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Article

Escalating Israel-Palestine Hostilities: Implications for Saudi Arabia, Iran, and the Wider Arab World

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Abstract:

The recent escalation in the longstanding conflict between Israel and Palestine has highlighted several significant shifts in the political dynamics of West Asia. The Arab world, once a strong advocate for Palestinian statehood engaging in three wars with Israel has recently demonstrated waning support. The issue of Palestine statehood no longer elicits the same response from the Arab world as it did until the 1970s. The Arab world, influenced by power politics, perceives its involvement in the conflict as less required. Instead, it prioritises industrial modernisation, trying to reduce dependence on hydrocarbons and focusing on advanced technologies. The Arab states believe that the comprehensive development of the region will occur only when there is peace, and their active participation in the Israel-Palestine conflict is likely to impact that prospect in the region. Additionally, it sees conflict between Iran and Israel as an opportunity to degrade Iran and its Axis of resistance, a scenario which would increase the Arab state's geostrategic significance in the area. However, the Arab world's disengagement from the Palestinian cause has left a void in the Arab leadership. Iran, which too has the aspirations of Muslim leadership, has stepped in, trying to fill the gap left by the Arab world. Iran has emerged as the strong voice of the Palestinian at the global level, giving it reasonable popularity among both Shia and Sunni Muslim countries. Moreover, Iran's economic, military, geographic, and demographic characteristics position it as a formidable Muslim country in the region, further heightening the Arab states' insecurities. Therefore, they believe that the Arab world may benefit from the weakening of Iran and its proxies. However, this notion doesn't appear to be entirely accurate. Because the collapse or weakening of Iran means the complete domination of Israel in the region, and given the fundamental differences between Israel's and the Arab world's regional interests, such an outcome would further hinder the prospects of peaceful coexistence between Arab states and Israel. This study concludes that lasting peace and prosperity in the region can only be achieved by upholding international law and strengthening multilateral institutions, rather than focusing on Iran's decline. In this research paper, a mixed-methods approach was employed, combining qualitative, quantitative, and descriptive research methodologies.

Keywords: Israel-Palestine Conflict, Arab-Israeli Relations, West Asia Geopolitics, Saudi Arabia Foreign Policy, Iran-Israel Conflict, US Foreign Policy, Regional Stability, Multilateral Institutions

1. INTRODUCTION

Since Hamas's October 7, 2023, attack on Israel, the tension between Iran and Israel has been running high, withthe militant groups backed by Iran in the region continuously attacking Israel, and in return, Israel carrying out massive military operations that some defence experts have termed as the world's most intense aerial bombing campaign in the past 20 years, aside from Gaza (Vohra, 2024). The tension between Iran and Israel reached a dangerous level when Israel destroyed the Iranian consulate in Syria's capital,

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Damascus, leading Iran to fire the barrage of missiles and drones on Israel (Gadzo, 2024). Thanks to the help extended by the Arab countries (Lipner, 2024) along with Western nations and advanced warning by Iran, the attack resulted in no major casualties in Israel. But, Iranian attacks, intended to establish deterrence against Israel, failed badly. Even after the Iranian attack, Israel continued its military operations, killing the Hamas chief, Ismial Haniyeh, who was in Iran for the swearing in ceremony of the Iranian Prime Minister, Masoud Pezeshkian. This attack came as a public humiliation for Iran, as Ismail Haniyeh was in Iran as a state guest when the attack took place. Just weeks after Ismail Haniyeh, Israel also killed the Hezbollah Chief, Hassan Nasrallah, in a deadly airstrike in Lebanon (Young, 2024). Iran retaliated by launching hundreds of ballistic missiles, this time with greater force than before. However, once again, Israel suffered no major losses. A few days after the Iranian attack, Israel struck Iranian military targets, causing significant damage to military assets and killing four Iranian soldiers.

These events highlight two major shifting trends in the geopolitics of West Asia. First is the emergence of Iran as the region's most prominent opposition against Israel, replacing the role of the Arab world, which once played an instrumental role in fighting the three Arab-Israeli wars and was traditionally seen as the champion of the Palestine cause. During these previous Arab-Israeli wars, Iran–under the Western-backed leadership of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, remained on the sidelines, enjoying cordial relations with Israel, while Arab countries fought lethal wars with Israel (Furlan, 2022).

This change has been not limited to behaviour of the Iranian regime but has gone beyond it. Earlier Sunni militant or political groups aligned themselves with the cause of Palestine and provided all kinds of support, but this too has largely been successfully opted by Shia militant groups, replacing their roles.This has fueled the rise in popularity of Shia groups and Iran in the region while also increasing resentment toward US-friendly Arab regimes, as well as Sunni political and militant groups.

Iran, over the years, by providing strategic, economic and military help to the largely Shia militant groups engaged in confrontation with the US backed states and Israel in the region (Hamas is an exception, which despite being a Sunni militant group, gets Iran's help), has tried to project itself as a major Islamic power, which is ready to take the risk of fighting much more powerful adversaries just for the sake of innocent Palestinians. It has used its support of Shia militant groups, fighting Israel, as a tool to win the hearts and minds of West Asia's Sunni Muslims who otherwise had no other reason to like the religious Shia regime (Maloney, 2024). Iran has also demonstrated its resilience that despite being in conflict with the US for more than four decades, It has still been able to expand its influence from Iraq and Lebanon to even Yemen and has helped Bashar al- Assad survive for almost a decade and run a well-functioning state in the midst of a chaotic and hostile region, defying many prophecies of its total collapse.

Moreover, Iran has emerged as a sophisticated military power of the region, increasing the further insecurity of the Arab regimes (Iran Inaugurates Its First Drone-Carrier Warship, 2025) which are yet to accept the emergence of Iran and are looking to limit its rising influence. All these developments have contributed to the rise of Iran's popularity and soft power in the Muslim world. What has further raised the stocks of Iran in the Muslim world, is the popular and precise rhetoric from the supreme leader, Ayatollah Khomeini, tapping the emotions of the global Muslim community on popular Muslim issues including Palestine. He has repeatedly highlighted the need of the Muslim world to unite (Khouri, 2024), a popular sentiment among Muslim, routinely attacking the forces creating a wedge between the Shia-Sunni. Interestingly, this call of Shia-Sunni unity goes against the interest of Arab regimes, especially the Arab's world most powerful country, Saudi Arabia, as it has strategically propagated the anti-shia propaganda (They Are Not Our Brothers": Hate Speech by Saudi Officials | HRW, 2017) for keeping Iran away from any meaningful collaboration with other Muslim countries, who are mostly Sunni.

There is a belief that after several recent setbacks in its war with Israel in the year 2024, Iran will change its strategies but given the Iranian past records, that belief seems misplaced. Rather, Iran is likely to adopt its strategies of aggression under pressure and prepare itself to play the long game: to retrench if necessary and to actively deploy its limited resources and relationship, and to engage in asymmetric attacks to achieve leverage over more powerful adversaries (Maloney, 2024), as it has been following this strategy whenever under pressure. Severe economic sanctions and extreme hostility of the US and Israel have made Iran the master of these strategies.

Turning to the second trend, it has been the absence of the Arab world from any meaningful resistance or vocalization of Palestinian grievances in the current round of the conflict between Palestine and Israel. Arab countries, even in the face of the rising death toll and casualties in fellow Arab states Palestine and Lebanon, maintained the calculated silence choosing not go beyond the rhetorical condemnation of Israel, No Arab country has imposed any sanction on Israel (Schaer, 2024). Egypt, which was regarded as the champion of the Palestine cause in the last two Arab-Israeli wars (1967, 1973), even went on to turn down refugees of Gaza from Rafah crossing (Why Egypt Refuses to Open Its Border to Palestinians, 2024). Saudi Arabia, home to two holiest Islamic mosques, continues to signal its intent of normalisation (Saudi-Israeli Normalization Persists Amid Gaza War, 2024) with Israel despite intense Israeli airstrikes having killed more than 46 thousand people, of which 70% are children and women (Parkinson & Sidhwa, 2024). No major Arab country has officially joined the South Africa genocide case against Israel in the international court of Justice (Schaer, 2024). Business relations between UAE, Morocco continue to flourish (Schaer, 2024). Apart from a few symbolic statements and resolutions in OIC (Donmez, 2023), and GCC, not much substantial has been done by the other Arab leaders to lessen the widespread humanitarian catastrophe among their fellow Arab citizens (Sultan, 2024).

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Given that Arabian monarchs have legitimized their rule on fighting for the cause of Palestine and the expansionist policies of Israel. This larger silence signals changing geopolitical priorities in the Arab world's politics and the evolving nature of power politics in the region.

Experts point to a number of reasons behind the Arab world's silence or lack of concern for the Palestine issue. All the Arab countries are sovereign states concerned for their own security, economic development, and national interests. Lately they have come to realise that championing the cause of Palestine would not assist them in achieving any of their core interests. Even though these countries are rational enough to understand the connection between fighting the cause of Palestine and leadership of the Muslim world, which would cement their influence in Muslim countries. But what demotivates them are the consequences of angering the US and Israel. These consequences are likely to be more detrimental to their aspirations of development than losing their position as the leader of the Muslim world.

The policies of the Arab world are now dictated by the reasoning of the realist theorists, who argue that a country that has economic and military might along with a large population is more likely to shape the affairs of world politics and increase its influence on other nations. The Arab countries therefore feel that despite not having a large population, they can build economic and military strength, helping them to assert their leadership in the Muslim world. The argument goes further: why should we be bothered about fighting the Palestinian cause and take the risk of enmity with the US, the elephant in the room?

They also understand well that advancing the Palestine cause is not the only path to expand their influence within the Muslim world. There are many other ways to do so, including distributing aid, building infrastructure, and issuing more hajj visas to other Muslim countries. These actions are less polarizing in global politics and, at the same time, have the potential to improve their image in the Muslim world. But to be capable of such things, it is important for the Arab countries to first accumulate enough economic, technological, and military strength.

Furthermore, with the rising activism against climate change and the deteriorating condition of the climate there is always uncertainty about how long the atmosphere will tolerate fossil fuels, and sooner or later it has to transition to green energy. All the Arab countries have acknowledged the reality of the post oil global economic order and are looking beyond their hydrocarbon based economies. Thus, the Arab world is more than serious about delinking their economies from fossil fuels. Arab leaders are trying to turn their nations into centers of high-tech industries, trade, and scientific advancement. For that they require investment and cutting-edge technologies from both the foreign governments and the private sector. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), however, will arrive only when Arab countries succeed to project a secure, peaceful, and moderate image of themselves.

However, they appear to fear that their active participation in the Israel-Palestine conflict will adversely impact their relations with Western countries, and any sign of deteriorating relations between the two may make them appear weak in front of domestic constituents, which could ignite internal and external militant groups against the Arab regimes, increasing their insecurity prospects. They also fear that any sign of bad relations with the western countries may prompt western nations to place restrictions on their private and public entities on trading with Arab nations leading to the business relations between the two getting impacted badly, creating additional challenges for the Arab world to build industrialized economies.

Furthermore, every Arab country ranks far below Israel in terms of military strength (Israel Ranks Among 10 Most Powerful Countries in Annual List; 4th Strongest Military, 2023). Arab countries have counted on the US for their defense against the hostile actors but in the event of their wars with Israel, the US is most likely to aid Israel rather than the Arab countries. The US supported Israel in three previous Israel-Arab wars, leading Israel to secure victory over Arab states in all three wars. Without the US help, no Arab country will be able to defend itself against Israel, and Arab countries understand this reality. The war with Israel would result in the massive destruction in the Arab countries, putting the survival of Arab monarchies at risk. Thus the Arab world prefers to stay out of any conflict with the western world.

Apart from military asymmetry the other reason for the Arab World's silence is Hamas. The Arab world doesn't like Hamas (Simons, 2023), which is a subset of the Muslim Brotherhood, the Arab world's distaste of Muslim brotherhood is well documented; hence, they seek its elimination, or, if not possible, at least its weakening. The elimination of Hamas will make it easy for them to promote their own organizations in Palestine, serving their interests and also it will reduce Iran's influence in Palestine.

Another viewpoint that is being cited to explain the Arab world's silence is that it is strategically better for them to let Israel and Iran be engaged in a long confrontation, which is likely to result in the weakening of Iran and its axis of resistance, which they view as the major obstacle to advancing their interest in the region. Though today almost all the major Arab countries enjoy diplomatic relations with Iran, Iranian theocratic rule is always seen as a threat for the larger Arab world. Arab countries have traditionally viewed Iran as their major foe. They feel threatened with the theocratic regime of Iran that, much like the Muslim Brotherhood's support to the Islamic rule based on Sharia rather than on monarchical system. It has the potential to challenge the legitimacy of Arab monarchies and other US friendly regimes in the region. Saudi Arabia and its Arab allies would be more than pleased to see Iran further bleeding, which is likely to make them more secure and strategically powerful in the region.

However, while analysing the reaction of the Arab world in the face of recent developments, one should not be mistaken to believe that the Arab world no longer cares for the plight of the Palestinians. There is still massive support

within the Arab population for the Palestinians. According to a study conducted in 16 Arab nations between December 12, 2023 and January 12, 2024, by the Arab Centre for Research and Policy Studies, 92% of respondents said that Palestinian cause was an issue of concern for all Arabs, not just for Palestinians (Elmasry & Al-Arian, 2024). Thus, the reason behind the silence of the Arab world's streets has more to do with the high- handedness of the authorities than the fatigue in the Arab world for Palestine's cause. Unlike the previous time when Arab masses were allowed to protest for the Palestinian cause despite Arab countries having very strict anti-protest laws, this time authorities have imposed more stringent regulation for the protests of Palestine. Therefore, it is safe to argue that though the general Arab population remains pro-Palestine, the current Arab leadership doesn't attach the same importance to the issue as they once attached.

2. IMPLICATIONS OF THE ARAB WORLD'S SILENCE: A REFLECTION ON ITS FUTURE AND ROLE IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

With the rising tension between Iran and Israel, there is a general ease among the Arab world that this tension will weaken Iran and its proxy groups, leading to the decline of Iran's influence in the region and creating a more positive environment for the Arab world but that belief is misplaced. Iran, as the leader of these militant groups, may be vying with the US-friendly Arab regime for the dominance of the Muslim world, but without Iran and its proxies, there will be no meaningful resistance against the unlawful activities of Israel in the region. The absence of it will provide Israel with complete impunity in its actions, including invading other nations at will, killing people on foreign soil, and meddling in other nations' affairs. The complete dominance of Israel in West Asia doesn't look good either for regional cooperation and prosperity, which the Arab World needed the most for the industrial development of their economies.

Gone are the days when Israel used to be ruled by secular zionist parties such as Mapai and post-1968 its successor Labour party. Mapai and Labour ruled Israel from its creation until 1977, also briefly in 1992-1996, and 1999-2001 (Rabin, n.d.). The Labour Party counts for nothing in Israel's politics, it got just four out of 120 seats in the last parliamentary election in 2022. The condition of other Israeli secular political parties is not very different. Presently, Israel is dominated by the right-wing religious extremist political parties, whose ideologies are based on Right-wing populism, conservatism and ultranationalism (Israel's Most Right-Wing Government Agreed Under Benjamin Netanyahu, 2022). They promote conspiracy theories, and their viewpoint of the world is also coloured by those conspiracy theories. Their actions are not driven by rational and scientific logic but by a narrow minded ultra religious approach that seeks to occupy all Palestine territories and establish the greater Israel (The Myth of Greater Israel Drives Zionist Genocidal Expansionism, 2024) in order to pave the way for the arrival of the Messiah, who would liberate them after building the third temple in Jerusalem (Israeli Minister Ben-Gvir Says He Would Build Synagogue on Al-Aqsa Compound, 2024).

For Israel's current government, which is also the most Right-wing government in the history of Israel, the solution to its conflict with Palestinians doesn't go through diplomatic means but violence. It seeks the displacement of all the Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza, and establishes greater Israel by combining the state of Israel with the Palestinian territories. To fulfill this desire of establishing a greater Israel, Israel already has sophisticated weaponry, supplied and funded by the economic and military superpower of the world: The United State of America (Maizland et al., n.d.).

The US has shared special relations with Israel for a very long time. It has been shielding Israel from its unlawful activities both diplomatically and militarily from almost every international organisation, including UNGC and UNSC. The US has vetoed 34 resolutions which were critical of Israel between 1954 and October 2023 in UNSC (Asrar & Hussein, 2023). It has provided $ 17.9 billion in military aid to Israel in the first year of war starting from October 7th, 2023 (Tarhan & Hacıcaferoğlu, 2024). Unlike Ukraine, there is bipartisan support in both US houses for continued support to Israel. Thanks to the unconditional help of the US, Israel can do anything without the fear of any repercussions from the international community. The US has provided it with total impunity from any illegal act. The recent examples of the US attempts to shield Israel from international organisations and other consequences of Israel's illegal actions in the region after October 7th, 2023, vindicate the assumption further that US-Israel relations are really ironclad and no violation of international law by Israel, no matter how dangerous it is, can weaken this ironclad relationship.

The closeness between Israel and the US is unmatched with the US's relation with any other foreign states, at least with any West Asian states. Both the countries share a very close intelligence, cultural, and military bond, no other country in West Asia can imagine to have that level of understanding with the US. Israel works with the assumption that its actions are unlikely to cost anything other than some meaningless diplomatic rhetorics from the US because Israel understands the importance of its existence for the US. It is exactly this kind of thinking that will encourage Israel in further unlawful activities in the region. Therefore, there is no guarantee that Israel would stop even after displacing the entire Palestinian population. It is an expansionist power (Hussein, 2024) that, in its disregard of international laws, has already occupied substantial amounts of land in Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine (Israel Refuses to Fully Withdraw From Lebanon: Here's What to Know, 2025). And it is this strong bond of Israel-US relations and Israel's total disregard for the international laws that are likely to create a number of challenges for the Arab world and their survival.

The Iran-Israel conflict is not in the Arab nation's best interest because the rising tension between Iran and Israel, which the U.S is fully supporting, is likely to provide Iran more incentive to build nuclear weapons (Reisinezhad,

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2024). The hardliner camp in Iran has already started building more pressure for nuclear weapons as a strategic means to establish deterrence against Israel with the popular belief that only the nuclear weapons have the capability to stop Israel's hostility in the region against Iran. Therefore, this war is likely to further accelerate Tehran's desire for nuclear weapons. This can not be a big win for the Arab world, which for decades has viewed Iran as a most significant enemy of their interest in the region and has used every tactic in the book to stop Iran from obtaining the nuclear weapons.

Moreover, In the case of rising tension between Israel and Iran there is a risk that Iran itself or its militant groups in the region could disrupt the global supply chain by choking either Bab Al Mandab or the strait of Hormuz and even attacking the ships of Arab countries on the Red sea. More than 20% of world oil trade passes through the strait of Hormuz (These Four Chokepoints Are Threatening Global Trade, 2024) and 12% of world trade passes through the red sea (Yerushalmy, 2023). The disruption in this much bigger supply can lead to a huge problem in the world especially in West Asia. Apart from robbing millions of dollars to the Arab countries this disruption can ignite the new circle of the violence in West Asia.

Additionally, The silence of the Arab world on the plight of the Palestinian can be exploited by the long marginalized Islamist groups such as Muslim Brotherhood to revive their anti establishment campaign in the region. Islamist groups can claim that their projection of the Arab government as evil entities working for the interest of the western countries, has been vindicated. Such arguments can get popular easily given the rising anger in the Arab world over the inactivity of the Arab regimes in stopping the Palestinian crisis and the complicity of the US in the tragedy. This may ignite a new Islamist challenge to the Arab states, directly challenging the legitimacy of the Arab regimes

Next, fear of radicalization. The mass casualties, rapes, and torture committed by Israel's soldiers in Gaza are being recorded on mobile devices and shared online through social media sites like TikTok (Kaur, 2024). These scenes are horrifying and might appeal to a wider Arab audience. Such videos have the potential to radicalize a large number of the youth and push them towards violent acts for the sake of their fellow Arab citizens. This becomes more worrying in light of the fact that the average age of the West Asian and North African countries is just 22 years (Alsuwaidi, 2023) and many of the Arab countries have the highest internet penetration rates in the world (SGA Knowledge Team, 2025).

Furthermore, if Israel pushes millions of Arabs out of Palestine, it would flood the Arab countries with refugees. Many Arab countries are already reeling under an economic crisis, and it would not be easy for them to absorb that many additional people. The arrival of Palestinian refugees may ignite the sectarian tension in the host country, it may also ignite awakening among the local citizens for the Palestinian sufferings, and there is always a risk of Palestinian refugees themselves forming organisations either covertly or overtly to attack Israel, as was the case in Lebanon in the 1970s-80s (Ioanes, 2024). This may lead to a war between the host country and Israel leading to the risk of large numbers of human casualties in the host country and further escalation of regional tension.

Arab leaders must acknowledge that Hezbollah and Hamas did not emerge in isolation but were instead products of specific historical, political, and geopolitical developments. The repeated oppression of Israel in Palestine and failure of the international community to end the suffering of the Palistenians and create an independent Palestinian state, resulted in the creation of Hamas, while Hezbollah was born only after the Israel invasion of 1982 (Ioanes, 2024). Now with Israel crossing new limits of oppression and torture in Palestine, this is likely to increase the resentment against Israel and the US in the wider Arab region. US friendly regimes in the region are unlikely to remain unaffected if this anger reaches new heights. There is a great likelihood that the Arab world may see more radicalisation, and the Arab spring may provide the road map for the enraged masses.

The escalation of the tension in the region is likely to impact the security prospects of the Arab countries, and with that escalation, the very premise of the Arab countries to not get involved in the Israel-Palestine conflict is undermined. More appeasement of Israel is likely to increase the security vulnerability of the Arab world instead of reducing it.

Also, the assertion that Israel possesses the most advanced military and intelligence capabilities in the world, which may help the Arab countries to fight the rogue elements in the region, has been proven to be overblown. First, the October 7th attack on Israel by Hamas, followed by its inability to confine its attacks to militants, failure to eliminate Hamas, Hezbollah and its incompetence to bring all Israeli hostages back from the captivity of Hamas even after a year of the current conflict, reveal serious challenges in its military capabilities. Additionally, despite the repeated claims of possessing a precise and targeted missile system, most of those killed in Israel's attacks in Palestine and Lebanon are civilians, which led to the biggest PR disaster for the country and revealed its weakness in fighting against the militant groups. So severe is the backlash against Israeli military attacks that the ICJ ruled that there was a plausible case of genocide in Gaza and ICC issued an arrest warrant against the Israel's PM and Defence Minister (Elgindy, 2024). Humanitarian groups such as Human Rights Watch and Save the Children declared that Israel was using starvation as a weapon of war. Today it has become a pariah state in the global community, with one after another country cutting (After Colombia, Now Turkey: Which Other Nations Have Cut Ties With Israel Over Gaza War?, 2024) their ties with Israel, a vast majority of UN members including many of the European Union nations (Motamedi, 2024) routinely criticize it in the United Nations (Schneider, 2024).

The Israel ground offensive in Gaza and Lebanon has not been up to the mark to produce the intended results. Even after over a year of Israel operation in Gaza it seems nowhere close to achieving its target of eliminating Hamas

and bringing Israel's hostages back, the group is very much active in Gaza, (MAGDY & KRAUSS, 2025) carrying out the administrative duties and even distributing the salaries to the employees (Hamas Moves to Reassert Power in Gaza City Areas From Which Israeli Forces Withdrew, 2024). Israeli soldiers continue to die on the battleground with no sign of the elimination of Hamas and Hezbollah.

Also, with the increasing confrontation between Israel and Iran, the popularity of Iran in the Muslim world has risen, which took a severe hit over Iran's all out support of the Bashar Al Assad regime during the Syrian Civil War. With the likelihood of further increase in the tension between the two, there are chances of Iran's popularity going further upward in the Muslim world. This rising soft power of Iran in the Muslim world should give extra trouble to the Arab leaders, who have always tried to project Iran as a Persian and Shite power rather than an Islamic or Arab one, hence, rejecting all its claims on the leadership of the Muslim world, which is predominantly Sunni. But Iran's decision to keep up its rhetoric, and proxies against Israel in the face of brutal Israeli military operations and its emphasis on the significance for Shia-Sunni unity, has further raised its stature in the Muslim world.

3. CONCLUSION

The Arab world assumes that eliminating or weakening the Iranian regime and establishing normal diplomatic relations with Israel will bring security and economic prosperity to the region. However, this perspective is shortsighted, as it overlooks the deep-rooted geopolitical and ideological complexities that continue to shape Arab-Israeli relations. The recent political dynamics indicate that these challenges are far from easily resolvable, particularly with the rise of the extreme religious right wing in Israel's politics, which further complicates prospects for peace. Achieving lasting security, prosperity, and technological advancement in the region requires genuine cooperation among all nations, rather than reliance on military confrontations or strategic alliances that ignore fundamental conflicts. While improved Arab-Israeli relations are important, they must be built on a foundation that prioritizes core issues—most notably, the establishment of a sovereign, independent Palestinian state. Without addressing these fundamental concerns, regional progress will remain stagnant. Ultimately, sustainable economic and scientific development in the Arab world is only possible under comprehensive and lasting peace. This peace can only be realized through mutual respect for international law and institutions, rather than through the exclusion or elimination of any nation. A long-term, inclusive approach to diplomacy—grounded in justice, cooperation, and conflict resolution—is the key to stability in the Middle East.

4. IMPLICATIONS

This study suggests that the current Arab strategy of disengagement from the Israel-Palestine conflict is unlikely to produce the security, economic, or geopolitical gains that Arab leaders may expect. In the short term, weakening Iran may appear advantageous to some Arab regimes, but the analysis indicates that an unchecked expansion of Israeli power could create greater instability for the wider region. The findings also imply that durable peace and regional development cannot be achieved through military dominance or selective normalization alone; instead, they require respect for international law, credible multilateral engagement, and progress toward a sovereign Palestinian state. For policymakers, the study highlights the need to balance strategic interests with long-term regional stability, humanitarian responsibility, and domestic political legitimacy.

5. LIMITATIONS

This study has several limitations. First, it relies primarily on secondary sources, media reports, policy analyses, and publicly available material, which may reflect the political perspectives and framing of their authors. Second, the paper focuses on recent developments in West Asia, so its conclusions are shaped by a rapidly changing geopolitical context that may evolve after the period examined. Third, although the study uses a mixed-methods approach, it does not present a large original dataset or field-based evidence from all relevant states in the region. Finally, the analysis is interpretive in nature and is intended to explain broad geopolitical patterns rather than to establish causal relationships with statistical certainty.

6. FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Future research should examine how shifting public opinion, elite decision-making, and state policy interact across different Arab countries in shaping responses to the Israel-Palestine conflict. Comparative studies across Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the UAE, Qatar, Jordan, and other regional actors would help clarify whether Arab silence reflects a shared structural trend or distinct national strategies. Further work could also explore the domestic political consequences of normalization policies, the role of social media in mobilization and radicalization, and the evolving influence of Iran's regional alliances. In addition, future studies would benefit from more systematic empirical designs, including interviews, survey data, and longitudinal analysis, to better assess how changes in the conflict affect regional security, legitimacy, and public sentiment over time.

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Author(s) Contribution

All the Author(s) work equally to prepare the manuscript.

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