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# Human Rights are the First Casualty in any Conflict

## A - Introduction

Avoid minor language mistakes  
Mature your arguments

## B - Violation of Human Rights is must in any Hostility

Do not capitalize them

## C - How Human Rights are Always Breached in any Dispute

### i - Breakdown of legal protection

- a) International legal system ignored and unenforceable
- b) Leaving vulnerable population without protection

### ii - Targeting of civilians

- a) violating principle of distinction between combatants and non-combatants

### iii - Torture and Extra-judicial killings

- a) Torture to suppress opposition and instill fear
- b) Extrajudicial killing undermines right to life and jury

### iv - Displacement of civilians from their shelters

- a) Bombing, rocket firing, airstrike in the area
- b) Case in point: Gaza city and its displaced population

### v - Gender-based violence against women

- a) To terrorize and humiliate enemy
- b) Case in point: Bosnia-Serbia War (1992-95)

### vi - Use of women and child soldiers

- a) Forcefully recruited and coerced
- b) used for spying, courier services

### vii - Suppression of freedom

- a) Curfew, surveillance, censorship, Internet blockage

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viii - ~~E~~ Destruction of Health and Education system

a) Depriving citizen from learning and medical opportunities and services.

ix - Cultural and religious persecution

a) Dominating and eliminating believes of other.

b) Ethnic cleansing and genocide

x - Psychological Impacts of war

a) Development of Post-Traumatic Stress disorder

b) Anxiety and depression in masses.

**Q x D - Reason for suffering of Human Rights in Conflicts**

i - Weakness of international institutions

a) No power of enforcement of laws

b) State prioritize their national interest

ii - Reluctancy of international community to intervene

a) Geopolitical goals of states

b) Role of USA in Israel-Palestine war

iii - Impacts of modern weapons

a) Drones, Artillery rockets, autonomous missile do disproportionate loss

iv - Culture of impunity and lack of accountability

a) Weak of international justice system

b) Absence of deterrence normalize violations.

**E - Conclusion**

Suggest remedial measures as well

"War, in its fairest form implies a perpetual violation of human rights and justice", says English historian Edward Gibbon. Wars and armed conflicts, no matter how controlled or organised they are, ~~they~~ include violation of human rights. ~~Rather~~, <sup>Infact</sup> every conflict starts with the violation of human rights. Armed clashes breakdown the legal protections, which ensure protection of human rights. People are displaced from their homes and their freedom is suppressed. Civilians are targeted, and no distinction is made between combatants and non-combatants. Women and children suffer the most among all the civilians. Gender-based violence becomes normal in such clashes and women and girls are murdered, raped, and trafficked. Basic facilities of health and education are either shut down or destroyed, depriving the civilians of their basic rights. Cultural and religious persecutions are widely observed in militarily disputes. Religious sites and artifacts are attacked. Perpetrators of such harmful and immoral ~~crimes~~ <sup>actions</sup> often walk away with impunity, and face no accountability. International organisations, responsible to uphold global

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peace, are so weak to implement any international law. International community shows reluctance to intervene in resolving conflicts, because they have geopolitical interests at stake. Thus, human rights often become secondary concern to <sup>over</sup> military objectives during war. Ubiquitous violation of human rights is witnessed, and civilians suffer the most.

Human rights are the basic rights conferred to all humans, regardless of their nation, region, colour, creed or their social status. Various theories for inception of human rights are available. The most accepted of them is that, they are natural rights, and every human is born with them.

No nation, government, society or opposition have right to deprive humans of these rights. These rights are, right to live, right to own property, right to have family, right to form association, right to health and education, and freedom of speech. Every law and every constitution provide surety of these rights. These laws are often neglected rather violated in wars and armed conflicts. This very phenomenon is against the concept of humanism and individualism.

Wars and armed disputes breakdown the legal protection conferred to civilians. International legal system is the watchdog of human rights, which often collapses or becomes ineffective, in case of war. It leaves individuals vulnerable to exploitation and oppression. Though, specific framework of international law is available, and every country abides by its implications, but its effectiveness gets compromised by warring countries. It prohibits targetting civilians, and committing war crimes. It is often unenforceable because of lack of cooperation from state actors. The principle of state sovereignty clashes with international interventions in situation of war, particularly when governments refuse international bodies like United Nations to intervene on the behalf of civilians. This leaves vulnerable population without adequate protection.

Public without any legal protection, is left at the mercy of combatants, which who target civilians. Fighters intentionally target civilians, violating the principle of distinction between combatants and non-combatants. A specific portion of the state is entitled

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to military, and, ~~those~~ <sup>they</sup> actively participate in wars and fightings. Rest of the population lies in the category of non-combatants. They are not to be harmed in conflicts. It is their basic right, being the civilian of a country. It is the distinction propagated by international law. The norms of fighting, set since primitive times, also admit this distinction. The leader of Muslim Ummah, Prophet Muhammad ordered his warriors, "not to kill or harm any non-combatant women, child, old or people entitled to religious duties". This distinction is not generally followed in wars, and civilians are attacked equally as combatants. Torture and extrajudicial killings in conflicts are grave violations of human rights law, and international law. Wars have been modernized in present era, so does their implications, have become more grave and severe. In conflicts, torture is frequently used by state or non-state actors, such as military forces, para-military groups or insurgent factions, to suppress opposition, gather intelligence, or instill fear. Common forms of torture in

conflict zones include beating, sexual violence, electric shocks, and psychological abuse. Extra-judicial killings refer to the unlawful killing of individuals without judicial proceedings. Right to jury is the basic human right. In conflict, such killings are common by state forces, militias, or armed groups that operate outside legal framework. Extra-judicial killings violate several core human rights, including right to life, right to jury, and right of fair trial, as enshrined in Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Therefore, torture and extra-judicial killings in conflict, not only perpetuate violence, but also undermine human rights.

Not just tortured, civilians in conflict-ridden areas are often forcefully displaced from their homes. Armed groups and governments by inflicting direct attack on ~~them~~ population via airstrike, bombing and firing rockets, leave them with no other option except to flee.

They ~~are~~ get deprived of their home and belongings. Destruction of property and infrastructure is against the very right of keeping private property. Destruction of critical infrastructure like roads,

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Schools, and hospitals makes the area untenable, compelling civilians to move in search of basic necessities. This can be visualized from the situation of Gaza city. Israel has bombarded and completely destroyed the city proclaiming the narrative that after movement, no innocent civilian left behind in city. It resulted in migration of hundreds and of thousand of civilians. Hence, the forceful displacement of masses is against their basic rights.

Likewise, gender-based violence against women in conflict zones is a widespread and devastating aspect of war. Women are the most affected portion of society in conflicts, whether they directly get attacked or their male guardian of the home get affected. One of the most common and brutal forms of gender-based violence is rape in conflict zones. It is often used strategically by armed groups to terrorize and humiliate enemy. This can be visualized from scenario of Bosnian War (1992-95); During the Bosnia-Serbia war; thousands of Bosnian women were raped by Serbian forces, intended to en demoralize the



opposing side". In conflicts, women and girls are often abducted and forced into sexual slavery. This injustice against women is not new, it is common since primitive times. So, women in conflict zones suffer disproportionately from gender-based violence.

Not just raped, and abducted, women along with children are also used in conflicts as soldiers. This is deeply troubling and widespread issue.

Both women and children are vulnerable communities, physically unable to participate in wars. They are recruited, coerced, or forced into armed groups, because they are useful as spies and couriers. Women combatants

may face unique challenges in terms of integration into armed groups due to gender biasness. Children are

abducted in early ages, and then given certain training to carry out operations. In Afghanistan conflict, various militant groups, including Taliban and ISIS-K recruited children to fight ~~in~~ or serve in other capacities, such as suicide bombers.

Similar roles are assigned to women. Thus, children and women are forcibly recruited and exploited.

Moreover, armed conflicts and disputes result in suppression of freedom of individual citizens. In times of crisis, rights of civilians get restricted. Government imposes emergency measures such as censorship, surveillance, and restrictions on communication to control information and maintain security. Military actions and curfews limit the movement of civilians. Media outlets are often shut-down or ~~are~~ directed to work on the instruction of government to propagate propaganda. Social media activity either get restricted or monitored. Basic rights of association and arranging meetings also get limited. Therefore, disputes left civilians with limited or no freedom.

Chose appropriate jargons

Along with that, facilities for basic human requirements, ~~to~~ get destroyed. Destruction of healthcare and education system during conflicts has devastating effects. Healthcare facilities are needed in conflict times more than ever. Their destruction can lead to deprivation of essential health services. This result in limited access to life-saving treatments, surgeries, ~~the~~ maternal and child healthcare.

Gaza war depicts the best picture of the incident. According to the latest data from United Nations; "87 percent of school buildings have been destroyed, 17 out of 36 health facilities are partially functioning, rest are completely destroyed". The demolition of schools and hospitals is violation of humanitarian law which deprive citizens from learning opportunities and medicare services respectively.

Not just basic facilities<sup>center</sup> get destroyed, but also cultural and religious persecution is prevalent in conflict-ridden areas. This happens mostly in the cases, where one group seeks to dominate or eliminate the other's group's beliefs or stance. Issue of Israel and Palestine is the suitable example in this regard. They have both are in pursuit of domination over Jerusalem. Armed conflicts destroy the cultural and religious sites of warring parties. In Israel-Palestine conflict; "Till Oct, 07, Israel has destroyed 611 mosques, 3 churches in Palestine in one year of war, from 07, October last year". This hurts the religious followers of subjugated

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belief and arises the feeling of resentment.

In addition to that, civilians are deeply affected by psychological trauma of war. War and armed disputes have fatal and long-lasting consequences. Those, who survived in wars, often get traumatized by its haunting memories. Civilians who witness or experience violence, loss, or displacement often develop Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). It is characterized by flashbacks, nightmares, severe anxiety and emotional numbness. Thus, the conflicts arise, and get solved, countries devastate and rebuild, but the trauma and anxiety remain in the heart of its citizens.

It is obvious and evident that armed conflicts and wars have devastating impacts. They destroy country's military facility and infrastructure. But, the most vulnerable community in these conflicts are the general public of conflict zones. They get deprived of their basic and natural human rights. The reasons for violation of human rights in conflicts are discussed below.

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Firstly, international organisations and institutions are weak to resolve conflicts and disputes. International institutions, especially United Nations, were created on the maxim of promoting co-operation and solving the problems among states. They have complete framework to do their dedicated work. For example, the Modern International Law attempts to provide protection to victims of war, with human rights law, refugee law, war law and humanitarian law. But, all these laws are present merely on paper. There is no proper mechanism of their enforcement. States easily and completely neglect the instruction of these laws, and work in pursuit of their own motives. So, international organisations are weak to enforce laws.

~~The~~ Secondly, the role of international community to resolve the conflicts and to intervene in disputes has not been satisfactory. All the countries in international scenarios have their own geopolitical goals. Such goals limit their activity for intervening in conflicts. So the countries prioritize their strategic interest and remain

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reluctant to plunge in. Some countries have interest associated with warring parties as they do not want wars to end up. This can be understood from the role of United States in Israel-Palestine war. United States, declaring itself as champion of liberalism and freedom have vetoed every resolution demanding ceasefire in Gaza. On the other hand, many countries prioritize national sovereignty and are wary of violating it. Thus, international community pays little heed to intervention in disputes.

Thirdly, the modern weapons have revolutionized the concept of war.

Their impact can be felt by all the entities in conflict zones.

In primitive times, wars used to occur outside city stations, in vast fields and grounds. Fighters used hand-made and simple weapons. But, in present times advanced weapons like drones, airstrikes, artillery can result in disproportionate civilian deaths, violating right to life. In conflicts, where precision is a challenge, even the most sophisticated technology can lead to unintended harm to non-combatants. Modern weapons such as autonomous drones or

cyber weapons, can be used to target civilians or civilian infrastructure deliberately or indiscriminately. Hence, with the use of modern weapons, it is impossible to discriminate combatants and non-combatants in war zone.

Lastly, the culture of impunity, and lack of accountability are central factors that drive human rights violations. Individuals and groups committing human right abuses — whether they are state actors, armed groups or others, believe they can act without fear of punishment. If perpetrators are not held accountable, they are more likely to continue their actions. This absence of deterrence fosters an environment where violence and abuse are normalized, making violations more widespread. The failure to hold perpetrators accountable can create a vicious cycle of violence. This escalates the severity of abuses, deepens the conflict, and prevents meaningful efforts toward reconciliation.

In a nutshell, one may say that human rights are the primary to suffer in case of conflict. Warring parties neglect international law and

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continue their atrocities without any hinderance. Torture and extra-judicial killings undermine the right to life. Displacement of citizens as a result of destruction of their homes is violation of right to have property. Women are at the forefront of suffering, they are raped, abducted and been made sex slave. Children and women are forcibly recruited and coerced in armed groups for spying and courier services. Conflict zone often have restriction and suppression on freedom of individuals due to curfew, surveillance and censorship by state. Conflict often results in destruction of health and education facilities, which deprive the citizens of their learning and healthcare rights. This all have severe psychological impacts on civilians. Human rights suffers because international organisations are weak to resolve disputes, and international community is reluctant. Modern weapons have made war more fierce and culture of impunity, and lack of responsibility normalize violation of human rights.