous Palestinian population. On May 14, 1948, Zionist organizations declared the establishment of the State of Israel on approximately 78% of the land previously recognized as Palestine (Porath, 2020). This declaration was a watershed moment that officially commenced the occupation of Palestinian territory, leading to the dispossession and oppression

of the Palestinian people (Hughes, 2020). The Nakba of 1948 marked a catastrophic period in Palestinian history, characterized by mass displacement and loss of land. Since the Nakba, the displacement of Palestinians and the annexation of Palestinian land have remained central objectives of Israeli policies. The continued use of forceful evictions and the construction of settlements have further exacerbated tensions and entrenched the occupation. For example, in early June 1967, Israeli forces employed these tactics to seize the last remaining piece of Palestinian territory, including the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, which encompasses East Jerusalem (Fischer, 2021).

The modern territory of Israel spans approximately 20,770 square kilometers, which was originally part of Ancient Palestine covering over 27,000 square kilometers. Around a quarter of the original Palestinian land is now situated within the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Following World War II, this territory was captured by Israelis in 1948 and further expanded in 1967. The international community officially recognizes the Occupied Palestinian Territories, comprising the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The Palestine Liberation Organization declared Palestinian independence on November 15, 1988. Subsequently, on December 15, 1988, the UNGA endorsed the State of Palestine's declaration of independence through Resolution No. 43/177 (Alasttal et al., 2023).

On the contrary, the Palestinian diaspora and the absence of effective leadership within Palestine have posed significant obstacles to the establishment of a unified Palestinian government over the Palestinian territories. The persistent targeting and assassination attempts on Palestinian leaders by Israeli occupation forces likely contribute to these challenges. The Oslo Accords delineated Areas A, B, and C as key components, aiming to transfer varying degrees of control and jurisdiction to the Palestinian Authority. However, Area C, which comprises the largest contiguous section of the West Bank, remains under full administrative and security control by Israel. Major urban centers are located in Area A, while surrounding towns and villages fall within Area B. The Oslo Accords, implemented as an interim agreement from May 4, 1994, to June 4, 1999, aimed to establish Palestinian self-governance and pave the way for a final resolution as outlined in UN Resolution No. 242 (Shayebhilal, 2020). Nonetheless, Israeli leadership failed to fulfill its commitments, obstructing progress towards a comprehensive peace agreement and perpetuating the occupation of Palestinian territories.

As stipulated in the Oslo Accords and subsequent agreements, the Israeli government sought to ensure Israel's continued security by suppressing Palestinian resistance within the framework of the peace process. However, due to the Palestinian side's limited ability to effectively challenge the Israeli military occupation, they encountered obstacles in negotiating amendments to the accords' terms. Consequently, the Palestinian administration in the West Bank and Gaza Strip lacks strength, capacity, and autonomy. The Paris Economic Protocol, a component of the Oslo II Accord, established a colonial dependency system by granting Israel full control over Palestinian foreign commerce (Hanieh, 2023). This arrangement led to a heavy reliance of Palestinian economic activities on Israel, thereby compromising the Palestinian Authority's independence in resource distribution and policymaking.

The situation in Palestine has often been compared to apartheid and oppressive practices, exacerbated by the ongoing Israeli occupation. Human rights, particularly the right to development, have been severely compromised since 1967, when Israel seized the remaining Palestinian territories. Many international organisations, including UN officials and human rights organizations such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, argue that Israel's policies and treatment of Palestinians amount to significant violations of international law, resembling apartheid practices (Irfan, 2020). UN reports have consistently highlighted this crisis over time. Various methods are used to illustrate these policies, including restrictions on movement, limitations on political and civil liberties, land confiscations, forced displacement, extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests and detentions, with a disproportionate impact on women and children. Additionally, there is a lack of cooperation with international organizations. Palestinians are also denied fundamental rights such as the right to life, citizenship, and family reunification.

The construction of Israeli settlements on Palestinian territory has egregiously violated the right to development of the Palestinian people. UN assessments conducted in recent years, including those from 2019 and 2020, have emphasized the severity of this issue, shedding light on its detrimental effects on Palestinian self-determination and progress (Salem, 2020). The expansion of these settlements has significantly altered the demographic composition of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, posing substantial barriers to Palestinian progress. The implementation of the "strategic fragmentation" policy, characterized by the repeated division of Palestinian land,

has severely restricted the fundamental rights of Palestinians. Consequently, Palestinians face challenges in accessing natural resources, maintaining familial unity, achieving economic growth, and ensuring their overall well-being. Israeli actions have further exacerbated this situation by dividing the Palestinian population into smaller, self-governing territories, ultimately reshaping the landscape of Palestine to serve Israeli interests.

### **Human Rights Violations in Palestine**

In the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, stark racial disparities in the application of legal systems based on ethnicity are evident. Palestinians face a complex military justice system under occupation, paradoxically fueling violence instead of resolving it. Unlike Israeli citizens governed by civil law, Palestinians fall under military jurisdiction, leading to discriminatory practices such as prolonged detention periods of up to sixty days, compared to fifteen days for Jewish settlers. Additionally, international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention, mandates trials in one's own country's courts. However, military courts, operating under the Israeli force, often prioritize security-oriented military orders over local laws. This unequal legal treatment perpetuates systemic injustice, hindering peace and stability in the region (Horowitz, 2021).

The Israeli government's amendment of the Security Code in 1988 marked a pivotal change in legal proceedings, as it barred military courts from considering international law (the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War) in their decisions. Additionally, from 1994 to 1997, the construction of 180 miles of bypass roads by the Israeli Defense Forces aimed to protect Israeli communities residing in areas affected by the conflict from Palestinian attacks but encroached upon fundamental human rights, particularly freedom of movement (Hammel, 2020). The intricate network of barriers encircling the West Bank, divided into discrete "land cells," significantly disrupts the daily lives of Palestinians, hindering their routine activities. Moreover, in February 2022, Israel passed a comprehensive 97-page law, which was scheduled to come into effect on July 5, 2022, imposing stringent restrictions on various groups, including companies, intellectuals, international students, and Palestinians holding dual citizenship visiting their families (Rozin, 2016).

The closure of rural villages presents a significant challenge in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with distinct policies affecting areas in Israel, Gaza, and the West Bank. One policy aims to isolate these communities from the outside world, while another restricts internal movement,

albeit with certain exceptions. These closure strategies originated from incidents such as the 1993 stabbings, with the application of the 1991 pass system serving as the foundation for this approach. Villages like Nauman and Kafr Qaddum illustrate the profound impact of long-term isolation, reflecting the historical origins of these challenges (Nasasra, 2022).

The Palestinian right of return has been a contentious issue since 1948, with legal constraints imposed by Israel further complicating the matter. According to international law, specifically the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, family reunification programs require Israeli approval, adding to the challenges faced by Palestinians seeking to reunite with their families. Moreover, Israeli restrictions on using terms like "return" in Palestinian media highlight Israel's control over narratives surrounding the issue (Munem, 2023). Additionally, the Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law (Temporary Provision) of 2003 prohibits married couples from the West Bank or Gaza, who are either Israeli citizens or "permanent residents," from residing together, further exacerbating the situation.

Scholars offer diverse perspectives on Israel's use of separation and exclusion tactics in the West Bank to assert authority. Selby (2013) highlights settlement expansion, land appropriation, economic integration, legal disparities, and coercive measures against Palestinians. LeVine and Shafir (2012) stress administrative detention, home demolitions, expulsions, permit systems, and torture. Falk (2014) adds extrajudicial killings, collective punishment, and political assassinations, while Gordon (2014) underscores the importance of legal battles in human rights advocacy. Together, these analyses illuminate Israel's multifaceted approaches to solidify dominance, revealing deliberate policies aimed at fragmenting Palestinian communities and undermining their well-being. While converging on Israeli hegemony, each scholar offers unique insights, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the conflict's complexities. Despite challenges, the perspectives underscore the resilience of Palestinian resistance against systemic oppression, emphasizing the ongoing struggle for justice and human rights in the region.

Fourth Geneva Convention, ratified by Israel and numerous other nations including members of the UN, is designed to safeguard individuals in conflict zones. Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention explicitly forbids the transfer of protected persons from occupied territories to the territory of the occupying power or any other nation, covering both singular and recurring transfers (Giladi, 2015). Nevertheless, despite these provisions, Israel's activities, such as the

relocation of residents from Khan al-Ahmar village to a landfill, contradict international law and it is a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention (Articles 33 and 53). These actions, which include imposing transportation restrictions, conducting deliberate bombings, making mass arrests, and demolishing public facilities, perpetuate ongoing human rights violations

### **Current Situation in Gaza and West Bank**

Over the past seven months, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank have experienced a significant escalation of violence, resulting in severe humanitarian crises and widespread human rights violations, primarily perpetrated by Israeli forces.

In Gaza, Israeli military operations have led to a staggering number of casualties and extensive infrastructure damage. According to the Ministry of Health (MoH) in Gaza, between October 7, 2023, and February 26, 2024, a minimum of 29,782 Palestinians lost their lives in Gaza, with 70,043 Palestinians sustaining injuries. These casualties include civilians caught in the crossfire of military operations and targeted attacks on civilian infrastructure such as residential areas, schools, and hospitals(OCHA, 2024).

Furthermore, the Gaza Strip continues to suffer from severe food shortages and limited access to essential services due to the Israeli blockade imposed since 2007. The World Food Programme (WFP) reports that over 70% of Gaza's population is food insecure, lacking access to nutritious meals, clean water, and adequate sanitation facilities. According to the OHCHR report dated January 16, 2024, at present, every individual in Gaza is experiencing hunger, with a quarter of the population facing starvation and desperate struggles to access food and safe drinking water, heightening the threat of famine. Pregnant women lack sufficient nutrition and medical care, jeopardizing their well-being. Moreover, all children under the age of five, totaling 335,000, face significant peril of severe malnutrition as the likelihood of famine conditions escalates, placing an entire generation at risk of enduring stunted growth. The blockade has also hindered the delivery of humanitarian aid, exacerbating the humanitarian crisis in the enclave (UNOHCHR, 2024).

Israeli settlers frequently attack Palestinian villages, homes, and agricultural lands, resulting in injuries, property damage, and displacement. The UN has documented numerous cases of settler violence and harassment against Palestinians, including physical assaults, arson attacks, and vandalism of mosques and other religious sites (UNOCHA, 2008).

Additionally, the escalation of violence in Gaza and the West Bank has resulted in a significant increase in attacks on humanitarian workers, journalists, and medical personnel, hindering their ability to provide assistance and report on the situation. Attacks on healthcare facilities and personnel, documented by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), have led to the closure of several hospitals and clinics, further straining the region's healthcare system.

Restrictions and the lack of protection for aid convoys in both northern and southern Gaza have severely hindered humanitarian efforts, leaving millions in desperate need. Checkpoints block and delay convoys, making it impossible to reach those most in need. The north of Gaza has been particularly affected, with people trapped and struggling to survive amidst bombings and destruction.

Humanitarian organizations, including Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), face immense challenges. A nurse in the north describes the situation as catastrophic, with a dire shortage of hospitals, medications, clean water, and food, leading to worsening health conditions, particularly among children.

Israeli authorities have consistently denied access to humanitarian missions, exacerbating the crisis. The World Food Programme had to cease assistance due to unsafe conditions for food distribution. This, along with the severe reduction in aid trucks entering Gaza, has plunged the population into desperation.

Prolonged administrative procedures further impede access to lifesaving supplies, with screening processes causing delays and rejections of essential items. This delays critical medical equipment and drugs, worsening the suffering of those with chronic conditions.

In southern Gaza, displaced people endure horrific conditions, lacking basic necessities like sanitary pads and proper shelter. Chronic diseases are left untreated due to medication shortages, leading to dire consequences (Reliefweb, 2024).

Lisa Macheiner, the MSF project coordinator in Gaza, underscores the severity of the situation, stating, “aside from the threat of bombs, people are grappling with shortages of food, water, and medical care.” She adds, “the people in Gaza have reached a breaking point. They no longer feel secure, facing the constant fear of bombings at night and the uncertainty of obtaining their next meal or clean water.”

MSF continues to provide essential medical and humanitarian aid, but the scale of the crisis overwhelms available resources. Urgent calls for a ceasefire, safety assurances for aid workers, and an end to the blockade underscore the need for immediate action to alleviate suffering and ensure access to lifesaving assistance (Reliefweb, 2024).

The disproportionate use of force by Israeli security forces against unarmed Gazans has raised concerns about violations of international human rights law. Human rights organizations, including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, have called for independent investigations into allegations of war crimes and violations of the laws of war by Israeli forces.

In response to these concerning developments, it is imperative for the international community to urgently address the root causes of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. These include the illegal occupation of Palestinian territories, the blockade of Gaza, and the expansion of Israeli settlements. Upholding human rights, promoting accountability for violations, and advancing a just and lasting solution to the conflict are essential steps towards achieving peace, security, and dignity for all people in the region (Amnesty International, 2023).

### **The Role of the United Nations in Israel-Palestine Conflict**

The UN has been actively engaged in addressing human rights violations and seeking solutions to the ongoing Palestinian-Israeli conflict, particularly in Gaza and the West Bank. Through resolutions, legal actions, and diplomatic efforts, the UN aims to alleviate humanitarian suffering, promote peace, and uphold international law in the region.

One of the key roles of the UN in addressing human rights violations in Palestine is through the adoption of resolutions condemning Israeli actions and advocating for the rights of Palestinians. Resolution 2334, passed by the UN Security Council (UNSC) in December 2016, reaffirms the illegality of Israeli settlements in Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem. This resolution calls for an immediate cessation of all settlement activities and emphasizes the need for a negotiated two-state solution based on the pre-1967 borders. By condemning Israeli settlements as a violation of international law, Resolution 2334 underscores the UN's commitment to addressing human rights abuses in Palestine and promoting a peaceful resolution to the conflict (UNHRC, 2334).

Furthermore, the UN has taken legal action to investigate and document specific instances of human rights violations in Gaza and the West Bank. The UN Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza

War of 2008–2009, led by Richard J. Goldstone, examined Israeli military actions in the Gaza Strip and documented numerous violations of Palestinian human rights. The mission's findings highlighted the disproportionate use of force by Israeli forces, resulting in civilian casualties and widespread destruction of property. Despite facing criticism and controversy, the report emphasized the UN's role in investigating and documenting human rights violations in the region (Goldstone, 2009).

Additionally, the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) has established committees and commissions to investigate human rights abuses in Palestine and the occupied territories. Resolution S-21, passed by the UNHRC, set up a committee of investigation to examine possible violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in the occupied Gaza Strip and Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem. These investigative bodies aim to hold accountable those responsible for human rights violations and promote accountability for violations of international law (Imseis, 2007).

In terms of diplomatic efforts, the UN has played a crucial role in facilitating peace negotiations between Israel and Palestine. The UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, along with other UN envoys, has worked tirelessly to broker ceasefires, promote dialogue, and advance the peace process in the region. Despite challenges and setbacks, the UN remains committed to facilitating negotiations and promoting a peaceful resolution to the conflict (Hanci, 2018).

In the current situation in Gaza and the West Bank, the United Nations continues to play a pivotal role in providing humanitarian assistance, advocating for the protection of civilians, and calling for an end to violence. UN agencies, such as the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), provide vital humanitarian aid, including food, shelter, and medical assistance, to vulnerable populations in Gaza and the West Bank. Additionally, the UNSC regularly convenes to discuss the situation in the region, express concerns about escalating violence, and call for de-escalation and restraint from all parties (Khouri, 2009).

Furthermore, the UN Secretary-General and other senior officials have consistently called for an end to hostilities and a return to meaningful negotiations to address the underlying causes of the conflict. The UN Secretary-General, alongside other senior officials, has consistently advocated

for an end to hostilities and a resumption of meaningful negotiations to address the root causes of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Through official statements, diplomatic engagements, and public addresses, the Secretary-General emphasizes the urgent need for all parties to prioritize peace and dialogue (Hanci, 2018).

Diplomatic efforts spearheaded by the UN, in collaboration with bilateral and multilateral partners, remain indispensable in promoting dialogue, fostering trust, and building confidence between Israelis and Palestinians. These efforts aim to create an environment conducive to peaceful negotiations and sustainable solutions to the conflict (Kahanoff et al. 2007).

At the UN, diplomatic initiatives take various forms, including Security Council meetings, General Assembly debates, and special envoys appointed to facilitate dialogue between the parties. The Secretary-General utilizes his diplomatic authority and convening power to bring together key stakeholders, encourage constructive engagement, and explore avenues for conflict resolution (Wiseman, 2015).

In addition to UN-led initiatives, bilateral and multilateral channels play a crucial role in advancing diplomatic efforts. Regional organizations (the Arab League, Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)), neighboring states (Egypt and Jordan), and major global powers (European Union and US) contribute to mediation efforts, offer diplomatic support, and promote confidence-building measures aimed at de-escalating tensions and fostering cooperation.

Despite the challenges and setbacks encountered along the way, the UN remains committed to its role as a mediator and facilitator of peace in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Secretary-General and other senior officials continue to engage with all parties involved, urging them to demonstrate restraint, respect international law, and work towards a just and lasting resolution to the conflict. Through sustained diplomatic engagement and collective action, the UN endeavors to pave the way for a future of peace, security, and prosperity for Israelis and Palestinians alike (Hanci, 2018).

In short, the UN plays a critical role in addressing human rights violations, promoting peace, and advocating for the rights of Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank. Through resolutions, legal actions, diplomatic efforts, and humanitarian assistance, the UN strives to alleviate suffering, protect civilians, and advance a just and lasting resolution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

However, sustained international engagement and cooperation will be crucial to achieving lasting peace and security in the region (El-Haybi, 2013).

### **Significant United Nations Resolutions on the Israel-Palestine Conflict**

The UN has enacted several resolutions and laws aimed at addressing the Palestine issue and stopping human rights violations. Some key ones include:

1. UNGA Resolution 181 (1947): Known as the Partition Plan for Palestine, it proposed the division of Mandatory Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states, with Jerusalem as an international city.
2. UNSC Resolution 242 (1967): Calls for the withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the Six-Day War and emphasizes the need for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.
3. UNSC Resolution 338 (1973): Calls for an immediate ceasefire and implementation of Resolution 242 to achieve a peaceful resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict.
4. UNGA Resolution 3236 (1974): Reaffirms the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination, national independence, and sovereignty.
5. UNSC Resolution 478 (1980): Condemns Israel's annexation of East Jerusalem and declares the Israeli Jerusalem Law null and void.
6. UNGA Resolution 194 (1948): Affirms the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties and receive compensation for those who choose not to return.
7. Various resolutions and statements by the UNHRC condemning human rights violations in Palestine and calling for accountability for perpetrators. Some important ones include

**I. UNHRC Resolution S-21/1 (2009):** Condemned the grave violations of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territory, particularly in the Gaza Strip, and called for immediate cessation of all acts of violence.

**II. UNHRC Resolution S-9/1 (2009):** Established an independent international fact-finding mission to investigate violations of international human rights law during the Gaza conflict in December 2008 and January 2009.

**III. UNHRC Resolution 31/36 (2016):** Called for accountability for human rights violations in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and reaffirmed the right of Palestinians to self-determination.

**IV. UNHRC Resolution 45/30 (2020):** Condemned Israel's continued occupation of Palestinian territories and called for an end to all human rights violations, including excessive use of force against civilians.

**V-Statements** by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, including those condemning settlement expansion, demolitions of Palestinian homes, and restrictions on freedom of movement.

These examples represent just a fraction of the many resolutions and laws implemented by the UN in addressing the Palestine issue and human rights violations in the region. They highlight the UN's ongoing commitment to address human rights abuses in Palestine and stress the significance of holding perpetrators accountable.

## CONCLUSION

In short, the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains a deeply entrenched and multifaceted issue that continues to have far-reaching implications for both the region and the international community. Throughout history, the UN has played a pivotal role in addressing human rights violations, promoting peace, and advocating for the rights of Palestinians. However, despite the UN's efforts, the situation in Palestine remains dire, with Palestinians enduring widespread oppression, violence, and displacement.

The examination of the UN involvement in Palestine underscores both its successes and limitations. On one hand, the UN has adopted numerous resolutions condemning Israeli actions, documenting human rights abuses, and advocating for Palestinian rights. Resolutions like 2334 serve as critical mechanisms for reaffirming international law and principles, particularly regarding the illegality of Israeli settlements in occupied territories. Additionally, legal actions, such as the Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza War of 2008–2009, have shed light on violations and held perpetrators accountable, albeit amidst criticism and challenges.

Diplomatic efforts spearheaded by the UN, including the involvement of special envoys and peacekeeping initiatives, have aimed to foster dialogue, broker ceasefires, and advance the peace process. Despite challenges and setbacks, these diplomatic endeavors remain crucial for promoting trust, facilitating negotiations, and ultimately achieving a sustainable resolution to the conflict.

Furthermore, the UN's provision of humanitarian aid through agencies like UNRWA has been instrumental in addressing the immediate needs of Palestinian refugees, providing essential services such as food, shelter, and medical assistance. However, while such initiatives offer temporary relief, they fail to address the root causes of the conflict or provide a sustainable solution for Palestinians.

The role of regional organizations, neighboring states, and major global powers also warrants consideration in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. While regional organizations like the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation have voiced support for Palestinian rights, their influence and effectiveness in resolving the conflict have been limited. Neighboring states, particularly those in the Middle East, play significant roles as stakeholders and mediators in peace negotiations. Similarly, major global powers such as the US, Russia, China, and the European Union wield considerable influence in shaping the trajectory of the conflict through diplomatic interventions, economic incentives, and military support.

In light of the complex geopolitical dynamics and entrenched interests at play, achieving a lasting peace in Palestine requires a concerted and multifaceted approach. Efforts must prioritize respect for international law, adherence to human rights principles, and genuine dialogue between all parties involved. The UN, as a central actor in the international community, must continue to uphold its mandate of promoting peace, security, and human rights for all peoples, including the Palestinians. However, lasting resolution ultimately depends on the collective commitment of the international community, regional actors, and the parties directly involved in the conflict to pursue justice, reconciliation, and a just and lasting peace in Palestine.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Addressing human rights violations in Palestine requires more than just reporting from the UN; it demands proactive measures to tackle the underlying issues and ensure accountability. Establishing an impartial international commission to investigate and report findings to the UNSC is crucial. However, reporting alone is insufficient; perpetrators of human rights abuses must be held accountable through mechanisms like the International Criminal Court and similar bodies.

To contribute effectively to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the UN should actively facilitate peace talks and advocate for Palestine's recognition as a legitimate state. This includes empowering Palestinian self-governance and fostering a suitable environment for dialogue and negotiation. Additionally, the UN and the global community should increase humanitarian aid to address urgent needs, particularly in Gaza and refugee camps where shortages of food, water, medical care, and education persist.

Long-term solutions also require global cooperation and the promotion of human rights education. Both Israelis and Palestinians must support efforts to promote tolerance, peace, and human rights in the region. Implementing these recommendations can help the international community and the UN play a significant role in ending human rights violations and building sustainable peace in Palestine.

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