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Hamas, Gaza and Israel: Ideologies, Strategies and Conflict

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ABSTRACT

The conflict involving Hamas, Gaza, and Israel remains one of the most entrenched and volatile in the modern Middle East. This study explores the ideological foundations, strategic approaches, and recurring conflict patterns that define the triangular relationship between these actors. Hamas, an Islamist political and militant organization established during the First Intifada in 1987, governs the Gaza Strip and seeks the establishment of an Islamic Palestinian state. Although it signaled political flexibility in its 2017 document by accepting a Palestinian state within the 1967 borders, it continues to reject the legitimacy of Israel. The ideological rift between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority further fragments Palestinian representation. Hamas employs a dual strategy: armed resistance through its military wing, the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, and provision of social services to sustain grassroots support in Gaza. Israel's response is rooted in deterrence, employing intelligence, targeted strikes, and large-scale operations. The cyclical nature of hostilities marked by escalations in 2008, 2012, 2014, 2021, and beyond has led to repeated civilian suffering, particularly in Gaza. Ceasefires, often brokered by regional or international mediators, tend to be short-lived and fail to address the root causes of the conflict, including territorial disputes, the Gaza blockade, and internal Palestinian divisions. The conflict's regional dimension, including Iranian support for Hamas and shifting Arab alliances, further complicates resolution. The study concludes that temporary ceasefires cannot replace a comprehensive political settlement. Sustainable peace demands inclusive diplomacy, ideological concessions, and consistent international engagement beyond crisis management.

Keywords: Hamas, Gaza Strip, Israel-Palestine Conflict, Political Ideology, Armed Resistance, Middle East Peace Process.

Introduction

Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Movement, has been a pivotal actor in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, particularly in the Gaza Strip. The roots of Hamas can be traced back to 1973, when Sheikh Ahmad Yasin founded al-Mujamma al-Islami, also known as the Islamic Centre, in Gaza. This institution laid the foundation for what would later become Hamas. Key founding members such as Isa al-Nashshar, Dr. Ibrahim al-Yazuri, Abdulfattah Doukhan, Dr. Abdul Aziz Rantisi, Mohamad Hassan Shama'a, and Salah Shehade emerged from this centre (Ezaki, 2025). Interestingly, the Islamic Centre was officially registered with the Israeli military authorities in 1978. Some Israeli analysts argue that this early registration gave rise to the claim that Israel "tolerated" or indirectly supported the Centre as a counterweight to the

secular Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) under Yasser Arafat (Tamimi, 2007). However, this cooperation was short-lived. In 1983, Sheikh Yasin was arrested for arms smuggling, briefly halting the group's activities.

By the late 1980s, particularly during the First Intifada in 1987, Hamas formally emerged as a distinct political and militant entity. In 1988, the group published its charter, defining its religious-nationalist ideology and framing itself as an Islamic alternative to the secular PLO. Its military wing, the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades named after a Palestinian leader from the 1936 Arab Revolt was created to lead armed resistance against Israel (Mishal & Sela, 2000). Hamas's legitimacy is rooted in three pillars: its role in initiating the First Intifada, its provision of social services such as education and healthcare, and its strict ideological stance. It gained considerable grassroots support, particularly in Gaza, where official Palestinian institutions were often weak or absent. The organization strategically avoided participation in the 1995 Palestinian National Authority elections, focusing instead on local elections to strengthen its political base. Ideologically, Hamas is deeply influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood, but with key differences. While the Brotherhood generally promotes pan-Islamism and passive resistance, Hamas combines nationalism with armed struggle. It aims to establish an Islamic Palestinian state and rejects Western political influence in the region (Gunning, 2009). Despite ideological similarities with al-Qaeda, Hamas has consistently distanced itself from global jihadist movements. Its focus remains on the Palestinian issue, not on global Islamist warfare. Interviews with leaders like Mahmud Zahhar have clarified this distinction, emphasizing Hamas's goal of resistance within Palestine rather than engaging in international conflicts (Zahhar, 1994).

Strategically, Hamas has targeted both the Israeli state and the Palestinian Authority. It launched its first suicide bombing in 1994, escalating a campaign of violent resistance. These attacks, although popular among some segments of society, were also criticized by Palestinians, particularly in the West Bank. Public opinion polls in the 1990s revealed that a majority wanted the Palestinian Authority to prevent such attacks, fearing that they undermined the larger goal of statehood (Shikaki, 1996). While Hamas criticizes U.S. support for Israel, it has refrained from targeting American assets. Nevertheless, ongoing U.S. financial and military assistance to Israel has led some within Hamas to question whether broader retaliation is justified. Still, Hamas has been cautious, balancing militancy with political survival, especially in its rivalry with Fatah. Internal clashes between Hamas and Fatah since 1988 reflect this struggle for dominance in Palestinian politics.

The group's reluctance to align with al-Qaeda is also grounded in its 1988 charter, which limits its goals to Palestine. Hamas declares itself a movement under Islam, committed to creating a society where people of all religions may live in peace under Islamic rule. Yet, without Islam, it argues, violence and destruction will persist. This localized approach to resistance, while drawing from broader Islamic principles, defines Hamas's unique identity in the region. In summary, Hamas presents a complex mix of ideological rigidity, grassroots legitimacy, strategic violence, and political pragmatism. Its focus on creating an Islamic Palestinian state through both armed resistance and social services has positioned it as both a challenger to Israeli occupation and a rival to secular Palestinian leadership.

Strategic Environment and External Influences on Hamas

Hamas's choice of strategies, targets, and methods is shaped by a complex set of internal and external factors. While its strongest support stems from local Palestinian communities and to a lesser degree, the Palestinian diaspora, several key external developments have also influenced its trajectory (Labadi, 2018). A notable example emerged during the Gulf War, when Yasser Arafat aligned with Saddam Hussein, whereas Hamas publicly condemned Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. This divergence won Hamas considerable financial support from Gulf donors in the early 1990s, enabling its military and social operations even without formal state sponsorship like Hezbollah receives from Lebanon (Love, 2010).

The group's relationship with the Palestinian Authority (PA) and Fatah has also significantly influenced its operational decisions. Although rooted in opposing ideologies, Hamas and other Palestinian factions formed tactical alliances at various points, most visibly during the Second Intifada. Hamas's readiness to govern Gaza following Israel's 2005 unilateral withdrawal exacerbated tensions with Fatah and the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades (Gardner, 2007). These internal rivalries turned violent in 2004, exposing the fragility of any unified Palestinian front. Hamas balances ideological rigidity with pragmatic partnerships when it serves its strategic goals. It has at times collaborated with rival groups to achieve immediate gains, despite deep ideological divisions. This is a hallmark of its operational flexibility and long-term planning.

Military Evolution, Asymmetric Tactics, and Non-Military Deterrence

Israel's defence posture has relied heavily on deterrence theory, adapted from Cold War nuclear doctrines. In this context, deterrence aims to raise the cost of aggression beyond its perceived benefit. Israel applies this strategy to Hamas and its affiliates through targeted strikes and publicized assassinations, such as the elimination of Zuhir al-Qaisi in 2012 (Abumbe, 2024). Yet, these actions often lead to short-lived escalations without long-term behavioural change from Hamas, suggesting that Israel's kinetic deterrence has limited effectiveness.

In response, Hamas has shifted its tactics to exploit psychological and asymmetric warfare. While Iron Dome has intercepted many of its rockets, Hamas has adopted inexpensive yet disruptive alternatives like incendiary balloons and kites. These rudimentary airborne devices have destroyed thousands of acres of Israeli farmland, caused significant economic losses, and generated public fear (Journal Report, Year). In one example, an explosive device attached to a balloon landed on a child's trampoline, highlighting the psychological impact of Hamas's strategy (Zych, 2019).

Hamas has also adapted captured Israeli drones for offensive use, retrofitting them with grenades and using them to target military installations. One such incident in 2019 revealed Hamas's growing technological capability and its effectiveness in undermining Israeli morale through symbolic attacks. Militarily, Hamas now operates as a structured force. Its elite unit, the Nukhba, consists of about 2,500 commandos trained for operations by sea, air, and underground (Schleifer & Ansbacher, 2024). Hamas's naval commandos demonstrated their threat in 2014 when five operatives attempted a seaborne infiltration near Kibbutz Zikim (Kohlmann, 2014). This prompted Israel to rethink its coastal defence strategy and invest in naval countermeasures.

Hamas's tunnel infrastructure, known as "the Metro," is another core element of its deterrence and offensive capabilities (Rathbone, 2023). These tunnels serve not only as

transport routes for weapons and fighters but also as psychological tools. The 2006 abduction of Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit via one such tunnel was a major success for Hamas, resulting in the release of over 1,000 Palestinian prisoners (Schweitzer, 2012). This episode illustrated the potency of Hamas's underground network both tactically and symbolically. In addition to its military developments, Hamas has expanded its influence through strategic misinformation and diplomatic tactics. It often shares images of destruction in Gaza without context, omitting that Israel frequently warns civilians before strikes. By disseminating partial truths and dramatized narratives, Hamas shapes international perceptions and pressures Israel to avoid broader offensives due to reputational concerns. This blurred the line between psychological warfare and propaganda, sparking public debate and deepening internal divisions within Israeli society. The ambiguity surrounding the video became a strategic asset for Hamas, as it ignited racial and political tensions.

Hamas has also engaged with legal and diplomatic systems to constrain Israeli actions. In 2014, the European Union's General Court temporarily removed Hamas from the EU terrorist list on procedural grounds, reflecting how Hamas exploits legal frameworks to seek international legitimacy. Although the EU later reinstated the designation, the incident demonstrated Hamas's ability to operate on multiple fronts, including diplomacy. Another form of deterrence has emerged through international legal actions targeting Israeli leaders. Arrest warrants for figures such as General Doron Almog and former Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni under the principle of "universal jurisdiction" signalled a new front in Hamas-affiliated lawfare (Faouzi, 2019). These legal threats complicate foreign travel for Israeli officials and exert indirect pressure on Israel's political and military establishment.

Hamas's strategy is multifaceted, extending well beyond traditional militancy. It blends armed resistance with political manoeuvring, propaganda, and legal warfare to challenge Israel across physical and psychological domains. Its adaptability has enabled it to maintain relevance and operational effectiveness despite significant military setbacks. The group's integration of asymmetric tactics, misinformation, and diplomacy presents an evolving challenge that Israel's conventional deterrence model struggles to counter effectively.

The International Criminal Court's (ICC) pre-trial chamber ruling on February 5, 2021, asserting jurisdiction to investigate alleged war crimes in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem, intensified efforts by Israel's adversaries to undermine its international standing and restrict the movement of its leaders. Despite the inclusion of "Palestinians" in the ruling, ICC chief prosecutor Fatou Bensouda indicated in 2019 that an investigation would primarily focus on Israeli settlement policy, the 2014 Israel-Hamas conflict, and Israel's response to Gaza border protests (Batoool, 2025). Hamas also leverages entities like the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, employing disinformation. The UN has frequently condemned Israel (Kertcher, 2025), and its evidence might be used in ICC cases, collectively limiting Israel's battlefield operational capacity.

Anti-Tank Weapons and Small Arms

Hamas has showcased captured American weaponry on its Al-Aqsa television network, claiming thousands of Kalashnikovs, M-16s, and tons of ammunition and RPGs, including those with armor-piercing dual warheads. The group also possesses at least one Russian-made Dushka heavy machine gun. While specific acquisition methods for more advanced anti-tank missiles like Sagger rockets and Russian-made Konkurs anti-tank guns remain unclear,

reports indicate Hamas now holds these more sophisticated and accurate systems, potentially obtained from Fatah or through smuggling.

Rockets and Anti-Aircraft Missiles

Sources, including IDF chief of staff Gabi Ashkenazi, suggest Hamas has acquired anti-aircraft weapons such as Strela (SA-7) missiles. These pose a risk to IDF helicopters and older aircraft, despite Israeli missile-countering capabilities, though Hamas would require advanced training for effective use. Hamas has also significantly boosted its missile capabilities, enhancing Qassam missile production after Israel's 2005 Gaza withdrawal. Qassam ranges have expanded from an initial 2-3 km in 2001, with the newest versions able to strike the Israeli seaside town of Ashkelon, reaching an estimated 17 km, and carrying larger payloads due to broader tubes.

Furthermore, Hamas is suspected of smuggling Katyusha missiles into Gaza. While the Palestinian Information Centre (linked to Hamas) and the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades website acknowledged but didn't explicitly confirm Israeli allegations of at least fifty long-range Katyushas, these rockets are more advanced than homemade Qassams, capable of hitting targets up to 20 km away. During its conflict with Israel, Hizballah fired nearly 200 Katyushas daily, significantly more than Hamas. Since June, Hamas has mostly ceased rocket fire towards Israel, focusing on Gaza control. However, Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) continues attacks, with Jane's Defense Weekly noting PIJ's superior rocket technology and manufacturing. PIJ's al-Quds Brigades recently debuted the Quds-4, with an estimated 18-22 km range. In the two months following Hamas's takeover, Israel recorded 121 total missile assaults.

Intelligence Captured

Hamas claims to have seized thousands of files, computer data, photos, and video recordings from the Fatah-run PA intelligence headquarters. While most U.S. intelligence officials don't believe highly sensitive material was compromised, a former official expressed concerns about potential intelligence losses. Bruce Riedel, a former National Security Council assistant and intelligence veteran, speculated the haul would be "quite a treasure trove of materials that would document the relationship with the CIA." Mahmoud Zahar, Hamas's former foreign minister in Gaza, told Newsweek that confiscated documents expose international cooperation between U.S. and Palestinian intelligence agents. Hamas officials, including Zahar, are using these materials in a public relations campaign to portray Fatah as Western and Israeli collaborators. Israeli authorities, including Dichter, suspect Hamas acquired signals intelligence technology, including eavesdropping devices, raising concerns about thwarting future surveillance.

Military Organization of Hamas

Hamas is actively restructuring its combatants into a more unified force. Israeli military authorities estimate the group comprises four battalions and approximately 13,000 armed militants. Hamas appears to be modeling its military structure on Hizballah, aiming to maximize losses among IDF personnel and Israeli population centers in the event of an Israeli assault through guerrilla warfare. Hamas's Executive Force, a 6,000-member security force formed after members were barred from joining the PA security system, primarily polices Gaza but is believed to support Hamas's sizable popular army, the Murabitun. Overall, Hamas

is developing a diverse force capable of managing internal issues and enhancing its capabilities against Israel.

Conflict between Hamas and Israel

The ongoing conflict in Gaza since July 10, 2023, represents the latest significant violence in the Arab-Israeli conflict. On this date, Hamas and Islamic Jihad launched an estimated 3,000–5,000 rockets at Israeli border towns and Tel Aviv. Simultaneously, over 1,000 Hamas militants breached the security barrier, attacking Israeli towns and kibbutzim, resulting in 1,400 deaths and 247 kidnappings, mostly civilians the highest civilian casualties in Israel's 75-year history. The IDF responded with Operation Iron Swords, involving heavy bombardment of northern Gaza, then the entire Gaza Strip, from air and ground. The operation reportedly neutralized all Hamas terrorists involved in the initial attack and destroyed most Hamas rocket launchers. The February 5, 2021, ICC ruling asserting jurisdiction to investigate alleged war crimes in Palestinian territories, including against Israel and Palestinians, was seen as a new low in efforts to damage Israel's international reputation (Batool, 2025). ICC chief prosecutor Fatou Bensouda previously indicated the focus would be on Israeli settlement policy, the 2014 Israel-Hamas conflict, and Israel's response to Gaza border protests. Hamas also utilizes disinformation via entities like the UN High Commissioner for Refugees; the UN's numerous condemnations of Israel could be used as evidence in ICC cases, collectively hindering Israel's operational capacity.

Hamas has displayed captured American weapons, claiming thousands of Kalashnikovs, M-16s, and tons of ammunition and RPGs, including armor-piercing dual warheads. They also possess Russian-made Dushka heavy machine guns. Reports suggest Hamas holds sophisticated Sagger and Konkurs anti-tank missiles, possibly acquired from Fatah or through smuggling.

Humanitarian and Environmental Crises

The IDF assault in Gaza has resulted in an estimated 17,000 Palestinians killed, including 7,000 children. The fighting has displaced 500,000 Israelis and 1.9 million Palestinians, representing 85% of Gaza's 2.1 million population. Gaza, a densely populated area (47 km long, 12–16 km wide), faces questions regarding international humanitarian law. Displacement began with Israeli orders for Gaza City and northern Gaza Strip residents to move south, followed by orders for Rafah and Khan Younis residents to Al-Mawasi. An estimated 83% of Gaza's population has been displaced, with about 1.9 million people forcibly migrated since October 2023. UNRWA shelters house over 12,400 people, four times their capacity, leading to dire conditions, severe lack of medical facilities, water, and sanitation.

The conflict has severely disrupted waste management, a pre-existing concern. Gaza produces approximately 1,700 tons of trash daily. The Juhr al-Dik landfill, which handled 3.9 million tons, is over capacity, causing overflow and fires. Waste collection, near flawless at 98% before the conflict, plummeted to less than 20% during fighting due to fuel shortages, leading to widespread accumulation of trash, including medical waste, near shelters and schools. Researchers observed tens of tons of rubbish and photographed sheep scavenging, the main meat source for displaced people. Severe food shortages have forced some displaced individuals to retrieve food leftovers from waste piles. Waste buildup also includes sanitary pads and infant nappies, with children and sheep scavenging.

Health Infrastructure and Humanitarian Crisis

Gaza's healthcare system, vulnerable from decades of blockades, has significantly deteriorated. Many hospitals, clinics, and health centers are partially or totally destroyed, limiting access to basic and emergency care. Personnel shortages are severe due to casualties and access issues. Operational facilities struggle with fuel shortages and power outages, rendering vital equipment unusable. Hospitals like Nasser and Al-Shifa have been targeted, causing destruction. MSF documented avoidable fatalities from evacuations and care shortages, with staff performing surgeries without anesthesia. The barrier continues to restrict essential supplies. Slow aid distribution exacerbates chronic illness management, leading to avoidable fatalities, as highlighted by Lohana et al. for chronic kidney disease and Jaradat et al. for neurological disorders. Beiraghdar et al. indicate the collapse of preventative care. Patients are dying on hospital floors, with MSF reporting burn patients without proper care and toddlers in shock. WHO, UNICEF, and WFP warn of impending famine without immediate intervention. Damaged infrastructure hinders aid delivery and patient transfers.

Responses and Geopolitical Dynamics

International responses to Gaza's crisis face challenges from Israeli political dynamics. A drone attack killed seven World Central Kitchen (WCK) employees, highlighting risks for aid workers. MSF documented assaults on medical institutions. Organizations like MSF, UNRWA, and WHO provide vital relief. UNRWA faces accusations of over-accommodating Israeli policy, leading to aid delays. WFP Executive Director Cindy McCain stressed people are "at risk of dying of hunger just miles from trucks filled with food." UNRWA's Commissioner-General Phillipe Lazzarini noted current aid cannot meet basic needs, advocating for reopening Gaza's borders for commercial traffic. Israel's control of the Rafah border crossing, citing security concerns, has restricted aid flow. Military operations have targeted aid infrastructure and workers. Egypt, under pressure, has occasionally restricted aid. Taylor highlighted delays due to supply channel controls, with organizations seeking more access points.

International pressure mounts on Israel regarding civilian deaths and the Rafah invasion. The US, Egypt, and Qatar, mediators in truce talks, have cautioned against it. All EU members except Hungary have called for caution in Rafah and a ceasefire. The over 30,000 Palestinians killed since the Israeli attack began, with two-thirds being women and children, is deeply concerning, especially given thousands missing under debris. Negotiations are crucial. The US experience in Afghanistan showed that occupying forces cannot simply "shoot or capture" their way out of insurgency. Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, decades old, have lost good faith. The expansion of West Bank settlements undermines a two-state solution. Former President Jimmy Carter warned of Israel imposing "a system of partial withdrawal, encapsulation, and apartheid" on occupied territories' Muslim and Christian citizens, driven by land acquisition, not racism. The long-term reoccupation of Gaza raises strategic and moral concerns. Alastair Irwin cautions against creating future insoluble problems. A two-state solution remains widely accepted. Thomas L. Friedman argues Netanyahu's government has strengthened Hamas and weakened the Palestinian Authority. The Israeli military operation will ultimately fail; future attacks are likely as long as Palestinians' aspirations for independence are ignored.

The future of Gaza and Hamas remains uncertain.

Hamas's historical dominance relied on its tenacity and perceived legitimacy as a resistance movement (Source). A core principle under Sinwar was Israel's inability to militarily free prisoners, which Hamas has exploited. As the conflict persists, Israel believes Hamas cannot

rehabilitate its international image. Delayed politburo elections, originally set for 2024, are expected to bring significant changes, potentially reinstating Khaled Meshaal to leadership following Sinwar's assumed demise.

Hamas faces three primary options amidst the ongoing Israeli war

Hamas, through Qatar and Turkey, might surrender weapons and armed resistance for UN-guaranteed authority over Gaza. This opposes Hezbollah, Iran, and Syria's desires for Hamas to remain a resistance group. Realizing international opposition to its rule, Hamas could form a consensus government with Fatah and the PA, taking a less prominent governing role. Despite acknowledging its diminished capabilities and loss of public support due to the war, Hamas maintains it can disrupt any governance without its consent. In this scenario, Hamas would support a new governing body, stepping down from direct power. Technocratic Administration: Hamas might cede control of Gaza to a non-political technocratic body focused on relief, development, and humanitarian aid. Hamas would covertly support this body, engaging with Israelis and the international community on reconstruction. This aligns with Netanyahu's opposition to a Palestinian state, reconciliation, and PA return to Gaza. However, PA President Mahmoud Abbas rejected this, fearing it would isolate Gaza from his authority. Experts predict it will take three to five years for Hamas to overcome its existential crisis. During this period, if given a consultative role, Hamas is unlikely to regain full control and will likely make compromises to any new governing entity. Its military branch, once well-funded, may cease to exist, with resources redirected to social, health, and educational projects, aiding the organization's restoration. Hamas will use this time to rebuild, regain public support domestically and internationally, and assess its losses.

Conclusion

The Israel-Gaza-Hamas conflict is a complex, protracted geopolitical struggle rooted in historical grievances, territorial disputes, and ideological divides. Hamas, an Islamist political and militant organization operating from Gaza, derives its legitimacy from religious conviction, resistance to Israeli occupation, and social service provision. Its core mission remains uncompromising opposition to Israeli sovereignty. Israel, established in 1948, views Hamas as a terrorist entity posing a strategic threat through violence like tunnel warfare and rocket attacks. Israel's military responses, including targeted strikes, often result in significant civilian casualties and destruction in Gaza, drawing international condemnation.

Gaza suffers immensely under Israel's blockade and Hamas's rule, experiencing a humanitarian crisis marked by poverty, unemployment, and deteriorating infrastructure. This cycle of despair can foster radicalization and support for Hamas. Hamas employs a multi-pronged strategy encompassing social outreach, political maneuvering, and military actions. Its military wing, the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, has developed advanced capabilities like tunnel construction, rocket manufacturing, and cyber warfare. These are complemented by media campaigns to bolster its resistance narrative. Hamas governs Gaza with authoritarian control mixed with populist messaging, adapting tactics based on regional developments, such as shifting alliances and Arab normalization with Israel.

Ceasefires, often brief and informal, are mediated by entities like the UN, Egypt, or Qatar. They address short-term security issues but rarely the core political and humanitarian problems. Israel views them as pauses to re-establish deterrence, while Hamas sees them as

tactical breaks. Their fragility leads to frequent collapses, exacerbated by a lack of direct communication and the exclusion of the Palestinian Authority from negotiations.

The conflict profoundly impacts the broader Middle East. Iran's support positions Hamas within a larger anti-Israel network alongside Hezbollah and the Assad regime, making Hamas a proxy in the regional Israel-Iran rivalry. While Qatar and Turkey provide political and financial backing to Hamas, some Arab nations, particularly those with normalized ties with Israel (e.g., Abraham Accords signatories), view Hamas with suspicion. This divide reflects shifting regional dynamics, where the Palestinian cause has become increasingly contentious. The human cost of this conflict, especially in Gaza, is immense. Generations have endured bombing and embargo, with limited access to economic, medical, and educational opportunities, leading to profound psychological trauma. Israeli communities near Gaza also face constant rocket threats, causing distress and distrust. These human costs perpetuate narratives of victimhood and retaliation, hindering peace efforts.

Ultimately, the Israel-Gaza-Hamas conflict remains deeply rooted in historical trauma, strategic calculations, and ideology. Ceasefires offer only temporary respites from bloodshed, failing to address core issues like territorial claims, political identity, and the humanitarian crisis. Lasting peace necessitates a fundamental shift in political tactics and ideological frameworks from both sides, supported by genuine international efforts toward just and sustainable solutions. Beyond military deterrence or temporary truces, bravery, flexibility, and a commitment to justice and dignity for all regional inhabitants are essential to move towards a future of coexistence and peace.

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