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Day: _____

Date: _____

Current Affairs

Palestine - Israel Conflict

Question: Critically analyse the recent escalation in the Israel-Palestine Conflict since October 2023. Discuss the role of International actors in mediating the conflict and assess the potential resolutions which could address the crisis, leading to lasting resolution.

Answer:

1. Introduction

The Israel-Palestine conflict is a long-standing geo-political issue which finds its roots over historical territorial claim. The British under the Balfour Declaration of 1917, pledged to the Jews that they will have their own independent homeland. By 1930s, Jewish migration into the Palestine State started. In 1947, the British decided to leave and through UNGA Resolution 181, Palestine was partitioned

into two states: Arab and Jewish

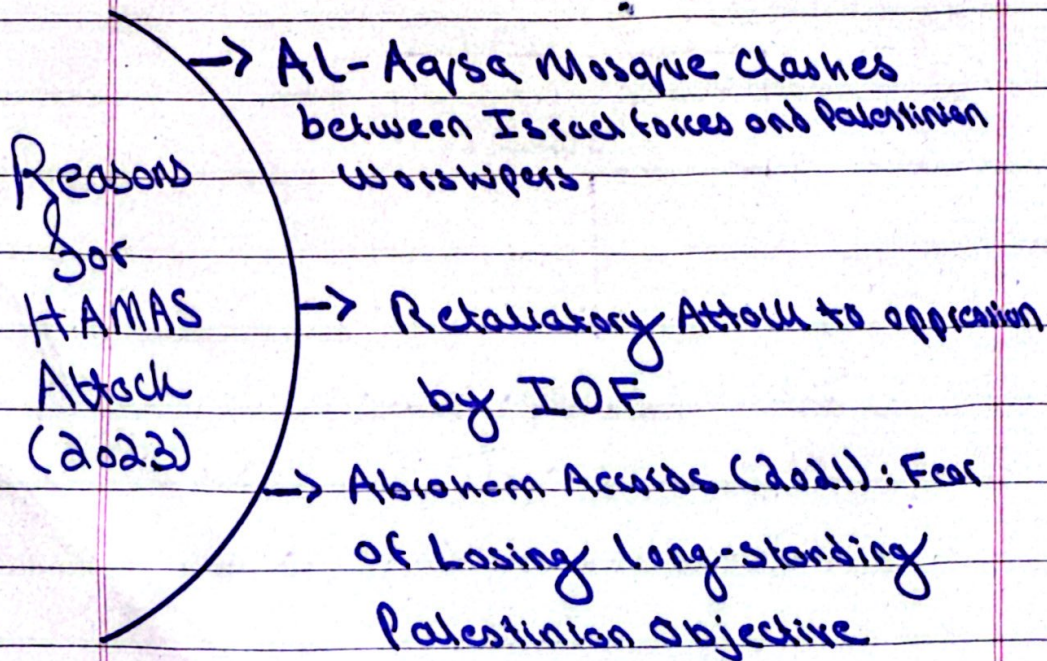
States	Pre-UN Resolution 194	Post-UN Resolution 194	2023 Landmark 7.092
Palestine (Muslims)	87%	45%	22%
Israel (Jews)	7%	55%	78%

From 87% land control of the Muslims, the UN Resolution reduced it to 45%. The Muslims and Arab states resisted this resulting in multiple conflicts: 1948: Nakba, 1967: Six-Day war, 1973: Yom Kippur War, and a series of conflicts and uprisings, the most recent being on Oct 7th, 2023. Given the present situation and Palestinian claims of genocide, co-existence seems impractical. Despite numerous discussions on solutions, the two-state solution seems to be the most viable which should be mediated by the U.S and should be supported by other international actors like the UN, EU, and other super powers.

2. Analysing the 2023 Israel - Palestine Escalation

On 7th October 2023, approximately 2,000 Hamas fighters entered the Israel territory and fired 500 rockets into Israel territory resulting in approximately 1,156 deaths. The attack by Hamas can be traced to multiple factors as shown below:

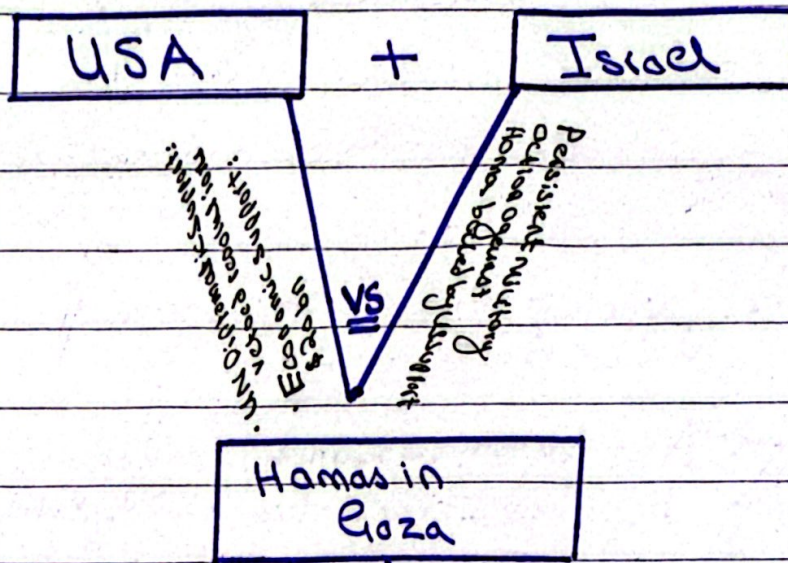
2.1 Triggering Events for Hamas



2.2 Israel's Response: Military Operation

In response, Israel launched a full fledged military operation against Hamas in Gaza which

included heavy bombardment and ground operations. The US-Israel nexus against Hamas to preserve Israel's interests has been criticized globally yet it stands strong as ever.



Severe Impact in terms
of Casualties, Infrastructure
Destruction and Humanitarian
Crisis

⇒ Approximately 40,000 civilian deaths and more than 1.6 million displaced

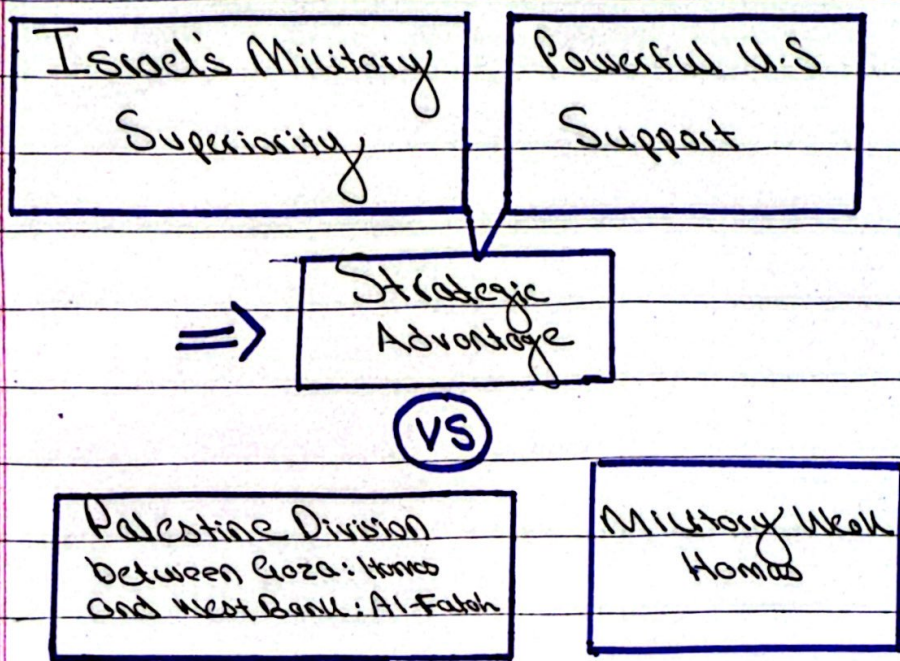
⇒ Estimated \$10bn infrastructure damage

⇒ Less than 25% hospitals/schools operational

2.3

Impact of The Israel-Palestine Conflict has been Drastic

The Israel-Palestine conflict reflects severe imbalance of power and this power asymmetry has been the reason behind obstacle to peace.



The result has been a severe humanitarian crisis in Gaza with a repeated failure of international diplomatic efforts leading to diplomatic stalemate. The escalation has had implication beyond the region into Lebanon and overall in Middle East resulting in regional instability.

3. The Role of International Actors in Mediation

3.1 United Nations

Historically, the United Nations has discussed the Palestine-Israel conflict at numerous occasions and at times played a role in administering ceasefires as in US Resolution 242 (1967). The UNSC has also attempted to resolve the conflict through Resolution 1397 (2002) by calling for a two-state solution. However, in the recent era the UN has utterly failed to achieve peace as US vetoed coercive resolutions. As the conflict prevails and the civilian casualties continue to pile up, UN has failed to play its role in mediating the conflict.

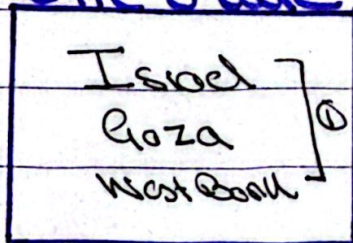
3.2 United States: Global Super Power

U.S. proclaims itself as advocate of peace and democracy but has intentionally countered any opportunity

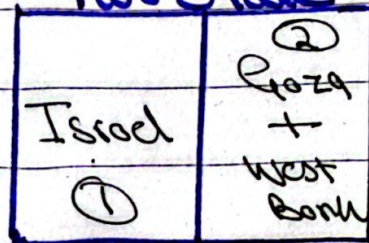
of stopping the war by using its veto power in The UNSC to block ceasefire resolutions passed by UNGA and supported by ~~the~~ The UNSC: 14-1. Despite, US capability in playing a major role to attain peace, its one-sided commitment to Israel due to its own strategic interests ~~as~~ has led to the inability of US playing a major role in mediating the recent escalation, as it has done historically through Camp David Accords (1978).

4. Potential Resolutions to the Israel - Palestine Conflict

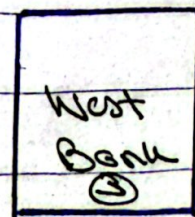
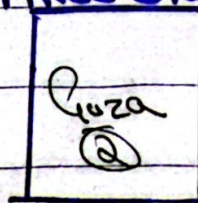
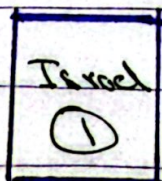
One State



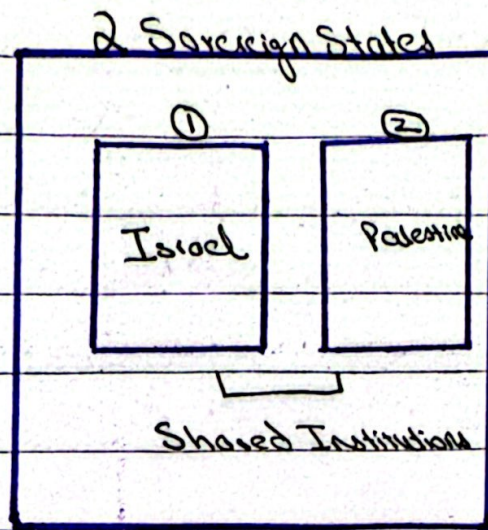
Two State



Three State



Confederation Model



4.1 One State Solution

This proposed solution aims at a single democratic state which includes: Israel, West Bank, and Gaza. The citizens of the state will have equal rights regardless of ethnicity or religion. This is supported by International law on the basis of human rights and right to self-determination. However, due to dilution of Jewish character of Israel and extreme polarisation among the society the prospects of attaining this solution and sustaining it are slim.

(5)

Day: _____

Date: _____

4.2 Three State Solution

This proposed solution aims at making 3 separate states: Israel, ~~East~~ Gaza, and West Bank. However, this is a weak solution as Israel is not willing to lose West Bank especially considering rapidly increasing Jewish settlements in the area which stand at 650,000 now. Moreover, Palestine is also not looking towards for their separation, loss of land, and it would also mean losing the Palestinian identity. Therefore, this solution is not viable.

4.3 The Confederation Model

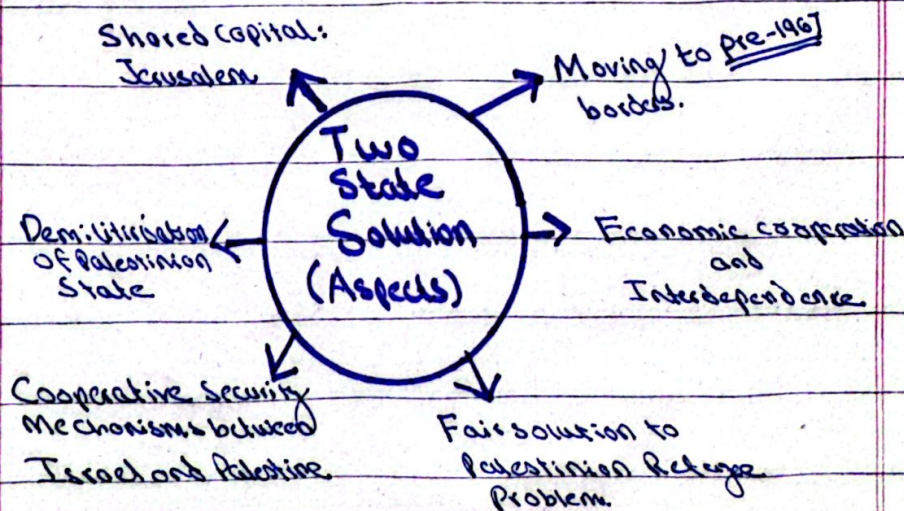
This model envisions two sovereign states: Israel and Palestine. Both states will retain sovereignty and will cooperate on shared interests while maintaining distinct national identities. The UN Charter (1945) emphasising peaceful coexistence and the Oslo Accords (1993-95) can provide framework for confederation model.

through alteration and expansion. However, complex governance, historical mistrust, and severe territorial dispute makes the possibility and sustainability of the model as questionable.

4.4 Two State Model: Lasting Resolution

The Two-State solution is the most widely endorsed proposal for resolving Israel-Palestine conflict.

This solution was supported by multiple UN resolutions including Resolution 242 and Resolution 338 which advocated for Israel's withdrawal from occupied territories and moving towards pre-1967 borders also known as The Green Line.



6

Day: _____

Date: _____

Despite deep-seated mistrust between Israelis and Palestinians the states need to move towards a peaceful Two-state Solution by overcoming historical grievances and political divisions.

"Peace cannot be achieved through violence; it can only be achieved through understanding"
- Ralph Waldo Emerson

5. Conclusion

The Israel-Palestine Conflict has seen multiple conflicts since 1948 including three major wars. At the end peace is to be attained through a peaceful settlement approach. Given the solutions, the two-state solution seems most balanced and practical. Using International Actors like UN and ICJ which have already advocated for the two-state solution and by calling for a shift in US role by making

Day: _____

Date: _____

it more balanced, a lasting resolution through UN Resolution with adoption of two-state solution should be adopted, implemented and respected by all parties.