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Evaluating The role of the United Nations in managing Middle East conflicts

تقييم دور الأمم المتحدة في إدارة النزاعات بالشرق الأوسط

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Abstract

This paper aims to make a small beginning in examining the role of the UN in the management and resolution of conflicts on a regional basis. It selects, as a framework, the United Nations' involvement in the Middle Eastern conflict and tests this case against relevant theoretical principles of international relations to see if the UN has been able to make a substantive revolution at this level.

Subsequent chapters will delve into specific cases within the region, providing a comprehensive analysis of the United Nations' effectiveness in dealing with the intricate challenges posed by Iran, Lebanon, and the Palestine question. Each case highlights distinct aspects of the region's dynamics and the UN's role, contributing to a deeper understanding of the complexities at play.

Keywords: *United Nations. Conflict. Middle East. Palestine question*

ملخص:

تهدف هذه الورقة إلى تقديم مدخل لدراسة دور الأمم المتحدة في إدارة وحل النزاعات على المستوى الإقليمي. وهي تختار، كإطار، مشاركة الأمم المتحدة في الصراع القائم في الشرق الأوسط، وتختبر هذه الحالة في ضوء المبادئ النظرية ذات الصلة بالعلاقات الدولية لمعرفة ما إذا كانت الأمم المتحدة قادرة على إحداث ثورة جوهرية على هذا المستوى. وستتناول العناصر اللاحقة حالات محددة داخل المنطقة، وتقدم تحليلاً شـــاملاً لفعالية الأمم المتحدة في التعامل مع التحديات المعقدة التي تفرضـها إيران ولبنان والقضية الفلسـطينية. وتسـلط كل حالة الضـوء على جوانب مميزة من ديناميكيات المنطقة ودور الأمم المتحدة، مما يساهم في فهم أعمق للتعقيدات التي تشكلها.

كلمات مفتاحية: الأمم المتحدة، الصراع، الشرق الأوسط، ، القضية الفلسطينية.

Introduction

There are constant calls for the United Nations to be more effective, particularly in the area of peacekeeping. However, it is rare to find instances where a scrutiny of its past performance in given cases of international conflict is undertaken. Instead, one sees more generalized examinations of the operation and principles of UN peacekeeping.

Since the United Nations explicitly relies on several of these principles and practices to guide its efforts at conflict resolution, their relevance and application in creating substantive structural peace on the international level can best be examined through regional, latent conflict management resolutions.

The central question it raises is: Has the United Nations succeeded in preventing the resurgence of overt conflicts through the use of international mediation techniques, and in transforming the conflict environment in the Middle East through the application of binding international law?

1. Historical Introduction

1.1. History of the United Nations

The United Nations, an organization that has been shattered by the increasing frequency of conflict in the 1990s. Its arbitrary intervention in managing conflict has waning regional acceptance, yet the UN continues to play what it believes to be a leading role in many regional crises. The post-Cold War environment of uncontrolled conflict has seen the role of the UN shift from peacekeeping to a more proactive and interventionist international government. While the UN represents the entire international community, it increasingly takes on the aspirations of a few of its members. It is not a coincidence that the few member nations who have brought the hidden subtext of normality, the right of self-determination, to international attention have been successful in using the United Nations machinery to give substance to the various aspirations of suppressed peoples. The UN's conception and practice of peace, until the mid-1990s, was weighted delinquently towards the idea of freezing conflict rather than addressing its underlying causes. (Muga, 2021)

The late deployment of the UN has seen the advantage of hard-won peace agreements turn into the ironical costs of peace: legislative apathy, territorial partition, gigantic sabotage, the proliferation of enlightened bad governance, and the enhanced human suffering of a self-absorbed dictatorship posing as a democracy. The UN mandate to solve conflict rights before the cause of ethno-nationalism takes root has meant a militarized peace at 'the cessation of hostilities'. It has had to fundamentally overhaul the idea of peace as outlined in the broad nature of the settlement and the type of non-military personnel involved and re-extend the ripples of intervention to the interstage of peace-making and peace-building. The conduct of the United Nations has certainly merited examination at the international spectrum where the organization is but a puppet of a few member states as it is at the regional level where it considers itself as arbiter. (Coleman et al.2021)

Note:

These theoretical principles and practices are: (i) International mediation, and (ii) Universal legal norms, particularly (Mingst et al., 2022) those which have been accepted by the contending states and are enforceable through binding international law. (Pomerance, 2024)

1.2. Significance of the Middle East Conflict

The tragic warfare that has inundated the countries of the Middle and for so long unquestionably constitutes the most widespread single aspect of all the tumultuous conflict to which world society is heir today. The area encompasses as points of principal concern the national entities of Israel, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, as well as the British and Iraqi dominions. Geographically, it represents a kaleidoscopic pattern placed generally at the crossroads of the Asian and European-African sectors and is remote from effective influence in social and political science held by leading world communities in both these vast areas. (Dodds et al.2023)

The Middle East has been one of the world's most important centers of both political and economic power. Art and literature, all of the arts and sciences, reached a very high level of attainment. Islamic culture reached its height in the 9th century, and Persians, and Syria, Egypt, north africa, and south-west europe received some gifts of their civilizations. Political instability in the Middle East is increasing. The area is characterized by an extreme lack of stable regimes. The frequency of regime changes tends to rise in times immediately preceding regional wars. (Al-Shboul et al.2020)

2. Theoretical Frameworks for Conflict Management

How can we analyze a large international body such as the United Nations and its role in managing conflict between states of different nature and with different contexts such as Israel, Palestinian people and Lebanon? The most useful international relations theories about international conflict are sought and assessed. These theories provide general guidelines on how to manage conflict in the international system and mediators' roles and preferred techniques. Three theories underpin the nature and sources of international conflict. The first is essentially descriptive and explains the two primary configurations of international conflict: the balance of power and the two-bloc configuration of the bipolar international system of the Cold War. The second major theory explains interstate conflict through the causes of relative rather than absolute gain. (Wolf, 2023)

UN resolutions on the Middle East reflect this 'relative-gain' hypothesis in that they are so loosely worded and vague in substance that they have become virtually empty documents, continually being overridden by further crises and wars. The third major rationale for why interstate conflict exists is to redress perceived imbalances in the status quo. The relative balance of power does not rule out temporary deviations from the mean, but ongoing large deviations suggest a disequilibrium. When disequilibrium is deemed to exist, rolling back the status quo ante is the common outcome. Indeed, major conventions in international law deem the use of force to have a legitimacy not dissimilar to the concept of jus ad bellum in Western just war theory based on national sovereignty and the maintenance of order. This theory does not take into account that world politics has a number of independent, valid international actors with various domestic political competencies acting on behalf of the secular state. (Kertcher, 2021)

2.1. Realism and the UN's Role

The modern realist perspective is characterized by an emphasis on the interdependence between the domestic and international environments, the belief that conflict is a natural part of international relations, and the assertion that the security of states is the primary and most enduring goal. The main aim of states is to ensure their own security, and this is achieved by the state's foreign policies, which are devised according to the principle of might is right; that

is, the weakest states fail and the powerful ones succeed. According to the realist perspective, optimum security is achieved when states conform to a dictatorial political structure - when the use of violence is monopolized by centralized authority. Although this level of security is not achievable in the international system, states continually strive to maximize their overall power in order to maintain and increase their security. (Clapp et al., 2022)

Realists have never imagined a world without some degree of conflict and do not expect the United Nations to prevent it. Yet, realists do not demand such a high level of order and stability that every dispute must be settled peacefully. International politics is a notoriously vicious affair, and the brigand have always been, and perhaps always will be, with us. In the international politics of Hobbes's dream, even a few policemen are hard to come by. Nevertheless, a world in which brigandage is unchecked is a nightmare. States feud at the slightest provocation; the chance of sudden and devastating war is always in the air. In sum, just enough provocation is necessary for the existence of a dangerous world of international politics. Treaty organizations failed to create a sufficient amount of order and stability to satisfy both the desires of great powers for security and their instinctual desires to pursue their religions, social orders, and ways of life. The desires resulted in a breakdown of the treaty organizations. (Congleton, 2020)

2.2. Liberalism and the UN's Role

The UN's immediate involvement in the conflict after 1945 was due to the Constitution of the organization, with objectives being to ensure and promote peace. Among the works of the General Assembly, as specified by the Charter, is encouraging development in international law with a view to laying a foundation for a more solid system of peace. The General Assembly achieves these objectives with the help of various organs, where specific activities are performed to deliver particular results. The Security Council, within the General Assembly, is the most influential in issues related to the maintenance of international peace and order. It, therefore, holds an important role in the political processes under the UN's auspices aimed at reaching a compromise on Israeli-Palestinian and other issues. The role of the parties in the resolution of conflicts is very important. Their intentions in the peaceful settlement of problems would greatly help in harmonizing the activities undertaken within the international arena with their endeavors. At the end of the day, any intentions in the creation of peace would not be effective if and only if the two parties' efforts are underscored by the will to achieve peace in an incremental manner. This should be done in cooperation with the initiatives always obtained through the assistance of the international community. (Farrall et al.2020)

2.3. Constructivism and the UN's Role

There is increasing popular and academic interest in the UN and its role in managing conflict in the Middle East. More practically, progress towards resolving international crises, especially in the Palestinian-Israeli arena, may have immeasurably positive humanitarian consequences, not least by removing the several barriers to development in an otherwise prosperous subregion. Constructivist theory arguably has the most to lend to understanding the UN's Middle Eastern role. Constructivists believe that an actor's subjective experiences lead them to develop their own set of goals and interests, independent of their material environment, and their intentions with which other states must concern themselves. (Mio et al.2020)

The operation of many collective international organizations, including the United Nations, is heavily influenced and driven by the transmitted norms of 'officialdom' or what is known as 'international bureaucracies.' For the most part, the organization of the UN embodies normative constructivist norms of the international arena. All nations of the world, irrespective of the level of their economic development, are ranked by the UN as equally sovereign and as deserving of equal consideration with respect to the global problems to which the UN is addressing. All nations understand that they operate within a political environment that embodies these normative beliefs, and they share similar normative goals about how actors should behave within this space. The UN, thus, is a collective institution that reflects a common set of values about how the international system should operate. (Lantis & Wunderlich, 2022)

3. Historical Role and Engagement of the United Nations in the Middle East and its Influence throughout Time

Throughout the 75 years of history of the United Nations, world crises have been many, and the Middle East has been involved at all times. Of international conflicts, the United Nations have settled few. The degree of rapprochement between Arab neighboring states in the Middle East, as a measure of decreasing possible tactical advantages for an outside power, may not be such a distinguishing characteristic of the Middle Eastern crises. The attitude involved in the Arab-Israeli dispute is modified by the belief that economic conditions will give atomic weaponry an option not currently available. Special about the Middle East is the degree of international concern with it, and that international concern is derived largely from the presence of the United Nations there. (Kentikelenis & Voeten, 2021)

At least three bases are reflected in the fact that at the formal phase of present negotiations, everyone wants the United Nations not only to approve a peaceful solution but to provide a significant portion of the guarantees that it is peaceful. Despite a scale of effort unmatched in any other thrust in mankind’s history, the Palestinian people remain under continual strain; Israel has not abandoned its determination to destroy resistance of this people. Only the prospect that they can be overpowered gives the present contours of defense plans, and only the understanding that their application will bring the United Nations force to the scene and possible international repercussions deters local confrontation and atomic war with Iran.

3.1. Creation of Israel and the Arab-Israeli Conflict

This conflict is a crucial concern for the United Nations in the Middle East. It raises the vital issues of international peace and security. The General Assembly has declared the establishment of an independent sovereign State of Israel in Palestine at peace with its neighbors to be a condition for lasting peace in that part of the world. The Assembly has recommended a plan for implementing that declaration and appealed to regimes of the area to take such steps, consistent with its purposes, as may be necessary for that implementation. (Moughrabi, 2023)

Five United Nations bodies are associated with the maintenance of peace, and the Palestine question has involved the Security Council in discharging its duty of maintaining international peace and security. For all these reasons, the Palestine question has been and is now a matter of continuing attention to the United Nations.

3.2. Suez Crisis

The Second Arab-Israeli War was between Egypt and Israel in late 1956 and prompted the dispatch of United Nations forces as its aftermath spread to other parts of the region. The UN

Emergency Force acted as a buffer between Egyptian and Israeli forces and served to separate them. The Security Council also established its first peacekeeping force, the United Nations Observation Group, to have members there in time to extend the influence of an intrastate agreement on which the parties to the dispute had been obliged to call for its inclusion. This was the first time that the United Nations had become involved in a Middle East situation after an extensive period of fighting had ceased, and the following years saw an increasing number of dispatches of United Nations observers who were mostly unarmed military personnel. Their purpose was to serve with a variety of international truces and agreements, to patrol areas and demilitarized lines, to supervise neutral zones, and to render assistance in negotiations, stabilization, and rehabilitation of the affected region. (Hilmy, 2020)

UN forces were never given an active role to help with the implementation of any political agreements, and their activities have in part been dictated by the purely military considerations of maintaining their own security. The large majority of problems in the Middle East that have been referred to the United Nations have had some specific relationship with the larger problem of peace in the whole region. In a number of countries, problems have initially been considered by some quarters as having an international character, but in each case, this aspect has been resolved informally in the international community. The mandates of UN missions have varied considerably, and even complete agreements among all permanent members of the Security Council have forced the United Nations to sit on the sidelines and only to act as a medium for communication between the parties during the negotiation of the cessation of hostilities. Seldom has the United Nations had the wherewithal to exercise any influence on its own. (Williams, 2024)

3.3. Lebanese Civil War

The Lebanese civil war occurred late in the century, but it dramatically altered circumstances in the Middle East as the United Nations and its Security Council became deeply involved. The war in Lebanon began in 1975 as rival political factions fought for control of the government. Lebanon had always been notoriously unstable as a multi-confessional state; however, it had been a stable financial center as well as a model of peaceful coexistence for the many religious sects residing there. Compromise had always been the key to peace and stability in Lebanon as the residents of Beirut went about their various commercial and social activities. But then the fragile society collapsed. the government in Beirut requested help from the United Nations before internal difficulties engulfed the whole Middle East. The Security Council promptly took up the Lebanese invitation and sent an uncertain mandate to the Secretary-General to offer good offices to the parties with a view to restoring peace and quiet. (Khanafer, 2020)

This was not successful, and the mandate was strengthened by a request from the concerned parties that the Council provide a UN observer force to see that the terms of the cease-fire were respected. These steps followed the sequence that developed frequently. First, the affected state welcomes United Nations intervention or interference as it sees the problem before it evolves into an international crisis involving the major powers. The Secretary-General, as a procedural first step, is then given the modest mandate of using his good offices to work out a settlement. If he cannot, or if the parties prefer to have their own identity kept secret, a peacekeeping observer force is put on the ground, and agreements are reached as to who may participate and what the force will do, subject always to the Security Council's ability to veto whatever action he takes. The strength of the observer force will generally be modest as well. (von Bernstorff, 2021)

With the possible exception of Iran, Lebanon became the most significant case of United Nations involvement in the Middle East in the years following the October War. The United Nations and its staff found themselves in a war-torn country as unstable and dangerous as the Gaza Strip, but with many more people, many more rival combat forces, and none of the containment strategy of the Sinai. The early years of the observer force were generally regarded as a success, and in their rare times at the Security Council, international disagreements were held to brief, polite disagreements. Following a member, states of the League of Arab States gave some modest logistic support to the force, and the United Nations itself found some helpful troop supplies. (El et al.2020)

Despite expectations and later accusations that the United Nations forces were helping only one side break the cease-fire, the presence of neutral observers had the effect of reducing the violence of the many warring factions. This more limited presence did, however, point out a major weakness in the process by which the concerned parties sought the help of the international body. Because the Lebanese government was weak and divided between the combatants, the request was made by the two warring forces, and the response received no endorsement from the Council. The weaknesses were corrected somewhat when the requests for the observer force were turned into derogation followed by the signing of a comprehensive cease-fire agreement. Again, the Secretary-General was given the necessary authority to mobilize forces without undue delay from the Security Council, and a modest sense-and-report mission grew almost overnight into a peacekeeping operation which, at its height, numbered some six thousand soldiers. (Gaub et al.2021)

4. UN Peacekeeping Missions in the Middle East

The United Nations has experienced considerable successes and failures with its various peacekeeping attempts in the Middle East. The agency's first attempted use of peacekeeping, its efforts in Palestine, took place in 1948. A more substantial mission followed, stationed in Egypt to provide a buffer following the Suez crisis in 1956. In 1967, the force was forced to withdraw, setting a precedent for the volatility of future peace enforcement missions. (Franco, 2024)

A UN force was sent to Yemen after the royal house of the recently formed state had requested help. Its initial mandate was to help eliminate external aggression against Yemen. By 1957, the focus extended to internal security, including preventing the infiltration of agents and preventing attempts to overthrow or undermine the new government. These efforts were unable to stem the civil war there, and the mission was soon to terminate. Since then, multiple peacekeeping forces have been established in the Middle East. (Davies, 2022)

4.1. UNTSO

UN Security Council Resolution 48 established the ‘United Nations Truce Supervision Organization for Palestine’ (UNTSO). It was the first-ever peacekeeping mission established by the UN, and it puts the UN ‘on the ground’ in one of the world’s most volatile regions. UNTSO’s mandate was and is to act as a third-party guarantor for both parties to the 1948 armistice agreement – the breaking away rebel state Israel, and the surrounding Arab countries and the representing power, the Arab League. States did not have relations with the rebel state, so the UN performed this diplomatic role. UNTSO acted as a intermediary between the parties by assisting both in the implementation of the truce provisions, by supervising the Armistice Agreements between the combatants, and by working with other UN peacekeeping missions that were being deployed. The mandate was never intended to be long term, but 60 years on, this is what UNTSO has become. (Elbasri, 2024)

4.2. UNEF

The experience of the United Nations Emergency Force following the Suez crisis increased the confidence of the international community in the ability of the United Nations to resolve conflict in the Middle East. The contribution of UNEF to the reduction of tension is difficult to establish. Some recent studies have even contested the accuracy of the original interpretation given to the reduced tension around the Gulf of Aqaba and put it down to an agreement between Egypt and Israel, therefore not necessarily linked to the UNEF deployment. However, from the logical point of view, the reduction of tension through UNEF can be comfortably supported. The UNEF also symbolized the concern of the international community for peace in the Middle East, which is over and above the reduction of tension. The experience of UNEF during that period also showed that the United Nations, with the cooperation of the parties, can contribute to the reduction of tension and the preservation of peace even in a complex situation such as that created by the Suez crisis. The deployment of UNEF was somewhat imperfect. The British and French armies did not disengage at the same time. In the end, the disengagement of the two forces took too long, damaged the prestige of the United Nations, and showed a malfunction thereafter that was later reproduced in other UN operations in the area. These phenomena have complicated the situation. Subsequent peacekeeping operations have not encountered the same maneuver problems and troubles at the command level that characterized the UNEF operation. Many other factors have facilitated the deployment of subsequent operations, such as the pre-existence of a small UNEF, the support and sympathy shown for the United Nations by the vast majority of the international community and the two direct parties, and the partial military disengagement. (Chupp, 2024)

4.3. UNIFIL

Following the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon was established to help the Lebanese government restore its effective authority in the area. On 18 June, the Security Council adopted resolution 425, by which it called on Israel to immediately cease its military action and withdraw its forces from all parts of Lebanon. Furthermore, the Council set up UNIFIL and the presence in the area of the Lebanese armed forces. The resolution was approved by 11 votes to none; the US abstained. France and Italy were requested to contribute further to the interposition force and, in cooperation with UNIFIL, to ensure the withdrawal of Israeli forces. (Bardalai, 2021)

Israel immediately indicated that it did not recognize the resolution or the establishment of a new operation in Lebanon. The Council, in frequent discussions, warmly welcomed the Force's presence and repeatedly asked for progress on its expansion. During the summer months, over 960 strong UNIFIL and its partner operation had concentrated in the south, and the Italian contribution had gone into action on numerous occasions to prevent clashes between the Israeli forces and the Lebanese population. But no progress was possible in implementing the resolution's long-term objectives. The Lebanese authorities made it clear that they would not exercise their responsibilities until the last Israeli soldier had departed from Lebanon. These requirements were not specified by the Security Council when it adopted resolution 425. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Lebanon, Minister Fakhoury, blamed the Israeli occupation for all the difficulties in the South. (Depledge, 2021)

5. Challenges Faced by the UN in Managing Middle East Conflict

The UN operates on the basis of consensus when dealing with Middle East conflict. It does not take the initiative and is always dependent on the conflicting parties desiring its help. Most

of the time, the UN does not take direct action employing its own means, but relies on countries that selflessly volunteer troops, money, and resources to facilitate the blue berets' cause. As in the case of the UNDF in the Suez, the expected consensus was not realized, with some countries being less than enthusiastic about the idea of a neutral force and others opposing the idea of having a military force in a region of vital interest. Middle East problems are not confined to countries of the region; their origins are also entwined in the policies of superpowers with vital strategic interests in oil, according undue prominence to the peace efforts of the superpowers at the expense of the UN. (Loewe & Zintl, 2021)

However, the UN's operation and capability to manage conflict in the Middle East is inhibited by: a) Weakening effectiveness. The UN has become somewhat distracted from its traditional peacekeeping roles and has become involved in political, legal, and humanitarian issues that cannot be easily reconciled with the blue beret role. b) Overstretch. The UN and its agencies are overstretched, spreading their limited resources thinly over a wide field of traditional and various new peacekeeping functions. Military operations with no connection to UN resolutions do not command similar attention or resources as conflicts that would follow specific United Nations resolutions or agreements. This causes problems in the availability of specialist skills, command and control infrastructure, and logistic support. (Walter et al.2021)

5.1. Political Challenges

It is a cliché to say that the Israeli-Palestinian dispute is complex, but few appreciate the significance of the fact that there are multiple issues entangled in the Middle East peace equation. These issues are threefold: the issue of Palestinian status in particular and Arab-Islamic identification in general; the territorial disaggregation of the 1949 armistice lines, which today are recognized as Israel's valid international boundaries but which are not accepted as such by the Palestinian resistance; and the Israeli requirement for defensible borders. There are two principal political constraints. The exercise of any of these rights' negative zero-sum reactions, as illustrated by the Western reaction to a UN General Assembly resolution. Furthermore, the peace dividend must exceed the current price. If Israel is to pay the present price demanded for peace, the other party must pay more so that the reward of peace is greater than the price now being exacted. In other words, Israel's aspirations must be met. Aspirations translate into goals, which in turn reflect the above-mentioned rights. The Government of Israel thus seeks peace but not at any price. Rather, peace must be attained utilizing the historical rights radiating from Israel's historical experience and acknowledging the limitations of international law. These rights are expressive, cooperative, and receptive in nature. A presentation of possible problems with respect to future bilateral relations might consequently focus on each of these dimensions. For example, with greater reliance on international law and more unconditional tutelage through organizations, the already secondary role of the bilateral special relationship might further diminish. (Stetter, 2021)

5.2. Logistical Challenges

The UN faces numerous logistical problems when it must manage an international conflict. First and most important is that it is there at all. UN peacekeeping operations are voluntary, and the larger nation-states are usually reluctant to further deplete their forces. Although small member states step forward more readily, these are the countries whose armed forces are not near the volume or the level of training ideally required, and their participation tends to be temporary, just until replacement forces can be forthcoming from other sources. There is often an inherent incompatibility between the very reasons why a peacekeeping deployment would be needed and those conditions most favorable to operate an effective force, e.g., speed,

strength, teamwork, professionalism, and geographical situation. After a force is in place, there is much to be done before it can accomplish its assigned mission. (Ogunnowo & Chidozie, 2020)

A chain of authority to command the force must be established, usually consisting of a Special Representative to the Secretary-General, a command authority, and the national commanders of the participating units. One of the most vexing problems for UN forces in the field is the extent to which their orders should be interpreted as giving them the right of self-defense. Other problems are the control of the movement of relief organizations and of the flow of food, water, and other essential supplies to the people around them, fomentation of internal unrest, and even launching military attacks. Strangely, the least interference with the regular operation of the peacekeepers usually comes about only under total military control that has been ceded to a single force, i.e., by either the intervention of a human rights group from outside or the separation of the warring forces by carrying the combat away from them. (Duffey, 2020)

5.3. Ethical and Moral Dilemmas

The moral and ethical premise of United Nations actions was brought into question at Geneva by the head of the Lebanese delegation later in 1948. He suggested that the presence of the United Nations in the Middle East now made it impossible to accept the United Nations as the arbitrator of the conflict. The ability of the General Assembly to arrive at a compromise was also brought into question. As expressed by the representative of the Egyptian delegation, resolutions calling for a ceasefire and truce were not based on consensus, but on the right to rule by the majority. (Pramuji, 2020)

Given the Cold War power play in the world, it is uncertain whether the Syrian and Egyptian requests for the creation of a committee to investigate and report on the conflict could have achieved a better outcome. Yet by questioning the United Nations' humanitarian and ethical justification to involve itself in the conflict, a seed was sown that would become a constant thread in the debate of the Arab-Israeli conflict in the years to follow. The extent to which the emergency United Nations' intervention was legitimized is further examined. (Weber-Lewerenz, 2021)

6. Effectiveness of UN Interventions in the Middle East

To conclude, U.S. policymakers should have realistic expectations of what the U.N. can and cannot accomplish in managing, defending, or overhauling the nature of the Middle East political order. Realizing the above-noted challenges, an important outcome would be to work to professionalize mediation, improve the operational, organizational, and legal basis of conflict management with a view to more comprehensively addressing the politics, economics, and recruitment of insurgents, and improve the political capacity of the international community to prevent and resolve conflict. Intra-elite conflict and conflict management and the role of regional institutions should also be a focus of research. (White, 2021)

6.1. Effectiveness of U.N. Interventions in the Middle East

The United Nations had faced criticism for its actions in Syria. It has been accused of failing to establish diplomatic relations with the Assad regime and being unable to remove him from power. It is important to acknowledge that intervention, although well-intentioned, can come at a staggering cost. The media often highlights the flaws and inadequacies of peace operations, shedding light on the limitations of the United Nations. (Ghadbian, 2021)

6.2. Successes and Failures

The United Nations, a Cold War creation, has generally failed in peacekeeping in cases where the major powers are seriously engaged, for in those cases their whole diplomacy is designed for the relief of their fighting. Probably Egypt and Israel, even in the hostile atmosphere of Syria, would have reached an agreement without much reliance upon the empty spaces of United Nations fidelity. In the Middle East, rarely is the United Nations an active participant. Yet the United Nations, in an appropriately circumscribed form, has often given expression to the ideals of the international community. It has achieved some presence that is greater than its performance. For real action, it was willing to rely in the end on a major power, which historically has been - at least in certain frequently encountered moods - just as logical a steward of the United Nations. There is a necessary complementarity between formal international government and order and influential national diplomacy, and the contribution need not have been made solely in the United Nations framework. In summary, the United Nations, an institution conceived during the Cold War, has had limited success in peacekeeping efforts when dealing with major powers entrenched in conflicts. The major powers often prioritize their own interests and strategies over the mission of the United Nations, making it ineffective in such cases. Even in the tumultuous environment of the Middle East, the United Nations plays a minor role. However, in certain contexts and within certain limits, the United Nations has managed to convey and embody the ideals of the international community. It has managed to create a certain level of influence that surpasses its actual impact. When it comes to taking tangible actions, the United Nations has often relied on a major power, which, historically, has shown itself capable of assuming a stewardship role within the organization. This highlights the complementary relationship between formal international governance and influential national diplomacy; the United Nations is not the sole framework through which contributions can be made. (Allen & Yuen, 2020)

7. Comparative Analysis of UN Involvement in Different Middle East Conflicts

Political action, or inaction, undertaken by the United Nations in various conflict situations is typically evaluated through the examination of the motivations of some of its member states when advocating for or opposing different UN-related activities in diverse international issue areas. To gain a more accurate prediction of the management of different types of conflict, available comparative models suggest that considering country-specific policy orientation is crucial. In this comprehensive study, our objective is to conduct exploratory research that delves into the extent of comparability, or lack thereof, of conflict-negotiating activities among different pairs of countries. We will specifically focus on three distinct dimensions that widely differ from one another. Our primary inquiry revolves around whether the UN manages three different types of armed conflict in the Middle East differently during different periods, not based on policy orientations of different states, but rather based on the formal membership of the Security Council during those particular time periods. To achieve this, we will employ advanced proxy methods to meticulously measure and compare the dimensions of UN involvement. By thoroughly analyzing these aspects, we aim to gain a deeper understanding of how the UN operates in various conflict scenarios. Ultimately, this article can provide invaluable insights for future conflict resolution efforts. (Myers & Dorn, 2022)

8. The Role of Major Powers in Shaping UN Policy in the Middle East

The features discussed in the previous section suggest that the United Nations performs crucial and pivotal roles in the Middle East, playing a significant part in shaping the region's destiny. Within the broad framework of the non-use of force in international relations, it has

successfully reduced and ceased conflicts between member states, acting as a catalyst for peace and stability. (Udeagha & Muchapondwa, 2023)

Moreover, the United Nations has consistently strived to promote social and economic change in the region, fostering development and progress. However, the region's complex dynamics, compounded by the strong and sometimes conflicting interests of major powers, present challenges and limitations for the United Nations' effectiveness. (Müller, 2021)

The influence wielded by these major powers, driven by their own agendas, and the limited availability of forces that the United Nations can call upon, significantly impact and circumscribe the roles and capabilities of the world organization. These factors are critical in understanding the UN's engagement and impact in the Middle East. One striking factor that emerges is the absence of a balance of power among regional actors. (Legusov et al.2022)

This lack of equilibrium further underscores the need for the United Nations to navigate carefully and engage with various stakeholders, including superpower allies, to influence positive outcomes. (Lal et al.2021)

Additionally, it is essential to recognize that conflicts in the Middle East have far-reaching implications extending well beyond the region itself. The region's significance on a global scale necessitates a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach to address the political, economic, and military dimensions effectively. (Lim, 2022)

However, despite its intentions and efforts, the United Nations faces limitations due to the restricted range of actions it can undertake while operating within the constraints of major power control or sanction. These realities define the inherent challenges that the world organization encounters in its activities within the region. Consequently, they contribute to frequent breaches of resolutions by parties involved in various disputes, as the United Nations faces external pressures that sometimes undermine its ability to enforce compliance effectively. (Fajardo, 2021)

9. Future Prospects and Recommendations for UN Involvement in the Middle East

it is imperative to establish systems that guarantee respect for international law as a reliable and steadfast pillar to searching for a comprehensive and enduring general solution. The development should be a collaborative effort by the parties within the region, fostering an intensified dialogue supported by international organizations. This dialogue should create a platform for a broad exchange of views and ideas among experts, entrepreneurs, and nongovernmental organizations. These discussions must explore alternative scenarios for the economic situation in the Palestinian territories, thoroughly examining the potential socioeconomic outcomes. It is through such a meticulous and comprehensive approach that we can pave the way for a sustainable and inclusive future for Palestinian people. (Cantarero, 2020)

The sheer complexity of today's conflicts, as well as the rapidly changing geopolitical landscape, makes the task of imagining the future role of the UN a difficult one. However, here are a few future prospects that may enhance the role of the UN in the region, and these are recommendations for investment today. First, the UN will have to enhance its diplomatic efforts and place more emphasis on peace-making rather than peacekeeping. This requires thinking outside the box in order to redefine peace processes in the region. Second, since the conflicts are primarily local, local actors should be the primary consideration in any conflict resolution process, and local structures should be involved in implementing prospective peace agreements. Third, the UN will have to revisit and streamline some of its operational

frameworks, including implementing the Secretary-General's report. Finally, funding and resource allocation issues remain critical and require greater and more committed efforts from donors and the UN budgetary organ. (Wamsler et al.2021)

CONCLUSION

The United Nations plays an indispensable role in the Middle East. Its impact and effectiveness are influenced by numerous factors, including the presence of major powers, the absence of a balance of power among regional actors, the global significance of Middle East conflicts, and the constraints on the United Nations' actions. By examining specific cases and analyzing the broader regional dynamics, a comprehensive understanding can be achieved, shedding light on both the achievements and limitations of the United Nations in its pursuit of peace and stability.

The Council and its members could certainly exercise influence and power regarding the implementation of its decisions in dealing with crises and conflicts; it has close relations with the conflicting parties and can facilitate the process of conflict resolution in the region. In the universe of peace and conflict, non-state, non-military actors play increasing roles.

Here are some key results regarding the assessment of the United Nations' role in the Middle East:

1. Peacekeeping Missions: The UN has deployed numerous peacekeeping forces in the region, notably in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and the Golan Heights (UNDOF), which have contributed to reducing hostilities, albeit with limited success in achieving long-term peace.
2. Mediation Efforts: The UN has facilitated several negotiations and peace talks, such as the Oslo Accords between Israel and Palestine. However, these efforts often face challenges from both parties and external actors.
3. Humanitarian Assistance: The UN provides critical humanitarian aid through agencies like UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees). This assistance is vital for millions of displaced individuals and refugees, but funding shortfalls often hinder operations.
4. Resolutions and International Law: The UN has passed numerous resolutions addressing issues like settlements in occupied territories and human rights violations. However, enforcement remains problematic, as compliance by member states varies significantly.
5. Political Influence and Challenges: The effectiveness of the UN in the Middle East is often undermined by geopolitical tensions and the influence of powerful member states, which can lead to selective engagement and inconsistent application of international law.
6. Regional Stability: While the UN aims to promote stability, ongoing conflicts, such as those in Syria and Yemen, highlight the limitations of its role and the need for a more coordinated international response.
7. Public Perception: The perception of the UN's effectiveness varies among regional populations, with some viewing it as a neutral mediator, while others criticize it for perceived bias or ineffectiveness.

These results indicate that while the UN plays a significant role in the Middle East, its impact is often constrained by complex political dynamics and the challenges of implementing effective resolutions.

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