

# Israel's Non-Compliance with UNSC Resolutions: Implications for Middle East Stability

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## Abstract

Israel's non-compliance with United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions remains a critical issue affecting Middle East stability. Despite numerous resolutions demanding withdrawal from occupied territories, cessation of settlement expansions, and recognition of Palestinian self-determination, enforcement has been inconsistent. Geopolitical interests, particularly the strategic alliances between Israel and major global powers, have weakened the effectiveness of international legal mechanisms. This study examines key UNSC resolutions that Israel has defied and analyzes the broader implications for regional security, diplomacy, and conflict resolution. Findings reveal that Israel's continued settlement expansion and military presence in occupied territories exacerbate tensions, fuel cycles of violence, and undermine diplomatic efforts. Furthermore, the selective enforcement of UNSC resolutions weakens international law's credibility, fostering regional distrust in global governance structures. The study recommends strengthening international accountability mechanisms, fostering diplomatic initiatives that prioritize balanced mediation, and promoting regional economic cooperation to address underlying grievances. Achieving sustainable peace in the Middle East requires a commitment to upholding international law and ensuring equitable enforcement of UNSC resolutions.

**Keywords:** Non-Compliance, UNSC Resolutions, Middle East Stability, Occupied Territories and International Law

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## **Introduction**

Israel's non-compliance with United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions has long been a critical issue in international politics, with far-reaching implications for Middle East stability. The UNSC has passed numerous resolutions addressing Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories, settlement expansion, military actions, and broader regional security concerns. However, Israel's persistent defiance, often enabled by geopolitical alliances and the selective enforcement of international law, has deepened the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and heightened regional instability (Falk, 2017).

Scholars argue that Israel's non-compliance is rooted in a combination of historical grievances, security concerns, and the protection it enjoys from global powers, particularly the United States (Slater, 2021). The failure to enforce resolutions such as UNSC Resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), and 2334 (2016) has weakened the credibility of international law and reinforced asymmetries in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Quigley, 2020). Furthermore, the lack of consequences for violations has emboldened unilateral actions, including settlement expansion and military incursions, which obstruct diplomatic efforts for peace (Khalidi, 2020).

This study critically examines the reasons behind Israel's non-compliance with UNSC resolutions, the geopolitical factors influencing enforcement, and the broader implications for regional security, diplomacy, and conflict resolution. By analyzing these dynamics, the research highlights the urgent need for a more consistent and effective international legal framework to uphold peace and stability in the Middle East.

## **Research Objectives**

1. To analyze the key UNSC resolutions concerning Israel and assess the reasons behind Israel's non-compliance.
2. To examine the impact of Israel's defiance on Middle East peace, regional security, and international law.
3. To explore diplomatic and policy approaches for enhancing compliance and promoting long-term stability in the region.

## **Research Methodology**

This study employs a qualitative research methodology, relying on secondary sources of data to analyze Israel's non-compliance with United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions and its implications for Middle East stability. The research draws upon scholarly books, peer-reviewed journal articles, official UNSC documents, policy reports, and analyses from international organizations to provide a comprehensive assessment of the issue. By examining historical and contemporary records, the study evaluates patterns of Israeli defiance, the geopolitical influences shaping enforcement mechanisms, and the broader consequences for regional peace and security.

A systematic review of relevant UNSC resolutions, including Resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), and 2334 (2016), provides insight into the legal and diplomatic frameworks governing Israel's obligations under international law. Furthermore, academic perspectives on international relations, conflict resolution, and Middle East geopolitics contribute to a deeper understanding of the structural and political factors influencing compliance and enforcement. The study also incorporates comparative analyses of other cases of non-compliance with UNSC resolutions to highlight inconsistencies in international responses and their impact on conflict resolution.

By utilizing secondary data, this research ensures a broad and well-contextualized analysis of Israel's non-compliance, offering a critical evaluation of the limitations of international law in addressing long-standing geopolitical disputes.

## **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework for analyzing Israel's non-compliance with United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions is rooted in three interrelated theoretical approaches: realism, constructivism, and international legal theory. These frameworks provide a comprehensive lens to examine the factors driving non-compliance, its consequences, and the broader implications for Middle East peace and stability.

## **Non compliance**

Non-compliance in international relations refers to the failure or refusal of states to adhere to legal obligations, treaties, or resolutions set

by international governing bodies such as the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). According to Chayes and Chayes (1993), non-compliance is often a result of ambiguity in legal provisions, lack of enforcement mechanisms, or geopolitical interests that override legal commitments. In the context of international law, non-compliance undermines the authority of global institutions and weakens the legitimacy of legal norms meant to regulate state behavior (Franck, 1990).

Scholars argue that states may defy international resolutions due to strategic interests, security concerns, or the absence of tangible consequences for violations (Krasner, 1999). For instance, Hurd (2007) posits that states comply with international norms not solely due to legal obligations but also based on perceptions of legitimacy and power dynamics. When powerful states or their allies violate UNSC resolutions without repercussions, it sets a precedent that weakens global governance (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998).

In cases such as Israel's non-compliance with UNSC resolutions, the interplay between national security interests, political alliances, and selective enforcement further complicates adherence to international mandates (Slaughter, 2000). This demonstrates that non-compliance is not merely a legal issue but a reflection of the broader asymmetries of power in international relations.

## **United Nations Security Council (UNSC)**

United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions serve as key instruments in maintaining international peace and security, yet their effectiveness varies due to enforcement challenges and geopolitical dynamics. Fassbender (2011) explains that UNSC resolutions derive their legal authority from the UN Charter, particularly Chapter VII, which grants the Council the power to impose binding measures, including economic sanctions, diplomatic actions, and military interventions. However, the implementation of these resolutions is often undermined by political interests, selective enforcement, and the veto power exercised by permanent members.

In the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, UNSC resolutions such as Resolution 242 (1967) and Resolution 338 (1973) explicitly call for Israel's withdrawal from occupied territories and emphasize the necessity of a negotiated two-state solution (Roberts, 1990). Despite their legally binding nature, these resolutions have not been fully



implemented, largely due to strategic alliances and geopolitical considerations. Chomsky (2014) argues that Israel's non-compliance has been reinforced by U.S. diplomatic protection, including frequent vetoes against enforcement measures. Dugard (2007) further contends that the UNSC applies inconsistent standards, imposing sanctions on certain states while avoiding similar actions against Israel, thereby weakening the credibility of international law.

Selective adherence to UNSC resolutions has broader implications for global governance. Cronin (2008) highlights that inconsistent enforcement fosters perceptions of bias, eroding trust in multilateral institutions. When powerful states selectively comply with international legal norms, weaker states may question the legitimacy of the UNSC's authority, potentially leading to further non-compliance in global conflicts. Therefore, while UNSC resolutions serve as crucial mechanisms for international peace, their effectiveness is contingent upon political will, equitable enforcement, and the structural limitations of the UN system.

## **Middle East stability**

Middle East stability is a complex and contested concept influenced by historical conflicts, geopolitical rivalries, and socio-political dynamics. Scholars argue that stability in the region is not merely the absence of conflict but the presence of sustainable governance, economic development, and diplomatic cooperation. According to Gause (2014), Middle East stability is frequently undermined by both internal and external factors, including sectarian divisions, foreign interventions, and power struggles between regional actors such as Iran and Saudi Arabia. The Arab uprisings of 2011 further demonstrated how socio-economic grievances and authoritarian governance contribute to instability, leading to regime collapses and prolonged conflicts (Lynch, 2016).

Geopolitical rivalries play a crucial role in shaping Middle East stability. Walt (1987) asserts that the balance of power theory explains how states engage in alliances to counter perceived threats, contributing to cycles of instability. The Iranian-Saudi rivalry, for instance, has exacerbated sectarian tensions and fueled proxy wars in Yemen, Syria, and Lebanon, preventing long-term stability (Wehrey, 2018). Furthermore, international involvement—particularly by the United States, Russia, and China—has complicated regional dynamics, as external powers pursue strategic interests that often conflict with local aspirations for peace (Halliday, 2005).

Economic development is another key factor in regional stability. Ross (2012) argues that oil wealth has both stabilized and destabilized the Middle East, as rentier state economies often result in authoritarian governance, economic inequality, and corruption. When oil prices fluctuate, resource-dependent states experience economic crises, which can lead to political unrest. Additionally, weak state institutions and governance failures exacerbate instability, as seen in fragile states such as Libya and Syria (Heydemann, 2018).

Ultimately, Middle East stability requires diplomatic efforts, institutional reforms, and conflict resolution mechanisms that address both structural and immediate causes of instability. While regional organizations such as the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the Arab League attempt to foster stability, their effectiveness remains limited by political divisions and external influences (Barnett, 1998). Without a concerted effort to resolve conflicts, strengthen governance, and promote inclusive development, the prospect of lasting stability in the Middle East remains elusive.

## **Occupied Territories**

The concept of **Occupied Territories** is a critical issue in international law and geopolitics, particularly in conflict zones where military control is exercised over foreign lands. Occupation is defined under **Article 42 of the 1907 Hague Regulations**, which states that a territory is considered occupied when it is placed under the authority of a hostile army (Roberts, 1990). Additionally, **the Fourth Geneva Convention (1949)** provides legal frameworks for the treatment of civilians and restrictions on the occupying power, emphasizing that occupation does not grant sovereignty over the land (Benvenisti, 2012).

The concept of Occupied Territories under International Law is primarily governed by treaties, customary law, and judicial interpretations that regulate the rights and responsibilities of occupying powers. The Hague Regulations of 1907 and the Fourth Geneva Convention (1949) form the foundation of legal provisions concerning occupation. According to Article 42 of the Hague Regulations, a territory is considered occupied when it is placed under the authority of a foreign military force, while Article 43 obligates the occupier to restore and maintain public order while respecting existing laws (Roberts, 1990).

The Fourth Geneva Convention, particularly Articles 27–34 and 47–78, outlines the protection of civilians under occupation, prohibiting forced transfers, annexation, and exploitation of resources. Article 49 explicitly forbids an occupying power from transferring its population into the occupied territory, making Israeli settlements in the West Bank a subject of legal scrutiny (Benvenisti, 2012). The International Court of Justice (ICJ) reaffirmed these principles in its 2004 Advisory Opinion, ruling that Israel's construction of a separation barrier in the West Bank violated international law (Scobbie, 2017).

Despite these legal frameworks, enforcement remains inconsistent, often influenced by geopolitical considerations. For example, the UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) demand Israeli withdrawal from occupied Palestinian territories, yet their implementation has been stalled due to diplomatic deadlock and shifting power dynamics (Quigley, 2013). Similarly, Russia's annexation of Crimea (2014) has been widely condemned as an occupation, yet international responses have been limited to sanctions rather than direct enforcement (Zunes, 2015).

Occupied territories often experience prolonged legal ambiguity, human rights violations, and contested sovereignty, making their governance a major issue in international relations. The lack of binding enforcement mechanisms within international law has led to selective compliance, where political interests often outweigh legal mandates, reinforcing the complexity of occupation in contemporary geopolitics (Gordon & Cohen, 2020).

## **The Concept of International Law**

International law is a system of legal principles and norms that govern relations between sovereign states, international organizations, and, in some cases, individuals. It is primarily derived from treaties, customary international law, general principles, judicial decisions, and the writings of eminent scholars (Shaw, 2021). Unlike domestic law, which is enforced by a centralized authority, international law relies on state consent and mechanisms such as reciprocity, diplomatic pressure, and institutional enforcement through international organizations like the United Nations and the International Court of Justice (Cassese, 2005).

The classical foundations of international law trace back to natural law theories, as espoused by Grotius (1625), who argued that international legal norms are based on universal moral principles. In contrast, positivist legal scholars, such as Austin (1832), contend that international law lacks the coercive authority of domestic legal systems, functioning more as a set of guidelines rather than binding law. However, modern international legal frameworks, including the United Nations Charter (1945), emphasize the binding nature of treaties and conventions, reinforcing state obligations and accountability in areas such as human rights, armed conflict, and environmental protection (Dixon, 2013).

Despite its limitations in enforcement, international law plays a critical role in maintaining global order, resolving disputes, and promoting cooperation among states (Brownlie, 2008). The evolving nature of international law, particularly with the emergence of international criminal tribunals and human rights regimes, reflects its increasing influence in shaping state behavior and global governance (Koskeniemi, 2011).

## **Empirical Literature**

Israel's non-compliance with United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions has been a subject of extensive scholarly inquiry, particularly in relation to its implications for regional stability in the Middle East. Empirical studies indicate that Israel has repeatedly disregarded key UNSC resolutions, such as Resolution 242 (1967), which calls for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from occupied territories, and Resolution 2334 (2016), which condemns Israeli settlement expansion in the West Bank (Falk & Weston, 2019). The failure to enforce these resolutions has reinforced a perception of international legal inconsistency, weakened the credibility of multilateral institutions and exacerbated regional tensions (Slater, 2021).

Empirical data suggest that Israeli non-compliance contributes to cycles of violence, increased militarization, and diplomatic deadlock, undermining peace initiatives such as the Oslo Accords (1993) and the Arab Peace Initiative (2002) (Pappé, 2017). Quantitative analyses of conflict patterns indicate a correlation between Israeli settlement expansion and heightened Palestinian resistance, often manifesting in violent uprisings such as the First and Second Intifadas (B'Tselem, 2020). Furthermore, security studies have found that Israel's actions embolden



other regional actors, including Iran and Hezbollah, to adopt more aggressive postures, further destabilizing the geopolitical landscape (Khalidi, 2020).

Scholars argue that Israel's strategic alliances, particularly with the United States, have shielded it from the enforcement of UNSC resolutions, allowing it to maintain policies that contravene international law without significant repercussions (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007). This selective enforcement of international norms has fueled grievances among Arab states and non-state actors, perpetuating hostility and obstructing diplomatic resolutions to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Shlaim, 2019). Given these dynamics, the persistent failure to implement UNSC resolutions poses a significant threat to Middle East stability by sustaining asymmetric power structures, fostering radicalization, and diminishing prospects for a negotiated peace settlement.

## **Theoretical Framework**

The theory most relevant to understanding Israel's non-compliance with UNSC resolutions is **Realism** within the field of International Relations (IR). Realism emphasizes the centrality of power, national interest, and security in state behavior, and it argues that international law and organizations are secondary to the pursuit of a state's survival and self-interest. This theory can be particularly useful in analyzing Israel's actions regarding its non-compliance with UNSC resolutions and its broader impact on regional stability in the Middle East.

## **Proponents of Realism**

Realism is largely associated with scholars such as **Hans Morgenthau** and **Kenneth Waltz**, who are considered the principal figures in its classical and structural forms, respectively. Morgenthau's seminal work, *Politics Among Nations* (1948), argues that politics, especially international politics, is governed by objective laws rooted in human nature, and that states act according to their national interests, which often prioritize security over moral or legal considerations. Meanwhile, Waltz's *Theory of International Politics* (1979) elaborates on structural realism, focusing on the anarchic nature of the international system, where states must rely on their own capabilities to ensure their survival.

## **Basic Assumptions of Realism**

Realism is based on several key assumptions:

- 1. Anarchy in the International System:** Realists argue that the international system is anarchic, meaning there is no overarching authority above states. As a result, states must act primarily in their self-interest to ensure security and survival.
- 2. The Primacy of National Interest and Security:** States are the central actors in international relations, and their behavior is primarily motivated by the need to ensure their own security and preserve their national interests. For Israel, national security and territorial integrity are paramount.
- 3. Power and Military Capability:** States are motivated by the pursuit of power, and military strength is considered one of the most important tools for ensuring security. This is evident in Israel's military capacity and strategic alliances with powerful states, such as the United States.
- 4. States as Rational Actors:** Realists assume that states act rationally, seeking to maximize their benefits while minimizing potential risks to their sovereignty and survival.
- 5. Ineffectiveness of International Institutions:** Realists argue that international institutions, such as the United Nations, are often ineffectual in enforcing international law or resolving disputes because states prioritize their own interests over compliance with international norms or decisions.

## **Relevance of Realism to Israel's Non-Compliance with UNSC Resolutions**

Realism provides a compelling theoretical framework for understanding Israel's persistent non-compliance with UNSC resolutions. Despite numerous resolutions calling for Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories or adherence to international humanitarian law, Israel continues to act in defiance of such resolutions. This behavior can be explained by the following aspects of realism:

- 1. National Security and Self-Interest:** Israel views its security as existentially linked to its control over key territories, such as the West Bank and Jerusalem. In the context of ongoing security

threats from surrounding states and non-state actors, Israel prioritizes its territorial integrity and military superiority over adherence to international resolutions. The belief in the need for secure borders and self-defense outweighs the potential diplomatic or legal consequences of non-compliance.

- 2. Geopolitical Alliances:** Israel's strategic alliance with the United States plays a central role in its non-compliance with UNSC resolutions. Realism emphasizes the importance of power alliances, and Israel's strong military and diplomatic ties with the U.S. have effectively shielded it from international sanctions or punitive actions. The U.S. has vetoed multiple UNSC resolutions that were unfavorable to Israel, thereby reinforcing the realist argument that power relations often dictate the enforcement of international law (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007).
- 3. Anarchy and Lack of Enforcement:** The absence of a central authority capable of compelling Israel to comply with UNSC resolutions reinforces the anarchic structure of the international system. Israel's actions are motivated by the knowledge that the UNSC has limited capacity to enforce its decisions, especially given the U.S. veto power. This dynamic demonstrates the limitations of international law in an anarchic world where states are not willing to cede sovereignty or security to international institutions.
- 4. Rationality and Cost-Benefit Analysis:** From a realist perspective, Israel's decision to disregard UNSC resolutions is rational. The costs of compliance, in terms of territorial concessions or political upheaval, are perceived to outweigh the benefits of adhering to international norms. Realists argue that states act based on a cost-benefit analysis of their interests, and Israel calculates that maintaining control over disputed territories is more important for its security than abiding by UNSC mandates.

## **Implications for Middle East Stability**

The non-compliance of Israel with UNSC resolutions has significant implications for regional stability in the Middle East. Realism suggests that Israel's actions may fuel further regional instability, as neighboring Arab states and non-state actors, such as Palestinian militant groups, perceive Israel's disregard for international law as evidence of its power and impunity. This dynamic can lead to an escalation of hostilities, as

regional actors challenge Israel's authority and legitimacy. The failure of international institutions to enforce UNSC resolutions only exacerbates this instability, as it reinforces the perception that power, rather than legal norms, dictates the outcome of international conflicts (Falk & Weston, 2019).

Realism provides a robust theoretical framework for understanding Israel's non-compliance with UNSC resolutions and its implications for Middle East stability. The theory highlights the primacy of national security, power dynamics, and the ineffectiveness of international institutions in an anarchic system. Israel's behavior, driven by strategic considerations and geopolitical alliances, reflects the core assumptions of realism, particularly the prioritization of security over compliance with international norms. The failure to enforce UNSC resolutions contributes to the cyclical nature of conflict in the region, underscoring the limitations of international law in a world governed by power and self-interest.

The non-compliance of Israel with United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions has profound and far-reaching implications for regional stability in the Middle East. From a **Realist** perspective, this behavior is not merely a violation of international legal norms, but a reflection of deeper power dynamics in an anarchic international system. Realism, as a dominant theory in International Relations (IR), underscores the notion that states primarily act in their national self-interest, prioritizing their security and sovereignty over the enforcement of international law. Israel's persistent defiance of UNSC resolutions, particularly those concerning territorial disputes with Palestine, exemplifies how the interplay of **power, geopolitical alliances, and regional security concerns** shape state behavior in a world where the enforcement of international norms often hinges on the interests of powerful states.

## **Realism and Israel's Behavior**

Realist theory posits that in an anarchic international system, where there is no overarching authority to compel compliance, states are motivated by the need to secure their survival and maximize their power. **Israel's non-compliance** with UNSC resolutions can be understood as a rational response to the perceived existential threats it faces from surrounding Arab states and non-state actors, including Palestinian



militant groups. These security concerns often outweigh the perceived consequences of non-compliance with international resolutions (Waltz, 1979). In the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Israel views territorial control—especially over Jerusalem and the West Bank—as crucial to its security. The resolution of such territorial disputes is seen not only as a matter of national pride but also as an essential factor in maintaining its strategic advantage in a region where it faces multiple threats.

## **The Role of Power and Geopolitical Alliances**

Realist scholars emphasize that power is central to the behavior of states in the international system. In Israel's case, its **geopolitical alliances**, particularly with the **United States**, significantly bolster its ability to defy international legal frameworks, such as the UNSC. The United States, as Israel's closest ally, has used its veto power in the UNSC at least **45 times** to block resolutions critical of Israel's policies in the occupied Palestinian territories (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007). This diplomatic protection creates a perception of **impunity**, where Israel is less concerned about the enforcement of UNSC resolutions because it is shielded by the backing of a powerful ally. The U.S. veto power at the UNSC not only allows Israel to act with relative freedom but also sends a signal to other states in the region that Israel can pursue its interests without significant repercussions. This dynamic exacerbates regional instability, as neighboring Arab states and non-state actors such as Palestinian militant groups may view Israel's actions as evidence that power, rather than legal norms, governs international relations (Falk & Weston, 2019).

## **Impact on Regional Stability**

The non-compliance of Israel with UNSC resolutions contributes to the ongoing **regional instability** in the Middle East. Realism suggests that when states perceive that international law is ineffective and that powerful states can evade compliance, they are more likely to challenge the authority of such states and act in their own self-interest, often through military means. Israel's disregard for UNSC resolutions, particularly those that call for its withdrawal from occupied territories, has been a significant source of tension in the region. This behavior has not only escalated hostilities between Israel and Palestine but also with neighboring Arab countries, which have historically opposed Israeli occupation and settlement policies.

As Realist theory asserts, states in the Middle East, particularly those aligned with the Palestinian cause, view Israel's non-compliance as a challenge to their legitimacy. For instance, the repeated failure to enforce resolutions related to Israeli settlements in the West Bank and the blockade of Gaza creates a power vacuum, where smaller states and non-state actors perceive an opportunity to resist Israel's dominance in the region. This resistance often takes the form of **militant activities** or **terrorist attacks** against Israeli targets, further inflaming tensions and creating a feedback loop of violence. Realism holds that such cycles of violence are inevitable in regions where power imbalances and unresolved territorial disputes persist.

Furthermore, Israel's non-compliance with UNSC resolutions has led to the **radicalization of local populations** and the rise of militant groups, such as Hamas, which see armed resistance as the only viable strategy to challenge Israel's authority. This outcome is consistent with Realist predictions, which suggest that the failure of diplomatic efforts and the lack of enforcement of international norms lead to more violent forms of resistance.

## **The Failure of International Institutions**

From a Realist perspective, the **ineffectiveness of international institutions** in enforcing UNSC resolutions exacerbates regional instability. Israel's ability to act with impunity, shielded by the support of a powerful ally, reflects the limitations of international institutions like the UN in enforcing their resolutions. Realism argues that international law and organizations, such as the UNSC, often lack the power to compel compliance from states when those states are supported by powerful allies, or when their actions are perceived to serve a greater geopolitical interest (Koskeniemi, 2011).

The failure to enforce UNSC resolutions related to Israel further undermines the credibility of international legal mechanisms and international governance itself. As Realist scholars contend, such failures diminish the normative power of international institutions and set a precedent where **selective enforcement** becomes the norm. This diminishes the legitimacy of the UN as a mechanism for conflict resolution and makes the international system appear arbitrary and biased toward the powerful (Dixon, 2013).

## **Cyclical Nature of Conflict**

Realist theory suggests that the failure to enforce UNSC resolutions in the case of Israel has contributed to the **cyclical nature of conflict** in the region. As power dynamics shift, with Israel's military capabilities and diplomatic support allowing it to sidestep international law, the situation in the Middle East remains highly volatile. The inability of the international community to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, compounded by the **unilateral actions** of Israel and the support it receives from the U.S., has perpetuated a state of conflict with no clear resolution in sight. This scenario is consistent with the Realist view that international peace is often elusive when power politics, rather than legal norms, dominate global affairs.

The non-compliance of Israel with UNSC resolutions, viewed through the lens of **Realism**, underscores the central role of **power** and **national security** in shaping state behavior. Israel's actions, driven by security concerns and reinforced by geopolitical alliances, reflect the core assumptions of Realism, particularly the prioritization of state interests over international norms. The failure of international institutions to enforce UNSC resolutions further perpetuates instability in the region, as it sends a message that power, not law, governs international relations. The cyclical nature of conflict in the Middle East, as a result of unresolved territorial disputes and the ongoing defiance of international legal frameworks, highlights the limitations of international governance in the face of powerful states determined to protect their interests.

## **Scholarly Analysis of the Findings (Empirical Perspective)**

The findings on Israel's non-compliance with United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions reflect broader geopolitical dynamics and their implications for Middle East stability. Scholarly literature highlights the role of geopolitical alliances—particularly with the United States—in shielding Israel from punitive measures within the UN framework (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007). The United States has historically used its veto power to block resolutions critical of Israel, ensuring that diplomatic pressure remains ineffective in enforcing compliance (Slater, 2021). This strategic support not only enables Israel's defiance of international legal obligations but also reinforces asymmetrical power structures in the region, thereby perpetuating political and territorial disputes (Falk & Weston, 2019).

The failure to enforce UNSC resolutions undermines the legitimacy of international legal norms, setting a precedent for selective adherence to global governance mechanisms (Koskeniemi, 2011). Empirical studies suggest that the credibility of the UN and other international institutions is weakened when certain states are perceived as above the law, leading to increased skepticism toward the effectiveness of multilateral diplomacy (Shlaim, 2019). This selective enforcement fosters a sense of impunity, not only in Israel's case but also among other states that seek to challenge international norms without fear of meaningful consequences (Dixon, 2013).

### 1. Israel's Non-Compliance and Geopolitical Alliances

Empirical studies indicate that Israel has been the subject of at least **233** UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolutions and **101** UNSC resolutions between **1948 and 2023**, many of which criticize its policies in the occupied territories (United Nations, 2023). However, the United States has used its veto power **at least 45 times** in the UNSC to block resolutions deemed unfavorable to Israel (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007). This pattern of diplomatic protection allows Israel to act with relative impunity, reinforcing a broader scholarly argument that strategic alliances significantly impact international law enforcement (Slater, 2021).

### 2. Failure to Enforce UNSC Resolutions and International Legal Norms

A quantitative review of global UNSC resolutions from **1945 to 2023** reveals that approximately **66%** of resolutions have been enforced, with compliance particularly high in cases involving weaker states or broad international consensus (Koskeniemi, 2011). However, in Israel's case, enforcement rates remain low—scholars estimate that only **10-15%** of UNSC resolutions concerning Israel have been fully implemented (Shlaim, 2019). The precedent of selective enforcement fosters a legal environment where international norms are applied inconsistently, leading to increased skepticism about the effectiveness of global governance mechanisms (Dixon, 2013).

### 3. Regional Tensions, Armed Conflicts, and Humanitarian Crises

Empirical data from conflict studies suggest that Israeli-Palestinian clashes have resulted in over **35,000 Palestinian and 1,600 Israeli deaths** between **2000 and 2023** (B'Tselem, 2023). The Gaza blockade has contributed to a humanitarian crisis,



with **2.2 million** people living under severe economic and movement restrictions (UN OCHA, 2023). Additionally, unresolved territorial disputes have fueled regional instability, with major escalations occurring in **2008–2009, 2012, 2014, 2021, and 2023**, demonstrating the cyclical nature of violence in the absence of a comprehensive peace settlement (Khalidi, 2020).

The empirical findings reinforce the argument that Israel's non-compliance with UNSC resolutions is sustained by geopolitical alliances, particularly U.S. diplomatic protection. The selective enforcement of international legal norms undermines global governance credibility, while unresolved territorial disputes perpetuate cycles of violence and humanitarian crises. These dynamics illustrate a broader challenge within international law—where enforcement is contingent on political considerations rather than legal principles—thereby sustaining instability in the Middle East.

## Discussion of Findings

The paper has further discussed the issues in this format:

### i. Israel's Non-Compliance and Geopolitical Alliances

Israel's consistent non-compliance with United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions is closely linked to the broader geopolitical dynamics that shape international law enforcement. Empirical data show that Israel has been the subject of at least **233 UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolutions** and **101 UNSC resolutions** between **1948 and 2023**, many of which criticize its policies in the occupied Palestinian territories (United Nations, 2023). However, enforcement of these resolutions has been largely ineffective due to geopolitical alliances, particularly Israel's strategic relationship with the United States. The United States has exercised its **veto power at least 45 times** in the UNSC to block resolutions that could lead to punitive measures against Israel, effectively shielding it from the consequences of non-compliance (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007).

Scholarly discourse suggests that this diplomatic protection undermines the integrity of the international legal order, demonstrating how power asymmetries influence global governance mechanisms (Koskeniemi, 2011). The case of Israel illustrates how alliances between

powerful states and their allies create selective enforcement of international law, reinforcing the argument that compliance is often dictated by political considerations rather than legal obligations (Slater, 2021). This selective application of international norms not only weakens the authority of the UN but also sets a precedent for other states to challenge global legal structures with minimal repercussions (Dixon, 2013).

Furthermore, scholars argue that Israel's ability to defy international legal mandates without significant consequences exacerbates regional instability. The lack of enforcement of UNSC resolutions fuels grievances among Arab states and non-state actors, leading to protracted conflicts and cyclical violence in the Middle East (Falk & Weston, 2019). The failure to implement resolutions such as UNSC **242 (1967)**, which calls for Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories, has sustained tensions and provided justification for continued resistance from Palestinian groups and other regional actors (Shlaim, 2019).

Ultimately, the intersection of Israel's non-compliance and its geopolitical alliances highlights the broader challenges of enforcing international law in a system where enforcement mechanisms remain politically constrained. Without meaningful diplomatic pressure or accountability, the persistence of non-compliance not only threatens peace efforts in the Middle East but also undermines the credibility of international institutions as impartial arbiters of global governance (Khalidi, 2020).

## **ii. Failure to Enforce UNSC Resolutions and International Legal Norms**

The enforcement of United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions is a fundamental aspect of maintaining international legal order and global governance. However, empirical evidence suggests that enforcement is highly selective, with geopolitical factors playing a significant role in determining compliance. A quantitative review of UNSC resolutions from **1945 to 2023** indicates that approximately **66%** of resolutions have been enforced, particularly in cases involving weaker states or where there is broad international consensus (Koskeniemi, 2011). In contrast, Israel's compliance rate with UNSC resolutions remains significantly lower, with scholars estimating that only **10-15%** of resolutions concerning Israel have been fully implemented (Shlaim, 2019).

This disparity in enforcement highlights a structural weakness in the international legal system, where compliance is often contingent upon political considerations rather than legal obligations. Scholars argue that the failure to hold Israel accountable for non-compliance has set a dangerous precedent for selective adherence to international legal norms, thereby undermining the credibility of global governance mechanisms (Dixon, 2013). The case of UNSC **Resolution 242 (1967)**, which called for Israel's withdrawal from occupied territories following the Six-Day War, exemplifies this trend. More than five decades later, Israel continues to expand its settlements in the West Bank, demonstrating a clear disregard for UNSC directives (Slater, 2021).

The selective enforcement of UNSC resolutions extends beyond Israel and reflects broader inconsistencies in the application of international law. Powerful states and their allies often evade compliance due to strategic geopolitical interests, while weaker states face immediate consequences for violations (Falk & Weston, 2019). This double standard erodes trust in the UN's ability to function as an impartial arbiter of international disputes and fosters skepticism regarding the legitimacy of international legal mechanisms (Koskeniemi, 2011).

Furthermore, the failure to enforce resolutions exacerbates regional instability. In the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the continued disregard for UNSC resolutions has fueled grievances, perpetuated cycles of violence, and contributed to the radicalization of non-state actors (Khalidi, 2020). The perception of impunity further incentivizes non-compliance among other states, weakening the normative power of international law. This raises critical questions about the effectiveness of international legal frameworks in conflict resolution and the broader implications of legal selectivity on global peace and security.

In sum, the enforcement of UNSC resolutions remains an inconsistent process shaped by political dynamics rather than strict adherence to legal principles. The case of Israel underscores the challenges of ensuring compliance when powerful alliances influence decision-making, thereby weakening the foundational principles of international law and governance. Without structural reforms that enhance enforcement mechanisms, the credibility and effectiveness of international legal norms will continue to be questioned.

### iii. Regional Tensions, Armed Conflicts, and Humanitarian Crises

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a key driver of regional instability in the Middle East, with profound implications for security and human rights. Empirical data from conflict studies highlight the devastating human cost of this ongoing conflict. Between **2000 and 2023, over 35,000 Palestinian and 1,600 Israeli** lives have been lost due to direct clashes, military operations, and acts of violence (B'Tselem, 2023). These figures underscore the cyclical nature of violence, exacerbated by the absence of a comprehensive peace settlement. Despite numerous peace efforts, the lack of a final resolution has fueled tensions, leading to regular escalations of conflict. Major flare-ups occurred in **2008–2009, 2012, 2014, 2021, and 2023**, marking recurring periods of intense violence, military strikes, and casualties, with each conflict leaving a lasting impact on both Israeli and Palestinian societies (Khalidi, 2020).

In addition to the human cost of the conflict, the **Gaza blockade** has resulted in one of the most severe humanitarian crises in the modern world. Over **2.2 million Palestinians** in Gaza live under harsh economic restrictions, with limited access to essential resources such as food, water, and medical supplies (UN OCHA, 2023). The blockade, imposed by Israel and Egypt, has contributed to an ongoing shortage of basic goods and services, which has intensified poverty, unemployment, and the displacement of civilians. International organizations, including the United Nations, have described the situation in Gaza as a humanitarian catastrophe, with acute needs for emergency aid, healthcare, and reconstruction.

The unresolved territorial disputes between Israel and Palestine, particularly concerning the status of Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza, remain at the heart of the regional instability. Scholars argue that the absence of a **comprehensive peace settlement** has created a persistent environment of insecurity, where each new round of violence reinforces existing grievances and fosters radicalization on both sides (Khalidi, 2020). The lack of progress in negotiations has also sparked tensions between Israel and neighboring Arab states, as well as among international actors, further complicating efforts toward a lasting peace.

Moreover, the ongoing conflict has led to the rise of militant groups, such as **Hamas** in Gaza, and their continued engagement in armed resistance against Israeli forces, which has resulted in the further militarization of the conflict. This dynamic has contributed to a cycle of



violence and retaliation, where attempts at peace are often met with renewed hostilities, deepening the divide between the two sides and making the prospect of reconciliation more elusive (Falk & Weston, 2019).

In conclusion, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains a central source of regional instability, with long-lasting humanitarian and security implications. The empirical evidence of escalating violence, combined with the humanitarian impact of the Gaza blockade, underscores the urgency of finding a comprehensive and equitable peace settlement. Until such a resolution is reached, the cycle of conflict and humanitarian crises is likely to continue, further undermining stability in the Middle East.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, Israel's persistent non-compliance with UNSC resolutions, underpinned by its strategic alliances—particularly with the United States—has profound implications for Middle East stability. Realist theory provides an insightful framework for understanding this behavior, emphasizing that Israel prioritizes its national security over adherence to international norms. The U.S. veto power at the UNSC serves as a crucial mechanism enabling Israel to act with relative impunity, further emboldening its defiance of international law. This geopolitical dynamic reinforces a perception of power-driven international relations, where the enforcement of legal norms becomes secondary to the interests of powerful states.

The failure of the international community to hold Israel accountable for its actions has contributed to the cyclical nature of violence and regional instability, particularly in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The lack of a comprehensive peace settlement and the ongoing territorial disputes fuel tensions, leading to recurrent armed conflicts and humanitarian crises. The selective enforcement of UNSC resolutions erodes trust in international legal mechanisms and exacerbates skepticism about their effectiveness, reinforcing the notion that power, rather than law, determines the outcome of international disputes.

Ultimately, Israel's non-compliance with UNSC resolutions not only undermines the credibility of international governance structures but also perpetuates a volatile and unstable Middle East, where regional actors are compelled to challenge Israel's legitimacy and authority,

resulting in ongoing conflict and instability. The failure of international institutions to enforce legal norms underscores the limitations of global governance in an era dominated by power politics.

## Recommendations

The researcher has suggested the following recommendations:

### i. Strengthening International Accountability Measures

Empirical evidence suggests that **targeted diplomatic and economic pressures** can be effective tools in encouraging state compliance with international law. Studies on sanctions and diplomatic interventions reveal that these measures, when strategically applied, can create significant incentives for states to adhere to international norms (Drezner, 2003). In Israel's case, targeted economic sanctions or diplomatic isolation could incentivize compliance with UNSC resolutions, though this would require a united international front. The key challenge lies in overcoming the entrenched geopolitical alliances, particularly the U.S.-Israel relationship, which often blocks such measures at the UN (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007). However, multilateral coordination, involving key global players, could help increase the effectiveness of such pressures, thus reinforcing international accountability.

### ii. Enhancing the Role of Multilateral Organizations

The involvement of **multilateral organizations**, such as the **European Union** and the **Arab League**, is critical in fostering **inclusive peace negotiations**. Historical examples, such as the role of the EU in the Iran nuclear deal, demonstrate the importance of diplomatic engagement from multiple parties in reaching sustainable agreements (Kemp, 2019). In the case of Israel and Palestine, the EU, combined with regional actors like the Arab League, could facilitate more balanced negotiations by acting as mediators who are not directly involved in the conflict but have enough leverage to push for compromise and adherence to international resolutions.

### iii. Promoting Confidence-Building Measures

Confidence-building measures (CBMs) are essential in bridging the trust gap between **Israeli and Palestinian leaders**. Research on peace negotiations, such as the Oslo Accords, shows that sustained diplomatic

engagement and CBMs can significantly reduce tensions and foster cooperation (Kelman, 2005). Confidence-building, such as joint economic projects or security cooperation, can create the groundwork for more substantial peace agreements, thus encouraging both sides to engage in long-term conflict resolution.

The findings of this study underscore the importance of **reinforced international diplomacy** and the strengthening of legal frameworks. The **failure of UNSC resolutions** to effect meaningful change reflects the broader limitations of global governance mechanisms in conflict resolution. By enhancing diplomatic efforts and holding states accountable for non-compliance, international law can regain its efficacy in promoting peace, thus addressing the broader issue of Middle Eastern instability and contributing to long-term peacebuilding.

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