ISRAELI-HAMAS WAR IN PALESTINE AND THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN GAZA, 2006-2023

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Abstract
The ongoing war between Israel and Hamas in Gaza has been a longstanding and complex issue with deep historical backgrounds, rooted in the broader Arab-Israeli conflict and the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. The territorial disputes over land, particularly in Gaza and the West Bank, have been contentious issues between the two forces in Gaza. The Gaza Strip has been subject to an Israeli blockade since 2007, following Hamas' takeover of the territory. The blockade restricted the movement of goods and people, contributing to the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Scholars and conflict analysts also attributed the ongoing war in Gaza to issues such as the status of Jerusalem, the right of return for Palestinian refugees, and the establishment of an independent Palestinian State. Therefore, this paper analyzes how the US's strategic interest in Israel intensifies the war between Hamas and Israel, leading to reoccurring hostilities and the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. The paper was anchored on realist theory as its theoretical framework of analysis. The paper depended on the time series research design and utilizes the documentary data generation method. Content analysis was used for analysis of data generated from documents. The paper found that the US's strategic interest in Israel intensified the war between Hamas and Israel, leading to the reoccurring hostilities and the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. This paper recommended that the US should embrace the UN Security Council Resolutions calling for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from occupied territories and the two-state solution by not vetoing the resolutions critical of Israel.
Keywords: *Israel-Hamas, War, Humanitarian Crisis, Palestine, Gaza.*

Introduction
The war between Israel and Hamas is leading to a humanitarian crisis in Palestine, especially in the Gaza region of Palestine. This is because the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza has been a longstanding and complex issue with deep historical roots. The war has its roots in the broader Arab-Israeli conflict and the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, the territorial disputes over land, particularly in Gaza and the West Bank, have been dominant to the ongoing war between the Israeli forces and Hamas in Gaza (Olson, 2012). The Israel-Hamas war is also a part of the broader Israeli-Palestinian conflict bothering problems such as the position of Jerusalem, the right of return for Palestinian refugees, and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state (Tubman, 2012, & Motala, 2016). Even more so, the emergence of Hamas as an Islamist political and militant group in the late 1980s, gaining popularity in Gaza and the West Bank and winning legislative elections in 2006, coupled with its use of violence against civilian populations, the international community, including Israel and the United States designated Hamas as a terrorist organization, leading to the ongoing confrontations (Nwoboshi & Itumo, 2017). The war has witnessed several escalations, with both sides engaging in military

operations that have led to civilian casualties and a rise in humanitarian concerns. The fight has taken a toll on the civilian population, and the humanitarian crisis arising from the war in Gaza such as casualties, displacement, and infrastructure damage has led to the situation where Humanitarian organizations have expressed concerns about the impact on the well-being of people in the region.

Similarly, the Gaza Strip has been subject to an Israeli blockade since 2007, following Hamas' takeover of the territory (Elystian, 2009). The blockade, which restricts the movement of goods and people, has had significant economic repercussions, contributing to high unemployment rates, poverty, and a lack of access to basic services. The war which often involves sporadic exchanges of rocket attacks by Hamas and other militant groups from Gaza and Israeli airstrikes, targeting civilian populations has resulted in casualties and fear among Israeli citizens (Fassihi, 2017). In response, the Israeli military conducts airstrikes to target Hamas infrastructure and rocket launch sites, leading to the destruction of critical infrastructure in Gaza (Bar-Tal & Raviv, 2021). Efforts by the international community and the United Nations to mediate and find a lasting solution to the conflict by proposing various peace plans and negotiations have proven abortive due to the United States exercise of veto power at the UN Security Council Resolutions on issues critical of Israel's (Bar-Tal, 2022). The United States has historically been a key ally of Israel, providing military and economic support. However, the U.S. has also been involved in diplomatic efforts to facilitate peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians. However, the approach of different U.S. governments has varied, influencing the dynamics of the conflict (Bar-Tal, 2022).

The Israel-Hamas war is entangled with broader regional dynamics, involving neighbouring nations and other Middle Eastern actors in which the relationships between Israel, Egypt, and other regional powers play a role in shaping the geopolitical landscape and potential solutions (Bar-Tal & Raviv, 2021). The Israeli-Hamas war has led to a significant humanitarian crisis, particularly in the Gaza Strip, where the majority of the population is densely concentrated. Extreme fighting in densely populated areas has resulted in a high number of civilian casualties as both Israeli airstrikes and Hamas rocket attacks have led to the loss of lives and injuries, and the conflict has also forced many Palestinians to flee their homes, contributing to a large internally displaced population of over 1.9 million people October 2023 and March 2024, and more than 20, 674 Palestinians lost the lives, while over 54, 536 people Palestinians injured since October 7, 2023 (UNRWA, 2024).

The reoccurring cycles of the war between the Israeli military and Palestinians, especially Hamas have severely damaged essential infrastructure in Gaza, including hospitals, schools, water and sanitation facilities, and electrical grids, which not only impedes daily life but also poses significant challenges for the delivery of humanitarian aid and medical services because delivering humanitarian aid in an active conflict and within the constraints of the blockade is a formidable challenge (Bar-Tal, 2022). The situation in Gaza is further complicated by the geopolitical complexities surrounding the conflict. The Gaza Ministry of Health (2024) reported that more than 303 health workers, over 8, 656 Palestinian children, and 6,327 Palestinian women were killed by Israeli forces, since October 2023. In the same vein, the report of the Gaza Media Office (2024) stated that more than 103 Journalists, including Samnar Abu Daqua, were killed since the renewed war in October 2023.

War is defined as a conflict among political or social groups and nations, involving hostilities of considerable duration and magnitude (Vasquez, 2009). Mao Tse-tung (1954) sees war as the highest form of struggle for resolving contradictions when they have developed to a certain

state between classes, nations, states or political groups. According to Carl Von Clausewitz (1976), war is a rational instrument of state policy; an act of violence intended to compel our opponent to fulfill our will. Strategically, Clausewitz says violence arms itself with the mention of Art and Science to contend against violence. For him, to make our opponent submit to our will is the ultimate objective of war, and to achieve this, the enemy must be disarmed. Sun Tzu (1993) views war as a matter of vital importance to the state and province of life or death, the road to survival or ruin, and advocates tailoring means to achieve the end of the policy, arguing that victory without fighting is the best. A humanitarian crisis, on the other hand, is a large-scale situation that threatens the basic survival and well-being of a community or population group. It is caused by a variety of factors but often involves a combination of events that overwhelm a country's ability to cope (Malteser International, 2022). Some of the characteristics of humanitarian crises, as identified by humanitarian organizations like the International Organization for Migration (IOM) include widespread suffering which entails a situation where a significant number of people are deprived of essentials like food, water, shelter, and healthcare; and threat to life and safety which creates a dangerous environment where violence, displacement, and lack of necessities endanger lives (Iberdrola, 2022). Humanitarian crises are triggered by events such as natural disasters, economic shocks and conflict (Malteser International, 2022).

The persistent state of the war between the Israeli forces and Palestinians in Gaza takes a toll on the mental health and well-being of the affected population, especially the Palestinian children and women who have grown up amidst violence, and therefore, trauma, anxiety, and stress are widespread, and the impact on the mental health infrastructure in the region is pervasive (Olson, 2012).

Scholars and theorists of war have advanced propositions to explain the Israeli-Hamas war in Palestine and the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Scholars such as Tubman (2012), Djerejian (2010), Halperin and Bar-Tal (2011), Bar-Tal (2022), Adeniyi (2019), Fassihi (2017), Motala (2016), Olson (2012), Nwoboshi and Itumo (2017), Elystian (2009) and Bar-Tal and Raviv (2021) among others have argued that the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, arising from the Israeli-Hamas war emanates from factors such as the Arab-Israeli conflict, the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, the territorial disputes over land, particularly in Gaza Strip and the West Bank, issues such as the status of Jerusalem, the right of return for Palestinian refugees, and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

Thus, it is not wrong to argue that what one should consider as dynamics contributing to the protracted conflict between Israel and Palestine, including the ongoing war between the Israeli forces and Hamas, leading to the humanitarian crisis in Gaza is the US's strategic interest in Israel, which is attributable to the US and Israeli government's security concerns in the Middle East, the threat of rocket attacks and the desire to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. This is because the U.S. and Israel view Iran as a major threat, collaborating on measures to counter its nuclear program and regional influence. In this paper, the review of the extant literature is centred on issues surrounding national interest and conflict between nations. As such, the theme of the literature is derived from the paper's objective.

Therefore, this paper analyzes how the US's strategic interest in Israel accounts for the reoccurring hostilities between Israel and Palestine, especially the Israeli forces and Hamas, leading to the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

Strategic Interest and the Israeli-Hamas War

Throughout history, national interests have been a significant driver of conflict between and among nations. However, this position should not be misunderstood as an approval, guarantee or justification for war. The ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine in Gaza, which started on October 7 2023, is a complex issue fueled by both historical grievances and competition for scarce land and water resources driven by national interest (Bowen, 2023). Olson (2012) argues that the Israeli-Hamas war is rooted in the territorial disputes between Israelis and Palestinians, particularly over land in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank with both sides laying claim to the same territories, leading to tensions and hostilities.

Bar-Tal and Raviv (2021) submit that the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 was a pivotal event in the war because the formation of Israel led to displacement and the creation of Palestinian refugee populations, fueling grievances and contributing to the ongoing war. Adeniyi (2019) avers that the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, as well as the construction of Israeli settlements in these regions, has been a major source of conflict because the Palestinians view Israeli's actions as obstacles to the creation of a viable Palestinian state.

Bar-Tal (2022) posits that the war between Israeli forces and Hamas in Palestine, especially in the Gaza region is also influenced by religious and nationalist sentiments in the sense that Jerusalem, a city sacred to Judaism, Islam, and Christianity, holds deep significance for both Israelis and Palestinians, contributing to the religious dimension of the conflict. The rise of Hamas, an Islamist political and militant group, has added complexity to the conflict because Hamas gained control of the Gaza Strip in 2007 after winning elections, leading to a divided Palestinian governance structure with the West Bank controlled by the Palestinian Authority (Fassihi, 2017).

Zanotti and Sharp (2024) argued that the Israeli security concerns, pointing to rocket attacks from Gaza and other security threats are reasons for military interventions, arguing that the Israeli government's actions are necessary to protect its citizens from potential harm. Walker et al, (2024) maintain that the blockade imposed on Gaza by Israel and Egypt, in response to Hamas' control, steered the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, leading to economic challenges, high unemployment, and limited access to necessities for the people of Gaza, provoking Hamas attack on Israel that has resulted in the ongoing war. Nwoboshi and Itumo (2017) assert that global events and shifts in geopolitical dynamics have also influenced the Israeli-Hamas war because changes in regional alliances, the broader Arab-Israeli context, and shifts in international politics impact the dynamics on the ground. They also stressed that historical traumas, including the memories of wars, displacement, and violence, contribute to deep-seated emotions on both sides. This is because narratives and historical interpretations of the intractable war between Israel and Hamas differ, making it challenging to build trust and find common ground for a negotiated settlement.

Shaul Mishal and Avraham Sela (2000) in their work titled "The Palestinian Hamas: Vision, Violence, and Coexistence," emphasize Hamas's resistance ideology and its opposition to Israeli occupation as key drivers of the conflict. Economic and humanitarian factors also contribute to the war between Israel and Hamas in Gaza because the Israeli blockade, imposed in 2007 after Hamas took control of Gaza, severely restricts the movement of goods and people, leading to widespread poverty, unemployment, and lack of access to essential services (Sara, 2011). According to organizations like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, the

blockade constitutes collective punishment and exacerbates the humanitarian situation in Gaza (Thrall, 2017).

Zanotti (2024) argues that the lack of progress in achieving a comprehensive peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians, despite various attempts and negotiations, perpetuates the cycle of violence and instability in the region, especially in Gaza. According to Ronen Bergman and Adam Goldman (2024), Israeli security concerns, including rocket attacks from Gaza into Israeli territory and the threat of terrorism, have led to military operations such as Operation Cast Lead (2008-2009), Operation Pillar of Defense (2012), and Operation Protective Edge (2014). For them, these operations have resulted in significant civilian casualties and infrastructure damage in Gaza, exacerbating the humanitarian crisis.

Scholars like Sara Roy (2011) in her book "Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza" analyze the impact of these military operations on Gazan society and the cycle of violence. Internal divisions within Palestinian politics, particularly between Hamas and the Fatah-led Palestinian Authority, have complicated efforts to address the conflict and improve conditions in Gaza. The political rivalry between Hamas, which controls Gaza, and Fatah, which governs the West Bank, has led to governance challenges and further fragmented the Palestinian territories, contributing to the war (Benedetta 2018). Some scholars, such as Nathan Thrall (2017) in his book "The Only Language They Understand: Forcing Compromise in Israel and Palestine," examine how the internal dynamics between Hamas and the Fatah-led Palestinian Authority influence the broader Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This position is not wrong because regional geopolitics also plays a role in shaping the Israeli-Hamas war and the situation in Gaza.

Hiba Yazbek et al. (2024) reiterated that socio-economic conditions in Gaza, exacerbated by the Israeli blockade and recurrent conflicts, contribute significantly to the humanitarian crisis. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has significant religious and cultural dimensions, particularly regarding the status of Jerusalem and holy sites revered by Jews, Muslims, and Christians. Competing historical narratives and religious interpretations contribute to the complexity of the conflict and also serve as both sources of identity and sources of tension. Scholars like Bernard Sabella (2013), in his work on Palestinian Christian perspectives, examine the interplay between religion, culture, and politics in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its implications for peace-building efforts.

The involvement of external actors, including regional powers such as Iran, Turkey, and Qatar, as well as global players like the United States and European Union, shapes the dynamics of the Israeli-Hamas war and the broader Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Sune Engel Rasmussen et al, 2024). This argument is not out of place because external support for various actors, including financial assistance, military aid, and diplomatic backing, can either fuel or mitigate tensions and influence the prospects for peace. Scholars such as Shira Robinson (2013), in her research on U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East, analyze the role of external actors in shaping the conflict dynamics and the challenges of achieving a sustainable resolution. The proliferation of arms and the militarization of Gaza, including the smuggling of weapons and the development of military capabilities by Hamas and other armed groups, contribute to the escalation of violence and instability in the region (Marcus Walker et al, 2024).

However, literature reviewed did not analyze how the US's strategic interest in Israel intensified the war between the Israelis and Palestinians, especially Hamas, leading to the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. This constitutes our gap in the literature and contribution to knowledge.

Theoretical Framework

This paper employs the realist theory as its analytical framework to explain the Israeli-Hamas war and the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Realism emerged as a counter-argument to idealism partly as a result of the outbreak of World War II which repudiates the idealist's argument about the possibility of shaping the cause of world events by deliberate human efforts and will. As an approach to international relations, realism can be traced to such ancient practitioners and thinkers as Sun-Tzu (544-496 BC), a Chinese General and the author of the *'Art of War'*, Thucydides (460-399 BC) a Greek Historian and the author of the *'History of Peloponnesian War'*. Realism also has diplomacy of such statesmen as Otto Von Bismarck (1815-1898), the iron chancellor who engineered the unification of Germany under Prussia's control (Bappa, 2011). Others include Nicolas Machiavelli (1532) and the English Philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679).

Realism emerged in the year surrounding World War II (1939-1945) as the dominant theory developing the academic discipline of international relations scholarship. Notably, the view of realism was taken up in the writings of such scholars as the British political scientist Edward H. Carl (1939) in his work, *'The 20 Years Crisis'* (1919-1939), and American scholar Hans Morgenthau (1948) in his epoch work, *'Politics among Nations and the Struggle for Power and Peace'* where Morgenthau argues that international politics is the struggle for power among states defined in terms of *national interest*.

For this intellectual discourse, we point to the works of contemporary realists such as Kenneth Waltz (1979) who introduced the concept of the structure of the international system (anarchy) as shaping state behaviour and power dynamics, and John Mearsheimer (2001) who emphasized the offensive realist viewpoint, where states prioritize survival and seek to maximize their relative powers.

The realists assume that the international system based on sovereign actors (states) which answer to no higher authority is anarchical with no overarching authority to regulate the conduct of states or provide security and order. Realists argued that the result of an anarchical international system means that states acquire military capability to deter attacks and rely on their resources to flourish and survive. The realists see states as the main and dominant actors in international politics, and as such states should not entrust their self-protection to international security organizations like the United Nations, and international law nor accept any global governance. The theory also submits that if states seek to maximize power, stability will result by maintaining a balance of power that counters other expansionist motives or tendencies.

The realists see force as a useable and effective rational instrument for national policy, arguing that there is a hierarchy of issues in world politics and a number of this hierarchy is military security. To the realists, the evil nature of man has reduced international politics to something close to a state of permanent war (Israeli-Palestinian war) characterized by a perpetual struggle for power pre-eminent by states. For realists, this power struggle becomes the primary interest that dictates states' actions (including military actions) and determines the possibility of cooperation and conflict between and among states.

While realism provides valuable insights into the power dynamics and security concerns of the Israeli-Hamas war, it falls short in several key areas, including its state-centric focus, neglect of ideological and humanitarian issues, inadequate attention to internal politics and economic factors, and inability to address long-term peace-building limit its explanatory power.

Therefore, a more comprehensive understanding of the war and the humanitarian crisis in Gaza requires incorporating insights from other theoretical perspectives that address these weaknesses.

Theory Application

The war between Israel and Hamas is better explained in this study through the lens of realist theory, particularly classical and structural realism. This is because classical and structural realism offer insights into the Israeli-Hamas war, highlighting the stark power asymmetry between Israel, with its strong military and economic power, and the Palestinians (Hamas) with limited resources and self-determination, which explains Israeli dominance in territorial control, resource allocation, and international influence.

Similarly, both Israeli and Palestinian (Hamas) military actions in Gaza could be understood through the realist lens of security concerns. For instance, Israel's expansionist policies and defensive measures stem from fears of existential threats, while Palestinian resistance movements like Hamas can be seen as responses to occupation and oppression.

Indeed, the notion of balance of power explains regional dynamics around the war between Israel and Hamas. This is because external actors like the US and regional powers exert influence, attempting to maintain a semblance of equilibrium and manage the escalation of the war. Therefore, the US strategic interest in Israel, especially the security concerns in the Middle East, is one of the important factors accounting for the US military support to the Israeli forces in Gaza. Under this circumstance, reaching a resolution and having lasting peace through a peaceful negotiation is subverted as both sides often perceive the gains of one group as losses for the other, hindering compromise. In the same vein, powerful actors (political and militant groups) benefit from maintaining the war, hindering peace efforts.

The United Nations Security Council has passed numerous resolutions addressing the Israeli-Palestinian war. These resolutions often call for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from occupied territories, the establishment of a Palestinian state, and the recognition of the rights of both Israelis and Palestinians. However, the implementation of these resolutions has faced significant challenges as a result of the US veto power at the UN Security Council over issues critical of Israel. Similarly, the involvement of external actors, including neighbouring countries and international powers, has influenced the dynamics of the conflict, and support from different countries, coupled with geopolitical considerations, has shaped the strategies and policies of both Israel and Hamas, leading to the protracted war.

Discussion of Findings

This section of the work analyzes how the US's strategic interest in israel, accounts for the reoccurring hostility between the israelis and palestinians, leading to the humanitarian crisis in gaza. The longstanding war between Israel and Palestine, particularly in Gaza, is deeply rooted in historical, political, and socio-economic factors. The United States' strategic interest in Israel has undoubtedly influenced the dynamics of this conflict, contributing to the recurring hostility between the Israeli military and Palestinians in Gaza, especially Hamas. Therefore, to understand the U.S.'s strategic interest in Israel, it is crucial to examine the historical context. After World War II and the Holocaust, there was widespread international support for the establishment of a Jewish state, leading to the creation of Israel in 1948. The U.S. played a significant role in supporting Israel diplomatically, economically, and militarily, driven by various factors including shared democratic values, Cold War geopolitics, and strategic interests in the Middle East (Shlaim, 2009). The U.S. views Israel as a crucial strategic ally in

the Middle East, providing a stable and reliable partner in a volatile region. This strategic partnership has led to extensive military cooperation between the two countries, including arms sales, joint military exercises, and intelligence sharing (Parsi, 2012).

Similarly, the U.S. perceives Israel as a bulwark against common threats in the region, including terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and Iranian influence. As such, supporting Israel's security and military capabilities aligns with U.S. interests in maintaining stability and containing perceived threats in the Middle East (Hinnebusch, 2002). The U.S. domestic political landscape, particularly the influence of pro-Israeli interest groups and lobbies, has also shaped U.S. policy towards Israel. Politicians often face pressure to demonstrate unwavering support for Israel, which has influenced the US's foreign policy decisions and impeded efforts to hold Israel accountable for its actions in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including the war between the Israeli forces and Hamas in Gaza (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007). The U.S. provides substantial military aid to Israel, which has enabled Israel to maintain a powerful military arsenal, including advanced weaponry and technology. This military superiority has contributed to the disproportionate use of force by Israel in its conflicts with Palestinian factions, including in Gaza (Human Rights Watch, 2021).

Again, the U.S.'s diplomatic support for Israel, including its use of veto power in the United Nations Security Council to shield Israel from international criticism, has emboldened Israel in its policies towards the Palestinians. This perceived impunity has undermined efforts to achieve a peaceful resolution to the conflict and has fueled Palestinian grievances. For instance, the US has used its veto power as a permanent of the UN Security Council to block the Security Council resolutions critical of Israel 42 times (Falk, 2014). Also, the U.S. support for Israel has exacerbated tensions in the region, contributing to a cycle of violence and retaliation between Israeli forces and Palestinian militant groups (Hamas) in Gaza. The blockade of Gaza, imposed by Israel with U.S. backing, has resulted in humanitarian crises and periodic escalations of violence, including devastating military offensives such as Operation Cast Lead (2008-2009) and Operation Protective Edge (2014) (UN Human Rights Council, 2009; 2015).

Therefore, the most critical magnitudes of the factors responsible for the US's strategic interest in Israel, resulting in the reoccurring hostilities between the Israeli forces and Hamas in Palestine, particularly in Gaza are the military and security cooperation between the US and Israel, the US political and diplomatic support to Israel, the US and Israel shared strategic concerns, economic and technological cooperation between the US and Israel among others.

Table 1: Showing reoccurring War between Israeli and Palestinians in Gaza 2006-2023

S/N	Year	Nature of the Conflict	Casualties
1	**June 2006**	Hamas captures Israeli army, conscript Gilad Shalit in a cross-border raid from Gaza, prompting Israeli air raids and invasions	Over 1,200 palestinians were killed
2	**December 2008**	Israel launches a 22-day military offensive in Gaza after rockets were fired at the southern Israeli town of Sderot by Hamas	About 1,400 Palestinians and 13 Israelis were killed before a ceasefire was agreed upon
3	**November 2012**	Israel kills Hamas's military chief of staff, Ahmad Jabari, followed by eight days of Israeli air raids on Palestine	Ahmad Jabari, Hamas's military chief of staff & few others were killed

4	**July-Augt. 2014**	The kidnap and killing of three Israeli teenagers by Hamas led to a seven-week war	more than 2,100 Palestinians were killed in Gaza along with 73 Israelis, including 67 soldiers
5	**March 2018**	Palestinian protests began at Gaza's fenced border with Israel and Israeli troops opened fire to keep them back, prompting fighting between Hamas and Israeli forces	More than 183 Palestinians were killed, and about 6,000 were injured
6	**May 2021**	Israel launched air raids on Gaza in response to what it said were rockets fired from Gaza, leading to the fight that went on for 11 days	Over 260 Palestinians were killed in Gaza, nearly 2000 were wounded, 13 Israelis died and over 72, 000 Palestinians were displaced
7	**August 2022**	Israeli planes carried out air attacks in Gaza, & in response to the Israeli's attacks, Palestinian Islamic Jihad fires dozens of rockets into Israel	More than 30 Palestinians, including women and children, and 2 Islamic Jihadi Commanders were killed
8	October 2023-date	Hamas launched a surprise sea and air attack on Southern Israel from the Gaza Strip, provoking reprisal attacks from the Israeli forces that have become the deadliest war for the Palestinians since the 1948 Arab-Israeli war	Over 1,200 deaths, mainly Israeli civilians and Foreign Nationals, injuring about 3, 300 israelis and taking hundreds of hostages, and over 10, 000 Palestinians killed by the Israeli forces in the first month of the ongoing war

Source: Compiled by the authors with data generated from (Timeline, 2024)
Information in Table 1 above, shows that from 2006 when Hamas won the legislative election in Palestine and took over control of the Gaza Strip and West Bank, provoking the Israeli military occupations in the region to 2023, Israel and Palestinians waged war against each other eight times. Similarly, the frequent hostilities between the Israeli forces and Palestinians in Gaza, has resulted in the deaths of over 30,000 people, including Palestinians and Israelis, more than 11, 300 others injured and over hundred thousand people were displaced.

Table 2: Showing Humanitarian Crises in Gaza between October 2023 and May 2024

S/N	Month/Year	Casualties	Source
1	As at 30th October 2023	Over **1200** Israelis were killed, and more than **18, 700** Palestinians mostly women and children were killed	OCHA (2023)
2	As of 30th November 2023	More than **22, 000** people were killed in Gaza, including two volleyball Players Hassan Zuaiter and Ibrahim Qusaya	Euro-Media Human Rights Monitor (2023)
3	As at 31st December, 2023	Over **26, 124** Palestinians were killed, including **11,422** children, **5, 822** women, **481** health workers and **97** Journalists (**92** Palestinians, **2** Israeli & **3** Lebanese), and over **54, 822** Palestinians were injured	Gaza Health Ministry (2024)
4	As of 31st January 2024	More than **29, 422** Palestinians were killed in Gaza, and over **65, 087** Palestinians were injured	Salama (2024)
5	As at 29th February 2024	Over **30,000** Palestinians were killed, and more than **69, 333** people were injured	Gaza Health Ministry (2024)
6	As of 31st March 2024	More than 32, 184 Palestinians were killed, and over **72, 889** others were injured	UNRWA (2024)
7	As at 30th April 2024,	Over **35, 000** Palestinians and **1, 410** Israelis were killed, including **224** humanitarian aid workers and **179** employees of the United Nations Relief and Work Agency	UNRWA (2024)
8	As of 31st May 2024	More than 36, 284 Palestinians were killed and over 82, 057 were injured	OCHA (2024)
9	As at 13th June, 2024	Over 37, 232 people were killed & more than 85, 037 were injured	Gaza Health Ministry (2024)

Source: Compiled by the authors (2024)

Data from Table 2 above shows that between 7 October 2023 and 13th June 2024, more than **37, 232** people were killed in Gaza, including Palestianians, Israelis and workers of the United Nation Relief Work Agency (UNRWA), and over **85, 037** others were injured (MoH in Gaza, 2024). In addition, over **2.3 million** Palestinians in Gaza experienced food insecurity resulting from the Israeli airstrikes and the ongoing blockade of the Gaza Strip by Israel (Parker, 2024). In the same vein, more than **1.9 million** Palestinians have been internally displaced since the war between Israel and Hamas started in October 2023 (UNRWA, 2024). Also, at least **305** schools, **1, 541** industrial facilities, and **135** health facilities, including **23** hospitals, **56** clinics, **55** ambulances, **183** mosques, and **3** churches, in addition to **165** press offices were destroyed by the ongoing Israeli attacks on Gaza (Euro-Med Monitor, 2024).

Conclusion
The Israeli-Hamas war has deep historical, political, and territorial origins, ingrained in the territorial disputes between Israelis and Palestinians, particularly over land in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank with both sides laying claim to the same territories, leading to tensions and hostilities. The Israeli occupation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, as well as the construction of Israeli settlements in these regions, has been a major source of conflict because the Palestinians view Israel's actions as obstacles to the creation of a viable Palestinian state.

The blockade imposed on Gaza by Israel have resulted in a protracted humanitarian crisis characterized by civilian casualties, famine, displacement, food insecurity and the erosion of basic human rights, including the destruction of critical infrastructure such as schools, health facilities, industrial facilities and electricity supplies. The paper concludes that the U.S.'s unwavering support for Israel has had significant implications for the Israeli-Hamas war, particularly in Gaza. By providing military aid, diplomatic support, is use of veto power and political cover to Israel, the U.S. has contributed to a power imbalance that has fueled violence and hindered efforts towards a peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Hamas war in Gaza.

Recommendation

This paper recommended that the US should embrace the UN Security Council Resolutions calling for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from occupied territories and the two-state solution by not vetoing the resolutions critical of Israel.

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