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## CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING THE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE GAZA STRIP CONFLICT ON MIDDLE EASTERN SECURITY

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**Abstract:**

*This paper analyzes the political consequences of the conflict that erupted in the Gaza Strip on October 7, 2023, highlighting its impact on regional security in the Middle East. The conflict intensifies regional polarization, leading to the formation of rival geopolitical axes: a pro-Palestinian bloc (Iran, Syria, Iraq, Yemen) and a more moderate one open to cooperation with Israel (Egypt, the United Arab Emirates - UAE -, Saudi Arabia, Jordan). These tensions undermine regional cooperation, stall peace processes, and erode the two-state solution, fueling radicalization and weakening the legitimacy of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). At the same time, the conflict is politically instrumentalized by both state and non-state actors to gain internal or regional advantages, which perpetuates instability and hinders diplomatic efforts for resolution. The impact on foreign relations is significant: normalization processes with Israel have slowed, and regional actors are aligning strategically based on their own interests. On a global scale, the United States (US), Russia, and China are using the conflict to project their individual spheres of influence. Organizations such as the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) remain rooted in rhetoric without concrete action due to internal divergences, while the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU) display a gradual disengagement from conflict resolution efforts. In this context, some regional actors - Qatar, Turkey, Jordan, and Egypt - are leveraging their role as mediators to consolidate their status. Gaza Strip, political consequences, regional security, Israel, Hamas.*

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### I. INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Brief Overview of the Gaza Strip Conflict

The conflict in the Gaza Strip, which erupted on October 7, 2023, between the jihadist militant group Hamas - later joined by other pro-Palestinian entities - and Israel, represents a major destabilizing factor for regional security in the Middle East, with significant political implications. Tensions between Israel and Palestinian militant groups, present since the founding of the state in 1948, have periodically escalated into violent confrontations (Wells, 2023), affecting both civilian populations and inter-state relations in the region. External support for the parties involved - from



regional actors such as Iran, Egypt, or Qatar, and from major international powers like the US - further amplifies the scale of the conflict (Saeed, 2025), turning it into a focal point of geopolitical rivalries.

Amid the ongoing conflict, the stability of Middle Eastern countries is threatened by secondary risks such as refugee flows, population radicalization, and the potential spillover of violence (Safdar, 2024). Additionally, instability in the Gaza Strip hampers efforts to normalize relations between Israel and certain Arab states, as well as international diplomatic initiatives aimed at achieving lasting peace in the region (Elgindy, 2025).

In this context, the conflict transcends a limited, bilateral approach between two entities. It is, in fact, part of a broader, complex system of regional divergences that significantly influence the security architecture of the Middle East.

### 1.2 Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research methodology, based on document analysis and an interpretive approach to recent geopolitical events in the Middle East. The sources analyzed include official reports from international and regional organizations (the UN, the EU, the Arab League, the OIC), academic articles, specialized studies, and relevant media publications released between 2023 and 2025.

The investigative approach focuses on identifying and assessing the political and strategic consequences of the Gaza Strip conflict on bilateral and multilateral relations in the Middle East. Content analysis was used to highlight the dominant narratives of both regional and international actors, along with a comparative analysis of the divergent positions expressed by Arab states in the context of the conflict.

Additionally, tools of geopolitical analysis were applied to understand how ideological and strategic rivalries shape state responses and influence the regional security architecture. The aim of this methodology is to provide a comprehensive, integrated, and well-argued perspective on the political dynamics generated by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict within the current regional context.

### 1.3 Research Hypotheses and Objectives

The present study is guided by the following research hypotheses:

**H1.** The conflict in the Gaza Strip acts as a catalyst for geopolitical polarization in the Middle East, contributing to the formation of regional axes with divergent interests (a pro-Palestinian bloc vs. a moderate bloc open to cooperation with Israel).

**H2.** The persistence of Israeli-Palestinian confrontations hinders the prospects for a durable resolution of the conflict and undermines the coherence of diplomatic discourse on regional security.

**H3.** Certain regional actors (Egypt, Qatar, Turkey) are instrumentalizing the conflict to strengthen their strategic positions and international influence, in the absence of cohesion within the Arab League and the OIC.

**H4.** The lack of a unified regional and international approach contributes to the perpetuation of the conflict and weakens the security architecture of the Middle East.

This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

**O1.** To analyze the political impact of the Gaza Strip conflict on the balance of power and inter-state relations in the Middle East.

**O2.** To identify the main geopolitical blocs that have emerged as a result of the polarization triggered by the conflict, and to examine their strategic motivations.

**O3.** To assess the effects of the conflict on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process and on the viability of the two-state solution.

**O4.** To examine the role of regional and global actors in the instrumentalization and management of the conflict.

**O5.** To determine the consequences of the conflict on regional cooperation, diplomatic initiatives, and institutional stability in the Middle East.

## II. POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE CONFLICT

The conflict in the Gaza Strip has major political consequences for the balance of power and diplomatic relations in the Middle East, with the potential to impact the architecture of regional alliances over the long term. It also significantly influences ideological narratives and shapes public perceptions regarding the legitimacy of both state and non-state actors directly involved in the conflict, as well as those engaged in its resolution. From this perspective, the most significant consequences are:

### 2.1 Regional Polarization and the Formation of Geopolitical Blocs

The Gaza conflict has generated substantial polarization among Middle Eastern states, facilitating the emergence of distinct geopolitical axes with divergent interests, and intensifying ideological, religious, and strategic-diplomatic rivalries. This polarization has direct and immediate implications for regional cooperation, obstructing the implementation of coordinated actions aimed at addressing shared security threats across the region - such as terrorism, political instability, and humanitarian crises. The following developments are particularly illustrative of these dynamics:

#### *a) Consolidation of the Pro-Palestinian Axis and Support for Islamist Movements*

Following the outbreak of the current conflict in the Gaza Strip, states such as Iran, Yemen, Syria, and Iraq have consistently voiced support for the militant group Hamas, justifying their stance through Islamic solidarity and opposition to what they regard as Israel's expansionist and oppressive policies.

It is worth noting that Iran has a strategic interest in maintaining and fueling tensions in Gaza. Its support for Hamas serves as a means to enhance its influence in the Arab world and challenge Western - particularly US - presence in the region (El Doh, 2023).

Yemen's motivation, particularly that of the Houthi rebel groups, for aligning with the pro-Palestinian axis is rooted in Islamic solidarity and anti-Zionist sentiment. It also aims to garner popular support, deflect internal pressure caused by poverty and civil war, and indirectly pressure Saudi Arabia and the UAE to gain leverage in the Yemeni peace negotiations (Huggard & Minor, 2024; Carlson, 2024).

Syria, meanwhile, has joined the pro-Palestinian axis for ideological, historical, and strategic reasons, including its longstanding opposition to Israel, Arab solidarity, support for Palestinian resistance movements, and efforts to strengthen its alliance with Iran and the militant group Hezbollah amid recent political developments in the country (Singer, 2025; Motamedi, 2024).

Iraq's alignment with the pro-Palestinian bloc is motivated by both religious and geopolitical factors. Supporting the Palestinian cause is viewed as a reaffirmation of its opposition to Israel and Western influence in the Middle East, as well as a means to reinforce its national identity and regional geopolitical standing (Meininghaus & Schliusing, 2024; Rudolf, 2024).



It is also important to highlight that Turkey, despite maintaining formal diplomatic relations with Israel, frequently adopts harsh anti-Israel rhetoric, seeking to position itself as a leading voice in the Muslim world in defense of the Palestinian cause (Bishku, 2024; Çelik, 2025).

***b) Consolidation of the Moderate Axis and Rapprochement with Israel***

In the context of the Gaza Strip conflict, several Arab states - namely Egypt, Jordan, the UAE, Bahrain, and, to some extent, Saudi Arabia - have adopted a pragmatic approach. These states consider the threat posed by Iran's recent actions and the broader instability in the Middle East to be more pressing than solidarity with the Hamas movement.

For instance, Egypt, while generally supportive of the Palestinian cause, is ideologically opposed to Hamas and has assumed a mediating role between the group and Israel - thereby reaffirming its regional importance (Shama, 2024). Similarly, the UAE and Bahrain, through their signing of the Abraham Accords (2020), have normalized relations with Israel, prioritizing economic, technological, and security cooperation despite criticism over the humanitarian crisis in Gaza caused by Israeli military actions targeting civilian areas (Fakhro, 2024). Saudi Arabia has also gradually developed a policy of rapprochement with Israel, seeking to balance its strategic interests with internal pressures and its symbolic role as a promoter of Islam and Islamic movements (Adachi, 2025). Jordan's position is also notable: although it has repeatedly condemned Israeli military operations in Gaza, it has assumed a diplomatic role as a mediator, facilitating ceasefires and humanitarian initiatives for the benefit of the affected population.

Against this backdrop, deep ideological and strategic divisions have emerged. The Gaza conflict has become a symbol of rivalry between the pro-Palestinian axis and the moderate bloc inclined toward engagement with Israel. Both sides have instrumentalized the conflict to legitimize their respective domestic and international positions.

The consequences of this reality for the security climate in the Middle East are significant, including: the weakening of Arab solidarity with the Palestinian cause and fragmentation within the Arab League; increasing difficulty in forming a unified regional front against extremism and terrorism; the erosion of regional integration and cooperation processes in areas such as security, economics, and energy; and the intensification of proxy confrontations through non-state actors, particularly radical jihadist movements.

## **2.2 Obstruction of the Peace Process and the Erosion of the Two-State Solution**

One of the major negative consequences of the Gaza Strip conflict is the disruption of the peace process between Israel and Palestine, as well as the erosion of the two-state solution - regarded by most international actors as the only viable option for achieving lasting peace in the Middle East. This deterioration is further exacerbated by recurring violence, the radicalization of involved actors, the absence of political will, and the fragmentation of the pro-Palestinian political landscape. Several developments illustrate this reality:

***a) Erosion of Mutual Trust***

Recent armed confrontations between Israel and Hamas in the Gaza Strip have significantly diminished the prospects for constructive dialogue aimed at resolving the Israeli-Palestinian dispute. Each side accuses the other of bearing responsibility for the conflict and of lacking genuine interest in pursuing a mutually beneficial resolution.

Specifically, Israel views Hamas as a radical jihadist militant group - essentially a terrorist organization - that cannot be considered a legitimate negotiation partner. Conversely, Hamas characterizes Israel's military interventions in Gaza as wholly disproportionate, reinforcing a



narrative of expansionist occupation. This perception reduces public support within the Muslim world for negotiated, peaceful solutions (Waleed, 2025; Contreras, 2024).

***b) Weakening of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA)***

The recent conflict in the Gaza Strip has further deepened the internal Palestinian divide between Hamas (which controls Gaza) and the PNA (which governs the West Bank). This division represents a major obstacle to the peace process. On one hand, Israel and part of the international community lack a single, unified negotiating partner capable of representing the entire Palestinian territory. On the other hand, Hamas does not recognize the state of Israel in accordance with international frameworks and refuses to meet the conditions for renouncing violence.

This territorial and political fragmentation has undermined the PNA's role as a unifying sovereign entity, severely damaging the viability of a comprehensive peace process. Currently, the PNA is an increasingly marginalized actor whose diminishing legitimacy and effectiveness contribute to the political deadlock in the region (Pocock, 2025).

***c) Reconfiguration of Realities in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Zone***

In the absence of a viable and functional peace process, the situation within the Israeli-Palestinian conflict zone is undergoing a reconfiguration that increasingly undermines the feasibility of the two-state solution. This reconfiguration is marked by the following key developments: Expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank, which fragments the territory intended for a future Palestinian state and makes the delineation of viable, mutually recognized borders increasingly difficult (Abhishek, 2024); The blockade imposed by Israel on the Gaza Strip, along with the political and economic isolation of the territory, exacerbates the institutional separation between the two Palestinian entities - Gaza and the West Bank. This fragmentation compromises the vision of a unified Palestinian state, rendering it more of a dystopian ideal than a realistic political objective (dos Santos et al., 2024); The absence of a pragmatic solution for the status of Jerusalem - claimed by both sides as their capital - and the recurrence of crises surrounding the city's holy sites continuously fuel tensions with high symbolic value. Disputes over locations such as the Temple Mount/Al-Aqsa Compound and the Western Wall have a damaging impact on diplomatic relations, further obstructing the peace process (Meruțiu, 2024).

***d) Gradual Disengagement of International Actors Involved in Conflict Resolution***

The prolonged deadlock in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process has led to what can be described as „diplomatic fatigue” among some international actors, such as the UN, and to a shift in strategic priorities for others, notably the US. Washington is now primarily focused on militarily countering Iran's behavior due to its continued support for terrorist groups operating in the Middle East and Central Asia. Notably, the UN indefinitely postponed the scheduled June 2025 conference dedicated to addressing the two-state solution, citing escalating regional tensions (Irish et al., 2025). Meanwhile, on June 22, 2025, the US conducted airstrikes on Iranian sites suspected of facilitating Iran's nuclear program.

The EU has also gradually reduced its involvement in resolving the Gaza conflict, limiting its role to issuing condemnatory statements and providing humanitarian aid. The lack of a coherent foreign policy, internal divisions among member states, and limited influence over key actors have all diminished the EU's capacity to serve as an effective mediator. Despite being the main donor to the PNA, the EU is no longer perceived as a strategic player in the peace process.

On the other hand, certain Arab states - particularly those that signed the Abraham Accords (such as the UAE and Bahrain) - now treat the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as secondary to their bilateral economic and security interests with Israel. While they officially condemn the violence in Gaza,



these states avoid direct involvement, reflecting a strategic realignment focused on regional stability, innovation, and defense cooperation (Nasruddin & Bakri, 2024).

The deprioritization of the Palestinian issue by actors previously engaged in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict reduces international pressure on Israel to create a favorable environment for renewed negotiations. It also sends a discouraging signal to the Palestinian population, fueling frustration and radicalization. In the absence of a sustainable solution, any credible revival of the peace process remains unlikely in the short term.

### **2.3 Political Instrumentalization of the Conflict**

The Gaza Strip conflict is not merely a military confrontation between Israel and the Palestinian group Hamas, but also a strategic political instrument used by various actors - both state and non-state - to advance their domestic or regional agendas. This instrumentalization has a profound impact on the political dynamics of the Middle East, undermining regional stability, diplomatic negotiations, and public perceptions. In this context, the following aspects are of particular relevance:

#### ***a) Using the Conflict as a Tool for Internal Power Consolidation***

Both Israeli leaders and the leadership of Hamas have used the Gaza conflict to strengthen their domestic political positions during times of crisis or instability within their respective entities.

Israeli political leaders often frame the Gaza confrontations as clear evidence of an ongoing threat to national security, thereby justifying continued military operations and preserving Israel's freedom of action in Gaza in the name of preventing renewed threats posed by Hamas and Islamic Jihad (Hayman et al., 2025). Additionally, escalations in the conflict are frequently used to divert public attention from major internal issues - such as political instability or governmental crises - or to legitimize the imposition of stringent security measures by political authorities (FT, 2025).

On the other side, Hamas exploits the conflict to justify its authoritarian rule, portraying itself as a „resistance” force against Israel. It uses this narrative to marginalize internal opposition, including factions loyal to the PNA, and to bolster its political and religious legitimacy in the eyes of a population suffering under constant social and military pressure (Freedom House, 2024).

#### ***b) Mobilization of Public Opinion and Ideological Rhetoric***

The conflict is frequently exploited symbolically to mobilize domestic public opinion and to construct ideological narratives that serve the antagonistic goals of the actors involved. On one side, Hamas and pro-Islamist actors - such as Hezbollah, Iran, and, at times, Turkey - use the conflict to advance anti-Israel and anti-Western rhetoric (Rahat & Abbas, 2024). They present themselves as defenders of the „Palestinian cause” and of Islam, aiming to garner popular support across the Muslim world and to assert a position of representational leadership.

On the other side, Israeli authorities regularly employ rhetoric emphasizing the need to defend Israel's sovereignty and to combat terrorism, using this discourse to justify security policies - including those contested internationally - such as the expansion of settlements in the West Bank and the blockade of the Gaza Strip (Hassan et al., 2021).

#### ***c) Diversion and Social Control***

The Gaza conflict is also used as a diversionary tool to shift public attention in the Middle East away from severe domestic problems faced by several states in recent years, as well as a means of exercising social control over their populations. Regimes with anti-democratic tendencies in the region (such as Iran, Syria, Turkey, Iraq, and Yemen) often exploit internal crises by redirecting public discontent toward external enemies or „internal adversaries,” relying on propaganda and repressive security measures.



Regional conflicts, nationalism, and anti-Western rhetoric become diversionary instruments used to justify authoritarianism, suppress civil liberties, and maintain control over a frustrated population (Safdar, 2024; El-Rayyes, 2021). A notable example is Iran, which - faced with internal protests and external economic pressure as a result of its authoritarian governance - supports terrorist groups in the Middle East (such as Hamas and Hezbollah) in order to shape a public agenda that fosters national cohesion and enables social control (Samad & Naz, 2025).

***d) Fragmentation of the Palestinian Political Landscape and Manipulation of Its Representativeness***

The instrumentalization of the Gaza conflict creates significant challenges for the legitimate representation of Palestinians in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Hamas has sought to build its political and religious legitimacy by portraying itself as the sole authentic force of armed „resistance” against Israel, in contrast to the PNA, which is increasingly perceived as compromised, cooperative with Israel, and ineffective in achieving Palestinian national goals (Wilson Center, 2023). As a result, the conflict becomes a political tool in the struggle for representational authority among Palestinians, undermining diplomatic efforts aimed at a peaceful resolution. This also enables Israel to claim that it lacks a legitimate negotiating partner representing the Palestinian people.

***e) Geopolitical Exploitation by Regional and Global Actors***

The Gaza conflict functions as a geopolitical instrument actively used by various states to consolidate their influence in the Middle East. This exploitation perpetuates instability, obstructs viable diplomatic solutions, and deepens regional polarization. Therefore, the conflict should be analyzed not only in military terms but also as a political phenomenon shaped by strategies of manipulation and control implemented by a range of regional and global actors with divergent interests.

Iran, for example, supports both the military and political operations of Hamas in Gaza while also backing Hezbollah in Lebanon as a partner in its opposition to Israeli interests. In this context, the Israeli-Palestinian space becomes a proxy battleground in the Iran-Israel rivalry, with Iran's proxy operations serving as key components of its broader strategic plan to counter Western influence and preserve its regional dominance (Dehnavi & Safavipour, 2024).

Conversely, Qatar, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey are engaged in mediation efforts in Gaza, using their roles to promote their images as regional peacemakers and defenders of the Muslim faith (Stein, 2025).

Lastly, the US, Russia, and China observe and engage with the conflict through the lens of their broader competition for regional influence, each pursuing its own strategic and economic objectives (Megielnicki, 2024). The US supports Israel to maintain its foothold in the Middle East; Russia leverages tensions to undermine Western unity; and China promotes regional stability to secure access to vital economic resources.

## **2.4 Impact on the Foreign Relations of Middle Eastern States**

The conflict in the Gaza Strip has a profound impact on the foreign relations of Middle Eastern states, affecting alliance dynamics, diplomatic normalization processes, and their positioning in relation to the world's major powers. The evolution of the conflict has triggered varied reactions, shaped by each state's strategic interests, domestic pressures, and geopolitical orientations. The following aspects are particularly relevant:

***a) Slowdown or Suspension of Normalization Processes with the State of Israel***

Following the signing of the Abraham Accords (2020), several Arab states - namely the UAE, Bahrain, Morocco, and Sudan - established official diplomatic relations with Israel. However, the



ongoing conflict in Gaza has triggered negative public reactions in these countries, with their leaders facing internal and regional criticism and being accused of betraying the cause of Islam.

It is worth noting that the UAE and Bahrain are attempting to strike a balance between their strategic interests - military, economic, and technological cooperation with Israel - and the growing public and political pressure to condemn Israeli actions in Gaza (Kateb, 2025; Harb, 2024). In contrast, Saudi Arabia, which has been cautiously moving toward diplomatic rapprochement with Israel, remains far more restrained in its official relations. This is largely due to the sensitivities surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Riyadh's self-proclaimed role as a key representative of the Muslim world (Guzansky, 2023).

***b) Strengthening Strategic Relations Between States and Non-State Actors***

The Gaza conflict has prompted certain Middle Eastern and neighboring states to intensify their support for non-state actors as part of broader strategies to expand regional influence. Iran, in particular, has openly expressed its support for radical Islamist groups operating primarily in the region - namely Hamas and Islamic Jihad in the Gaza Strip, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and the Houthi rebel movement in Yemen. These groups are frequently involved in orchestrating terrorist attacks against Israel or Western allies that support Israeli operations (Peptan, 2024).

In contrast, Egypt and Jordan - both of which have long-standing peace treaties with Israel - have positioned themselves as intermediaries between Israel and Hamas. These states leverage the conflict as an opportunity to reaffirm their diplomatic roles in the region. Taking advantage of the heightened tensions, Egypt and Jordan present themselves as key diplomatic actors in the Middle East, working to facilitate negotiations, mediate ceasefires, and promote regional stability while simultaneously enhancing their political standing in the eyes of the international community (Kacowicz et al., 2021; Hamzawy, 2024).

***c) Redefining Positions Toward Major Global Powers***

The way Middle Eastern states respond to the dynamics of the Gaza conflict significantly shapes their relationships with major global powers (the US, Russia, and China).

The US, traditionally a strong ally of Israel, is increasingly perceived by many Arab states as complicit in fueling and sustaining the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. While countries such as Iran, Yemen, Syria, and Iraq openly oppose the US, more moderate Arab states - such as the UAE and Saudi Arabia - often express dissatisfaction with Washington's unconditional support for Israel, though they stop short of severing their strategic ties (Bianco & Lons, 2024).

Meanwhile, Turkey and Qatar leverage their pro-Palestinian positions to gain diplomatic influence and soft power in relation to the US, presenting themselves as defenders of Muslim world interests (Aras & Al Ansari, 2024; Kelkitli, 2024). Notably, Russia and China frequently condemn Israeli actions in Gaza and use the conflict as an opportunity to promote their anti-Western agendas, positioning themselves as supporters of the Palestinian cause and strategic partners for Arab states disillusioned with US policy (Dunne, 2023).

This dynamic has led to a visible repositioning of Middle Eastern states in relation to global powers. Through diplomatic, economic, and military support, Russia has emerged as a close partner to countries like Syria and Iran, while the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey have taken increasingly favorable stances toward Moscow. At the same time, several regional states - including Iran, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Egypt - have expressed appreciation for China's non-interventionist foreign policy, large-scale investments in infrastructure and energy, and its perceived neutrality in regional conflicts. As a result, China is increasingly viewed as a valuable „non-Western” mediator.





***d.) Divergent Reactions and Fractures within the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation***

The conflict in the Gaza Strip has often sparked divergent opinions among Arab states, undermining regional cohesion and security. Within the Arab League, responses to escalations in Gaza are frequently limited to vague statements or symbolic gestures, reflecting the difficulty of achieving consensus among member states. Major divergences between the so-called „moderate axis” countries - whose interests converge around regional security and stability - and those with a more radical discourse, such as pro-Palestinian or pro-Hamas states, often hinder the adoption of clear positions or concrete actions in support of the Palestinian cause (Guterman, 2025; Krieg, 2024).

Similarly, within the OIC, although anti-Israeli rhetoric is frequent and vehement, the absence of tangible action highlights the political divisions among member states. Diverging perspectives among influential actors - such as Turkey and Saudi Arabia - undermine the organization’s ability to formulate and implement effective joint initiatives on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Ali et al., 2025).

***e.) Symbolic Diplomacy and Image Capital***

The conflict in the Gaza Strip has served as a security event that allowed certain states to enhance their international image and promote themselves as key diplomatic actors. Qatar, for example, uses its consistent financial support to the population in Gaza and its direct ties with Hamas leadership as strategic tools of foreign policy. Through this approach, Qatari authorities position themselves as indispensable in managing regional crises, capable of mediating between Palestinian factions and international stakeholders. This strategy reinforces Qatar’s status as a key partner in de-escalation efforts and in negotiating sustainable ceasefires in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Fouskas, 2023).

Similarly, Turkey regularly issues strong statements condemning Israeli actions, particularly in the context of the Gaza conflict, employing a bold political discourse aligned with its own regional agenda. This rhetoric is often accompanied by acts of symbolic diplomacy, such as the temporary withdrawal of ambassadors or the suspension of bilateral cooperation. Through these actions, Turkey seeks to reinforce its image as a defender of the Palestinian cause and to expand its influence within the global Muslim community (Cagaptay, 2024).

Egypt’s role is also noteworthy. By opening the Rafah border crossing with Gaza and mediating ceasefire agreements between Israel and Hamas, Egypt reaffirms its role as a significant actor in the management of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (El Bendary, 2025). Jordan has also taken a more active diplomatic stance in addressing the Gaza crisis, aiming to reinforce its monarchical legitimacy and regional influence.

### **III. CONCLUSIONS**

The conflict in the Gaza Strip, which erupted on October 7, 2023, reaffirms its role as a catalyst for regional tensions and a disruptive force in the security architecture of the Middle East. The political implications of this conflict extend beyond the bilateral confrontation between Israel and Hamas, becoming embedded in a complex web of power relations, geopolitical rivalries, and divergent strategic interests. The regional polarization triggered by the conflict has led to the crystallization of competing political and ideological blocs -a pro-Palestinian axis and a moderate axis open to engagement with Israel - undermining regional cohesion and weakening the capacity for coordinated responses to shared threats.

At the same time, the conflict has deepened the fragmentation of the Palestinian political landscape and eroded prospects for a two-state solution, fueling a climate of mistrust and radicalization. The strategic interests of both regional and global actors have contributed to the instrumentalization of the conflict, transforming it into a platform for projecting influence and



pursuing individual agendas. Moreover, the inability of multilateral organizations - such as the Arab League and the OIC - to adopt coherent and effective positions, along with the gradual disengagement of the UN and the EU, reflects the depth of existing divisions within the Muslim world.

In this context, the mediation roles played by countries such as Egypt, Qatar, and Turkey are essential to de-escalation efforts and the maintenance of a functional regional order, even though lasting peace remains a distant objective - one that depends on genuine political will and a restructuring of the regional balance of power.

The research hypotheses are confirmed through qualitative analysis of geopolitical polarization, the erosion of the peace process, and the instrumentalization of the conflict by regional and global actors. The research objectives have been met through the interpretation of political narratives and the assessment of strategic impacts on security, regional cohesion, and international relations in the Middle East.

This study provides a detailed overview of the political effects of the conflict on regional balance, intra-Arab cohesion, the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, and relations with global powers. By evaluating the strategic motivations of involved actors and the dynamics of bilateral and multilateral relations, the research offers a comprehensive and well-substantiated perspective on how the Gaza conflict influences regional stability and order.

In the current context of the Gaza conflict's evolution, identifying concrete and feasible courses of action becomes essential to prevent the perpetuation of instability and to create the foundations for a sustainable security climate in the region. These may include: strengthening regional cohesion through joint Arab initiatives aimed at reducing internal divisions and restoring the Arab world's political influence in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; recalibrating UN and EU involvement in the peace process, in cooperation with key regional actors and through a phased agenda focused on security, borders, the status of Jerusalem, refugees, and development; rehabilitating the PNA as a viable and legitimate partner in the Middle East peace process; creating a flexible and inclusive multilateral mediation framework with balanced representation of regional and international interests; integrating the humanitarian dimension and civil society into the peace process, given the conflict's devastating effects on the civilian population in Gaza.

These proposed scenarios offer pragmatic pathways for intervention aimed at stabilizing the region and supporting a sustainable peace process.

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